**Nurse Practitioner Communities of Practice: Developing, Sharing, and Stewarding Knowledge**

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**Background.** Communities of practice (CoPs) consist of groups of people who share a passion and a focus in a particular area. Individuals, in all professions, interact with colleagues regularly to enrich their knowledge and expertise with the ultimate goal of improving the practice and professional development of the group. Although CoPs historically have not been associated with the healthcare industry, their effective implementation has been demonstrated to have invaluable benefits.

In British Columbia, the nurse practitioner (NP) role was formally introduced in 2005. At this time the Interior Health Authority developed a NP CoP to help successfully implement and support this new role. The prospect of increasing numbers of new graduate NPs and emerging positions within British Columbia health authorities is exciting for the profession. Although newly graduated nurse practitioners are experienced registered nurses with a Master’s degree, they still require nurturing, continuing education, and support while transitioning into their advanced practice role. CoPs provide valuable opportunities for this ongoing support, learning and mentorship. This support and sense of community positively impacts role integration and the success of novice NPs.

**Purpose.** This paper will seek to pursue three objectives. First, it will attempt to showcase British Columbia NP CoPs. Second, it will highlight their strengths and limitations while exploring their potential to provide mentorship. Finally, it will propose recommendations as to how CoPs can be utilized so as to remain relevant and of value to NPs in the future.