

Support Our Health Care (SOHC)

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



Newsletter



December, 2017

Finding New Recruits

To address chronic shortages in health care professionals, rural BC communities need to recruit. The challenges are great, but SOHC is committed.

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Highlights of 2017

SOHC had a busy year. Highlights included various presentations, involvement in research projects, and the formation of the BC Rural Health Network.

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Pain Management Workshop

The second in a series of workshops was held at Riverside on Wednesday, March 8. Participants in the workshop received information on what pain is and how to manage it.

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Princeton Health Directory

The first edition of the Princeton Health Directory will be made available to the public early in 2018.

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SOHC AGM

AGM 2018 will be held on January 24, 2018 at 7:00 pm at Riverside Community Centre.

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Health Care Links

A selection of links to the websites of various healthcare organizations where you can find articles covering a range of healthcare topics.

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BC Health Coalition 2017 Conference

Bill Day, Nienke Klaver, and Edward Staples represented SOHC at the BCHC Conference held in Vancouver, October 27 & 28.

Art for Health

Two new art works are installed at PGH.

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Stability

Over the past year, our community has seen many improvements that have contributed to our health care stability. Central to this stability is an excellent team of health care professionals, competent support staff, improved equipment and facilities, and expansion of services through our Visiting Specialists and Community Paramedicine programs. Considering where we were five years ago, we've come a long way.

Some might question, therefore, why SOHC remains active. Haven't we done enough? Certainly there have been days when I feel like it's time to spend more time on other things and with our present stability it's tempting to sit back and enjoy our present situation. But when I see

other rural BC communities going through the same struggle we've been through, I realize there's still work to be done. And to be honest, I kind of like what I'm doing. Knowing that there's still work to be done gets me out of bed in the morning.

The danger that comes with stability is complacency. I believe that true stability will only be achieved through constant effort to maintain and improve our present services. SOHC continues to work in partnership with other organizations that share our vision of an improved model of healthcare for rural British Columbians. We believe that this work is critically important to the stability that all British Columbians desire.

SOHC will be holding its Annual General Meeting on January 24,

2018, where we'll be electing our new Board of Directors and outlining our goals for the coming year. I encourage you to attend and become actively involved in our effort to achieve ongoing healthcare stability in our community.

As we approach the last days of 2017, I'd like to thank all our valued supporters and wish you a Very Merry Christmas and a Happy and Healthy New Year.

Edward Staples, President



www.sohc.ca

Finding new recruits for Princeton's healthcare team

We are fortunate in Princeton that our doctor demographic is favourable. Unlike the BC average, our doctors are nowhere close to retirement and hopefully plan to stay in Princeton for many years to come. The story elsewhere is very different.

According to the Canadian Medical Association and the BC College of Physicians and Surgeons there are about 12,000 physicians licensed to practice in our province. Of those, about 40% are at or near the average age that doctors retire, at 65.1 years. And to exacerbate things, a study in the Canadian Medical Association Journal (December 11, 2017) shows that 40 per cent of doctors reduce their workload at least 10 per cent in the three years before they retire. The study hypothesizes that rural doctors may retire earlier because of burnout or because of lower cost of living but regardless, "early retirement in these communities is of particular concern, given that many rural areas are known to have substantial difficulties recruiting and retaining physicians," says the team of authors from the University of B.C., Simon Fraser University and the Vancouver Coastal Health Research Institute.

At the present time HealthMatch BC shows there are 759 openings for doctors across BC. The result is that about 15 % of BC residents don't have, or can't find, a primary care doctor (Canadian Institute of Health Information, December 2017).

Dr. Trina Larsen Soles, president of Doctors of BC, thinks rural doctors in under-serviced areas become exhausted because they frequently

have to work nights and weekends on call. However, she believes that the government is "sincere" about establishing team-based practices utilizing allied health professionals like nurse practitioners and social workers and this approach may address the chronic shortage of rural doctors.

To bring this closer to home, we are fortunate that our team of primary care providers - doctors, nurse practitioners, nurses, social workers, counsellors, lab technicians - are on the leading edge of providing a team-based, patient-centred model of primary care in our community. However, we must recognize that we are still far from our goal of attaching everyone in our community to a family physician or nurse practitioner.

