Executive Director's Report
September 2011

Policies and Procedures

The lead managers of their respective departments have reviewed and updated all their operational policies and procedures to reflect best practice and any legislative requirements and enhanced efficiencies. These policies and procedures were approved at the Senior Leadership Team meeting in September.

Work to Learn Volunteer

The Down Syndrome Associations' Fall Newsletter will run a feature article on Malinda Caron and her Work to Learn experience here at SWCHC. Malinda has been volunteering with us 3 days each week since January 25, 2011. She assists staff in many ways, a few of which include tidying kitchen areas, pickup and delivery of mail, assembling information packages and watering the plants on the balcony. A picture of Malinda along with Sigrid Overhoff, Clinical Aide and Son Nguyen, Building Superintendent will accompany the article.

CHC Advisory Work Group

Merry Cardinal, Manager Primary Health Care, is participating on a working group that is developing an infection control manual specifically for the CHC sector. This is a project initiated by the Ontario Association for Health Protection and Promotion. When the work is completed all CHC's will have access to this comprehensive, research based manual developed on Best Practice Guidelines.

Harm Reduction Program

The harm reduction team will be expanding the peer worker program over the next year and offering more opportunities for both training and peer work. Over the summer we trained 12 peers in needle retrieval and have had 2 community clean ups in our catchment area with them. We have also trained 6 peers in Street Health issues and will be offering a peer training in December on oral vulnerability and mouth protection geared to crack smoking. We are also working with the Oasis program at Sandy Hill CHC to plan Overdose Prevention training for peers city wide.

Lowertown Community Resource Centre and Centre 507 have both approached us with an interest in becoming partners in the Safer Inhalation Program- we will be meeting with their teams shortly to present the program.

We have struck a Resource Development Working Group which is developing a campaign of key messages around oral health care/burn prevention/safer crack smoking and safe disposal of crack pipes. The membership includes Sandy Hill and Centretown CHCs, along with Youth Services Bureau of Ottawa and DUAL (Drug Users' Advocacy League). We have held 3 focus groups with 27 people who smoke crack in order to help us identify knowledge gaps and to gain feedback on the key messages we have developed to date.

We have started doing street outreach in the Caldwell area, in partnership with Carlington CHC. Both Ottawa Public Health- SITE program and the SIP are seeing increased drug use activity in that area.

Counselling Team

The counselling managers from South East Ottawa, Centretown, Carlington, Sandy Hill and Somerset West CHC's are investigating the purchase of an electronic tool that will roll up the evaluation data currently being gathered manually by counsellors. Counselling clients in all 5 centres now complete the Session Rating scale and the Outcome Rating scale- standardized tools- at the end of each counselling session. The scores are plotted manually on a graph which the counsellor regularly reviews with the client. The tool under investigation would roll scores up and produce reports on how the client is doing compared to the clinical cutoff.

Lung Health

In our commitment to be a Centre of Excellence in Lung Health, we are pleased to be the recipient of ongoing funding from the Champlain LHIN for our COPD Program. This program will allow us to expand our asthma program to now include care for clients with COPD in the 7 CHCs and 1 AHAC in Ottawa. In addition to assessment and teaching, there will also be access to community rehabilitation and smoking cessation programs. This will enable us to hire additional certified respiratory educators. The total funding is over $185,000 annualized with an additional $29,000 in one time funding.

In addition, we have received a grant from GlaxoSmithKline for 18 months to develop further resources, care maps, education for professionals, and training for respiratory educators in COPD. The intent of this grant will be the establishment of a Community of Practice of lung health across the LHIN which should improve consistency in teaching materials and care maps. This grant totaled over $61,000.

Health Quality Ontario (HQO)

In an effort to improve access and efficiency in Primary Health Care, we have partnered with Health Quality Ontario to pilot some tools with one group of providers to improve our efficiency in office practice. This 6 month pilot will be undertaken between October and March 2012 with a tool kit of resources to assess, implement, improve, and evaluate our efficiencies.

CHC Planning Summit

For the first time four Ottawa CHCs (Carlington, Centretown, Pinecrest-Queensway and South-East Ottawa) embarked on a process to identify common strategic directions and goals. Jennifer Simpson and Nancy Douglas attended a "planning summit" where the managers and boards of the four centres came together to review the themes identified through stakeholder interviews and select priorities. Once the common strategic directions have been established, each centre will be responsible for the review of its individual mission, vision and develop specific goals for their population.

Focus areas (strategic directions) discussed by the group included: Quality of Care and Service, Health Equity, Community Capacity-building and Empowerment, Advocacy and Health Equity. Each focus area had a number of goal statements. At the end of the day the participants narrowed down the focus areas to Quality of Care and Service, Community Capacity-building and Empowerment and Advocacy. These three strategic directions and corresponding goals are very similar to our current strategic directions.

This is the first time CHCs in Ottawa (and maybe across the province) have undertaken joint strategic planning. In future, the SWCHC planning cycle will be harmonized with the other centres.

Advocacy: Provincial Election Activities

SWCHC participated in city-wide elections workshops with the Community Developer Network and in partnership with People for a Better Ottawa. The workshops have been well attended and evaluated. In addition, SW worked with Centretown and PQ CHC and participated in meetings with local Ottawa Centre candidates to discuss our key policy priorities. Members reported that meetings with Yasir Naqvi, Anil Naidoo (and Andrea Horwath), and Kevin O'Donnell went well. Robert Dekker did not respond to the invitations. We are also actively supporting the AOHC campaign which has a goal of collecting 10,000 signatures which asks all political parties to endorse the position that the Provincial government should improve access to primary health care by expanding CHCs.

Rochester Heights Community House

We have started a new playgroup for young children ages 0-6 years as there is currently no programming at the house for this age group. It is weekly every Tuesday morning and volunteer-led. Home daycare providers and stay-at-home parents are welcome to come and enjoy the activities and snacks. In addition, we are resuming our after school programming for children ages 6-12 years old and a Youth Night program for teens every Wednesday evening from 6pm to 8pm.

Community Development Framework

After a city-wide process review, the Community Development Framework will be operating under a revised and simplified model. A new and shorter survey has been developed and is currently being distributed through outreach in Rochester Heights, as well as in the area surrounding Rochester Heights (Bell to Raymond to Rochester to Willow) for the second phase of the process. Action planning will follow later this fall.

Food Security

Food security continued to be an important issue for our catchment area. SWCHC was heavily involved in the Put Food in the Budget campaign which challenged prominent Ottawa residents to live 3-7 days on a typical food hamper and share these experiences with the public. The campaign 'ask' was an immediate $100 healthy food supplement, and also involved other advocacy and public education strategies such as a postcard campaign and community meetings.

HIV Prevention for African/Caribbean Community

Irene Mlambo is currently on maternity leave and we have hired Jane Karago on contract to continue with the work in this program.

Submitted by: Jack McCarthy
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