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Health Canada approves SHCHC's application for an exemption to operate a Supervised Injection Service

In the fall of 2012, the Board of Directors of Sandy Hill Community Health Centre (SHCHC) tasked the Management Team to develop a service model that was accessible to those who needed it, did not interfere with access to other services for other community members and clients, and met the Centre's high standards of excellence in all the care we provide.

Oasis Program staff developed a proposed model of service delivery for the integration of Supervised Injection Services (SIS) within the Oasis Program of the SHCHC. This model was presented to internal stakeholders (i.e. SHCHC staff and clients of the Oasis Program) during internal consultations, in order to gather feedback on the proposed model.

In April 2016, the Centre conducted general public consultations, targeting the local neighbourhood. The consultations were highly discussed and promoted by all local media starting from week one.

In January 2017, the Board of Directors voted to submit the application to Health Canada. The application was necessary since Health Canada has to grant an exemption under the Respect for Communities Act in order to operate a SIS.

On July 26, 2017, after five years of gathering evidence, consultation and political advocacy, SHCHC received notification from Health Canada that the request for an exemption under the Controlled Drugs and Substances Act to operate a su-

pervised consumption site has been granted for one year.

"The work of the last five-plus years has come to fruition", says Rob Boyd, the Director of Oasis Program. "It's a bit surreal right now, when I think about the struggle and the efforts over the years, that we're finally here at this point. I think it's significant for Ottawa. I think it's a recognition that the opioid crisis and the overdose crisis are here in Ottawa."

The Sandy Hill Community Health Centre is the first supervised injection site in the nation's capital, and could open as early as October. The exemption is pending a final on-site inspection by the Ontario's Ministry of Health and Long-Term Care, once renovations for the injection room are completed, and provincial funding approved for capital and operating budgets.

"It's a great accomplishment and it speaks mountains of the partnerships with the Ottawa Public Health (the Medical Officer of Health, Dr. Isra Levy), all the other partners that have stepped up, and more importantly the people that we serve and who have been asking for this service way before it started five years ago", says Mr. David Gibson, SHCHC's Executive Director.

We sincerely believe that the model we have developed with your support and feedback will meet those high expectations!



Rob Boyd, the Director of Oasis Program

In this issue

2017 Annual General Meeting	3
SHCHC Award for Excellence in Health Promotion	3
Movie night in the park	4
New cross walk for Strathcona Heights	5
META:PHI steps in to help patients with opioid addiction.....	5
Staff news	6
Stand Up! Fall Prevention.....	7
SHCHC receives full accreditation	7
SHCHC receives AOHC's Transformative Change Award ...	8

EVERY ONE MATTERS.

Connecting our communities to health and wellbeing



From left: Hon. Mona Fortier, MP for Ottawa-Vanier, Mr. David Gibson, SHCHC Executive Director, Ms. Lynn Marchildon, SHCHC Board Chair, and Mr. Mathieu Fleury, City Councillor for Rideau-Vanier.

On June 28th, members of our community, clients, staff and Board gathered for the Annual General Meeting (AGM) and to celebrate 42 years of service.

We were delighted with the presence, among others, of Hon. Mona Fortier, MP for Ottawa-Vanier, Mr. Mathieu Fleury, City Councillor for Rideau-Vanier ward, and Mr. George Wilkes, the founding Board President of SHCHC from 1975.

The AGM included the election of the Board of Directors, presentation and approval of the Chair's and Treasurer's reports, appointment of auditors for the next fiscal year, and acknowledgement of departing Board Directors.

In her address, the Board Chair, Ms. Lynn Marchildon, spoke of the many projects the Board was involved over the past year. *"One of the big projects the Centre is working on is our proposal to establish safe injection services at the Centre. This is an initiative aimed at, among other things, increasing access to primary health care and other ser-*

vices for some of our most vulnerable clients whose circumstances make it difficult for them to make their health a priority. Our job, as a Board, is to make sure we have in place appropriate governance oversight to ensure that, whatever the Centre does, it continues to meet its obligation to its funders and to you, the community. Also, equally important for the Board in evaluating these types of projects is to ensure that the Centre stays true to its Mission and Vision."

Mr. David Gibson, the Executive Director of the Centre, spoke about the Centre's excellence in the provision of health and wellbeing services, and about the challenges that still lie ahead. *"SHCHC has a continuous improvement approach at all levels of the organization - strategic, operational and within service delivery. We look for the positive and celebrate incremental successes. Within this culture of hope there is no failure, only opportunities for learning and growth. The work we do at SHCHC is important, but it would not be possible or sustainable without the support of many organizations and individuals."*

It truly is about building community together. So, to all of our supporters - funders, donors, volunteers and advocates - please accept our very heartfelt thanks!"