To address the shortage of primary health care providers in Princeton, SOHC has collaborated with our local practitioners in the development of promotional materials that includes a set of display banners, a promotional booklet, and postcards that show the natural beauty of our area.

SOHC Executive members Nienke Klaver and Edward Staples attended three events in 2017 in an effort to recruit doctors for our community. The first was at the Rural Locum Conference in Nanaimo in February where Dr Ella Monro gave a presentation on the resiliency of our health care team over the past few years. The second was at the Princeton Healthy Living Fair in April. And the third was at the UBC Job Fair in Vancouver in June.



At the Nanaimo Rural Locum Conference, from left to right, Dr Ella Monro, Princeton GP; Dr Avery Granger, Past President of Canadian Medical Association and Executive Director of the Rural Coordination Centre of BC; Nienke Klaver, SOHC Secretary; and Edward Staples, SOHC President.

Although our efforts have yet to get us a new doctor, we have been successful in recruiting new locums, who are important members of our team. We realize that we are competing with dozens of other rural communities for a limited resource. But we are undeterred. We will continue in our efforts to promote our community and recruit new members to the excellent team of healthcare professionals that serve Princeton.

Our next recruitment effort will be at the Rural Health Conference in Nanaimo on May 10, 11, and 12, 2018.

Highlights of 2017



April 26 - SOHC attended a full day meeting where Kathy Rush (UBC Okanagan) and Betty Brown (Interior Health) led discussions on research conducted on 'The Entrepreneurial Activities of Citizen-led Coalitions'. In August, 2016, the research team traveled to seven communities to collect information from various representatives of participating local citizen-led health service organizations. SOHC was one of the organizations consulted.

Grassroots organizations from other Interior Health communities also attended the meeting. One of the outcomes of the meeting was a suggestion presented by SOHC and the Wellness and Health Action Coalition in Ashcroft to the various health advocacy organizations to form a rural health network. (see *BC Rural Health Network* below)

Presentation to Old Age Pensioners Organization

May 25 - Ed Staples and Nienke Klaver made a presentation at the regional meeting of the Old Age Pensioners Organization. At the SOHC Annual General Meeting in January, Chris Goodfellow, OAPO President, made a generous donation to SOHC in support of our activities.



Chris Goodfellow (on right) presents cheque to SOHC President, Ed Staples.

Merritt Community Consultation



June 15 - With advice and assistance from SOHC, members of the Merritt City Council organized a Community Consultation to gather information on the community's healthcare successes and challenges.

Using the focus group model that was employed previously in Princeton and Ashcroft, community representatives shared their experiences with the healthcare system. The information gathered was shared with the community in a Summary Report.

South Okanagan Similkameen Rural Corridor Community Coalition

SOHC continues its involvement in the SOS Rural Corridor Community Coalition. Formed in October, 2015, the coalition focuses on building a strong community collaborative to provide an improved and sustainable model of healthcare for residents in the South Okanagan Similkameen.

BC Rural Health Network



September 11 - Representatives from the communities of Ashcroft, Nelson, Sicamous, Sorrento, South Shuswap, North Shuswap, Trail, and Princeton held a teleconference meeting to discuss the formation of a rural health network comprising healthcare advocacy organizations working to improve service delivery in their communities.

A committee was formed that prepared an organizational proposal to be presented to the community representatives. At a second meeting on November 17, the proposal was accepted with some amendments. Community representatives agreed to present the proposal to their organizations and indicate their involvement by the end of the month.

On December 1, the BC Rural Health Network was launched with the communities of Ashcroft, Nelson, Princeton, South Shuswap and Trail agreeing to participate. Other communities in BC have expressed an interest in joining the Network and will be invited to participate in the New Year.



Pain Management Workshop

On Wednesday, March 8, 2017, SOHC presented a pain management workshop held at Riverside Community Centre. Panelists included Jamie Ignacio - PainBC, Emma Kim - Keremeos pharmacist, Dr. Peter Entwistle - Oliver General Practitioner, and Kieth Olsen - University of Victoria pain self management program.

