

Lanark Renfrew Health & Community Services

2016-2017

Annual Report

Blueberry Mountain, one of the Seven Wonders of Lanark County.

Courtesy of Jean Clifford



Back Row: Nic Maennling (Board Chair), Tracy Zander, Bill Janes, Tom Baumgartner (Vice Chair), Joey Trimm (*), Stephen Bird (Treasurer), Robert Fletcher, Warren McMeekin, John Jordan (Executive Director)
Front Row: Wayne Church (*), Diane McGee, Jean Knowles, Jean Dunning, Andrea Bret (*), Noreene Adam, Melanie Mills, Fay Bennett (*)
(*) Applicants on the slate for election

On May 24, 2017, 55 Lanark Renfrew Health & Community Services Staff, Board and Community Members came together at Calabogie Peaks Resort to celebrate some of the successes we have realized as our current 5-year strategic plan comes to a close, and to lay the groundwork for setting our priorities for the coming years.

This gathering provided a tangible and powerful reminder of the great things that can be accomplished when a group of thoughtful, dedicated, skilled and determined people are aligned behind a common vision, mission and set of beliefs.

Every Part of this integrated Organization - Lanark Community Programs, North Lanark Community Health Centre and Whitewater Bromley Community Health Centre – plays a vital role in supporting individuals and communities across Lanark and Renfrew Counties, to achieve and maintain their best possible health and social well-being.

It has been my honour to serve on the Board of Lanark Renfrew Health & Community Services for the past 6 years, most recently as Board Chair, and to be part of the evolution of this great organization.

Keep in mind as you read the stories in this Annual Report, that they serve as a starting point for the challenges we have faced and the successes we have enjoyed these past 5 years, but only provide a glimpse at the depth, breadth and scope of the work of LRHCS. As always, the work keeps on coming, and I have deep faith that the staff, volunteers and new members of the Board will have their own share of successes if we remain united in our purpose.

Nic Maennling, Chair, Board of Directors

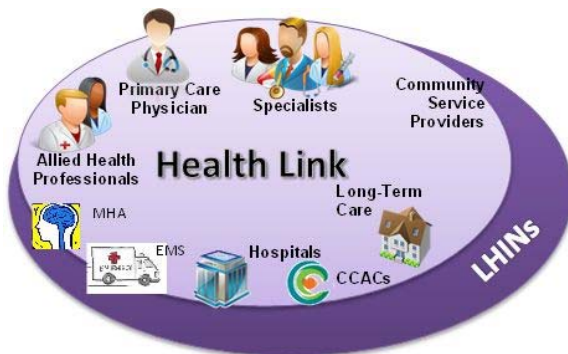
We can't avoid the radical and transformative changes (some positive and others frightening) that have been happening around the world, across the country and in our communities. ...but we can respond to some of them, and indeed, help shape them. The Staff, Board and Volunteers of Lanark Renfrew Health & Community Services have always embraced change and at times driven change....this is what our vision and mission call upon us to do. This past year has been no different. We have achieved important successes, faced daily challenges and dealt with our share of disappointments – in both our personal and professional lives. The shared commitment of our Board, staff, and community members to affect positive change in our communities is the backbone of our Organization. It is what allows us to continue to face the demands placed upon us and to provide excellence in meeting health and community needs.



From the Desk of the Executive Director . . .

In the Province of Ontario, the recent passing of Bill 41, the Patients First Act, exemplifies the way the government, through the Ministry of Health, is hoping to improve the health and social well-being of our communities through system- and service-level transformative change. The need to provide people with the education and tools to maintain good health is now recognized as a good investment and the answer to keeping our health system sustainable. Health Links were developed to fundamentally change the way individual organizations, service providers and practitioners provide health care services to people with demanding and complex health conditions - requiring that they focus first on the person by asking them a simple question “ What do you need? “ – and then coordinating care to make the system better for the ‘patient/person’. “Health Equity” is now on the agenda in all health and social service organizations and among our funders...and challenges us to address the reasons that cause some individuals and communities (in particular indigenous, racialized and francophone communities, rural communities and women - with intersecting factors of ability/disability, immigration status and sexual orientation) to have differing levels of (and access to) care, varying baskets of service and different health outcomes.

This coming year, we have our work cut out for us. We will continue to use a “health equity lens” in our work with community members and partners to advocate for oral health services, protect our rural schools, improve the availability of transportation, increase access to family relief/respite care, ensure services are available for those suffering from mental health illnesses or addictions and provide care for the rising number of people suffering from autism, asthma/COPD, dementia and those in need of palliative care services ...among others. We will also be using the results from our Be-Well Survey and the Vital Signs Project to inform our strategic objectives and direct our work and efforts to continue to demonstrate, communicate and advocate for a comprehensive approach, to the health and well-being of the communities we serve.



