

# Closing the Loop: Working Together

Feedback from the Board of Directors  
to Local Health Involvement Groups

Theme: Health Equity

Fall 2015 Consultations



## What We Heard ...

- We have little control over equality because people are born with varying degrees of health (based on genetics, environment, culture, etc.) but we do have control over equity and making decisions that will promote health for all.
- We don't always have to create new initiatives - very often, we just need to enhance and expand some of the great work that's already being done.
- The CHA is a great tool - it gives evidence for inequities and helps provide focus. We need to make sure to refer to it often when making decisions.
- Just because we make great resources available, some people still won't access them (either by choice or because of other barriers).
- Engaging with people may be difficult because we may not "speak" their language, culture or experience- we can't forget the value of the patient experience.
- We cannot do things alone - look for partners already in the community.
- We need to recognize community actions that are already taking place and see if we can support those initiatives. Individual communities generally know what their needs are and have volunteers who are invested in the outcomes.

## Recent Equity Initiatives

**MOBILE CLINIC** Our "clinic on wheels" goes to communities around the region that don't have easy access to primary care. Appointments can be made to see a Nurse Practitioner. Adjustments are constantly being made to the schedule based on community demand.

### **ABORIGINAL INTERNSHIP PROGRAM (YOUTH)**

In partnership with our communities and schools, Aboriginal youth in grade 10-12 are introduced to 20 health careers in our facilities for school credit by completing 55 hours of volunteer work. Successful students are given an opportunity for six weeks of paid work experience to further develop their skills and confidence in becoming a health care worker.

### **ABORIGINAL INTERNSHIP PROGRAM (ADULT)**

In partnership with our First Nation communities, young adults 18-30 can participate in a program designed to teach life skills and pre-employment training. Participants are then provided with a selection of work placements to test their training. Further education and employment options are then explored.

## New Board Commitment

LHIG members told us that innovation sometimes means expanding on successful projects. We know about many good things happening in the region regarding health equity but we also know there are more initiatives taking place that we don't know about. In order to strengthen these projects and work at achieving our Strategic Direction around Health Equity, we will work with staff to collect a health equity initiative listing. This will give us a sense of where there might be gaps and what we can further support.

As a Board of Directors, we value the time and commitment contributed by our Local Health Involvement Groups. We hope that your participation is as meaningful to you as it is to us. As partners, we can truly help achieve our vision of:

*Together leading the way for a healthier tomorrow.*