The workshop began with a short video entitled Understanding Pain in Less Than Five Minutes, followed presentations by each of the panelists. Participants then had an opportunity to ask questions.

The workshop was the second in a series presenting information to the public on a variety of healthcare topics. This series has been organized in response to the Community Consultation held in February, where participants indicated a need for information on healthcare topics and services available in our community.

The third workshop will be on Nutrition and is planned for the spring.



Princeton Health Directory

One of the areas for development identified in the February 2016 Community Consultation on Healthcare was the need for information on health care services currently available to Princeton and Area residents.

Although participants in the Consultation were pleasantly surprised at the number and range of health services offered in our community, there was agreement that a directory would be a helpful tool to help residents access these services.

With that in mind, SOHC decided to produce a health directory. Lynn Wells, SOHC Director, volunteered to gather the information that would include addresses and telephone numbers of healthcare services, both local and provincial.

SOHC is pleased to announce that the Princeton Health Directory will be made available to the public early in the New Year.

SOHC would like to thank the Princeton Rotary Club for their generous donation that paid for the graphic design and printing of the Directory.



ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING

SOHC Annual General Meeting

The Annual General Meeting of the Support Our Health Care (SOHC) Society of Princeton will be held on Wednesday, January 24, 2018 beginning at 7:00 pm at Riverside Community Centre. The agenda will include a report on activities in 2017, a financial report, presentation of priorities for the coming year, and election of officers and directors.

Please plan to attend. Your support is important to the success of our society.

Health Care Links

Canadian Doctors for Medicare
www.canadiandoctorsformedicare.ca

Canadian Health Coalition
www.healthcoalition.ca

BC Health Coalition
www.bchealthcoalition.ca

Support Our Health Care (SOHC) Society of Princeton
www.sohc.ca

Better Health Together -
informative articles on digital health/telehealth
<https://www.betterhealthtogether.ca>

2017 Conference

SOHC well represented at BC Health Coalition Conference

On October 27th and 28th, 2017, health care advocates, labour leaders, health care providers, and community members came together at the Jewish Community Centre in Vancouver, BC to meet, learn, and strategize around strengthening public health care in BC.

The 2017 Conference was the BC Health Coalition's largest ever regional gathering. The conference was highly successful in bringing together health justice activists across the province, sharing information, building skills, and collectively advancing strategic campaigns.

There were 120 attendees who came from all across the province. Bill Day, SOHC Vice President, was one of the conference volunteers, assisting participants with registration and facilitating workshops.

Some key highlights:

- Jenny Morgan and Elder Roberta Price discussed empowering Indigenous women and families in health services and healing.

- Twelve workshops were held. Topics included national pharmacare, coalition-building, culturally competent care, poverty reduction, and seniors issues.

- There was a panel discussion on primary health care reform. Panelists were Colleen Fuller, Dr. Margaret McGregor, Edward Staples, Ania Shen, and Kerrie Watt. The discussion was facilitated by Marcy Cohen.

- Nienke Klaver, SOHC Secretary, and Edward Staples, SOHC President, gave a workshop on how to organize a Community Consultation on Healthcare.

- Chief Robert Chamberlin called on us to engage in societal change in addition to political change in the fight for decolonization in society and our health care system.

- BC Health Minister Adrian Dix joined us to share insights into his priorities as health minister.

The conference concluded with the BC Health Coalition Annual General Meeting where SOHC President, Edward Staples was elected to serve a second term on the BCHC Steering Committee.

Art for Health

The Art for Health project aims to provide a more welcoming and healing space for patients in our community's health care buildings. In 2017, two art works were installed at Princeton General Hospital. The first is a mural by Princeton artist, Merrilyn Huycke that was placed in the entry lobby at the hospital. The work depicts a small town street scene demonstrating a variety of outdoor summer activities (see photo below).



The second is a ceramic tile mural by Edward Staples located at the Nurses Station in the hospital. Entitled "Emerge", the work depicts an iconic Princeton scene of the tunnel on the KVR close to town (see photo below).



A resident in our long term care facility likes to eat his lunch in front of the mural at the Nurses Station at PGH.