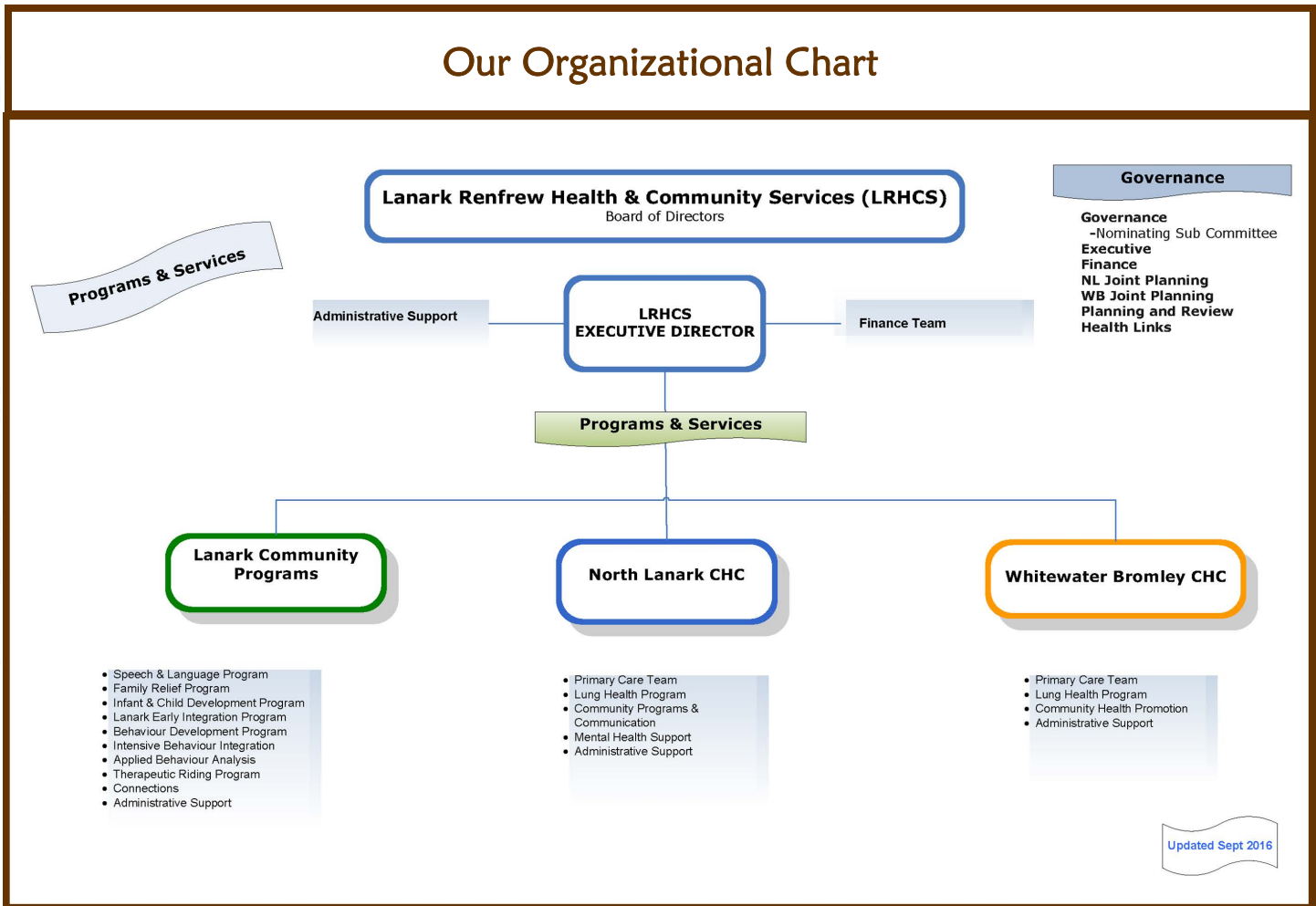
John Jordan, Executive Director

Lanark Renfrew Health & Community Services (LRHCS) oversees the provision of a wide range of health and social services across Lanark and Renfrew Counties, with service-delivery extending into the United Counties of Leeds and Grenville for some programs/services.

LRHCS is an umbrella organization with one governing Board of Directors and one Executive Director. The North Lanark Community Health Centre serves as the corporate home of the Organization, but Senior Leadership responsibilities are shared across the Parts to ensure the delivery of LRHCS programs and services meet funder accountability agreements, comply with legislation, follow business best practice guidelines and Canadian Centre for Accreditation (CCA) standards, and protect the assets and reputation of LRHCS. The Senior Leadership Team guides the work of the Organization in achieving its strategic and operational priorities in the areas of accessibility, accreditation, data systems, financial management, health & safety, human resources, information technology, operational planning, policy development, privacy, property management and quality improvement among others.

While legally created under the name of the North Lanark County Community Health Centre in 1992, and later as Lanark Health and Community Services (2003), some of the Parts that make up our Organization pre-date this by several years. Over time, new programs and services have been created, integrated and re-configured.. In 2013, alongside the governance integration with the Whitewater Bromley Community Health Centre Advisory Board, an Organization-wide consultation and contest was held to find a name that better suited the integrated Organization – resulting in our corporate name change to “Lanark Renfrew Health & Community Services” (LRHCS).

Our Organizational Chart



LRHCS Consolidated Statement

Revenues

Revenue from government contributions	10,421,667
Amortization of deferred revenue	244,062
Other Revenues	618,810
Program Fees	1,496,681
Fundraising and donations	184,508
Total Revenues	12,965,728

Expenses

Advertising and recruitment	7,228
Amortization	272,923
Computer, medical, resource material	204,648
Insurance	51,875
Meetings, memberships & publications	49,471
Non-recurring expenditures	73,974
Office supplies, postage, courier	105,810
Professional fees	37,912
Programs and project funding	562,104
Rent and accommodations	354,043
Repairs and maintenance	246,813
Salaries and benefits	9,842,904
Telephone	136,796
Travel, training and transportation	308,719
Total Expenses	12,578,749

Increase in reserves (Note 1)	386,979
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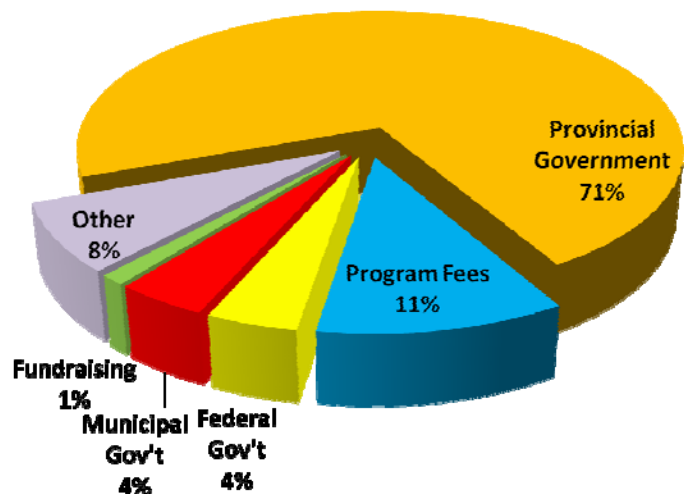
Family Relief Client Funds (Note 2)

Client Funding	3,929,540
Client Services and Expenses	3,929,540

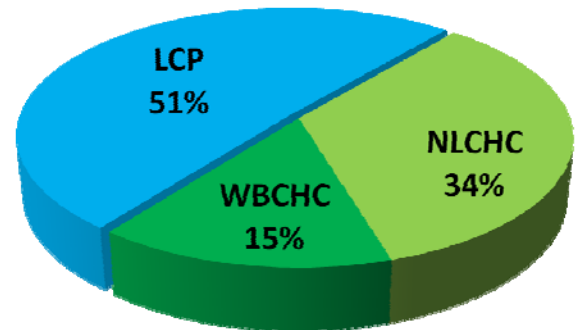
Notes:

1. This year the operations of the organization generated a surplus in revenues over expenditures equivalent to 3% of total revenues. This surplus will be added to the organization's reserves.
2. Family Relief manages individualized client funding on behalf of the client. These funds are tracked separately on an individual basis and are not part of LRHCS finances.

