

Executive Director's Report March 2011

Policies and Procedures

The following policy and procedures was recently approved by the Senior Leadership Team (SLT):

- FIN-5B Travel Expenses – Removed the per diem amounts. Receipts will be required for meals and incidentals.

Organizational Review

Yet Keen and the Housing Support program have been transferred to Eugene Williams, Manager Health Promotion and Community Programs.

September 1 has been set as the target date for implementation of the new pod structure. MOAs (Medical Office Assistants) will join the pods in January 2012. A timeline has been drawn with key activities and target dates.

Harm Reduction Program

On March 30, we will be holding a staff training day for front line staff from partner agencies of the Safer Inhalation Program (SIP). Yvette Perrault from the AIDS Bereavement and Resiliency Program of Ontario will facilitate the day which will help workers examine their resiliency in the face of loss. We plan to support front line staff from across all partner agencies in setting up a network which will meet quarterly to do ongoing training and debriefing. This activity is part of our workplan in response to the evaluation done of the SIP program.

The "Together for Vanier, Working Group on Drugs and Prostitution" has invited us, along with Ottawa Public Health, to present the SIP and the SITE programs on March 30. This group is funded by Crime Prevention Ottawa. We anticipate a challenging discussion as there has been a recent spike in discarded needles in the Vanier area.

Adult High School

A new partnership with the Adult High School has been established. One of our nurse practitioners, Laura Kollenberg, will be providing a weekly clinic for the students there. She will provide brief episodic care for acute illnesses, (including diagnosis, ordering investigations, and treatment), contraception advice, health promotion, and general primary health care.

Delegation from Bosnia and Serbia

SWCHC hosted a delegation from Bosnia and Serbia outlining the CHC model of care. The visiting physicians were public health physicians and an epidemiologist, arranged by the Public Health Agency of Canada, investigating other approaches to delivering HIV prevention.

Smoking Cessation “Smart Cards” from University of Ottawa Heart Institute

In an arrangement with the Heart Institute, we were able to acquire over \$10,000 worth of smoking cessation aids: Medication, patches, gum etc. Clients who are currently smokers were contacted, advised of this time limited opportunity until the end of March, invited to an information session by Debbie Tirrul, our nurse practitioner who coordinates smoking cessation here, and there distributed “Smart Cards” worth \$100 in the pharmacy. The amazing interest generated by this one-time opportunity has led us to hope that it may be repeated in the coming year. Unfortunately, although the numbers are decreasing, smoking does persist among many clients.

Partnership with Ontario Lung Association regarding Smoke Free Homes

In another partnership with the Ontario lung Association, Laurie Taylor, our Lung Health coordinator, is participating in Smoke Free Homes. This initiative targets families who have asthmatic children less than 12 years where there are currently smokers. The program is based on motivational interviews to influence lifestyle change.

Dept of Family Medicine, University of Ottawa Winter Newsletter

Our centre was featured in the Department of Family Medicine of the University of Ottawa’s winter newsletter. It describes our centre, our clients and the opportunities provided to our 2 family medicine residents by their preceptors, Dr. Kay Lee and Dr. Sarah Rice. To quote a snippet of the article: *“Dr Vyvey enjoys working at Somerset West because of the fascinating group of physicians and allied health professionals that are housed there, who are all concerned with social justice and dedicated to the patients and the community. You have to be flexible with your management plans, always willing to listen to the patient, and come up with ideas that will work with their unique circumstances.”*

Well Baby Clinic

Our well baby clinic, held on Wednesday afternoons, is bursting. Last Wednesday there were 16 Moms and 18 infants (2 sets of twins)! The support they receive from their peers as well as our lactation consultant, dietitian, and nursing staff ensure that our youngest community members have the best start in life possible. This weekly drop-in is a popular aspect of the perinatal programming at SWCHC.

Seniors Outreach Nurse Part of an Expert Panel on “Polypharmacy in the Elderly”

Ginette Drouin, Seniors Outreach Nurse, will be part of an expert panel discussing, “Polypharmacy in the Elderly”. Ginette will bring the community perspective and illustrate the many issues that create adherence barriers when seniors bring their prescriptions home.

Rochester Heights Community House

Artwork from the children of Rochester Heights is currently on display at the Minto Suites Hotel downtown. The artwork is from a class that the Ottawa School of Art runs at the Community House once a week.

