

Support Our Health Care (SOHC)

Dedicated to the development of Princeton as a model of excellence and innovation in rural health care.

Newsletter

Autumn, 2014

SOHC Annual General Meeting

SOHC held its Annual General Meeting on Wednesday, November 5 at Riverside Community Centre. The newly installed Executive will be holding a team building workshop at their first meeting.

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PHCSC Action Plan

The Princeton Health Care Steering Committee has completed the first phase of the review of its Action Plan and will be sharing the document with the public following their next meeting in December.

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Ashcroft Partnership

Members of SOHC assisted the community of Ashcroft with their Community Consultation on Health Care, held on September 16. Their Summary Report is now available to the public.

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BC Government & Dr. Brian Day Behind Closed Doors

The court case scheduled for September, between the BC government and the Cambie Clinic, has been postponed. The two sides are now working on an out-of-court settlement.

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Love a Locum Campaign

Acting on a suggestion by Dr. Ella Monro, SOHC organized the "Love a Locum" campaign, intended to welcome locum doctors to our community. Lori Thomas is coordinating the campaign.

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Steering Committee Website Launched

The Princeton Health Care Steering Committee now has a website. Ole Juul coordinated the efforts of several SOHC members to come up with this important addition to our health care model.

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"Love living in Princeton"

Looking back over the past three years that I've been involved in Princeton's health care, I have to say that it's been a very enjoyable roller-coaster ride! I've been lucky to have the support of a large number of dedicated individuals who share my vision for an improved health care model for the people of Princeton and Area.

Part of this stimulating ride involves fielding the variety of comments that concerned and interested residents have shared with SOHC and the Princeton Health Care Steering Committee. They include a wide range of content, from constructive criticism to misinformed complaint. Often the complaints are heard the loudest and become the focus of our attention. So it is, that when I recently read a positive message about our

health care system, I felt that I needed to share it with everyone, as follows:

"I just want to say how much I love living in Princeton..... for many reasons and would like to let everyone know what a very great deal of HELP I received yesterday. I was able to get a quick appointment with Dr. Ahmeed at Cascade clinic, get a cheap ride (up and back) to the clinic in a warm comfortable bus driven by a wonderful driver Debbie.

I was helped by ALL the staff at the clinic, lab and x ray unit and treated with great respect and kindness. I want to send them a BIG THANK YOU.

Princeton is the most friendly place I have ever lived in.

Also big thanks to Neil Ashley for his help.

WE ARE LUCKY TO LIVE HERE!!"

Sue Woodage (Posted on the Princeton and Area Issues page on Facebook, November 21, 2014)

Thank you, Sue, for taking the time to recognize and thank the people in our community who are dedicated to serving your health care needs. We are indeed lucky to live in a community with respectful and kind people providing these important services.

And thank you to everyone who has taken the time to provide comments, congratulatory or critical, that motivate us to improve health care for the people of Princeton and Area. It certainly helps make for an enjoyable and rewarding ride.

All the best,
Ed Staples, SOHC President



www.sohc.ca

AGM 2014

SOHC Annual General Meeting

The Support Our Health Care Society held its Annual General Meeting on November 5 at Riverside Community Centre. Members present accepted the minutes from the last AGM, the financial report, and amendments to the Constitution.

Brad Hope presided over the election of officers, resulting in the new Executive being voted in by acclamation, as follows:

President - Ed Staples

Vice President - Ole Juul

Secretary - Nienke Klaver

Treasurer - June Hope

Directors - Spencer Coyne,

William Day, Judy Short, and

Lynn Wells.

Ed Staples presented the Year in Review followed by a list of suggested priorities for the coming year.

Complete copies of each of the above reports are available on the SOHC website at www.sohc.ca.



PHCSC Completes Final Draft of Action Plan

At the November meeting of the Princeton Health Care Steering Committee, members completed the final draft of their new Action Plan. Based on a review of their first year mandate and a look at future priorities, the new document will provide a roadmap for the Committee to follow as they continue their task of improving Princeton's model of health care. The Action Plan will be ratified at the December meeting and then shared with the public.

The November meeting was the first to be attended by newly elected Area H Regional Director, Bob Coyne, who replaces outgoing Director, Brad Hope, as the RDOS representative on the Steering Committee. SOHC welcomes Bob and wishes him well in his future involvement.

Brad Hope's involvement in the Steering Committee has been outstanding. SOHC members recognize his support and tireless efforts to improve health care service for the people of Area H and the Town of Princeton. Thank you, Brad.



Ashcroft Community Consultation

On September 18, the Town of Ashcroft held a Community Consultation on Health Care at the Ashcroft Seniors Centre. The event was the culmination of several months of planning that involved the Wellness and Health Action Coalition (WHAC) of Ashcroft, Dr. Barb Pesut and a team of research assistants from UBC Okanagan, Interior Health, and SOHC members.

