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The Association of Ontario Health Centres is now Alliance for Healthier Communities

Ontario's voice for community-governed comprehensive primary health care has a new name, and it's official as of June 4, 2018: Alliance for Healthier Communities.

Members of the Alliance for Healthier Communities - Community Health Centres, Aboriginal Health Access Centres, Community Family Health Teams and Nurse Practitioner-Led Clinics right across the province of Ontario - share a strong commitment to advance health equity and recognize that access to the highest attainable standard of health is a fundamental human right. Alliance members strive to be health equity leaders for people and communities who face barriers - through comprehensive primary health care.

"Our new name, Alliance for Healthier Communities, is a powerful statement of our shared vision. It reflects our commitment to achieving health equity for the 22% of people in Ontario who face barriers by embracing our full Model of Health and Wellbeing and the Model of Wholistic Health and Wellbeing", said Sarah Hobbs Blyth, Chair of the Board of the Alliance for Healthier Communities, and Executive Director of Planned Parenthood Toronto. *"It's hard to describe the work we do in just a couple of words. Our members are all different, and serve diverse communities across the province. They offer a wide range of programs depending on the needs of who they serve. But this unites us all: we focus on improving individual health through comprehensive primary*



Alliance for Healthier Communities

Alliance pour des communautés en santé

ADVANCING HEALTH EQUITY IN ONTARIO

health care that addresses the social determinants of health, and we are committed to improving the wellbeing of our communities."

Over the last 36 years, Alliance membership has grown from six original CHC members to more than 100 community-governed primary health care organizations across the province. While the health care landscape in Ontario is undergoing significant transformation - offering new opportunities and new barriers to confront - our members remain collectively committed to planning and delivering more equitable programs and services for the 3.5 million people in Ontario who experience health disparities due to social, economic and environmental barriers such as racism, poverty and social isolation.

Standing together with members and partners, the Alliance for Healthier Communities will continue to strive for healthier people, healthier communities, a more inclusive society, and a more sustainable health care system. The Alliance's new tagline - *Advancing Health Eq-*

uity in Ontario - is a call to transform the primary health care landscape in Ontario so that everyone living here can achieve their best possible health and wellbeing. The Alliance believes good health is much more than something you get in a medical clinic. It believes that better health begins in our homes, in our schools, in our workplaces and in the communities where we live.

In this issue

2018 Annual General Meeting	2
SHCHC Award for Excellence in Health Promotion 2018	3
SHCHC presentations at the 2018 Conference of the Alliance for Healthier Communities	4-5
Farewell, Lynda Giffen!	6
Freestyle Flash Glucose Monitoring System	7
Infection Control Week at SHCHC	7
Become a member of SHCHC ...	8

EVERY ONE MATTERS.

NEWSLETTER No. 26 - FALL 2018

Advancing health and wellbeing for all - highlights from AGM 2018



Ms. Lynn Marchildon, outgoing Board Chair, receiving a token of appreciation for her contributions as Board Director from 2012 to present

On June 27th, members of our community, clients, staff and Board gathered for the Annual General Meeting (AGM) and to celebrate 43 years of service.

We were delighted with the presence, among others, of Hon. Nathalie Des Rosiers, MPP for Ottawa-Vanier, who spared a few moments from her busy schedule to come and meet with our Board and staff.

The guest speaker this year was Dr. Bob Walsh, PhD, Executive Director of the Strategy for Patient Oriented Research National Coordinating Office of the Primary and Integrated Health Care Innovation Network, and former SHCHC Board President. Mr. Walsh spoke about the role of the CHC model in the primary care sector across Canada by comparing SHCHC's contributions to this field over a 10-year horizon.

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

In her address, the outgoing Board Chair, Ms. Lynn Marchildon, focused on areas where the Board has worked over the past year to support the Centre's activities and make sure it continues to remain relevant and sustainable.