The Board Chair also recognised the departing Board Directors Francis D. Reardon and Filip Szadurski, and thanked them for their commitment and contribution to the Board.

Mr. Francis D. Reardon joined the Board of Directors in June 2012, and held the position of Vice-President for External Issues from 2013 to 2015. He played an instrumental role in supporting and advocating for the Safe Injection Services, and for the application to Health Canada for an exemption to operate such a service at SHCHC.

Mr. Filip Szadurski was a Board member since June 2014, and for the past year he took on the role of Vice-Chair and Chair of the Emerging Issues Committee. Filip was also a true supporter of the harm reduction model and an advocate for issues that impact our community, such as poverty, food security, affordable housing and other.

The AGM concluded with the acknowledgment of staff who this year turned 5, 10, 15 and 20 years of dedicated service at SHCHC.



Francis D. Reardon



Filip Szadurski

2017 SHCHC Award for Excellence in Health Promotion

With the annual Award for Excellence in Health Promotion established in 2007, the Sandy Hill Community Health Centre is proud to honour those whose activities and initiatives have contributed to improving the health and wellness of our community. Nominees for the SHCHC Award for Excellence in Health Promotion must be individuals who work or reside within the SHCHC catchment area (Sandy Hill and Ottawa East), businesses and organizations that operate in our catchment area.

To qualify, nominees must demonstrate leadership activities that strengthen people's health knowledge and the skills required to prevent ill health, and to enhance and protect healthy behaviour; create and sustain environments that are supportive of health; advocate for health to gain political commitment, policy support, social acceptance or systems support for a particular health goal or program; and have a current or potential impact on SHCHC strategic priorities.

This year, the award was presented at the Annual General Meeting on June 28th to Ibrahim Musa, as he demonstrates significant leadership by strengthening health knowledge and skills, sustains environments that are supportive of health and has a significant impact on determinants of health relevant to the community of Strathcona Heights.

Ibrahim Musa is a resident of Sandy Hill and undergraduate student at Ottawa University in political science. Ibrahim is founder and Executive Director of the charity *Cuts for Kids*, a not-for-profit that partners with community organisations, professional barbers and hairstylists to create community events that offer children from disadvantaged backgrounds the opportunity of a free professional haircut. As a newcomer to Canada himself as a child, Ibrahim recognised the importance of something as simple as a good hair

cut - that it gives children more confidence, increased feelings of self-respect, a better ability to make friends in new surroundings, and an improved general sense of wellbeing.

In the past year, Ibrahim has helped in planning two large scale *Cuts for Kids* community events in Strathcona Heights. The community of Strathcona Heights is home to a very diverse and multi-cultural population, many of whom are newcomers to Canada who experience multiple barriers to participation. As well as free haircuts, these events provided an opportunity to share space, food and conversation with neighbours, to bring people together, generate positive experiences and build community spirit.

Ibrahim is also involved in Ottawa University's Youth Engagement Committee which collaborated with SHCHC to host consultations in Strathcona Heights with Councillor Fleury to gain community support and insight on the Low Income Transit Pass.



Ibrahim Musa receiving the 2017 Award for Excellence in Health Promotion from our Board Chair, Ms. Lynn Marchildon

Meet the Board of Directors for 2017-2018

- Board Chair: Lynn Marchildon
- Vice-Chair: Aynsley Morris
- Vice-Chair: Edward Speicher
- Treasurer: Kenneth Workun
- Secretary: Lisa Gorman
- Ayah Alsaafin
- Leila Bocksch
- Kim Brown
- Miquelon Deller
- Brian Legris
- Karen McMullen
- Marguerite Nadeau
- Sarah Stirling-Moffet
- Ross Taylor

The Board of Directors meets 10 times a year, providing guidance and input in support of the Centre's tradition of excellence. If you would like to attend one of the meetings, please call Cristina Coiciu, Executive Assistant, at 613-789-1500 x 2505, or e-mail her at ccoiciu@sandyhillchc.on.ca.

Upcoming Board meetings in 2017: September 20, October 18, November 15; and in 2018: January 17, February 21, March 21, April 18, May 16 and June 20.

Movie night in the Park: *Trolls* - by Gerald Dragon



Saturday, July 8th, was certainly a busy day in the Strathcona Heights neighbourhood! With a community BBQ that celebrated endings and new beginnings for high school se-

niors, the opening of a new cross walk over the Lees Avenue bridge, and a water balloon challenge that left everyone wet, there was as much anticipation as there were

clouds hanging in the sky for the evening's event-movie night in the park. Luckily, the rain held off and we were treated to clear skies and a full moon.