Revenues



Expenditures



What are reserves and why are they important:

Reserves are essentially the accumulation of unrestricted surpluses and thus available for use at the discretion of an organization's board.

The presence of a reserve increases an organization's ability to take risks and to absorb or respond to temporary changes in its environment.

(source: <http://www.nonprofitaccountingbasics.org>)



Lanark Community Programs (LCP) is the “The Little Agency That Could.” We began in 1979 with two programs, a staff of five and a budget of \$70,000.00. Today we have nine programs, a staff of over 65 regular employees and over 400 contract workers. We are assisted by 170 registered volunteers as well as many special event and occasional volunteers. Our funding

sources include the Ontario Ministries of Children & Youth, Community & Social Services, Education, and Health. We also receive funding from the Public Health Agency of Canada and the County of Lanark as well as from various fundraising ventures. In total last year these sources gave us over ten million dollars in funding (which includes almost four million dollars in Family Relief individualized client funding).

Our main office is at 30 Bennett Street, Carleton Place. It is an eighteen thousand square foot building and we’re currently in our sixth year at this location. We also operate five Respite Homes throughout Lanark County and rent satellite offices in Smith Falls and Brockville.

Our nine programs are as follows: Infant and Child Development, Connections, Language Development, Behaviour Development, Autism - Intensive Behaviour Intervention (IBI), Autism -Applied Behaviour Analysis (ABA), Lanark Early Integration, Family Relief, and Therapeutic Riding.

All services are available in the client’s home and/or community environments and stress the empowerment of clients, parents and other natural mediators. We serve Lanark County and some programs serve clients in Leeds and Grenville Counties as well. Full descriptions of each program are available on our website (www.lcp-home.com).

Of special note is the incredible contribution our staff make towards community development work in the community. Our staff members are active on many different associations, networks and Boards (37 of them!), some of which we were founding members.

We are proud to be part of Lanark Renfrew Health & Community Services. As we celebrate 16 years of our coming together, we concur with our last Accreditation Review which urged us to ‘go on the road’ as a uniquely successful model of health and community services working under one governing body serving a vast rural community.





Established in 1992, the North Lanark Community Health Centre (NLCHC) in Lanark Village is the source of primary health care and health promotion programs for thousands of people in north Lanark. Many of our services and programs reach people across Lanark County. NLCHC also serves as the governance and administrative hub for our umbrella organization, Lanark Renfrew Health & Community Services (LRHCS).

Poverty, geographic isolation and other forms of exclusion can lead to an increased risk of acute and chronic illness or disease – in individuals, families and communities. All of the programs and services offered by the NLCHC help to reduce those barriers- and we actively strive to improve the health and well-being of the members of our community by addressing the challenges they encounter. Starting with the warm welcome you'll receive from our front office administrative staff.

Our multidisciplinary health team provides care across the life span – from pregnancy to the provision of palliative care. All our primary care and allied health staff - Doctors, Nurse Practitioners, Nurses, Social Workers, Counselor, Dietitian, Health Promoters, Community Health Workers, Chiropodist and Respiratory Therapists - work together to address the specific health and social well-being needs of people in our community.

Our health promotion programs reduce barriers in accessing to programs and services for our rural residents and help people learn new skills so they can achieve their own health and wellness goals. All our programs are free and all members of the community are welcome! Our programs include exercise classes for older adults and seniors, yoga for people recovering from injury or illness, falls prevention programs, cooking groups for men and budget-conscious families, information, support and skills training for people with chronic health conditions, mindfulness based stress reduction programs, managing powerful emotions and physical activity programs for children and families, to name just a few.

A unique program offered by the NLCHC is the Mental Health Support Project (MHSP) - a membership driven peer-support program for individuals in Lanark County who struggle with mental health concerns. MHSP started in 1999 as a sponsored agency of the North Lanark Community Health Centre. It is founded on the belief that individuals can and do recover from mental illness and can self-determine their own recovery process. Weekly peer support groups help reduce the isolation from living in a rural area and the negative impact of stigma related to mental illness itself. They also encourage ongoing group dialogue about various issues related to mental illness and wellness. They provide a safe place where people can develop an increased sense of hope, self-awareness, insight and empathy for others. Social and recreational activities help build supportive friendships among individuals who have both unique and shared experiences in relation to mental illness and wellness.

We work in partnership with many other community agencies such as the North Lanark and Rideau-Tay Health Links, Lanark Leeds and Grenville District Health Unit, Lanark County Mental Health, Lanark Leeds Grenville Addictions and Mental Health, The Table Community Food Centre, Township of Lanark Highlands, and Maple Grove School among many others. This year we were particularly involved in advocating against the proposed closure of both the Scotiabank Branch and Maple Grove Public School in Lanark Village. While we succeeded with one (Maple Grove School) and got concessions with the other (the Scotiabank branch closed but an Automated Banking Machine was retained), we will continue to work with our community partners to advocate on behalf of the citizens of north Lanark County to ensure they have equitable access to the conditions that lead to their health and well-being.



Since its establishment in 2000 as an Under-Served area Nurse Practitioner program and then receiving Community Health Centre funding in 2005, the Whitewater Bromley Community Health Centre has grown to support the community it serves. Our multidisciplinary health team provides primary care and health promotion across the life span- from newborns and new parents to seniors with multiple persistent health conditions. We offer primary health care and health promotion programs for thousands of residents of the Whitewater Bromley/Admaston Townships and surrounding areas at both our Beachburg and Cobden sites.

