

The UBC Medical Journal: Engaging dialogue across the province
Ciara Chamberlain, Suzanna Mitrovic, Gavin Tansley, Diane Wu, and Pam Verma

UBC Medicine Class of 2012,
Vancouver-Fraser, Vancouver Island, and Prince George Northern Medical Programs
British Columbia, CANADA

Leaders in rural health have voiced concerns regarding inequities in publishing. A concern for Canadian medical students is the under-representation of publications that disseminate their perspectives and experiences with regards to rural health. UBC is a leader in distributed medical education with training in 3 sites across the province of BC. One student-driven solution is the creation of student-run journals that facilitate interconnectedness between the different sites and other medical schools, and encourages contributions highlighting rural experiences

A newly established peer-reviewed health science student publication at the University of British Columbia established positions for representatives from the two distributed sites situated in Victoria and Prince George. These representatives promoted and recruited articles from their communities. Articles underwent thorough peer-review by faculty experts and student review teams prior to publication. This initiative, including content, management and distribution, was entirely student-generated. Since its inception in 2009, the UBC Medical Journal has engaged more than 200 students, faculty and clinicians as editors, authors and reviewers across the province of British Columbia, including contributions from the distributed sites. In March of 2010, the UBCMJ will be hosting a medical student research conference where students at distributed sites will have funding to travel to Vancouver, or the option to participate in poster presentations using video conferencing and live streaming technology.

It is our hope that this forum will inspire not only inclusivity throughout our distributed medical program, but also dialogue on topics unique to the distributed centres. This initiative demonstrates a collaborative approach to foster and maintain student interest and involvement in rural health through a peer-reviewed student publication. With the theme of Rural Health already chosen for the March 2011 edition of the UBCMJ, we hope to enhance the publication and student discourse on rural health and education.

Keywords: Education, Publication, Student-generated, peer-review, rural education