The Ashcroft group followed the model used by SOHC in the Princeton and Area Community Consultation held in January of 2013, where community stakeholders were invited to present their perceptions on the health care successes and challenges within the community.

Approximately 35 Ashcroft stakeholders attended the consultation, giving their views on the state of health care in their community. As rural and remote communities, Ashcroft and Princeton share many similar concerns, but it became apparent that we each have unique issues that require "made at home" solutions.

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The information collected at the consultation was gathered by Dr. Pesut who with assistance from Ed Staples and Nienke Klaver wrote a Summary Report that was recently shared with the public (see www.sohc.ca for full report).



Dr. Pesut, in discussion following the Ashcroft consultation, praised WHAC and SOHC for their ground-breaking partnership and encouraged each organization to expand the community consultation model to include other rural and remote communities in BC that face similar health care challenges.

Other communities have been identified, including Lilloet, Clearwater, East Shore Kootenay Lake. SOHC is excited to be a part of this ongoing movement and is hopeful that this model will result in ongoing improvement for people facing health care challenges in rural BC.



Dr. Day versus BC Government

On August 26th, the BC Supreme Court granted a 6 month delay in the trial to hear Dr. Brian Day's challenge to Canadian Medicare. Originally scheduled to be heard on September 7, the decision to postpone the trial came at the request of Dr. Day and the Cambie Clinic. The two sides have now moved behind closed doors in an effort to negotiate a settlement.

The reasons for Dr. Day's decision are open to speculation. On one hand, it might be that Day is considering abandoning his lawsuit due to growing pressure from the public who see his actions as a clear violation of health care law. The second possibility is that this is the latest in a long line of delaying tactics, that he does not actually intend to seek an out of court resolution, and is buying time with the hope that public pressure will subside.

What is clear is that Dr. Day continues to unlawfully bill patients for procedures that are covered by BC Public Health Care. Based on a BC government audit, this could mean an additional \$3 million dollars for Day's specialist referral clinics over the next 6 months.

SOHC supports the position of the BC Health Coalition, demanding that Dr. Day immediately stop charging patients for services that are covered by the BC Medical Services Plan. Although the ongoing negotiations are private, concerned citizens can insist that our government representatives uphold the law and negotiate in the best interest of the citizens of this province.



Love a Locum

*This past month, Support Our Health Care in conjunction with the Princeton Health Care Steering Committee, organized a **Love a Locum** campaign designed to welcome visiting locums to our community. We are indebted to Drs. Black, Monro, and Sandhu for their work in recruiting locums to fill the gap in services resulting from our present doctor shortage. We also acknowledge the support of Interior Health for providing a furnished apartment and a house as an incentive to attract locums and make their stay as pleasant as possible.*

Many locums welcome the opportunity to practice in a variety of communities as a way to find a place that they like. We hope that we can leave a positive impression on our visiting locums and they will keep Princeton in mind when they're ready to set up a permanent practice in BC.

*If you're interested in being a part of the **Love a Locum** campaign, you can help by providing such things as home cooked meals, canning, gift certificates, lessons by skilled people (fly fishing, horseback riding, cross country skiing, etc.).*

Please phone Lori Thomas at the Chamber of Commerce (250-295-3103) if you'd like to make a contribution.



Princeton Health Care Launches Website

On November 18, the Princeton Health Care Steering Committee launched their new website. The project is the result of many hours of work by Ole Juul (SOHC Vice President) who was contracted to construct the site.

Ed Staples (SOHC President) and Nienke Klaver (SOHC Secretary) contributed information and photographs for the site and Ole provided design and construction expertise.

*One of the purposes of this website is to provide accurate and complete information on jobs and careers at **Princeton General Hospital** and **Cascade Medical Clinic**. It will also provide up to date information on the work of the PHCSC and a convenient way for Princeton and Area residents to provide their comments and suggestions on health care issues that affect our community.*

Please visit the website at www.princetonhealth.ca



Breaking News - Connect Hearing of Penticton will be holding a hearing clinic in Princeton in December.

SOHC has just received word from Mike Whitney, audiologist with *Connect Hearing* in Penticton, that they will be setting up a hearing clinic in Princeton in January. Acting on a suggestion by SOHC member Diane Sterne, Ed Staples contacted *Connect Hearing* to determine the feasibility of the idea. The hearing clinic will be on a trial basis and will offer hearing consultations and follow-up appointments for Princeton and Area residents.

Lynn Pelly will be coordinating the clinic through Princeton Community Services.

More information will be shared with the community once final arrangements are made.

Membership!!!

SOHC Membership Renewal

Membership in Support Our Health Care (SOHC) provides support for the ongoing work of the Society. Annual dues are \$2.00 and can be paid at the office of the *Similkameen News Leader*, the *Similkameen Spotlight*, or at *The Source*.

Your ongoing support is appreciated as we work together to improve the model of health care for our community.