One area was the opening of the Supervised Injection Services (SIS), in April. *"From a Board perspective, it is worth reflecting on how much things have changed since the Centre and the Board initiated a plan for an SIS, about seven years ago. Back then, we were on the vanguard of a service that*

would save the lives of our most vulnerable community members. It was new, and somewhat scary, for the community and some of the Board members. There was a lot of worry and alarm about what an SIS would mean for the community. But, with better education and models built on successful sites, none of those fears have been borne out. Now, there is no question that supervised injection services are a critical part of the harm reduction spectrum. It is a lesson to all of us that sometimes it pays to be courageous and push back against public opinion to do the right thing in terms of providing health care to those who are least able to access it."

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 of Directors also recognised the departing Board Chair, Ms. Lynn Marchildon, and Board Directors Ayah Alsaafin and Ross Taylor.

During her years with the Board since she joined in November 2012, Ms. Marchildon held the position of Board Secretary from 2014 to 2016, and Board Chair from 2016 to present. Her contributions to the Board were numerous! She led the review of the Board Governance Structure aimed at better aligning the Board's committee structure with the Board of Directors' present policy-focused mandate; she organized the work of the Board and its committees in a way that best uses Board members' time and increases the time spent at Board meetings discussing strategic or generative issues, as opposed to routine matters; she participated in Board discussions and deliberations to seek the Health Canada exemption for our SIS, and also potential partnerships with Billy Buffett House of Welcome and the Lowertown Community Resource Centre. Her main contribution has been to help foster an engaged, committed group of Board members who generally reflect a diverse range of viewpoints and contribute positively to the governance of the Centre. The Board has benefited immensely from her particular skill sets and perspectives over the years!

The AGM concluded with the acknowledgment of staff who this year turned 5, 10, 15, 20, 25 and 35 years of dedicated service at SHCHC.

Meet SHCHC's Board of Directors for 2018-2019

- Board Chair: Edward Speicher
- Vice-Chair: Miquelon Deller
- Vice-Chair: Aynsley Morris
- Treasurer: Kenneth Workun
- Secretary: Leila Bocksch
- Kim Brown
- Guy Desaulniers
- Rebecca Gibbons
- Lisa Julia Gorman
- Edward Brian Legris
- Margaret Lobbay
- Karen McMullen
- Marguerite Nadeau

The Board of Directors meets 10 times a year. 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 for this Board year will be held on: November 21, 2018, and January 16, February 20, March 20, April 17, May 15 and June 19, 2019.

2018 SHCHC Award for Excellence in

Health Promotion

With the annual Award for Excellence in Health Promotion established in 2007, SHCHC is proud to honour those whose activities and initiatives have contributed to improving the health and wellness of our community.

This year, the award was presented on June 27th to Ms. Johara Aden, as she 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.

In a few words, Johara Aden has been a resident of Strathcona Heights for over 10 years, when she came to Canada as a Somali refugee. She contributes tirelessly to her community on a daily basis. As a community leader and volunteer, she gives freely of her time frequently to increase the health and wellbeing of her neighbourhood. Her life experience is indispensable in helping others to integrate into Canadian life, helping them navigate health care and others systems, providing translation services in Arabic and Somali and frequently supporting her neighbours by ensuring they get to medical and other appointments. She loves helping her community, and it gives her much pleasure to assist those in need and to put a smile on kids' faces.

Johara is an integral member of the Strathcona Heights Neighbourhood Circle, a group of active citizens who advocate for social change and host events in the community addressing various issues such as food security, community safety and transportation to name a few. She has volunteered as a Site Supervisor for the local Market Mobile, and has often catered community events with her excellent signature Sambusas and Somali cooking.

Johara has attended a number of civic engagement trainings to increase her skills, notably the *Creating the Change We Want* (CCWW) which supported her facilitation, group work and advocacy skills. She and two other local women took their learning from the CCWW back to their community, secured a United Way Spark grant and hosted their own version in three languages, bringing together 25 local residents for an evening of learning, sharing and building community cohesiveness.

