

Executive Director Report February 2011

Policies and Procedures

The following policies and procedures were recently approved by the Senior Leadership Team:

HR 3-16 Tuition Assistance – reflecting the amount allowed (\$500 from \$1000) per staff depending on budget.

HR 3-17 Special Leave Policy – no substantive changes – brought forward to ensure all managers are aware of what constitutes special leave when staff are seeking approval for special leave.

HR 1-20 Personal Vehicle Use – new policy created to clarify vehicle use for work and who is eligible.

New Van for SWCHC

On Friday February 4th SWCHC received word from the Champlain LHIN that we have been approved for one time funding in the amount of \$65,000 to purchase a new wheelchair accessible van. SWCHC will have until March 31, 2011 to purchase the new vehicle.

SWCHC on Twitter

SWCHC has reached the milestone of over 200 twitter followers! The numbers continue to grow as SWCHC uses both Twitter and Facebook to send messages of importance to local and provincial followers. SWCHC Twitter followers include the Minister of Health Deb Matthews, MP Paul Dewar, the Ontario Ministry of Children, MPP Yasir Naqvi, CHEO, AOHC, Foodbanks Canada, MP Tony Clement, MP Carolyn Bennett and many, many others.

SWCHC on CKCU Radio

Rosemary Jones, Resource Development Manager and Jack McCarthy were both interviewed by CKCU radio and were asked to speak on Community Health Centres, our model of care and how we make a difference to our community.

Annual General Meeting

The PRRD committee will be taking the lead in planning this year's AGM. The event is scheduled for June 15, 2011...stay tuned for more information on the theme and event details.

Reception House

The clinic for Government Assisted refugees, currently located at Reception House, will be relocated to newly renovated space at the Catholic immigration center's main site at 219 Argyle Ave. Jointly, our staff has been working to insure a smooth transition with the establishment of a permanent clinic with all the operational policies and procedures in place. As previously reported, the LHIN has provided SWCHC with \$100,000 ongoing funding to support this clinic.

Chronic Disease Prevention and Management (CDPM)

Our diabetes program, involving our dietitian, physician assistant, and nurse, has been offering clinics twice monthly. Initial feedback is very positive with improved self management of this chronic condition. As a new initiative in CDPM, we have also commenced a diabetic clinic in Vietnamese which is staffed by our nurses and physician fluent in Vietnamese.

Community Partnership

We continued our community partnership with the Bell Pharmacy in jointly offering programs at their site. The latest workshop offered is: "nutrition to lower your blood pressure".

Chinese New Year

A very successful celebration of the Chinese New Year happened on February 11 for isolated Chinese seniors, resulting in 54 enthusiastic participants.

Bed Bug Infestation

Our outreach mental health staff have been very aware of the bed bug infestation in our community, particularly in the rooming houses. They have been distributing bedbug kits to assist our residents, but it has been an increasingly difficult problem to eradicate. Ottawa Public Health has recently announced funding for a Bug 'n Scrub program where the residences will be sprayed twice and assistance given with replacing beds.

Community Development Framework (CDF)

The Rochester Heights Action Plan has been updated. While there are still many items that require further work and support, it was encouraging to see that many of the items are complete.

As part of the Neighbourhood Watch Committee, a Self-Defense Class for Women and Girls will take place Saturday March 12th from 1pm-4pm at SWCHC.

The Somerset West CDF Resource Committee has decided to expand the CDF into the area surrounding Rochester Heights (Willow St. to Raymond St. and Bell St. / Rochester St.) in order to build on the energy and momentum in Rochester Heights. This will represent Phase 1 of the expansion; Phase 2 will branch out from there.

Grocery Store Inventory Project

A volunteer is currently completing the inventory of all the grocery stores in West Centretown.

Income Tax Clinics

SWCHC will be hosting a Free Income Tax Clinic on Saturday March 26th from 9am-3pm.

Municipal Budget

There is a display board in the front lobby with information on how people can learn more about the 2011 Draft City Budget and on how residents can share their views. SWCHC in partnership with Sandy Hill CHC and Centretown CHC will be hosting a free workshop on the 2011 draft

budget, presented by People for a Better Ottawa on Thursday, February 24th, 6-8 pm, at SWCHC. This will be an opportunity for community members to become informed about the budget, and will be an opportunity to prepare those who are interested to speak at Public Consultations. We are encouraging Community members to attend/speak at the Central Multi-ward budget consultations on March 3rd.

