

## HSA member leads professional association

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**r. Meena Sran**, the new president of the Physiotherapy Association of BC, chose her profession by accident.

Following a motor vehicle accident in 1991, a physiotherapist worked with Sran in her recovery, and the University of BC student found the profession that shed been looking for. -I was drawn to studying physiotherapy because it helps individuals get their lives back by improving their function and independence and helping them return to their work and leisure activities."

She was still a patient when she began taking the prerequisite courses for the UBC School of Rehabilitation Sciences, where she was admitted for physiotherapy training in 1992. Her Bachelor of Science degree in Physical Therapy was followed up by a Masters degree in Physiotherapy from the University of Queensland, Australia.

-I enjoy being a physiotherapist so much that I do let it perfuse various aspects of my life, but I have other activities as well," Sran said. Balancing a personal life that includes a husband and a baby with her numerous professional responsibilities isnt easy, but being able to work weekends and evenings allows her to spend time with her family, accommodate child care arrangements, and even play sports.

She earned her PhD in Experimental Medicine from UBC in 2005 and, in the process, was a twotime recipient of the Michael Smith Foundation for Health Research Trainee award. In 2003, she was chosen for her study to determine if manual therapy creates a risk of fracture in people with spinal osteoporosis, and whether x-rays and CT scans could effectively detect such fractures. The second award was given in 2005 for conducting the first studies into techniques for preventing vertebral fractures during backward falls.

Her focus on bone health is due to a realization seven years ago there was glaring lack of information on this subject related to physiotherapy. -There was huge amount of literature on the effects of exercise on bone health but the results of this basic science research werent being translated for clinical application by physiotherapists. In addition, there was little information regarding the role of the physiotherapist in bone health. I saw that there was something I could do to improve the knowledge and clinical practice of physiotherapists in this area."

Dr. Meena Sran Physiotherapist BC Women's Health Centre
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She was working with UBCs Bone Health Research Group when she joined the Osteoporosis Program at the BC Womens Health Centre. Sran is also involved with the Injury Prevention and Mobility Laboratory at Simon

Fraser University and the Centre for Hip Health and Musculoskeletal Research at UBC, and works approximately two days a week in clinical practice. Still, she manages to find time to give something back to the profession that she enjoys so much.

Sran is excited about her new role as president of the Physiotherapy Association of BC, representing more than 1700 physiotherapists. Her involvement with PABC is a long-standing one, dating back to her student days. After her graduation, she volunteered with the PABC and served on committees and special interest groups. Her efforts led to an invitation to join the PABC board of directors.

Sran is a strong believer in being a part of professional organizations: she sees it as a way of staying informed about professional development, and providing strength through numbers. -I always believed it is seminal to any profession that a health provider be a member of their association since its the primary way we can protect, direct and progress our profession."

A board member for the past five years, she decided to take on the presidency because she believed she had more to contribute.

-Being president brings with it different responsibilities and experiences," she says, -and I like new challenges. I also like to put my work where it has the most influence. The physiotherapy profession is a vital part of health care in BC. And the PABC is the voice of the profession."

One of her goals is to see the provincial Ministry of Health establish a Rehabilitation Directorate. A PABC and HSA survey among public sector physiotherapists indicated a high level of support. -It would be similar to the Nursing Directorate," she said. -Its role would be to support issues of concern for physiotherapists, occupational therapists, and speech language pathologists ... and help address work place stresses in the future."

Sran says her union, HSA, is -a wonderful supporter of our profession" and works to ensure fair wages and benefits for physiotherapists in the public sector. 

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