



NEWS RELEASE

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VIHA CELEBRATES PHARMACY AWARENESS WEEK

VICTORIA – The work of pharmacy teams across the Vancouver Island Health Authority benefits patients both at the hospital bedside and in home and community settings.

March 5th to March 9th is Pharmacy Awareness Week. This year's theme is "Expanded Pharmacy Practice: Doing More Beyond the Door."

"Pharmacists play an instrumental role in facilitating discharges as patients transition from hospital to home," said Dr. Sean Spina, RJH Pharmacy Clinical Coordinator. "VIHA pharmacists' training and commitment to care allows us to care for patients in the acute setting as well as ensuring patients have medication support upon discharge."

VIHA pharmacy teams are made up of clinical pharmacists, pharmacy technicians and pharmacy support assistants. The teams work with patients and their health care providers to ensure medication therapy supports positive health outcomes. Pharmacy teams monitor patients' response to medications and help educate patients on the appropriate and safe use of medications as they leave hospital to return home.

In the community, pharmacy teams work with physicians to support medication awareness and conduct medication reviews to cure or minimize disease progression to decrease hospital admissions. They also assess drug therapies for outpatients with complex care needs and transplant recipients and review medications for seniors, dialysis and HIV patients.

"VIHA pharmacists are an important part of the health care provider team, and our focus on – and commitment to a team approach in health care delivery ensures better care for all our patients," said Alice Gelpke, VIHA Executive Director, Pharmacy and Diagnostics.

During Pharmacy Awareness Week, VIHA's pharmacy staff will host information booths daily between 11 am and 1 pm adjacent to the cafeterias in Victoria General Hospital and Nanaimo Regional General Hospital and alongside the outpatient pharmacy in Royal Jubilee Hospital.

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