



Making a SWITCH: Advancing the Health of Our Community Through a Student Managed Wellness Centre

2008/2009 Annual Report

Dear Friends: On behalf of all of us and the other SWITCH Council members who have gone before, we want to thank you who have helped make SWITCH a role model for how interprofessional collaborative client care can be achieved.

To our partners who not only took that leap of faith four years ago to help SWITCH establish itself as Canada's second student-managed clinic, we want to thank you for taking that leap and for your continued support. Thank you to all of you from the Saskatoon and Westside Community Clinics, Saskatoon Health Region and University of Saskatchewan who have provided your time, space, resources, finances and expertise. We would also like to thank the White Buffalo Youth Lodge for hosting our dental clinics and other events.

To the health professionals who mentor SWITCH students - we know you have many other things you could do with your time and we cannot thank you enough for spending it with us. And particularly to the students who volunteer at SWITCH, we thank you for your ongoing commitment to this innovative community service learning project. We hope you take the experiences you receive and the lessons you learn to make Canada's health care system a beacon for others to follow.

We would like to offer a special thank you to our partner representatives: Patrick Lapointe and Cheryl Hand from Saskatoon and Westside Community Clinics; Sheila Achilles, General Manager, Primary Health Care and Suzanne Shephard, both from the Saskatoon Health Region and Peter Krebs, Inter-Professional Health Sciences Office, University of Saskatchewan. We literally would not be here if not for you.

And to those who are yet to become a part of this history making project, we hope you choose to be involved and we welcome you to this amazing world we call *SWITCH*.

SWITCH 2008 Council Members:

Alixé Dick - Arts & Science
Angela Bates - Pediatric Resident
Brenda Jackson - Nursing
Darren Bikey - Dentistry
Dean Watson - Physical Therapy
Elizabeth Tomczak - Pharmacy
Emily Alston-O'Connor - Social Work
Erin Hamilton - Medicine
Fahad Cadili - Dentistry
Heather McEwen - Medicine
Kaleigh Hlady - Arts & Science
Kieran Conway - Medicine
Kristin Calverley - Clinical Psychology

Megan Clark - Arts & Science
Melissa Anderson - Physical Therapy
Nicole Haugrud - Clinical Psychology
Nikki Rewuski - Medicine
Pamela Vorstermans-Agar - Social Work
Sydney Byrns - Arts & Science
Zach Buxton - Nursing

"SWITCH is the best kept secret in town. This is the way health care is supposed to be practiced. You really get a chance to build relationships with clients." Dr. Lorne Pilot, Physician Mentor

Cover Photo: Medical student Kieran is examined by a young client.

Our History

Since October, 2005, SWITCH has operated one of Canada's only student-managed primary health care centres. This unique and creative wellness centre provides year-round interprofessional, after-hours primary and specialist clinical care, social and program services primarily to residents of Saskatoon's core neighbourhoods during shifts on Wednesday evenings and Saturdays.

Almost 300 students attending the University of Saskatchewan, University of Regina and SIAST from several different colleges volunteer their considerable skills to extend the hours of Saskatoon's Westside Clinic, a cooperative health care centre. Students work with professional mentors and community partners to provide interprofessional collaborative care, social services and health promotion programs to a client base that is primarily of First Nations and Métis ancestry and most of whom live in disadvantageous socioeconomic conditions. SWITCH services are free and may be accessed by anyone with a health card.

Using a combination of staff, mentors and student volunteers, SWITCH offers clients an opportunity for an interprofessional, collaborative and holistic health care experience by people with sensitivities for both local community and cultural dynamics. Students volunteer alongside a professional staff of a physician, cultural support worker and mentors from a range of different health areas including some

for which there is no student program such as occupational therapy or Reiki.

Students, staff, mentors and clients all learn from one another how to provide better health services for the residents of our core neighborhoods with a goal of improving the health of our entire community. Students also gain valuable leadership skills as they learn about project development, financial and human resource management, public speaking and developing and delivering programs.

Our mission is to build health equity in our community and provide learning opportunities within the context of a student-managed health center that is evolving, sustainable, inter-professional and client-centered.

SWITCH Coordinator with Dr. Ryan Meili, one of the students who founded SWITCH.



