

Bringing Care Home

The South West CCAC Staff Bulletin

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Partnerships at Work

South West CCAC case managers are playing a key role in an innovative project to improve diabetes care

It started with three Family Health Teams, but now the innovative Partnerships for Health (PFH) project will involve as many as 100 primary care practices across the South West.

PFH brings together family practices, Diabetes Education Centres (DECs), the South West CCAC and other community partners to improve care for adults with diabetes. Wave I involves three Family Health Teams in Strathroy, Clinton and Brockton. South West CCAC case managers are involved with each team.

"It's exciting to see the progress we've made in eight months," says Anne Smith, Client Services Manager, who is working as part of the Strathroy team. "It started with building relationships but now we're drilling deeper, and getting to the meat."

The three multi-disciplinary teams have been hard at work since last September and recently held their second learning collaborative. The teams, which meet monthly, use the IHI Model of Improvement (first used in the Flo collaboratives, see page 3) and PDSA cycles to create, implement and evaluate improvements in their practices. "We're beginning to see some very positive changes," says case manager Bonnie Salomons, who now spends a day a week at the Strathroy clinic. "All of us —

the doctors, nurses, diabetes educators and South West CCAC — are working together, and that's a huge step forward."

Anne agrees, adding that clients are the clear winners. "For me the huge benefit of better communication and collaboration is for the clients," she says. "When a client knows we're all on the same team, there is improved self-management, because we're all talking about similar issues." As an example, Anne points to a new self-management tool developed by the PFH team. Clients at the DEC are encouraged to set and record a small, realizable goal, such as walking 10 minutes a day. When they visit the doctor, she or he reinforces the goal by asking how things are going. South West CCAC staff members also discuss the self-management tool when they make home visits. The team plans to ask clients for their input on the tool as part of the evaluation.

Salomons is now screening all patients over the age of 80, doing home visits for those not on South West CCAC services, and when necessary, arranging services to help maintain them at home. She has also helped re-design nurse triage questions to more quickly identify patients that should be referred to the South West CCAC.



Mike Hindmarsh helped develop the Chronic Care Model and is now lending his expertise to Partnerships for Health.

Wave II of Partnerships for Health expands the project further. Nine new teams are under way, after holding their first learning collaborative in January. The teams include Owen Sound Family Health Team, London Intercommunity Health Centre, East Elgin Family Health Team, Happy Valley Family Health Team and Southwest Medical. Each team will include a South West CCAC case manager. "These are forward-thinking, innovative health professionals," says Marg McAlister, a member of the PFH leadership team. "They are committed to providing their patients with the best possible care."

Recruitment is now under way for Wave III of PFH, in which many practices across the region will implement strategies developed through Wave I and Wave II. Executive Director Sandra Coleman is excited about the South West CCAC's involvement in this groundbreaking project. "We want to be part of a proactive disease management approach that uses the special skills of each member of the team to improve health for our shared clients and patients."

South West
Community Care Access Centre

CCAC

CASC

Centre d'accès aux soins communautaires
du Sud-Ouest



A Message from
Sandra Coleman, Executive Director,
South West CCAC

Connecting people with care
is what CCACs were created
to do, and it's what we
at the South West CCAC
do with excellence...

News, but not new

The word “connect” can be defined in many ways — “join,” “associate mentally or practically,” “put into communication,” “form a logical sequence,” and “be meaningful.” When you think about it, all those definitions relate to the work of CCACs. We are truly care connectors. Thanks to our work, many thousands of Ontarians connect with the care they need to stay healthy, get better, live safely at home, and die with dignity.

So it was with great delight that I heard Premier McGuinty's announcement on February 12 about the new Health Care Connect program (there's that word again!) and our special role in it.

As you now know, Health Care Connect will help Ontarians find a health care provider in their community. Specially-trained Care Connectors will serve as a link between health care providers and people looking for a provider.

And naturally the Care Connectors are CCAC case managers. After all, we are all care connectors here.

It's a new program, but the concept is old. Connecting people with care is what CCACs were created to do, and it's what we at the South West CCAC do with excellence, day in and day out. On page one, you'll find a story about a project that connects the various players in diabetes care. Below this message there is information about how we are building capacity in I&R, which is the important function of connecting people to care through information. Elsewhere you'll also read about our Flo projects, designed to improve connections between hospital and community.