We are supporting residents in Rochester Heights to apply for an Ottawa Community Housing capital grant. Residents are putting together an application to apply for picnic benches, garbage

cans, garden supplies, and repaving the basketball court. In addition, we are working with the Rochester Heights Social Committee to apply for an Ottawa Civic Events grant to organize a Canada Day event in Rochester Heights.

Community Development Framework (CDF)

Community workers Jenn Wilks and Josmi Bansal are planning outreach efforts for the new CDF micro-neighbourhood (Willow St. to Raymond St. and Bell St. / Rochester St.). They are working with other Community Developers and the Knowledge Transfer Table in order to have the modified needs assessment survey ready this spring. The goal is to have this work completed before we move into the new neighbourhood.

The CDF process evaluation is set to be released at the end of the month. The intent is that this will help shape the future of the CDF in our neighbourhoods through an in-depth analysis on the process of change, things that could be improved and strengths we can build on.

Food Security

Orders for the Good Food Box in this area are on the rise and we are exploring the possibility of getting a Good Food Box in Hintonburg. Meetings are planned with Ottawa Public Health to explore ideas about tackling the issue of increasing the availability of affordable nutritious foods in SWCHC neighbourhoods. We continue to explore getting a community garden in the Hintonburg/Mechanicsville area and we have connected with SLOWest Grow Slow group.

Income Tax Clinics

SWCHC will be hosting a Free Income Tax Clinic on Saturday March 26th from 9am-3pm. We have secured 6 volunteers who speak Mandarin, Cantonese, Vietnamese, Spanish, French and English to assist with the Clinic.

Changes to Early Learning Program and Child and Family Centres (CFC)

Vicky Smallman, Cori Thompson-Smith, and Eugene Williams attended a forum hosted by the Child Care Action Network (CCAN) on Wednesday March 2, 2011. The purpose of the forum was to hear from experts in the childcare/early years sector about the impact of the changes being created by the provinces Early Learning Program (ELP) and Child and Family Centres (CFC). There were over 189 forum participants who heard from four guest speakers including Zeenat Janmohamed, from the Atkinson Centre for Society and Child Development, Michael Carson, Superintendent Ottawa Carleton District School Board (OCDSB), Cathy Curry, Trustee OCDSB and Dick Stewart, former General Manager of Peoples Services for the City of Ottawa. The consensus of the presenters was that the changes will impact programs and services. All agreed with the principles of the Early Learning Report while highlighting problems with the implementation which were having negative impacts on the sector. Participants were encouraged to approach City Council and request that the City take leadership for ensuring an open and transparent process and lead the transformation of the City's child care system. Somerset West is working with CCAN to track the impact of the changes in the sector and monitoring how they will affect our Early Years Programs.

Hintonburg Hub Initiative

The Hintonburg Hub Partners received another counter-offer from the Salvation Army for the Wellington Street property and we responded with a new offer on March 9, 2011. We are waiting for the Salvation Army to respond to our latest offer. We are in the midst of having multiple discussions with politicians, City officials, community groups and the media about the Hintonburg Hub Initiative. We are organizing a Community Forum on Monday April 4, 2011 at the Hintonburg Community Centre from 7:00 pm to 9:00 pm. The purpose of this forum is to provide information about the project and get community input.

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

Irene Mlambo has concluded a field trip to Jamaica to produce an HIV Prevention Video targeting African and Caribbean youth. In March 2011, Jamaican youth visited Ottawa for one week as part of the knowledge transfer and exchange. The documentary is in the final stages of editing. The project has since received attention in Jamaica and Somerset West is mentioned by the Jamaican local newspaper. The story can be found on our website, Twitter and Facebook. The Jamaican youth then visited Ottawa for one week as part of the knowledge transfer and exchange. The documentary is in the final stages of editing. The Jamaican participants are scheduled to be back in August when the Ottawa and Jamaican Youth will launch the documentary.

HIV Prevention and Testing Information Day

We organized an HIV Prevention and Testing Information Day on March 12, 2011 which was a collaboration between SWCHC (African and Caribbean HIV Prevention Strategy) and the Vital Hope Support Group which offers family support for people living with or affected by HIV/AIDS. The focus of the presentations and discussions was on how to educate the community on the effects of HIV Stigma and Discrimination.

Clinical Management System

In early March the provincial Information Management Subcommittee (IMS) at the Association of Ontario Health Centres (AOHC) announced that the initiative to replace our current Clinical Management System (CMS) just took a big leap forward and is becoming a reality. Funding is approved and the request for proposal (RFP) is released for a bilingual next generation product! The current timelines see product being selected this summer and deployment to begin this fall!

Submitted by:
Jack McCarthy
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