All our primary care and allied health staff-family doctors, nurse practitioners, nurses, respiratory therapist, social worker, health promoter, chronic disease nurse and administration staff work as a

team to address the health needs of people in our community.

Our health promotion programs, like the ones listed below, are geared towards promoting health and supporting people to achieve their health and wellness goals and are lead by dedicated staff and volunteers who strive for excellence. The team strives to offer programs at both the Beachburg and Cobden site.

- ✧ **Fit, Fun & Fully Alive! Group Fitness Classes for Older Adults**
- ✧ **Falls Prevention Classes**
- ✧ **Get W.I.T.H. [Walking in the Halls] It!**
- ✧ **Nordic (Pole) Walking**
- ✧ **Chef's Corner**
- ✧ **Chronic Pain Self-Management**
- ✧ **Living a Healthy Life with Chronic Disease**
- ✧ **Smoking Cessation**
- ✧ **Weight Management**
- ✧ **Health Talks**
- ✧ **Opeongo Teen Clinic**
- ✧ **Memory Clinic**

Our Cobden site also offers independent access to our associate partners. Dr. Steve Olsen provides chiropractic treatment of musculoskeletal conditions. Dr. Olsen treats many patients with sports injury, muscular injury and extremity joint concerns. Diane and Patrick McHugh are certified Sivananda Yoga Instructors who emphasize proper breathing and postures to increase strength, flexibility, concentration and resilience. Shirley Hill (Registered Nurse) offers advanced foot care services including diabetic foot care. Julie Keon offers a 5-week death preparation course for adults at all stages of life. This course covers practical and emotional aspects of death and dying and supports participants to attend to details and relationships before one dies.

The Whitewater Bromley CHC team is excited to continue to build partnerships, to expand our volunteer base, and to increase our capacity to provide programs and services to the community. Participation on many networks and coalitions helps us stay current and assists us in finding new ways to provide the highest quality of service to all members of our community.



Lanark Renfrew Health & Community Services

BOARD OF DIRECTORS

IS PROUD TO HONOUR THE FOLLOWING STAFF



YEARS OF DEDICATION AND INCREDIBLE INTERDISCIPLINARY TEAM WORK

25

Angele Blaskie



YEARS OF DEDICATION AND INCREDIBLE INTERDISCIPLINARY TEAM WORK

20

Joane Morin
Leigh Gibson



YEARS OF DEDICATION AND INCREDIBLE INTERDISCIPLINARY TEAM WORK

15

Brenda Ferguson

Leigh Wahay

Shari Southin



YEARS OF DEDICATION AND INCREDIBLE INTERDISCIPLINARY TEAM WORK

10

Halina Shannan

Doreen Schroeder

Laurie Ann Glenn

Nicole Murray

Penny Samek

Richard Eady

Stephanie Richardson

Congratulations

Thank You

Years of Service

THE

Perth Courier

InsideOttawaValley.com

Parents, Bureaucrats stand up for local schools at Perth ARC meeting

NEWS

Maple Grove, Glen Tay in danger of being closed

LETTERS

No sense in closing Maple Grove school over Drummond

NEWS

Parents discuss programming at local schools worry about closures

The Lanark Era

Does it make rational sense to close Maple Grove?

THE

Perth Courier

InsideOttawaValley.com

Value of local schools outlined at ARC meeting in Perth

The closure of a school in a small rural town or village has potentially devastating social and economic consequences for individuals and the community as a whole. So, in the fall of 2016, when the Upper Canada District School Board (UCDSB) released draft recommendations for the proposed closure of up to 29 predominantly rural schools, community members and staff at the North Lanark Community Health Centre (NLCHC) were alarmed when they saw that Maple Grove Public School in Lanark Village was “on the list”.

Staff and volunteers of NLCHC and Maple Grove School have worked in close partnership for over two decades to improve early life learning and experiences for the children of north Lanark and their families. Over the years, the NLCHC has provided a wide range of health promotion programs at Maple Grove School and in the Village of Lanark to help children and their parents learn healthy lifestyle skills, build resilience, develop an increased sense of self-efficacy and a stronger connection to others. *Kids in the Kitchen, Breakfast for Learning, Healthy Active Kids, Roots of Empathy, Mental Health, Wellness and Early Intervention with the Royal Ottawa Hospital, Understanding the Teenage Brain, Families Get Together, Pickleball, Nurse Practitioner Screening Clinics, Get W.I.T.H It Walking in the Halls, etc.* are some of the initiatives that have helped the children of north Lanark get a good start in life.

Determinants of Health

Public Health Agency of Canada

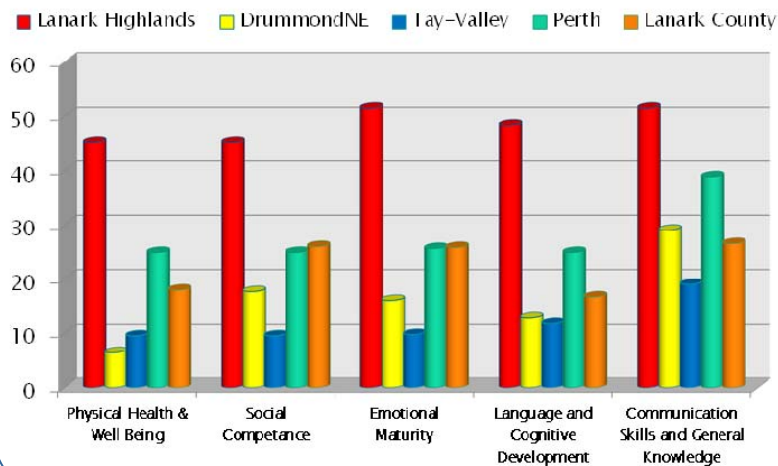
- ▶ Income and social status
- ▶ Social support networks/inclusion
- ▶ Education and literacy
- ▶ Employment/working conditions
- ▶ Social environments
- ▶ Personal health practices/coping skills
- ▶ Healthy child development
- ▶ Culture
- ▶ Physical environments
- ▶ Biology and genetic endowment
- ▶ Health services
- ▶ Gender

Health Centre staff know that the children and families in north Lanark face many barriers that make them more vulnerable than their peers across Lanark County. These vulnerabilities are due in part to geography, and are made worse by unequal access to education, social, recreation and employment opportunities available to them, across all age groups. Addressing these broader determinants of health and taking a community-centred approach, are what Community Health Centres are uniquely designed (among primary health care providers) to do.

