

FOCUS

Saskatoon
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"Your Health
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Saskatchewan Needs to Continue Mental Health Funding Enhancements

By Joanne Schenn, MSW, RSW, Director, Counselling & Community Services



Joanne Schenn, MSW, RSW

I have worked in the field of mental health counselling and/or management for much of my professional life, including for a Health District, a Health Region and now the Saskatoon Community Clinic. Change and progress is occurring rapidly in many areas of health care in general, however, attention to mental health services seems to have lagged behind until recently. Tragedies such as the La Loche shooting, an increase in suicide rates, the crisis with

substance use deaths from fentanyl and crystal meth, and the impact of trauma with the Humboldt bus crash have put the need for mental health services in the public eye. I, and my family, have been personally hit with two suicides and have experienced a range of mental illnesses over the years, as I'm sure most other families have as well. Mental illness is as common as physical illness. So why do we not have the same funding for mental health?

I highly commend the work of the Bell Let's Talk initiative, the work of the Canadian Mental Health Association and various other projects designed to help reduce the stigma of mental illness so people feel more comfortable talking about mental health and asking for help. The message appears to be getting through as our services and other mental health services such as Saskatoon Crisis Intervention Services have seen huge increases in demand.

This is all good news, except for the fact that funding for Mental Health programs has not kept up, even despite clear recommendations to the government funders in the 2001 Fyke Report and the 2014 Saskatchewan Mental Health and Addictions Report. In fact, Saskatchewan still lags behind other provinces in mental health funding even though additional funding was included in the March 20th, 2019 Provincial Budget. Wait lists abound at both at our clinics, the Regional Health Authority and at other community based organizations that work in the area of mental health and addictions. People that identify that they may have a mental illness are asking for help and we are now essentially turning them away by putting them on lengthy waitlists or referring them to private counsellors that they can't afford. The most effective mental health interventions are often initiated when motivation is high and people initially ask for help. We are missing that opportunity with so many people when they must wait for the help they are requesting. The motivation slowly disappears, people give up and some become desperate. Common depression moves toward desperation, hopelessness and thoughts of suicide. No wonder suicide rates are high.

My belief is that it is ethically and morally wrong to set people up with expectations that there is a life-line available for them and then pull it away when they finally try to grasp hold. People living with mental illness need individual attention, and that can only be achieved through providing the resources of crisis workers, counsellors, social workers,

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mental health therapists and community mental health nurses who can form therapeutic helping relationships and provide expertise to help people grab hold of that life-line.

Testing and diagnosis by psychologists has its' role, as does the diagnostics and medication provided by psychiatry. These resources are underfunded as well, but mostly we hear from patients that they need a well-trained human being to

meet with them regularly to walk with them on their journey towards mental health. It is time that Crisis Intervention work is seen an essential emergency service and funded in the same way as the police and fire services. The Province must now keep up the momentum of the March 20th budget and become a leader in mental health funding instead of a follower. We must remember that, "There is no health without mental health" (World Health Organization). ❖

Foundation Grants Help Grow a Healthy Community

By Karen Timoshuk, Member and Public Relations

At its January meeting, the Board of the Saskatoon Community Clinic Foundation approved two grants—one in support of the activities of the Community Peer Leader Program (CPLP) at our Westside Community Clinic and one for hearing screening equipment.

At Westside's Collective Kitchens, members of the CPLP offer drop-in sessions where participants pool their resources to make healthy, low cost food in bulk to take home to share with their families. Three five-session drop-in Collective Kitchens are offered in a twelve month period. The Peer Leaders also run Fitness, Food and Fun, an exercise and health education program offered three times a week at White Buffalo Youth Lodge. All cooking and food resource programs of CPLP are designed to improve cooking skills and increase knowledge of food, nutrition, health and to address food insecurity.

The OAE (optoacoustic emissions) hearing screening device will be available to SWITCH and Community Clinic staff and students to screen and identify those up to three years of age with temporary or permanent hearing loss. "This is a particularly effective screening tool for infants," adds Lyall Pacey, SWITCH Speech-Language Pathologist mentor. "Although the province is working to screen all newborns, many are missed due to scheduling, device unavailability, or place of birth (small town, home, or abroad)."

