

As part of our ongoing support of Pharmacy, Pharmaceutical Partners of Canada Inc. is proud to bring you a special feature article on the annual BCHS Business Practices and Leadership Forum.



**Ingrid Kandal**  
Owner of BC Health Services

## Popular Pharmacy conference is keeping pace with a changing profession.

**Like every area of health science, Pharmacy is an ever-changing profession,** with new discoveries and trends constantly stimulating discussion and pushing boundaries. One of the best ways for busy professionals to stay abreast of developments in Pharmacy is to attend conferences where they can compare notes, network, and listen to current thinking from industry leaders. While every conference has its own formula for success, one such forum attracts an ever-growing audience by evolving to meet the needs of Pharmacy professionals.

The **BCHS Business Practices and Leadership Forum** is an annual Vancouver-based conference that keeps participants current with the economics, trends, and emerging issues within the Pharmacy industry, as well as business practices essential to their professional development. BCHS (British Columbia Health Services) hosts the conference in conjunction with the Business Practices Conference Planning Committee, which is comprised of provincial health care leaders. The committee identifies the topics that address current issues, while BCHS develops conference content under the guidance of the committee.

Why has the BCHS conference become one of Canada's best attended and most influential pharmacy forums? Partly because organizers listen to their audience, and work hard to create a forum that pharmacists will be eager to attend.

Ingrid Kandal, owner of BC Health Services, and founder of the popular conference, says that the organizing committee is always looking to remove the roadblocks that often deter conference attendance.



“Even before this conference was conceived, we did a survey with Coopers & Lybrand to find out what sorts of things discouraged people from attending forums such as this. That research showed that expenses related to travel, meals and registration fees were the main impediments to hospital-based pharmacy staff registering for conferences.”

This finding came as no surprise. But what was surprising was that BCHS took immediate steps to eliminate these financial barriers.

“We have an outstanding list of sponsors who know they’re reaching the audience they want through our conference. PPC’s generous support in particular played an important role in establishing the conference as the founding member and as a perennial supporter. All of our sponsors’ generous support enables us to subsidize attendees’ travel, food and accommodation expenses”, says Ingrid. “so we’ve been able to make our conference financially accessible to a much wider audience. BC Directors of Pharmacy can now send their technicians and buyers here to network, rub shoulders with top industry players, and stay on top of the latest trends. We’re proud to be able to provide a learning experience that nearly anyone in Pharmacy can afford to take advantage of.”

The fact that the BCHS conference is so accessible has meant that all levels of Pharmacy – from Health Authority CEOs to pharmacy technicians – can interact, share experiences, and learn the challenges that face every aspect of the profession.



### **Managing business, and the business of life.**

Pharmacy conferences traditionally concentrate on scientific updates, industry trends and clinical information. But one area of Pharmacy that is rarely touched on – and is seldom part of the Pharmacy academic curriculum – is business administration. A Pharmacy manager or director may be outstanding at the clinical aspects of pharmacy, but he or she is sometimes like a fish out of water when it comes to managing people and budgets. So a significant component of the BCHS Business Practices and Leadership Forum deals with the day-to-day realities of managing a business. This training helps to set the conference apart, and make it an invaluable continuing education resource.

Another indispensable aspect of the BCHS Business Practices and Leadership Forum is its emphasis on balancing work and home life, and building the “whole” employee. Too often, the lines between “working” and “living” become blurred, yet it’s never been more important for professionals to be able to separate the two. Some believe they can get more done and create more free time by “multi-tasking”, yet this mode of work only leads to a loss of efficiency and focus – literally doing a mediocre job at more than one thing at a time. Some of the most popular conference speakers are motivation and productivity experts who teach ways to achieve a more focused, dynamic work life, thus creating more time for family and personal endeavors. The “work/life balance” seminars represent one of the ways the BCHS conference evolves its content to benefit its audience.

### **There's always time for fun.**

All work and no play makes for a dull conference, so organizers ensure there's plenty of fun built in. The entertainment aspect of the conference definitely helps Directors of Pharmacy attract their buyers and technicians to the event, to network and enhance their industry knowledge. At each conference, Thursday is the day for wine & cheese, plenty of networking and socializing, and even professional entertainment.