Our goals are to:

1. Be sustainable.
2. Provide holistic health care that addresses the mental, physical, emotional and spiritual needs of our community.
3. Create opportunities for learning in a community-based interprofessional environment.

"Having been here since the beginning, it has been great to see SWITCH grow into what it has become today. I loved being a part of SWITCH as a student, and now a mentor."
Marqarita Sysina, Social Work Mentor

4. Provide the resources and opportunities to address community needs.
5. Build relationships to benefit SWITCH and our community.

Social services include a needle exchange, free condoms, use of a phone, free childcare for clients and program participants, a food store and advocacy. Food and coffee are served on every shift and SWITCH provides transportation by taxi or bus tickets to clients of local shelters to access services.

Amanda helps prepare the food served on the shift.



Health promotion programs and services provided through informal partnerships include:

Wednesdays:

- **Women's Drop-In Night** - free workshops on crafts, community kitchens and health topics.



Women's Drop In-Night sessions offer a variety of crafts, health topics and community kitchens.

- **Community Addictions Outreach Worker (Saskatoon Health Region)** - works with SWITCH clients to provide a link to other services.
- **Food Store** - affordable fruits, vegetables, milk and eggs for sale.



Chelsey & Angela prepare the Wednesday evening Food Store where we sell fruits, vegetables, milk and eggs at affordable prices.

- **CLASSIC** - clients have access to a Community Legal Assistance Services for Saskatoon Inner City law student for questions and intake.

Saturdays:

- **Fluoride Varnish Clinic** - for people 6 months to 80 years of age.
- **Immunizations** (Saskatoon Health Region, Public Health) - for children.



Arts & Science student Kaleigh talks with clients on a Wednesday evening shift.

Wednesdays & Saturdays:

- **Fitness-Food-Fun** - SWITCH is a partner to this drop-in program for chronic disease management.



Brenda shares a smile with *Fitness-Food-Fun* participants.



Brent, Matt & Sarah discuss a client's case in an interprofessional team.

- **Free Counseling** - by appointment or drop-in.
- **Needle Exchange**
Twice Monthly:
- **Children's Health Day** - drop-in pediatric services.
- **Guy Time** - free sessions for guys.
- **Dental Clinic** - free basic dental services for adults.

SWITCH extends the hours of health care availability by operating year-round shifts at Westside Clinic Wednesdays 5-9pm and Saturdays 10:30am-2:30pm. SWITCH is a non-profit registered charity whose partners are the University of Saskatchewan, Saskatoon Community Clinic and Saskatoon Health Region - Primary Health Services. SWITCH is governed by a student comprised board and raises its annual budget of approximately \$225,000 from a variety of sources.

Our Students

In one year, approximately 300 SWITCH student volunteers come from:

University of Saskatchewan in medicine, nursing, physical therapy, kinesiology, clinical psychology, pharmacy, nutrition, dentistry, public health, education and the arts and sciences.

University of Regina in social work and *SIAST* in nursing.

We are always looking to recruit students from other areas and disciplines that would both enhance our clients' wellness and our students' interprofessional experiential learning. Please contact SWITCH if you are a student who would like to volunteer in some capacity.

Our Mentors

At any one time, SWITCH works with approximately 40 different professional health care mentors. Mentors come from medicine, nursing, pediatrics, clinical psychology, social work, pharmacy, clinical herbology, Reiki, dietetics, physical therapy, occupational therapy, dentistry, dental hygiene, pediatric specialists and other disciplines from time to time. We are always looking for more mentors to enhance our wellness centre.



Louise, Cultural Support Worker, smudges students and staff at the beginning of a shift.

Our Clients

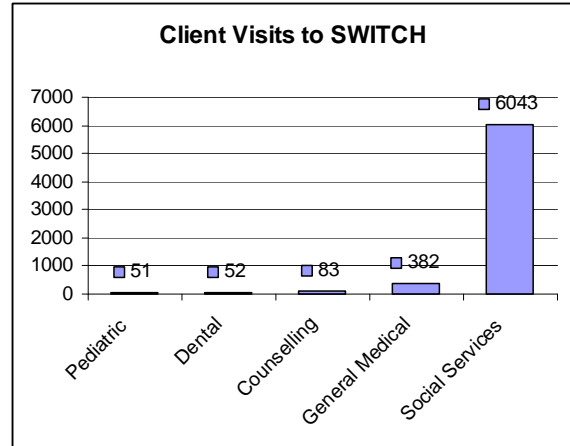
In 2006, 2008 and 2009, the Saskatoon Health Region released research information showing the significant health disparities between the lower and higher income neighborhoods of Saskatoon. SWITCH works very hard to reduce at least some of the gaps in health care service provision to the residents of our core neighborhoods. To this end, we strive to provide our clients with help to address as many of the twelve health determinants as possible:

- Income & Social Status
- Social Support Networks
- Education & Lifelong Learning
- Employment & Working Conditions
- Social Environments
- Physical Environments
- Biology & Genetic Endowment
- Personal Health Practices & Coping Skills
- Healthy Child Development
- Health Services
- Gender
- Culture

In 2008, SWITCH saw the following client visit numbers (96 shifts/year @ 3 hours/shift):

52	Dental Clients
382	General Medical Clients
83	Counselling Clients
51	Pediatric Clients
6,043	Social Service Clients
6,611	Total Client Visits
69	Average client visits per 3 hour shift

"I love coming to SWITCH! I always get back more than I give." Doreen Jacek,
Dental Mentor



SWITCH does not bill the province for clinical costs, however, if we had, we would have billed the Province of Saskatchewan the following for health care costs in 2008:

\$ 11,897.90	Billed for verifiable medical billing codes
\$ 191,273.80	Billed for social service client visits
\$203,171.70	Total client costs
\$ 30.73	Average client visit cost

Our Awards

SWITCH has won the following awards since its inception in October, 2005:

- 2005-2006 Unique Initiative Award of Merit by the Saskatchewan Physiotherapy Association Inc.
- 2007 Recognition Award by the City of Saskatoon Cultural Diversity and Race Relations Committee and Office
- June, 2007 - the Tommy Douglas Celebration of Medicare Award for Excellence in Interdisciplinary Achievement in the Area of Primary



Sheila Achilles, General Manager of Primary Health Care, Saskatoon Health Region and Pamela Vorstermans-Agar, social work student, accept the 2008 Tommy Douglas Celebration of Medicare Award.

- 2008 - Chosen as a site for The Governor General's Leadership Conference visit.
- 2008 - Pharmacy Practice & Drugstore Canada Commitment to Care & Service Award for Collaborative Team - Award & Cash Prize.
- 2008 - University of Saskatchewan College of Medicine Social Accountability Art Award & Cash Prize

Strategic Direction

SWITCH has been very successful in promoting the health of our community as well as the experiential learning of our students. Our future is unlimited but in the short term, we hope to open a third weekly shift on Monday nights that would have a women's health focus.

We hope also to recruit students from other colleges - commerce, education, music, art and others all have a place

here at SWITCH. And, of course, we're always looking for mentors from all of the various health disciplines. Please consider working with us!

Our Special Events

- *Golf Tourney* - in 2008, this event raised \$5,494. Plans are underway for the 4th annual SWITCH Golf Tournament August 28, 2009 which will see over 150 players at the Dakota Dunes Golf Course.

Tracy, Golf Tourney organizer, Emily, Pamela & Carole at the 2008 SWITCH Golf Tournament.



- *Ladies Pamper Night* - in November, 2008, almost 300 volunteers and women from our core neighborhoods spent the evening giving and getting hairdos, nails done, pictures, health advice and free gift bags.
- *SMIHILE* - SWITCH was the lead organizer for the Student Managed Interprofessional Health Initiative Leadership Event. This one day workshop held in March, 2008 in Kingston, Ontario in conjunction with the National Health Science Student Association conference saw almost 100 students and faculty from across Canada who are either involved with or developing a student managed health care initiative. Plans are underway for the 4th annual workshop in 2010.



Students from across Canada formed the SMHILE Steering Committee. Representatives are from several different student-managed health care initiatives.

- *Community Dinner & Special Events* - SWITCH volunteers cooked dinners to serve for Thanksgiving, Christmas and a Community Dinner in January. All community residents were welcome and volunteers and clients ate turkey with all the trimmings together in our clinic for these special events. Our January Community Dinner saw 150 people served.