The Saskatoon Community Clinic Foundation Inc. is a registered charity that invests in new programming, equipment, therapies, research and resources that improve the quality of healthcare for Saskatoon Community Clinic members and the community. All gifts large and small are welcome and are truly appreciated by the patients who benefit from them. Your support is important and helps make us grow a healthy community. For more information on how to donate

to the Foundation, visit the Saskatoon Community Clinic's website at www.saskatooncommunityclinic.ca or call (306) 652-0300. ❖



Fitness, Food and Fun participants Della Kinequon and Karen Edwardsen (foreground).

Planned Giving Maximizing Your Charitable Donations

New to our website is guidance on how you can keep the Community Clinic and the Foundation financially viable by considering, amongst other strategies, a donation to the Foundation through your will upon death. To review the many possibilities of planned giving visit <https://www.saskatooncommunityclinic.ca/about-the-foundation/>

Managing your Blood Pressure

Submitted by Cindy Nylund RN (NP), Community Clinic Nurse Practitioner

Editor's note: Heart health, including hypertension management, is an important health concern for patients. Cindy Nylund, Nurse Practitioner, has a general practice with speciality training in this area. The information in this article is drawn from the following sources: Canadian Heart and Stroke Foundation (2018), Hypertension Canada (2018) and the American Heart Association (2017).

What is blood pressure?

Blood pressure is a measure of the force exerted against the walls of your blood vessels known as your arteries and it is measured in millimeters of mercury (mmHg). The systolic (top) number measures the force when your heart contracts and pushes out the blood. The diastolic (bottom) number is a measure of when your heart relaxes between beats.

What should your blood pressure be?

Most adults **should be < 140/90** at the doctor's office or **< 135/85 mmHg** at home

Adults > 80 years of age **< 150/90**

People with Diabetes **< 130/80**

High blood pressure (hypertension) may damage your arteries and increase your risk of heart attack, stroke, heart failure, and kidney disease. It has also been associated with erectile dysfunction and dementia. Early diagnosis and treatment of high blood pressure helps to prevent these problems. Unfortunately, people with high blood pressure often have no warning signs or symptoms and that is why it's called the "silent killer".

Blood Pressure Treatment

Lifestyle Modifications

Ideally, all adults should engage in 30-60 minutes of moderate intensity exercise 4-7 days a week. Exercise will help to lower blood pressure, decrease blood sugar, reduce stress, and improve energy levels, mood, and sleep. Try walking, biking, swimming or any other physical activity that you enjoy. Also, it's important to remain active throughout the rest of the day. Try parking further away from the door when you go shopping, stand up and walk when you talk on the phone or take the stairs instead of the elevator.



Healthy Eating

A healthy diet can decrease your blood pressure, improve cholesterol levels, reduce weight, and control blood sugar. A healthy diet consists of 7-10 servings of vegetables and fruit every day. Choose whole grains, low fat dairy products and protein choices such as lean meat, fish or chicken. Prepare meals at home and limit fast foods. Eat less salt (< 2000 mg per day) and remember that highly processed foods contain a lot of salt. Limit canned foods and pre-packaged meals or those high in salt, sugar, saturated fat, or trans fats. Reduce your intake of shortening, palm or coconut oil and lard.

Limit your alcohol intake to one or two standard drinks per day. If you carry extra weight, a loss of 5 or 10% of your body weight will help to lower your blood pressure. If you smoke, it's important to quit as it increases your risks of heart problems and other diseases.

Medications for High Blood Pressure

Many medications that lower blood pressure also help to prevent heart attacks and strokes. Medications that are used to lower blood pressure include: water pills (diuretics), beta blockers, angiotensin converting enzymes (ACE inhibitors), angiotensin receptor blockers (ARB's) and calcium channel blockers. Most people need 2 or more medications to control their blood pressure. It's important to take your medications every day as prescribed to get the most benefit and reduce your risks. You should never stop your medications before speaking to your provider and you should continue with lifestyle modifications to effectively manage your blood pressure.

Helpful Links

<https://myhealthcheckup.com>

[https://www.ccs.ca/images/Guidelines/Tools and Calculators/En/FRS_eng_2017_fnl1.pdf](https://www.ccs.ca/images/Guidelines/Tools_and_Calculators/En/FRS_eng_2017_fnl1.pdf) 

Research Projects Exploring Primary Care for Women Living with HIV in Saskatoon Core Neighbourhoods

By Kali Gartner, Community Clinic Family Physician

Medical students Veronica Hammer and McKayla Cozart both completed a Dean's Summer Research Project at Westside Clinic in the summer of 2018. The projects were funded by the University of Saskatchewan College of Medicine.