Using this understanding, the Board of Lanark Renfrew Health & Community Services (LRHCS) was quick to grasp the long-term health implications for the population of north Lanark if Maple Grove School were to close and quickly endorsed advocacy actions aimed at keeping Maple Grove open and in the Village of Lanark. What followed was a 6-month campaign on behalf of LRHCS and in partnership with the Township of Lanark Highlands, the Parent Council of Maple Grove Public School, Lanark Highlands Youth Centre, and with support from numerous community organizations and individuals (i.e. Big Brothers Big Sisters, Children's Resources on Wheels/Ontario Early Years Centre, Offord Centre for Child Studies and the Lanark County Planning Council for Children Youth and Families among many others). Using data from the Early Development Instrument (EDI) developed by the Offord Centre for Child Studies at McMaster University, the children in Lanark Highlands as a population were determined to be more vulnerable and at risk than their peers across all of Lanark County. The EDI measures healthy child development across five domains: physical health and well-being, social competence, emotional maturity, language and cognitive development, and communication skills and general knowledge.

EDI - Percentage Vulnerable and At-Risk

Cycle 3 EDI for Lanark County from Offord Centre for Child Studies



Kara Symbolic, Community Programs and Communications Co-ordinator at the NLCHC, appeared as a delegate before the Accommodation Review Committee (ARC) in Perth on November 16, 2016 and in Kemptville on March 1, 2017 at the Special Meeting of the Board of Trustees of the UCDSB. *“These children face many barriers that make them more vulnerable than their peers across Lanark County. As a population, and regardless of which school they attend, the children of Lanark Highlands are much more vulnerable than their peers. Without the free wrap-around supports provided by many individuals and community organizations, moving the children of Maple Grove School outside of the Village would disadvantage these children even further.”*

On March 23, 2017 the UCDSB Trustees unfortunately announced the closure of a number of schools; however, for this round and for the coming five years at least, we are pleased to report that Maple Grove was not “on the list”! The North Lanark Community Health Centre staff and the Board of Lanark Renfrew Health & Community Services will continue working with community partners and advocating on behalf of the children and families of north Lanark to secure the conditions that lead to their health and well-being.



Based on the **Canadian Index of Wellbeing (CIW)**, the Be Well survey measures conditions in eight domains that affect the health and quality of life of individuals and communities.

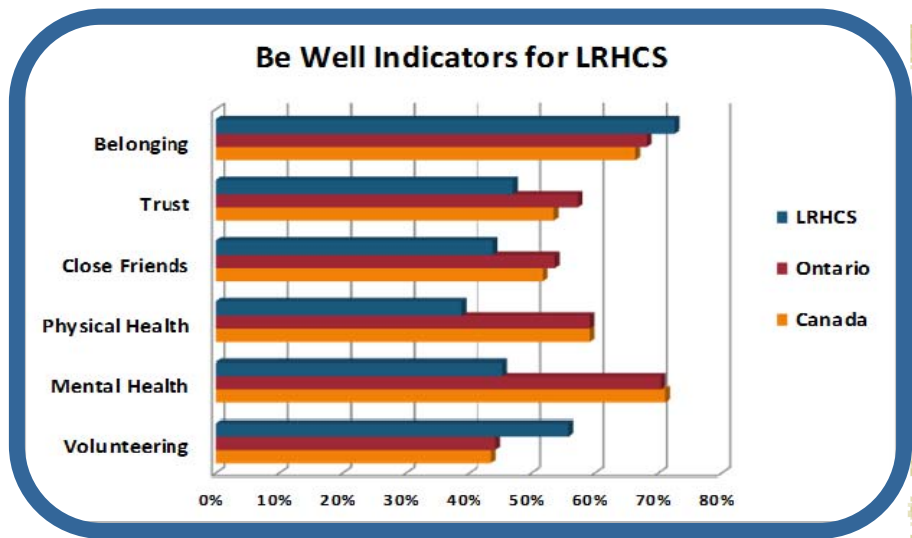
Be Well Survey

On Community Health & Wellbeing

To better understand issues and concerns affecting the health and quality of life for people in our communities, from July through November 2016 the North Lanark and Whitewater Bromley Community Health Centres joined with Community Health Centres across Ontario to administer the “Be Well Survey on Health and Well-Being”. Canadians are generally healthy people. However, not all Canadians enjoy good health, and there are big differences in the health of certain populations, between different regions in Canada and between different income groups. Although many people believe that our health is affected most by the quality of healthcare available to us, by our genetic make-up or by our lifestyle choices, we now know that a number of other factors play a more significant role in determining our overall health and well-being.


Patterns of health and disease are largely a result of how we live (education, income and work), where we live (our housing, neighbourhoods and communities) and the quality of our environment (the air, land and water). Having a good start in life, having enough nutritious food, having supportive family and friends and feeling a sense of belonging – these are all important factors that shape our health.

Six hundred and fifty people in Lanark and Renfrew Counties completed the Be Well survey – a remarkable response rate for a rural community! While we are just starting to get the results from the survey, the initial results show that we have cause for celebration in some areas and lots of work to do in others. In comparison to national and provincial data, our respondents showed a greater sense of belonging and higher formal rates of volunteering, fewer social contacts, a lower sense of trust, and lower physical and mental health ratings.





As part of our on-going commitment in building excellence to meet health and community needs, the North Lanark Community Health Centre applied for and received a \$15,000 grant from Canada 150, to complete a Vital Signs Lanark County report in partnership with the Perth and District Community Foundation and many community partners. The Be Well survey results are a key component of the community engagement and public consultation process for the Vital Signs project.

Over the coming weeks and months, we will be analyzing the data, making comparisons to local, provincial and national data, reflecting on what the data means to us, and then using the results to inform changes in programs and services so that collectively we can better respond to community trends and issues as identified by people in the communities that we serve.