Dr. Dyck helps prepare food to be served at SWITCH.



- *Volunteer Appreciation Night* - Where we honour those students who have participated in ten or more shifts in a calendar year.



Brenda and Emily receive their Student Volunteer Appreciation Awards for working 10 or more shifts in one year.

- *YWCA Women of Distinction Awards and Dinner* - Through a

generous donation from Cameco Corporation, SWITCH was able to send eight women from our community to the YWCA Women of Distinction Awards and Dinner. This was truly a special night for those who attended.



SWITCH mentors, students, staff and women from our community attend the 2008 YWCA Women of Distinction Awards and Dinner.

Research

SWITCH was involved in a handful of research projects carried out by students enrolled in a variety of university courses: Commerce, Community Health and Epidemiology, Medicine and Nursing. Our thanks also to those University of Saskatchewan faculty members who applied to Social Sciences and Health Research Council in 2008 for a research grant on our behalf.

How To Make A Donation Or Get Involved

As a charity, SWITCH does all its own fundraising. If you would like to contribute to this innovative health care project, please see our wish list below:

- Financial contribution.
- Food that can be served on our shifts.

- Portable dental chair.
- Beauty and bath products that can be given away at our Ladies Pamper Night.
- Prizes or cash for our Golf Tournament or items for the silent auction.

If you are a university student or health care professional who would like to participate at SWITCH, please contact us for further information.

If you are a community member who would like to volunteer your time with SWITCH, you are welcome to participate in our Program Committee and at our yearly special events. Please contact us for further information.

Our Staff

SWITCH Coordinator: Carole Courtney
 Volunteer Coordinator: Shelley Thiessen
 Cultural Support Worker: Corine Eyahpaise & Louise McKinney
 Receptionist: Donna Rothenberger
 Nutrition Supervisor: Shawn Smith
 Shift Supervisor Coordinator: Emily Alston O'Connor
 Shift Supervisors: Alixe Dick, Brent Thoma, Kaleigh Hlady, Nicole Dressler, Nikki Rewuski, Yuqi Gu, Cheryl Mitchell, Kali Nunweiler, Reid Sadoway.

"SWITCH is the essence of primary health care within our community! Volunteer students that are truly concerned about the health of this community through health assessment and treatment, food, fun, listening, and caring hearts! These are the future health leaders of tomorrow." Sheila Achilles, General Manager, Primary Health Care, Saskatoon Health Region

For more information on SWITCH, please contact us at student_clinic@yahoo.ca or (306) 956-2518. In addition to other information, a 13 minute DVD showcasing SWITCH's activities may be viewed at www.SWITCH.usask.ca. We invite you to come see what this wonderful project is all about. Come down any Wednesday evening or Saturday!



Some of the students who helped develop SWITCH in 2004.

Financial Review

SWITCH receives its funding from many different sources - the province of Saskatchewan; Saskatoon Health Region; University of Saskatchewan; Community Initiatives Fund; City of Saskatoon; various college departments, individuals, Saskatoon Community Clinic and a variety of foundations. The bulk of SWITCH expenses are for staff, food and program costs. If you would like a copy of our Financial Review, please do not hesitate to contact us.

"The University of Saskatchewan is proud to partner with SWITCH in promoting the health of our community. This student-managed health care project is a unique and innovative opportunity for our students to experience practical learning while providing a great community service". President Peter MacKinnon, University of Saskatchewan



SWITCH's Mission: To build health equity in our community and provide learning opportunities within the context of a student-managed health center that is evolving, sustainable, inter-professional and client-centered.

"SWITCH's multi-disciplinary setting provides terrific resources for our clients and a great learning opportunity for both students and mentors. I am very proud of the treatment and services we offer our clients, community, students and professionals." Helen Bzdel, Social Work Mentor

"SWITCH offers professionals and students alike the opportunity to work and learn interprofessionally which ultimately benefits our entire community." Dr. Bruce Reeder, Physician Mentor

"We are delighted to have SWITCH as a partner in providing primary health care to Saskatoon's vulnerable inner city population. SWITCH provides much needed service with compassion and creativity. It is also providing a great opportunity for exposing and attracting health science students to the rewarding challenge of care giving in the inner city." Patrick Lapointe, Administrator, Saskatoon Community Clinic

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