Johara supported a group of women to successfully apply to the Ottawa Community Housing Community Capital Grant fund to have blinds installed in one of their community rooms, thereby creating a culturally appropriate space for a



Johara Aden (left) receiving the Award for Excellence in Health Promotion from Vice-Chair Aynsley Morris

group of women (mostly Muslim) to exercise with dignity and privacy. She was instrumental in establishing the exercise group, recognizing the need amongst her peers and friends to provide exercise classes in the local community, in an appropriate space and delivered by an instructor who spoke multiple languages to properly support a diverse, multilingual group of women.

Johara currently supports a group of local seniors to access a city-wide ethno-cultural seniors network, meeting regularly to reduce isolation and working to find access to exercise opportunities.

Walk to Quit poster presentation - reflections on the 2018 conference of the Alliance for Healthier Communities - by Emily Clark

➤ What was my purpose at the conference?

I was fortunate enough to have attended and represented the SHCHC at the Alliance for Healthier Communities 2018 Health Equity Action and Transformation conference on June 13 - 14, in Toronto. I had the opportunity to listen to some of our Centre's employees present and speak passionately about issues surrounding equitable healthcare and services, and the necessary changes that are required to address these issues. I, myself, contributed to the conversation by presenting a poster on one of our health promotion programs offered by SHCHC through the Health Promotion and Chronic Disease Management (HPCDM) team, in hopes of inspiring new ideas in other health promoters.

➤ About the Walk to Quit program

The poster presentation was on the *Walk to Quit* program developed by Julie Tessier, Health and Wellness Coach and Team Lead of the HPCDM team. While it's main goal is to help and assist individuals motivated to reduce or quit smoking, *Walk to Quit* is open to anyone to join and focuses on health equity by addressing various social determinants of health (e.g. costs, social isolation, etc.). Further, it meets clients at the stage they are, regardless of where they place themselves on the change readiness continuum. What differentiates *Walk to Quit* from other smoking cessation programs is that it combines smoking cessation techniques with urban poling. Since its debut in 2015, the program has evolved and adapted to meet the needs of our clients. Participants have reported having learned a great deal regarding both smoking cessation strategies and exercise. They have also reported having experienced positive change.

➤ Why was I there?

As mentioned before, the program includes Nordic walking to promote physical activity and good health, as smokers may often present with low fitness levels. The Centre's Registered Kinesiologist, Natacha Ducharme, is an urban poling instructor and trainer, and certifies Human Kinetics students from the University of Ottawa every year. Having been one of Natacha's intern students in 2015-2016, and having replaced her while she was away during the winter/spring of 2018, I had the chance to help Julie Tessier with the program. This is why we thought it would be fitting and beneficial for me to present the program at the annual conference.

➤ Goals of a poster presentation and conception of it

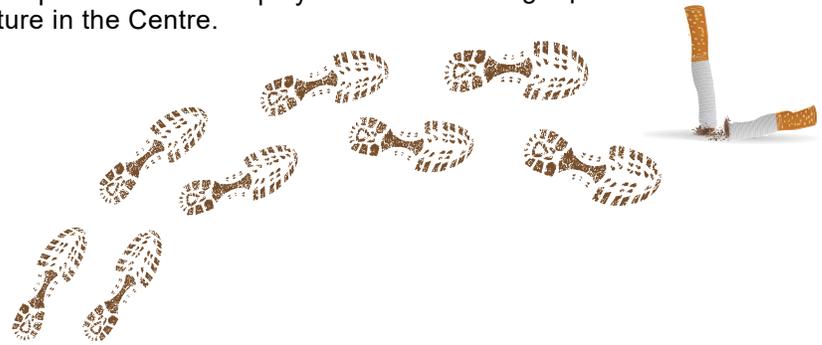
Julie and I collaborated on the content of the poster presentation and were able to collect quotes from program participants. What resulted from our collaboration was a poster that presented an overview of the program, its objectives, the challenges faced, the self-reported outcomes and future hopes for the program. Cristina Coiciu, the Centre's Executive Assistant, also added her magical touch to make the poster visually attractive - and that it was! There was a lot of interest in the program at the conference by other health promoters from other CHCs. Eventually, the poster will be displayed in the future in the Centre.