Now in its fourth year, the movie night in the park has become a welcomed event in the community. While people began gathering early at the viewing area, children and teenagers kept busy playing basketball at the courts. Some small hands (Yonis, Annis, Omar) helped with setting up the screen and running wires, meanwhile Amin connected us to his house for power.

With well over one hundred people in attendance, *Trolls* proved to be a big hit with everyone. We look forward to *The Boss Baby*, in September.

International Drug Users' Memorial Day - by Rob Boyd

On Friday, July 21st, 100 people gathered in the SHCHC's parking lot to mark the International Drug Users' Memorial Day.

The grief experienced by people who use drugs is complicated by the stigma associated with drug use, the early age at which people who use drugs die and the sudden causes of death, such as overdose and violence resulting from the illicit, unregulated drug markets created by prohibitionist drug policies.

This year's memorial was particularly intense given the increasing number of people dying from overdose, as a result of highly toxic fentanyl powder being sold on the illicit market in Ottawa.

While governments at all levels are taking steps to respond to the opioid crisis, the community is frustrated that things are not moving quickly enough.

SHCHC is proud to provide a space for people who use drugs to remember loved ones, to build a community of caring and support, and to turn grief into action by getting involved in issues that impact their lives of their community. As one of our community leaders said so poignantly "*It is the anger that inspires me to stay off this wall!*" (i.e. the Drug Users' Memorial Wall).





A new cross walk for Strathcona Heights - by Lynda Giffen Clements



A new pedestrian cross walk has been installed in Sandy Hill thanks to the efforts of the active citizens of Strathcona Heights. The cross walk sits on Lees Avenue near the corner of Chapel Crescent, and is a main access point to OC Transpo Bus routes in and out of the community.

After its construction in the autumn of 2016, it was officially launched during a community BBQ on July 8th by Councillor Mathieu Fleury, with support from SHCHC's Community Development and Engagement (CDE) Team, Ottawa Police and Safer Roads Ottawa. A

group of local children walked up to the new installation for a photo opportunity, official "launch" and announcement by the City Councillor, and a lesson on safe road use.

Community Safety and notably traffic calming have been a top priority for the Strathcona Heights Neighbourhood Circle, a group of residents who advocate for community change. In September of 2016, with the support of SHCHC's CDE Team, the resident group hosted a community hearing and invited Councillor Mathieu Fleury and representatives from OC Transpo to

discuss concerns about accessibility and safety. The group highlighted that no curb cuts were in place for those with reduced mobility when accessing bus stops on Lees Avenue, nor was there a cross walk over a busy connecting road. At the hearing, the group walked the City Councillor over to the location in question. The need was clear, and action was quickly taken to ensure the safety of residents and better accessibility for all. As a result of the advocacy of this resident group, the work was immediately made a priority. New curb cuts were done and the cross walk was installed before the winter.

The Strathcona Heights Neighbourhood Circle has been meeting in its current form since October 2015, with support from SHCHC's CDE Team. Residents now hold leadership roles in the group. Recently, the group has formalized as an Ottawa Community Housing "tenant circle", allowing access to funding to support its ongoing efforts to advocate for social change, food security initiatives, host community social events, build partnerships and grow capacity.

META:PHI steps in to help patients with opioid addiction

More and more Ontarians are filling opioid prescriptions now than ever before according to a recent report by Health Quality Ontario. Nearly two out of every 1,000 Ontarians visited an emergency department within a week of being dispensed an opioid and the death rate from opioid overdoses has nearly quadrupled in Ontario in the last 25 years.

A first-of-its-kind program, Mentoring, Education and Clinical Tools for Addiction: Primary Care - Hospital Integration (META:PHI), reduces emergency room visits for opioid and alcohol addictions and improves patient care.

META:PHI provides patients with easy and fast referral between emergency departments, addiction specialists and family physicians.

Developed by Dr. Meldon Kahan and his team at Women's College Hospital in Toronto, the program's rapid-access clinics have spread to seven additional communities across Ontario, thanks to support from ARTIC (Adopting Research to Improve Care) - a program of the Council of Academic Hospitals of Ontario (CAHO) and Health Quality Ontario, with the mandate of accelerating the spread of programs which have been shown to improve care.

Patients have reported that the clinic's patient-centred approach made them feel less stigmatized - something patients living with addiction often feel.