McKayla Cozart's project, "Caring for Women Living with HIV in Pregnancy: A Ten-Year Review" was a retrospective chart review of women living with HIV and receiving prenatal care at Westside Clinic.

Seventy-five infants were born from 2010-2017 to 55 women who accessed prenatal care at Westside in this time period. The Westside interdisciplinary prenatal team worked closely with community partners, including AIDS Saskatoon, Sanctum, HIV/AIDS Response Team and the Saskatoon Tribal Council. The chart review found no perinatal HIV transmissions recorded during that time period, despite high rates of unstable housing (45%), lower income and high rates of trauma, violence and substance use amongst HIV+ women.

McKayla's research identified an increasing need for primary care of women living with HIV in pregnancy. The number cared for increased each year and the women continued to face multiple barriers to optimal health outcomes. The chart review confirmed the importance of advocating to the provincial government to address the social determinants of health that lead to disproportionately high rates of HIV amongst Indigenous people in Saskatchewan, a fundamental step in reconciliation.

Saskatchewan has the highest rate of new HIV diagnosis in Canada – 15.4 per 100,000 compared to Canada's rate of 6.4 per 100,000 in 2016. Saskatchewan women of child bearing age (15-40 years) experience rates of HIV six times higher (28 per 100,000) than women living in the rest of Canada (4.9 per 100,000).

McKayla's research also found high rates of apprehension to foster care in our chart review – 25% of infants from the study went to foster care from hospital.

Veronica Hammer's project, "Primary Care for Women Living with HIV in Saskatoon: A Pilot Project Exploring Women's Views at Westside Community Clinic", invited 12 women who were HIV positive to participate in one of two focus groups to explore their experience of accessing primary care.

The women expressed satisfaction with the team-based approach at the Westside Clinic. They enjoyed the friendly staff and appreciated that their confidentiality was maintained. They identified a need for more support for women living with HIV as many struggled with disclosing their status and many felt isolated. The women also voiced the need for more public education about HIV since they continue to experience a great deal of stigma related to their HIV status.

The two projects were supervised by Kali Gartner and Westside Clinic staff provided feedback, access to health records and support for recruitment for focus groups. Della Magnusson helped McKayla with project design, Delores Young assisted Veronica with focus group facilitation and Shar-Lee Haichert helped with honoraria and childcare.

Veronica and McKayla appreciated Westside's support, and particularly thank the women, infants and families who participated in the research projects. McKayla and Veronica are hopeful that new resources such as Sanctum 1.5 can help fill current gaps. 

Upcoming Events of Interest Offered by Partners in the Community

Global Gathering Place: Contact 306.665.0268 for more information

Coffee and Conversation: Thursdays 1:00 to 4:00 pm

Saskatoon Council on Aging: Contact 306.652.2255 for more information or to register

Introduction to Spring Birding: April 23, 30, May 7 (outdoors) and May 14 (indoors) 2:00 – 4:00 pm \$40

Apple Technology Class: One-on-one on Friday afternoons, 2 classes (1.5 hours each) \$40

Saskatoon Services for Seniors: Contact 306.668.2762 or email ssfs22@sasktel.net for more information

Free Income Tax Assistance: Call or email for an appointment or more information

Participation Rate High in Information and Communications Survey

By Karen Timoshuk, Member and Public Relations

In November and December, 462 people completed the Clinic's Information and Communications Survey either on line or in person at the Downtown and Westside Clinic locations. The survey primarily helped identify the extent to which patients are aware of the Clinic's programs and services, and how patients prefer to receive information from the Clinic. Questions were also asked as to what health topics patients are interested in to better manage their own health or that of a family member. This data will be considered by all Departments in their planning in the upcoming year as part of their commitment to ongoing improvement in patient, member, and family centred care.

The surveys completed in person at the Clinics would not have been possible if not for the time of the following volunteers. For that, we say, thank you!