Emily Clark, Physical Activity Specialist, presenting the Walk to Quit poster at the annual conference in Toronto

➤ Impressions on other presentations

While having only played a small part in this year's conference, I am happy to be part of a larger network of health professionals and providers fighting and advocating for health equity. Though presentations differed, they all seem to highlight that together we have the power to create change - no matter the political context. As community health centres, we need to continue advocating for our clients to provide them with the care they rightfully deserve. Through dedication, hard work, and perseverance, we can transform primary healthcare and get closer to achieving equitable services for all.



Sandy Hill and South-East Ottawa CHCs workshop at the Alliance for Healthier Communities Conference 2018 - by Lynda Giffen

Visioning for Change is a workshop implementing physical and dramatic techniques, meditation and relaxation, and 'vision boards' to create space for dialogue about change in community. Most importantly, the workshop gives participants time to gather together, imagine positive outcomes for the future of their families and communities and share food together.



The project was funded by the Ministry of Citizenship and Immigration for Ontario through South East Ottawa CHC. A partnership was created with Community Developers at SHCHC to help develop the content of the workshops, and three sessions were originally conducted in South East Ottawa.

The workshops were delivered in both French and English. Audiences were primarily Ottawa Community Housing tenants, who included many refugees and newcomers to Canada, as well as Syrian groups who spoke mainly Arabic. Groups were accessed through community developers, workshops were hosted in community centres and featured meals cooked by community members as part of the evening event.

The collaborators recognized the importance for participants to be able to dream about their futures,

This collaborative project was featured as a workshop at the 2018 Alliance for Healthier Communities Annual Conference in Toronto. The conference learning session was created and led by Lynda Giffen, Community and Health Equity Developer with SHCHC, and Valerie Assoi, Community Health Worker with South East Ottawa CHC.

Participants enjoyed a sample of the workshop and were given the background, funding sources, theory, tools and tips to re-create similar workshops in their own communities. Workshop content included poetry, physical movement, drama techniques, discussion, guided meditation, yoga, visual arts and crafts.

and the impact this could have on their personal confidence, their positive sense of self and their wellbeing. Reactions to the sessions were extremely positive, with all groups requesting more workshops. Many commented that they didn't get time to laugh, to spend time together and to think about themselves, their communities and their futures in a positive way. The physical and tactical nature of the workshops also made it very accessible, despite language barriers.



Fundamentally, the project was grounded in Community Development Work with a Health Equity Lens. *Visioning for Change* workshops support relationship building, reduce isolation, create space for sharing and joy, examine concepts of self-determination and power, and provide space for transformational learning of self and community.



Farewell, Lynda!

In late September 2018, SHCHC said goodbye to Community Developer Lynda Giffen, as she moved on to a new position in Montreal, supporting non-profit organizations in Quebec.

When Lynda joined SHCHC's Community Development and Engagement (CDE) team in 2015, she brought with her a range of exceptional skills and experience. From her acting and popular theatre work, grounded in Augusto Boal's Theatre of the Oppressed methodology, to her activism and advocacy supporting innovative youth programs in Scotland, Lynda brought positive energy and compassion to her new role as a Community Developer in Sandy Hill.

Much of Lynda's community development work involved supporting residents of Strathcona Heights, an Ottawa Community Housing neighbourhood at the south end of Sandy Hill. Her support to resident leadership development through community initiatives like *Making Voices Count*, *Creating the Change We Want*, and activities of the Strath-

cona Neighbourhood Circle were a large part of her work in 2016 and 2017. As co-chair of the Good Food Initiatives Committee, Lynda supported both neighbourhood food security efforts, such as the Strathcona Community Garden and the Market Mobile, but also broader City-wide efforts to advocate for better access to affordable and healthy food. Lynda was co-chair of the Community Developer Network for the past year, and supported the creation of the soon-to-be launched, Community Development Guiding Principles document.