SHCHC is pleased to be a META:PHI partner agency, and continues to host a rapid-access addictions medicine clinic in partnership with the Ottawa Hospital.



Patricia Eakins, former Director of Finance

Happy retirement, Patricia!

After six years of being with our Centre as the Director of Finance, Patricia Eakins retired on June 30, 2017. Under her financial leadership, SHCHC has benefited greatly from her professionalism and dedication in putting into place financial systems and processes that have continuously met all of the accounting requirements necessary for maintaining financial stability, accountability and sustainability.

In her tenure with SHCHC, Patricia has also earned the respect of our many partners, funders and our Board of Directors as an ethical, credible and stellar example to her profession as a Chartered Accountant. Although she retired from her full-time position, we will still benefit from her continuing on with us one day per week.

Good luck, Allison!

After almost 15 years with SHCHC, Allison Lampi said her farewells to her colleagues and moved on to the Champlain Local Health Integration Network (LHIN) as a Senior Planner. During her tenure with SHCHC's Senior Management Team, Allison was responsible for successfully leading accreditation reviews, decision support, data management, performance management, electronic medical record implementations, strategic planning and quality improvement initiatives. We wish her every success in her career at the Champlain LHIN!



Allison Lampi, former Director of Quality Improvement and Performance Management

Welcome to the Management Team, Wendy and Michelle!

We would like to extend a warm welcome to Michelle Nemeth, who has been hired as the new Director of Finance. Michelle has been with us for three years, and comes with extensive professional experience as a Chartered Accountant.

In addition, we are happy to announce the hiring of Wendy Chong as our new Director of Quality Improvement and Performance Management. For the past year, Wendy was the Regional Decision Support Specialist for the Champlain and South East LHINs CHC networks.

Please join us in welcoming Michelle and Wendy to their new roles with SHCHC and as members of the Senior Management Team!



From left: Michelle Nemeth, Director of Finance, and Wendy Chong, Director of Quality Improvement and Performance Management



Stand Up! Fall Prevention Program - by Natacha Ducharme



From April 18th until June 22nd, approximately 20 participants took part in our Stand Up! Fall Prevention Program. The program took place twice a week for ten weeks, and was offered by our very own Physical Activity Specialist, Natacha Ducharme, in collaboration with Shoon Omar, Multicultural Health Worker at Lowertown Community Resource

Centre. The aim of the program was to offer a pre and post balance assessment, exercises to help increase better balance, as well as health education. Participants were very satisfied with the program and proud of the improvements of their balance and strength, feeling more confident in doing daily activities. We hope to offer another in the near future.

Marie, participant in the program says: *"It has been of great benefit for me, as I find I have a lot more energy than before. Each year I housesit for a friend for several weeks while she is on holiday. She has a dog, and last year I told her she would have to make arrangements for walking the*

dog, as I wasn't feeling able to do it. This year, she arranged for a young lady to walk the dog a few times a week. However, the first day I was here I decided I would try to walk it and to my surprise I had no problem taking it for a 20 minute walk in the mornings, and again in the evening. We don't go fast, but we go. Also, I am happy to learn how to get up off the ground. Two years ago, I was at my son's cottage and fell. It was a soft landing on grass, but I was unable to get up on my own and needed assistance. It was a humiliating episode, but now I feel I would be capable of getting up myself.

I find Natacha and Shoon very competent and compassionate teachers. I love the mix of different nationalities in the class. It has been very enriching, as well as healthful."

SHCHC receives full accreditation for the sixth consecutive time!

The Canadian Centre for Accreditation (CCA) is a national not-for-profit offering accreditation to community-based health and social service organizations in Canada.

Accreditation provides an external review of an organization's operations in relation to accepted standards of good practice and risk management. Standards address all aspects of the organization, including governance, management, programs and services. It is also a system to promote learning, improvement, excellence and innovation. CCA looks at the whole organization, and reviews are conducted by CCA-trained teams made up of senior staff, governing body members and volunteers from the community-based organizations that participate in CCA.

Between April 19th and 21st, the Centre was host to the Accreditation

Review Team, who conducted a site visit which included orientation to the organization and a tour of the Centre, group interviews with a cross-section of staff, Board members, managers and clients, and examination of some documents on site.

"We were impressed with SHCHC as an organization that is clearly dedicated to meeting the needs of its expanding community, clearly focused on the social determinants of health, with staff who are passionate about what the organization does, with Board members who are thoughtful and caring stewards, and as a centre focused on quality improvement."

- CCA Report, April 2017

Accredited by
**Canadian Centre
for Accreditation**



Agréé par
**Centre canadien
de l'agrément**

Overall, the review team found SHCHC to be a healthy, effective organization that is delivering needed programs and services to its clients and community.