Put Food in the Budget

The Put Food in the Budget Campaign had a successful challenge week with 22 participants and some media attention. The blogs of those who participated were thoughtful and thought-provoking (<http://ottawadtmc.posterous.com/>), and several members presented a Pre-Budget Deputation to the Standing Committee on Finance and Economic Affairs. The Challenge week was celebrated with a well-attended debrief dinner at Savana Café.

In order to keep up the momentum, a letter to MPPs asking them to support the 'asks' of the Campaign has been created and sent. Valentine cards for Dwight Duncan with the message "Don't fudge it, Put Food in the Budget!" have been sent from centre's / communities across Ontario.

Rochester Heights

The staff and Board members of the Rochester Heights Community House are hosting an Open House for community members in the evening of Wednesday, February 23rd. Community residents will have an opportunity to learn more about programs and services. Highlights include multilingual tours (given by youth volunteers from the community), raffle prizes, and an old fashioned popcorn machine.

The Community House has been working with the St. Anthony's Soccer Club to assist families in the community to access sports subsidies so that more children and youth can participate in their soccer club. Since the New Year, we have helped 7 children access subsidized spaces in the soccer club.

Queensway Preschool Headstart Program

We have decided that the Queensway Preschool Headstart Program will become a full day program. We made this decision because the current morning and afternoon nursery school for 32 children is not being fully utilized. In addition, we are struggling to maintain full enrolment due to full day learning and the changing demographics of Queensway Preschool's catchment area. The operational details will be established within the next few weeks and a timeline that considers clients needs and budget pressures will be put in place. The new full day program will be based on an enrollment of 13 to 16 children and the City has granted funds to assist us during the transition period.

Hintonburg Hub Initiative

The Salvation Army responded to our recent counter-offer to purchase their property on Wellington Street. We are consulting our legal counsel and considering how we will respond. We will be requesting a face to face meeting with Salvation Army representatives before we formally submit our next counter-offer of purchase. The Hintonburg Hub partners are holding a strategy meeting on February 24, to consider next steps.

HIV Prevention for African/Caribbean Community: The Canadian-Jamaican Youth Exchange Program

Irene Mlambo, HIV/AIDS Strategy Prevention Worker, is currently in Jamaica coordinating the production of an HIV Prevention Video. This initiative is funded by the Canadian International Development Agency (CIDA) and is sponsored by the Inter Agency Coalition on AIDS and Development (ICAD). The project is a collaboration between Caribbean Vulnerable Communities (CVS) and Somerset West CHC (SWCHC). The production of the video will be completed in Ottawa with a perspective from the Ottawa Caribbean Youth on HIV/AIDS. The documentary will be launched on December 1 World AIDS Day.

Black History Month: February 26, 2011

The African and Caribbean HIV Prevention Strategy is partnering with community groups such as the Don't Just Stand There, to put together a display and resource materials for the Black History Month event at the Seventh Day Adventist Church. The event will be celebratory and will draw more than 500 people.

Yet Keen Seniors' Day Centre

Yet Keen began to implement a partnership with The Good Companions Centre in February 2011. A group of members together with our outreach worker and our Chinese painting instructor visited the Centre on Feb 11, 2011 to celebrate the Chinese New Year and over 70 seniors participated in the celebration. The event was very well received. We also hosted a highly successful Chinese New Year Luncheon at the Yang Tze Lounge on Feb 10, 2011 with 100 participants in attendance. We have identified the need for more spots for participants next year.

Harm Reduction Program

We are planning a focus group of peer workers and clients to help us with next steps in the ongoing development of the peer program. Peers now help out in the NESI room 4 afternoons a week assembling cookers for the needle exchange program and other activities around the centre (raking/ cleaning the van, etc.) We would like to offer more meaningful peer activities including training opportunities.

On February 23, we will be hosting a study tour of public health professionals from the Balkans who are interested in learning about Canadian approaches to HIV prevention and treatment, along with how harm reduction programs work on the ground.

Formal partners' agreements for the Safer Inhalation Program are now being signed off on by the 10 partner agencies.

Housing Support Program

A new position of Community Integration Worker, will start in April. Funded through the federal Homelessness Partnership Strategy for 3 years, the worker will carry a caseload of 20 families. The role will be to work intensively with them for 6-9 months to help them settle into their new communities after moving from the family shelter system. As with the Housing Support Program, our contract will be with Pinecrest Queensway CHC which receives the funds from the city.

Cambodian Counsellor's Position

We have hired 2 people to fill Mony Heang's maternity leave: Janet Prak will be responsible for Cambodian/multicultural practical assistance. Ana Delage will provide the multicultural mental health case management service.

Submitted by: Jack McCarthy
February 23, 2011