

# HINFormation

A Newsletter of the School of Health Information Science  
University of Victoria

Spring 2016



## MESSAGE FROM THE

Office  
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Health  
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## Alumni update from south of the border

Group Health Cooperative (GHC) in Seattle; I thought an alumni update might be due. I moved to Seattle in 2006 and started work for GHC as a Clinical Information Systems Consultant. At the time, GHC was a world leader on the informatics front. They were well on the way to implementing a nearly paperless and fully integrated EMR across 26 ambulatory clinics, Urgent Cares, and multi-specialty centers. They were first in market to offer direct access to a web portal where patients could email their MD, view after visit summaries, results and health reminders and refill prescriptions among many other features. A member-governed, non-profit cooperative is structurally unique here in the US but has been a great fit for a Canadian heading south!

In 2007 the organization focused on developing a Patient Centered Medical Home and I took a new job as a Lean Consultant supporting that effort. Since then

improvement initiatives across the group practice, health plan and

shared services spectrum. My primary focus has been in areas of care delivery; from OR turnover and coordinating hospital discharges to building new clinics and creating better flow in Primary Care. As the Affordable Care Act

front row seat observing and participating in the response to unprecedented challenges and changes both on the insurance and care delivery fronts (GHC does both). An acquisition agreement was recently announced with Kaiser Permanente. Finalization of the deal is subject to a member vote and a series of regulatory processes but the outcome seems fairly certain. If circumstances pan

largest growth forays into a new market.

Historically our two organizations have been well aligned in structure and philosophy and already share in member insurance reciprocity and purchase agreements. The primary divergence is in governance. Group Health is a run by the community as a co-operative. Kaiser, though also a non-profit, is run by national and regional executive teams. This will be a loss. I recently volunteered at a member meeting on the subject of acquisition; it was attended by several thousand members, executives and staff. The emotion was palpable, so was the pragmatic belief that change is due. Through the turbulence of change I will continue in my role (now as Senior Lean Consultant) as a catalyst, supporting staff to

continually improve their daily work delivering care that is of the highest quality, in the most efficient way.

## Alumni Message

Our Director, Andre, has asked me to take on the role of HINF Alumni Contact for the school.

In accepting this role I have the pleasure of supporting the ongoing building of our alumni network. Our priority is to help HINF alumni stay connected with the school and enable alumni to connect with each other.

One of our goals is to raise alumni awareness of HINF School and related events both in Victoria and in their home geographies and encourage them to consider participating or even organizing. Another is to enable HINFers to connect with each other in their organizations, whether in co-op or career roles. HINF alumni make great mentors.

Another of our goals is to keep you informed about the school and the professional interests of our graduates, our faculty research work, and HINF related initiatives and conferences. We encourage you to be part of this

a few words of encouragement  
and advice to you all as you

## FACULTY AND STAFF

Adjunct Professor David Birnbaum has been appointed by Emerald Group Publishing Ltd. as co-editor of the *International Journal of Health Governance*. Formerly published as *Clinical Governance: An International Journal*, for which he served as North America regional

reflects an expansion in scope. The *International Journal of Health Governance* is oriented to serve those at the policy and

# SEMINAR SERIES

## Past Seminars

Feb. 9

Sari

Sari Palojoki