In June 2017, the Centre was granted a four year accreditation by the CCA, in recognition of our continuous improvement efforts. CCA accreditation supports excellence and quality in our provision of community-based programs.

The Centre receives AOHC's Transformative Change Award for 2017 for Supervised Injection Services

The Transformative Change Award recognizes leaders, innovators, collaborators and health champions who have been working at the forefront of transformative change helping us achieve our vision of the best possible health and wellbeing for everyone living in Ontario. On June 7th, the Board of Directors of the Association of Ontario Health Centres (AOHC) recognized the work of the Sandy Hill Community Health Centre, Parkdale Queen West Community Health Centre and South Riverdale Community Health Centre (both in Toronto) in expanding harm reduction programs to include Supervised Injection Services.

"This all started in 2012, with a 19-year old who was a client of ours, and regularly came to our centre to get their harm reduction supplies. The only place this person could find to inject was literally 20 meters away from the Centre, and they overdosed" says David Gibson, SHCHC's Executive Director.

For the past five years, these three Community Health Centres (CHCs) have worked to expand their long-standing harm reduction programs by adding Supervised Injection Services. Their years of hard

work included collecting and presenting evidence, building partnerships, engaging communities, developing policies, preparing submissions to both the federal and provincial governments, and working with the media. Now, all three CHCs are on the cusp of getting (SHCHC has just received) government approval and funding to set up the first SIS in Ontario.

"We see supervised injection as part of the addictions treatment continuum for people, that we start while people are actively using their substance, and we begin to look at different ways of stabilizing them through housing, through employment, through health care, and supervised injection is a key part of that entry into the system" says Rob Boyd, the Director of Oasis Program here at the Centre, whose role was instrumental in supporting and advocating for the Safe Injection Services model as a harm reduction, and for an application to Health Canada for an exemption to operate such a service at SHCHC.



These services will undeniably save lives and help reduce risk factors that lead to infectious diseases. The fact that SIS will be located in Community Health Centres means more people who use injection drugs will have access to other much needed health and social supports. The impact of the work done by these three CHCs is already significant. Their efforts have helped shift the conversation around substance use and mental health, and enhanced the engagement in many communities towards transforming the landscape of harm reduction, drug policy and evidence-based practices.

For more information, watch the videoclip created for this occasion, at <https://vimeo.com/221273253>.

CHAMPIONING TRANSFORMATIVE CHANGE

In keeping with OUR VALUES

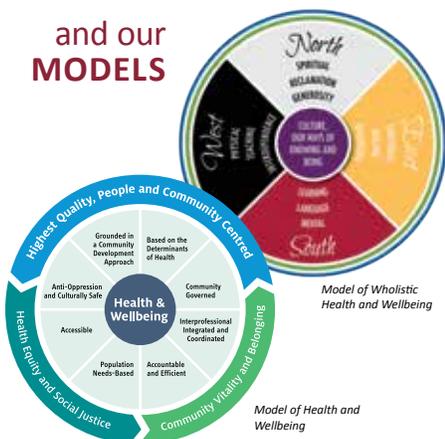
Equity:
We champion an equitable, inclusive and respectful primary health care system.

Leadership:
We challenge the status quo with integrity and transparency and are catalysts for system innovation.

Collaboration:
We embrace community-driven cooperation and partner to influence change.

Knowledge:
We act and learn from a community-informed and evidence-based approach.

and our MODELS



to support OUR MISSION

We champion transformative change to improve the health and wellbeing of people and communities facing barriers to health.

and achieve OUR VISION.

The best possible health and wellbeing for everyone in Ontario.



Our mission

To lead and innovate in *person-centred* primary health care and community wellbeing.



Our vision

Every one in our community will have an equitable opportunity for health and wellbeing.



Get involved in your Community Health Centre!

Become a member of Sandy Hill Community Health Centre Inc./Centre de santé communautaire Côte-de-Sable, Inc.! Simply fill out the Membership Application Form below and return it to us at 221 Nelson St., Ottawa, ON, K1N 1C7. No membership fee is required.

Application for Membership: June 1, 2017 - May 31, 2018

Name: _____ Address: _____
(Home or Work)

Telephone: _____ E-mail: _____
(Home or Work) (Home or Work)

I confirm that I am over 18 years of age, I reside in the Ottawa area, and I support the Mission and the Vision of the SHCHC/CSCCS.

Signature: _____ Date: _____

Application approved by the Board of Directors at its meeting of: _____

Secretary: _____ Date: _____