- Fran Forsberg
- Evelyn Linklater
- Carol Glazer
- Carol Armstrong-Monahan
- Florence Highway
- Donna Neufeldt
- Della Kinequon
- Nancy Wilkinson

Do you want to ensure your thoughts and opinions are captured in future surveys? If so, please provide us with your e-mail address by contacting Shar-Lee Haichert, Member and Public Relations Administrative Assistant, at 306-664-4265 or shaichert@communityclinic.ca.



Volunteers Evelyn Linklater (left) and Florence Highway (right) prepare to gather feedback from Westside Clinic patients.

Seniors of Tomorrow Spring Offerings

Topic: Indigenous People & Canada from the Past, Present and Future

Wednesday April 17, 2 p.m. – 4 p.m.

Facilitated by: Randy Morin, Faculty Member, Department of Indigenous Studies, U of S

Randy has many years experience teaching the Cree Language and First Nations Cultural knowledge and awareness on treaties, spiritual practices, environmental and natural knowledge as well as healing decolonization for Indigenous peoples.

Topic: Saskatoon Council on Aging Overview

Wednesday May 15th 2 p.m. – 4 p.m.

Facilitated by: Virginia Dakinewich, Fund Development & Communication Coordinator, Saskatoon Council on Aging Inc.

The Saskatoon Council on Aging (SCOA) supports older adults (55+) to stay active, engaged and informed. At this session they will be sharing who they are and what they offer. Get involved and find out how you can help.

This is a drop-in program, pre-registration not required. Sessions held at Mel Langer Building, 424 1st Avenue North. Participants must supply their own transportation. Contact Kim at (306) 664-4283 for more information.

Semi-annual Members Meeting Report

By Ingrid Larson, Member and Public Relations

The Semi-annual meeting was held January 16th, 2019. There were sixty-five members and staff in attendance. Here is a quick summary for those who weren't able to attend:

Guest presentation. Tiffany Hewson, Program Consultant, Primary Care Service Branch, Ministry of Health and Cristina Ugolini, Director, Primary Health Care, Saskatoon Urban, Saskatchewan Health Authority did a presentation on Provincial Developments in Primary Care. Copies of their power point presentations are available by contacting Hazel Javier, Board secretary.

Reports. Lisa Clatney, Executive Director and Karen Cederwall, Board member reported on activities since the AGM and invited members to provide input into the strategic planning goals through a survey distributed at the meeting. The results will be provided to the Board for consideration. Members Michael Finley and Angie Fergusson made a report and appeal on behalf of the Saskatoon Community Clinic Foundation.

Awards. Board member Karen Cederwall presented the Community Clinic volunteer award to Jacquie Christenson. Jacquie has been a volunteer with the Community Clinic Seniors programs since 2006. Board member, Patrick Lapointe presented Dr. Stephen Helliar with the C.A. 'Smokey' Robson award for Compassion, Commitment and Cooperation. The award is given to those whose actions reflect the values of the Community Clinic in a superlative way. Dr. Helliar has provided exceptional service for thirty-five years at both our Clinics and has been an active member. Congratulations to Jacquie and Dr. Helliar.

Resolutions. Members passed the following motion: That the Community Clinic Board of Directors ask the Minister of Health and the Saskatchewan Health Authority to retain patient access to urgent mental health services and beds through a continued and specifically designated Mental Health Assessment Unit. A resolution was also passed to maintain the annual service fee at the current rate.

Prizes and Door prizes. The winner of the member e-mail collection contest was announced. Congratulations to member Della Kuruluk who was in attendance to accept the prize.

Thank you to Affinity Credit Union (a sister co-operative) for use of their meeting room, the door prizes and to all those helped out with arrangements. ♦



Lisa Clatney, Executive Director with Board members Karen Cederwall and Gertie Paul.

Vaccinations for Seniors

Wednesday, April 24th
12 noon – 1 p.m.

Stay out of the hospital by protecting yourself with vaccinations!
Do you know which ones, and are you up to date?

Speaker: Dr. Darren Chew, Saskatoon Community Clinic Family Physician.

This is a 'Lunch and Learn' Event sponsored by the Seniors Advisory Council and the Counselling and Community Services Department. Session will be held at 424 1st Avenue North.

Lunch will be available at no cost and everyone is welcome to attend!

Please RSVP to lstone@communityclinic.ca or call 306 664-4282 to reserve your spot!