And as everyone knows, a good time starts with a great Master of Ceremonies. At one time, the Chair of the planning committee was always the emcee of the event, and one year the Chair happened to be Sam Louie, who was then the Associate Director of Pharmacy at Lions Gate Hospital. Sam did such an amazing job at making the conference entertaining as well as informative that he is now the perennial host.

### **The future of the BCHS conference looks bright.**

The BCHS Business Practices and Leadership Forum is definitely getting better and better with each passing year. The organizing committee still listens carefully to comments from attendees, and works to make the conference relevant to as many people as possible.

Ingrid Kandal says they will continue to keep the Friday session more didactic, with guest speakers and educational content, while Thursday is for networking and fun. They would like to build in even more coaching and mentoring elements, and of course they want to keep growing their audience.

"The success of the show makes it easier to attract top sponsors, speakers and entertainers," says Ingrid. "We've already booked many distinguished speakers for this coming June, and we're very excited about the rest of the plans for 2010. It's very satisfying when we hear comments like 'This conference was even better than the last one!' We know that when someone attends they're sure to be back next year."

It's no wonder the BCHS Business Practices and Leadership Forum has become a "must attend" conference for so many Pharmacy professionals.

For more information about the 13th Annual BCHS Business Practices and Leadership Forum, scheduled for June 2010, please call:

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***Distinguished Speakers of Previous Years' Conferences Include:***

**Herb Cohen** is the author of "You Can Negotiate Anything" which was on the New York Times bestseller list for nearly one year. He has been a practicing negotiator, intimately enmeshed in some of the world's headline dramas from hostile takeovers to hostage negotiations. He has served as a special advisor to US Presidents Carter and Reagan, the US Department of State, FBI and CIA.

**Major General ( Ret'd ) Lewis MacKenzie** who is one of the world's most respected peacekeepers. He is now a much sought after speaker to share his lessons on leadership which were learned during his many years of peacekeeping in the world's hotspots.

**Michael 'Pinball' Clemons**, CEO of the Toronto Argonauts and a National icon of sporting excellence, community leadership, personal character and integrity. He is also a dynamic motivational speaker delivering a powerful message about perseverance, commitment and leadership.

**Linda Edgecombe** is a National recognized motivational speaker and consultant. She has been featured in the Wall Street Journal as an expert in "Shifting Perspectives".

**Peter Legge**, a professional speaker and Chairman and CEO of Canada Wide Media Ltd. Peter is an internationally acclaimed speaker and best selling author. His eleven books have motivated many people towards positive change.

**Dr. Robert Buckman** is a world renowned expert on interpersonal communications. He combines a mischievous sense of humor with communication training that has set the standard for personal and professional development programs. Dr. Buckman is a medical oncologist at the University of Toronto and his communication techniques are taught at hospitals and Universities around the world.

**Yvonne Camus** is one of North America's most inspiring speakers and she has shown hundreds of organizations how ordinary people can achieve extraordinary things.

**Linda Duxbury** is one of Canada's influential workplace health experts with emphasis on work/family/life balance. She is a Professor at Carleton University School of Business and the Director of research at the Centre for research and Education on Women and Work.

**Bruce Kirkby** is an elite adventurer, a bestselling author and host of "No Opportunity Wasted", a recent CBC reality show. Kirkby shows how to ditch the excuses, plan bravely, move carefully, use fear as a compass and embrace the unknown. He teaches how to achieve excellence in leadership and teamwork.

***The conference planners have also drawn on the expertise of prominent Regional healthcare leaders such as:***

**Dr. Nigel Murray**, CEO of Fraser Health Authority.

**Chris Mazurkewich**, Executive Vice President and CFO Alberta Health Services.

**Bob Nakagawa**, Assistant Deputy Minister of Health, Pharmaceutical Services, BC Ministry of Health.

**Dr. David Hill**, Dean, University of Saskatchewan School of Pharmacy and Nutrition.

**Murray Ramsden**, formerly the CEO of Interior Health Authority.

**Ida Goodreau**, formerly the President and CEO of Vancouver Coastal Health and presently CEO of Life Labs which is Canada's largest provider of community lab services.

**Dr. Robert G. Evans**, Professor of Economics, University of British Columbia and a faculty member at The Centre for Health Services and Policy Research. He is an internationally esteemed health economist.