Lanark County
Community Well-Being & Quality of Life Survey

- Help us celebrate Canada's 150th birthday!
- Let us know what you like about living in Lanark County.
- Tell us what could be done to improve your quality of life.







The Perth & District Community Foundation is undertaking a **Vital Signs** project to celebrate life in Lanark County, measure community wellbeing, and identify areas for improvement. By taking **10 minutes to complete this survey** you'll help us better understand our community's strengths and needs, and ensure resources are directed to where they are needed most. Your responses may be shared on our website and in our Vital Signs report, but they will be kept anonymous.

Complete a survey online at www.pdcf.ca or
Paper copies may also be picked up or dropped off at any library in Lanark County

Thank you for your time. Your comments and suggestions are greatly appreciated!

Questions? Call or email Jeff Kohl at 613-200-0655 or jkohl@storm.ca

This initiative is made possible by the Community Fund for Canada's 150th, a collaboration between the Perth & District Community Foundation, the Government of Canada, and extraordinary leaders from coast to coast to coast.

"Volunteerism is the ultimate in democracy. You vote in elections every few years but when you volunteer you vote everyday about the kind of community you want to live in"

Marjorie Moore

Across Lanark Renfrew Health & Community Services (LRHCS), hundreds of community members freely offer their time (thousands of hours each year!) and their talents (from routine tasks to highly specialized skills) to help us achieve our vision and mission and to make the world a better place – for themselves, their friends and families, and for the more vulnerable people in our communities. Across the Organization this past year, almost 250 volunteers contributed thousands of hours of time (equivalent to several full time staff) to help make our communities better in so many ways. We really and truly could not accomplish the work we do without these contributions.....and even if we could, it would not be nearly as much fun!



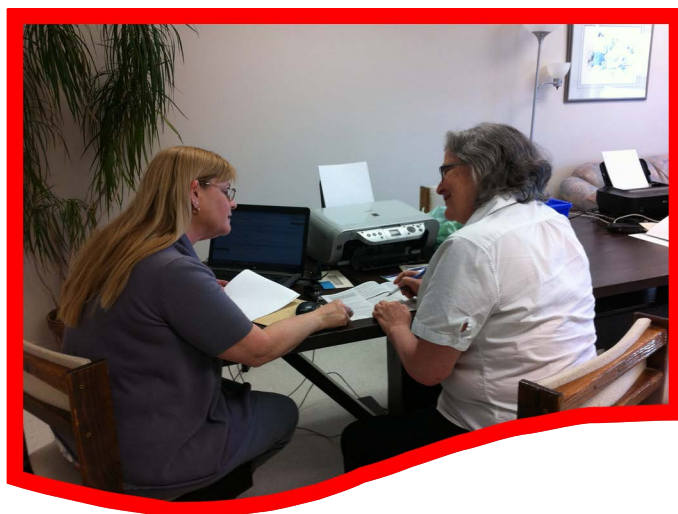
The Therapeutic Riding Program has a huge contingent of loyal volunteers who allow us to extend services to a vast number of persons much beyond what our staffing limitations allow. Approximately 120 people (who range in age from 14-70) volunteer to make it possible for our Therapeutic Riding Program to exist by: providing assistance during riding lessons, caring for the horses, organizing special fund raising events, doing administrative tasks and building ramps or other small carpentry projects. Some volunteers are occasional and help us out once a year, others are trained to work directly with our riders and come out weekly, and others go through months of training to become certified as Assistant Instructors through the Canadian Therapeutic Riding Association.

Within the Connections program, 40 volunteers helped this past year in three program areas. In the Birth Companion program, volunteers take extensive training to provide emotional and practical supports to pregnant women during pregnancy, labour, delivery and postnatal. Birth Companions are

"Service to others is the rent you pay for your room here on earth"

Muhammad Ali

extraordinary women who provide tremendous care for the young women with whom they are matched.



The Connections Playgroup volunteers give us the capacity to meet the demand for our ever-popular playgroups. The Volunteer Income Tax program – now housed with Connections – has grown exponentially since LCP agreed to host the program three years ago. A dozen volunteers have received training from the Canadian Revenue Agency to provide assistance to low income individuals and families by filing their income tax returns. Filing facilities families to receive the child tax credit that provides essential financial support to young families – helping their children have a good start in life.



In 2016, our Fresh Fruit and Vegetable Project ran almost completely on volunteer efforts. Over six tons of fresh vegetables and fruits from our local community garden and local Farmers' Market Vendors was distributed to income-vulnerable people and families within 24 hours through various community networks. The largest network was the Lanark Highlands "Plan B" Citizen's Group, which also used the fresh produce for monthly Community Dinners and for freezing, preserving and pickling. "Plan B" involved approximately 50 volunteers, who contributed thousands of hours of time.

Wherever you turn, you can find someone who needs you. Even if it is a little thing, do something for which there is no pay but the privilege of doing it. Remember, you don't live in a world all of your own"
 Albert Schweitzer

Nancy and Company (A.K.A Secret Santa) is the longest serving LCP volunteer. She has been volunteering since the program's inception 38 years ago – and over the years has enlisted many of her friends! Nancy credits Donna, Sandy, and the rest of the LCP staff for her longevity as a volunteer. "On many occasions, I have seen the way LCP staff work with their clients - no one there has an attitude because of their particular "title", and they treat everyone equally, and with great respect. It's my way of giving back."



Nancy's first volunteer 'job' came about when she was learning to sew and decided to make clothes for dolls as Christmas presents. "It has expanded and grown since then." Because of health issues, Nancy says that "she doesn't sleep well, and has to keep busy", so knitting has now become a frequent past-time. Nancy knits hats, mitts and slippers (by the hundreds!) to distribute to LCP clients at Christmas (and as needed throughout the year). She also fundraises and purchases clothing, books and toys throughout the year for distribution by LCP staff to families who could use an extra "something" at Christmas time. Nancy figures she spends about 15-20 hours a week in the creation and shopping of Christmas gifts. Her contributions (in time and talent) are immeasurable!