Bury Family Publishes Memoir

Submitted by Ingrid Larson, Member and Public Relations

The family of the late Dr. John Bury, a former Saskatoon Community Clinic physician, has published his memoir. In her afterword, Betsy Bury, describes his involvement with the Community Clinic at a time when Medicare was being introduced in the province.

She notes, “John’s memoir begins with a vivid description of his early life in England. He and his family arrived in Saskatoon in June of 1963. In his letter of acceptance for a position at the Saskatoon Community Clinic he wrote: ‘It is always stimulating to be in at the beginning of a social revolution, particularly in a country with a future.’”

As Betsy notes, “June 13, 1963 was a turning point for those of us who had been organizing and planning to operate the Community Clinic in Saskatoon. Since the Clinic had been open from July 2nd 1962, many people had become members and the atmosphere of health care was still very (tense) divided. There was still pressure from the established medical groups, so when Dr. Bury arrived, a highly qualified

family physician with sub-specialities in obstetrics, the Clinic group felt that it was becoming more able to compete with the establishment.”

As noted in the book’s description, “Dr. Bury passionately believed in health care as a right not a privilege.” He recounts many interesting stories from the frontlines. Over his career in Saskatchewan he delivered 800 babies, worked for reproductive rights, and actively promoted Pharmacare. “The challenges, joys and tribulations of this pivotal time in the creation of Medicare, that we now know and value all over Canada, are recorded in this insightful memoir of Dr. John Bury, one of its visionary pioneers.”

If you would like to purchase a copy please leave your name and contact information with Shar-Lee, Administrative Assistant at the Community Clinic, (306) 664-4265 or email member.relations@communityclinic.ca. Cost is \$20.00 per copy. 

Preserving our History

By Susan Robertson, Sociology Research Associate, University of Saskatchewan

Members of the Community Health Services (Saskatoon) Association (CHSA) agreed to a resolution at the 2018 semi-annual meeting supporting the vision of an archive of historical materials relevant to the development of the Association and the services it offers. Preserving and honouring the history of the Association is central to enabling future generations to work to sustain and expand the CHSA’s ground-breaking innovations in interdisciplinary, team-based primary health care delivery.

The Saskatoon Community Clinic Foundation and the Saskatchewan Health Research Foundation have provided grant funding to University of Saskatchewan Sociologist Liz Quinlan and myself to undertake this project. We are working closely with Betsy Bury, one of the original members of the Community Clinic and staff to complete the project.

Cataloguing of the historical materials housed at the clinic is well underway. Once finalized, the catalogue will be made available to the membership in print format, featured on the website and highlighted in the Focus newsletter. Materials from the archive will also be used to develop displays accessible to members and staff and used for presentations for staff and members of the public.

To ensure that our archive is rich and comprehensive we invite all members and staff to consider making a donation of your personal records or significant memories to the archive. Following is our guidelines for submissions. Submissions will be reviewed for possible inclusion by the team working on the project:

- Do you, or someone in your family have a significant document, article, photograph, audio/video recording or personal memory that you think should be part of the Community Health Services (Saskatoon) Association Archival Collection?

- Does the item or memory you possess represent a significant development in our collective past? What can you tell us about it? How does it contribute to the history of the Association and clinic? How did it come into your possession?

If you have materials that you would like to donate please email member.relations@communityclinic.ca with the details. The project team will discuss your submission and get back to you as to whether or not we can accept them. Ownership of any donated materials will be transferred to the Community Health Services (Saskatoon) Association Ltd. Thank you in advance for your submissions. 



Gifts to the Saskatoon Community Clinic Foundation

In Memory of:

Alice & Walter Allen from Bonnie & John Lawrence
Eugene & Don Anderson from Gracie Anderson
Bette & Roy Atkinson from their children Bob, Leta, Mike, Patricia and Wenda Atkinson
Dr. John Bury from Betsy Bury
Eleanor Davies from Aivan & Hazel Javier
Rebecca Elder from Judith Ann Martin
Albert Landry from Mary Landry
Shelley & Laurie Goff from Brent Goff, Terry Goff
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Honouring:

Dr. Helliar from Stephen Berman
Dr. Olszynski and her team from Anonymous
John Sheard, Seniors Advisory Council Volunteer from Colleen Gerwing

Thank you for your generosity. Donations from November 1st, 2018 to February 4th, 2019

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