In early 2018, Lynda's responsibilities shifted to support the Centre's interest in Health Equity. As Health Equity Developer, Lynda chaired SHCHC's Health Equity Working Group, a new Centre initiative engaging staff representatives from all teams. Her passion for equity and her enthusiasm for social justice, could be felt by all staff across the Centre, but also by external colleagues and, most importantly, by community residents.

At her farewell lunch at SHCHC, many community residents dropped in to thank Lynda for her years of support to their efforts in the community. It was a fitting tribute to the valued relationships that Lynda had fostered during her time at SHCHC. Lynda shared many gifts with us and we are fortunate to have worked alongside her. She will be greatly missed by both residents and colleagues but we would not



CDE team members, from left: Gerald Dragon, Lynda Giffen and Chris Osler

only like to acknowledge her contributions, but also would like to congratulate her on her new position and the new challenges it may bring!



Soup and story time at the Market Mobile event - October 28, 2015



Creating the Change We Want event in Strathcona Heights, with community members (from left): Johara Aden, Sylvie Roussel and Joyce Halladay - November 25, 2016

Flash Blood Glucose Monitoring is helping our diabetic clients

- by Irena Konopacki, RN CDE



There is something new happening in health services, aimed at helping our more complicated diabetic clients gain better control of their blood sugars. It is the introduction of the Freestyle Libre Flash Glucose Monitoring System, which measures glucose levels from interstitial fluid surrounding body cells. A sensor is applied to the upper arm of a client and scanned by the client with a reader at least every 8 hours. The sensor is worn for 2 weeks and then, when the client returns to the office, the data from the reader is down-

loaded on a computer. It is amazing what we discover, and we use this information to improve the life of our clients.

In one such recent case, we discovered that a client, who we thought was doing very well with normal daily blood sugar readings and an excellent A1C, was experiencing severe low blood sugars from 1 to 3 a.m. during her night sleep. Low blood sugars can affect the brain and the heart in a negative way. Using this data, we were able to change her insulin to a different type, and to adjust it to stop this low blood sugar from occurring. I think that this technology is amazing!

Infection Control Week at SHCHC - by Kyle Heney

The third week in October is fully designated as National Infection Control Week (NICW) in Canada and the U.S. In Canada, Infection Control Week originated in 1988, to highlight infection control efforts in Canadian hospitals, long-term care facilities and in the community. It was an opportunity for infection control professionals to educate staff and the community about the importance of infection prevention and to promote the important work that was being done by infection control professionals in a visible and fun way. In 1989, the federal government proclaimed Infection Control Week as an annual event.

This year, staff at SHCHC took part in several activities, including a Hand Washing challenge, Infection Control-related word searches and word jumbles, and - the main event - a homemade Escape Room in our very own 'George Wilkes Boardroom'!

For the main event, staff had to race against the clock to escape the boardroom before a terrible airborne

disease made its way through the ventilation system! Groups had to first solve a flu-related quiz in order to gain access to a locked container that contained a blacklight. Then, they had to find a hidden message on the wall that led them to the final key. Only two groups were able to make it to this point in the escape! Once groups found the last key, they were able to unlock a special handle that allowed them to open the dividing wall inside the boardroom. Once inside the other half of the room, groups had to don the necessary Personal Protective Equipment (gowns, gloves, masks and eye goggles) before exiting the room and escaping the infection! Two groups were able to escape the room, and the one who escaped the fastest - team name: *Social Determinants of Awesome* - is pictured below. The team consisted of staff members (from left): Melissa Lees, As-

trid Froese, Arian Platthy, Sun-Ah Park and Tyler Wolchuk.





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, 2018 - May 31, 2019

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: _____