Parents in our Lanark Autism Support Group and our Respite Home Parent Group raised over five thousand dollars to extend services to families. These and other parent volunteers play an invaluable role by providing emotional and practical supports to each other and to staff.

"The true meaning of life is to plant trees under whose shade you never expect to sit"
 Nelson Henderson

To each and every one of our volunteers...

"We cannot answer but thanks, and thanks, and ever thanks,"

William Shakespeare Twelfth Night

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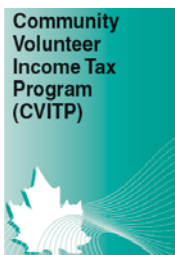
WWW.ANDRETOONS.COM



While many people may grumble and complain about preparing their income tax forms, some health care providers are actually **prescribing** tax returns.



Dr. Gary Bloch, a Toronto-area MD, was quoted in the *Globe and Mail* (March 20, 2013), about why, "As a doctor, (he's) prescribing tax returns. Seriously!" "The link between health and income is solid and consistent – almost every major health condition, including heart disease, cancer, diabetes, and mental illness, occurs more often and has worse outcomes among people who live at lower income levels. As people improve their income, their health improves. It follows that improving my patients' income should improve their health." By way of example, one of Dr. Bloch's clients, named Rena once told him "Doc, if you really want me to get better, get me more money". Rena "...suffers from high blood pressure, chronic back pain and depression...works full time at a minimum wage job, earning just under \$20,000 a year. With this, she does her best to support herself and her young daughter. However, she has not always been diligent in filing her tax returns. If she had, she could have received over \$8,000 more a year in tax credits from the provincial and federal governments. That might have gone a long way to make things just a little bit better for her, including her health. Suggesting Rena fill out her tax return is prescribing income. And prescribing income can be just as powerful as prescribing medications for her blood pressure or her mood".



The Canada Revenue Agency (CRA), which partners with community agencies across the country to deliver the program, has noted the terrific response – contrary to the program's decline in other regions of the country. Donna credits the dedicated and talented crew of volunteers who prepare the tax forms, the leadership and administrative support provided by Connections staff, the partner organizations who donate clinic space and help spread the word, and the strong community understanding of the link between health and income.

Closer to home, the connection between health and income is also understood by many. In 2013, when local anti-poverty activist and volunteer Martina Flanagan became aware that the "Community Volunteer Income Tax program" in Lanark County was going to end, she put out a plea for another community agency to take the lead. Donna Davidson, Agency Director of Lanark Community Programs (LCP), immediately saw the benefits of providing free income tax clinics to assist LCP's clients, as well as individuals and families from across Lanark County who are in the lowest income brackets (*) in completing and submitting their income tax returns.





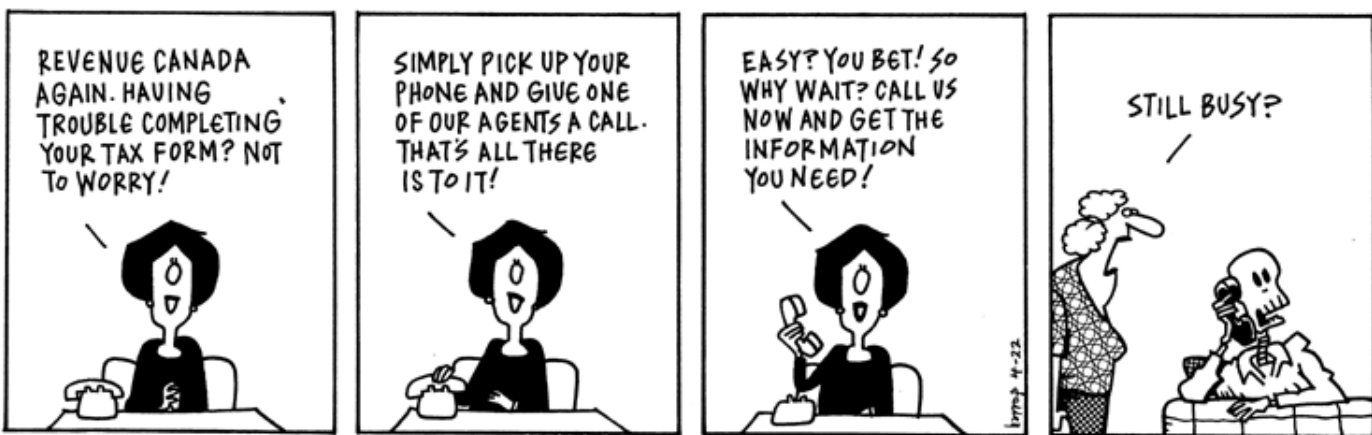
In the four short years that this program has operated under the Connections and Lanark Community Programs banner, the number of volunteers, clinics, locations, and returns completed has grown exponentially - taking many people by surprise.

While these numbers are impressive, the real benefit is in having real money find its way back into the hands and pockets of income-vulnerable people across Lanark County. Based on CRA estimates, for the number of tax returns filed for Lanark County in 2014 – 2016 **over nine million dollars** has gone back to people who have had their income tax returns completed through the Lanark County volunteer income tax program.

The County of Lanark has also noted the importance and significance of this program, by awarding a \$50,000 grant for two-years for further development of this program. This year, a guide was developed for people with a disability or for parents who have a child with a disability, to inform them of income tax breaks for which they might qualify. This information is extremely valuable, as these individuals/families are not often aware of the availability of thousands of dollars of tax breaks they might qualify for. In 2018, a general Financial Literacy course will be offered via workshop and web-based information.

The Volunteer Income Tax Program in Lanark County demonstrates the “Power of One”. The millions of dollars now coming into Lanark County via this project have their origins in the simple outreach phone call made by volunteer Martina Flanagan.

(*) couples who have a yearly combined income of \$40,000 or less, or a parent and child with a yearly income of \$35,000 or less.





When Robert Thompson, a local resident and client of the Whitewater Bromley Community Health Centre (WBCHC), told his primary care provider that he wanted to volunteer his time and give back to the community and to the Health Centre, Margie Cliche, Chronic Disease Nurse at the WBCHC didn't waste time in taking him up on his offer.

