



Choosing Wisely at Island Health: Patient-Centred Public Awareness Campaign

Proposal

Choosing Wisely is, at its heart, an awareness campaign requiring engagement with providers and patients alike to ensure success. Choosing Wisely Canada (CWC) has over 400 recommendations published across a large number of clinical specialties and has developed 39 patient pamphlet resources. The amount of information can be overwhelming and hard to navigate for those interested in best practice.

This proposal, inspired by the 'Abstract CW Hospitals' session at the CWC National meeting, aims to utilize the patient perspective alongside the expertise of providers in the community and acute care to highlight unnecessary tests and ways patients and providers can frame conversations around appropriate care for the benefit of the patient using CWC recommendations.

This proposed campaign focuses on provider practice habits and patient request aspects of unnecessary ordering of tests and treatments. For example, a patient may request a specific intervention or test based on something they have heard or a friend who has had a similar issue. Practice habits of providers may not have adapted to changes in evidence-based best practice and time is often a barrier to engaging in conversation with patients.

As Island Health works towards [Becoming a Choosing Wisely Hospital](#) it is important that we engage outside of the acute care system to bring awareness to CWC recommendations and promote reduction of unnecessary tests and treatments to providers and patients to support the work being done within the Health Authority. By tackling this conversation in the community and bringing awareness to the recommendations highlighted by Choosing Wisely, we can work towards a better system.

Background

“Founded in 2014, Choosing Wisely Canada is the national voice for reducing unnecessary tests and treatments in Canada. It is a clinician-led campaign that encourages informed conversations between clinicians and patients about the potential risks of unnecessary tests, treatments, or procedures.”¹

Island Health has committed to [Becoming a Choosing Wisely Hospital](#) and is working to bring awareness of CWC and best practice recommendations to reduce patient harm and unnecessary variation in care. The Choosing Wisely at Island Health Oversight Committee guides this work and methods include overseeing expert panels, engagement with physicians through an annual symposium, [utilization of the medical staff website](#) and a Community of Practice on Yammer.

CWC has many [patient resources](#), including [patient pamphlets](#) and the [More is Not Always Better campaign](#) for patient education. Choosing Wisely has also developed a guide for [Patient & Public Engagement in Choosing Wisely](#).

Project Scope

Through engagement with multiple stakeholders, this campaign proposes to bring Island-wide awareness for both physicians and patients to Choosing Wisely at Island Health. By collaborating with physicians and patients to develop the campaign, we can:

- 1) Bring awareness to Choosing Wisely Canada to physicians on Vancouver Island,
- 2) Educate patients on tests and treatments that may be unnecessary, and
- 3) Highlight the work being done at Island Health to improve patient care.

The proposed campaign will utilize Island Health social media and print advertising through creation and distribution of posters highlighting specific low-risk Choosing Wisely Tips. These two methods will increase the reach of the message and will be the first step in bringing broader awareness to the public.

The results of this campaign will influence two areas: providers and patients.

For providers, the short-term result is to bring awareness and change habits to align with best practices outlined through CWC Recommendations, working towards a long-term aim of reducing ordering of unnecessary tests and treatments. Possible outcomes include increased engagement with Island Health Choosing Wisely initiatives such as the Community of Practice, expert panels, quality improvement work, and future symposiums. **Awareness is the first step towards change for improvement.**

For patients, this campaign will provide information on the limitations of low-risk specific tests or interventions and encourage conversation aligned with evidence-based best practice. By

¹ Source: Choosing Wisely Canada Website, Frequently Asked Questions.
www.choosingwiselycanada.org/faq

highlighting the Tips of the Month and CWC Patient Pamphlets, we can provide an additional trusted resource for patients in the community to help answer questions they may have, without replacing conversation with providers.

Patient awareness is a critical component for the success of Choosing Wisely as it helps to reduce the risk of unfavorable perceptions around the campaign – e.g. understanding that a test may not be ordered to prevent harm and not because of cost or disinterest in patient needs.

Approach

The proposed public awareness campaign consists of five phases. Proposed steps within each phase are subject to the approval of the CW Oversight Committee, Island Health Communications and will be defined by the proposed Working Group.

Phase 1: Initiation

- Formation of Working Group.
- Selection of 6-12 low-risk recommendations.

Phase 2: Socialization and Feedback

- Recommendations socialized with Oversight Committee, Island Health Communications, Patient Advisory Council, MSAs, Divisions of Family Practice, and other affected physicians (e.g. Emergency Department) for consideration and feedback.
- Feedback incorporated.
- Pilot sites selected.

Phase 3: Pilot

- Poster creation, approval, and distribution at pilot sites.
- Onsite feedback obtained from pilot sites.
- Social media campaign materials finalized during pilot, incorporating feedback from pilot.

Phase 4: Launch

- Social media campaign launched to share Choosing Wisely at Island Health Tip of the Month via Island Health social media channels.
- Additional posters distributed by request.

Phase 5: Campaign Finalization and Report

- Story published using Island Health publications.
- Report created for Oversight Committee and other potentially interested parties (e.g. Island Health Communications, Patient Advisory Council, Medical and Academic Affairs and CWC) regarding lessons learned from the campaign.