Robert is a skilled Red Seal Chef who has spent many years following his passion. He has owned a cafe/restaurant in the Montreal area for many years and has worked in different facilities as their lead chef, making healthy and delicious meals for seniors.

When the WBCHC was evaluating the menu of programming options (pun-intended) available at WBCHC, staff realized that they were lacking specific programming for men and also on hands-on, skills-based nutrition programming. And then Robert came forward and expressed interest in providing a cooking class for men – something he was already doing in the Pembroke area! In collaboration with WBCHC staff, Margie and Robert developed a 6-session cooking program for men called "Chef's Corner". The group emphasizes safe food handling and preparation and healthy menu planning and food selection for budget-conscious meal-prep for one or two people. Since the program started in May 2016, three program cycles have been held – each with a maximum of six men. (The small group size ensures that everyone gets lots of hands-on instruction and experience.)

The cooking skills of Bob Thompson were valuable, creative and led to good socializing with the group.

Staff at WBCHC love/hate it when the program is being held because the smells wafting from the kitchen are so tantalizingly and distractingly delicious! Staff comment on how lovely it is to stroll past the kitchen or to stop in for a coffee and be part of the laughter and socializing that is taking place and to see new friendships being formed.

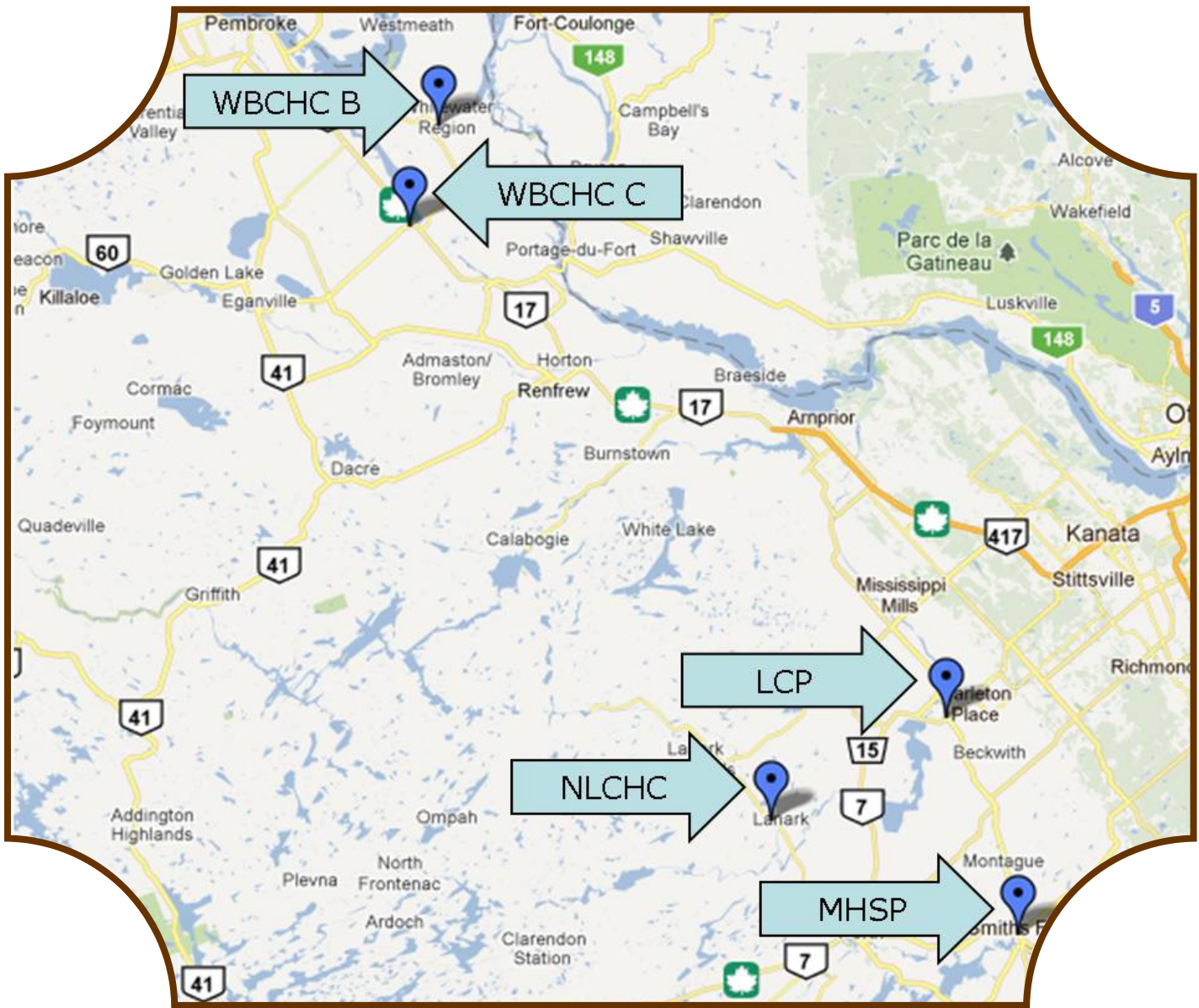
I learned that cooking is not a mystery—it is something that can be learned AND it can be a lot of fun!

Margie says that "Robert is now considering running a co-ed session of the group, as many female clients have expressed interest in this program".

When I participated in Chef's Corner, it was a special morning for me. I looked forward to each session



Huge and heartfelt thanks to Chef Robert for sharing his passion with the clients, staff and community members of the Whitewater Bromley Community Health Centre!



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*** Completed term(s)**

We Believe . . .

In the right of all people to resources for good health, including peace, shelter, education, food, income access to health care, a stable ecosystem, sustainable resources, social justice, equity and social inclusion.

Our Vision . . .

A community that is healthy and just and supportive of all.

Our Mission . . .

Together we support people and communities in achieving and maintaining the best possible health and social well-being.

Our Commitment . . .

- ☉ To provide holistic programs and services that are respectful, relevant and effective;
- ☉ To reduce barriers that prevent people and communities from achieving their full potential;
- ☉ To enable people to remain in, and participate in, the life of their community;
- ☉ To seek and share knowledge and resources so that individuals and communities are empowered; and
- ☉ To manage our resources respectfully.