Speaking of connections, the best kind happens face to face. I'm looking forward to seeing you all in Stratford on March 24!

Information and Referral (I&R) Ramps Up

Information and Referral (I&R) is one of the core services of CCACs across Ontario. Recently this important function is getting more attention.

In the South West, for example, a pilot project gave staff members access to online courses offered by the Alliance of Information and Referral Services (AIRS). In just nine months, South West CCAC staffers completed more than 330 courses. “It's been a big success,” says Gwen Vanderheyden, Regional Manager Client Services. “This is a great way to build our capacity in I&R.”

There are also changes at the provincial level. **310-CCAC** is the new province-wide phone number that automatically connects the caller with the nearest CCAC office. A website, **310ccac.com**, is under development. It will connect users with regional information listings like *thehealthline.ca*.

“This isn't really a new activity for us,” says Gwen. “It's recognition of the strengths we already have in connecting people to the information and services they need. We are continuing to excel.”



“It's recognition of the
strengths we already have
in connecting people...”



More than 15 minutes of fame

Recently the South West CCAC collaborated with our health system partners in the Grey-Bruce Health Network to place a series of articles in local newspapers about the changes happening in our system. The first article, which appeared in late January, focused on the work of the CCAC as a care connector.

Three case managers (left to right), Ruth Ann Allen, Kerry Cragg, and Rachel Thomson, were interviewed and photographed for the article. As hospital case managers they work as integral members of the care team to get patients home as quickly as possible. Ruth Ann actually combines the role of CM and hospital discharge planner at the Markdale Hospital.

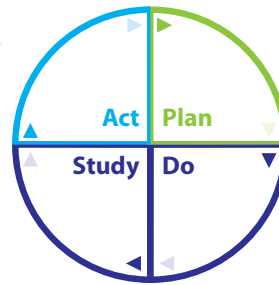
Since the article was published, all three have heard from clients and colleagues. Wrote Ruth Ann: "I have been receiving positive feedback both externally and internally, even messages left on my home phone! The public awareness reinforces confidence in what we can provide to people in the community, and the rewards we gain as case managers in assisting our clients to live where they want to."

"It takes courage and commitment to take on new roles and try different approaches to providing care," says Executive Director Sandra Coleman. "Ruth Ann, Kerry and Rachel are trail-blazers and worthy representatives of our organizations."

Going with the Flo

Flo is an 85-year-old woman with several chronic conditions. She is frail and getting confused. Right now she's in hospital and it looks like a long-term care home is the next stop.

Flo is imaginary but represents many clients served by the South West CCAC every day. Her story lies at the heart of the Flo Collaborative, a project of the Centre for



"We saw great results from the Flo projects..."

Healthcare Quality Improvement (CHQI) to help make transitions from acute care hospitals to other settings faster and easier. The 18-month project involved 29 teams across Ontario.

Two teams were formed in the South West, involving St. Thomas Elgin General Hospital and Grey Bruce Health Services staff members working with South West CCAC case managers and managers. The project teams and their improvement advisors received training

in the Model of Improvement and the PDSA process, and then went to work.

In Grey Bruce, strategies included daily bullet rounds and whiteboards to track discharge status in the nursing station and patient rooms. In St. Thomas, the team developed a new nursing assessment used when patients are admitted to identify potential discharge risks, introduced the use of whiteboards, and developed a tool for faster communication between the hospital and the CCAC. Both units saw a decrease in average length of stay of approximately a day and a half, and a decrease in the number of ALC days.

Remarkably, when ALC reductions across the province were added up, CHQI estimated that they were enough for an entire 336-bed hospital. A Flo Wave II team is now starting work at Woodstock General Hospital.

"We saw great results from the Flo projects," says Jennifer Fazakerley, Improvement Advisor to the South West CCAC. "Now we want to share both the improvements and the process across the region. Our four QILT teams will be using the Model of Improvement and PDSA cycles in their work."

Watch for more about the Model of Improvement and PDSA cycles in our March issue.



Sue Minns – Humourist,
"The Red Shoes Lady"

28 Days and Counting!

There's less than four weeks until the big event on March 24, and anticipation is building

The annual face-to-face South West CCAC All-Staff Meeting is an opportunity to celebrate and learn together, free from the demands of phone and email. This year's theme, "Everything is Possible to a Willing Heart – Yes we can," captures the ethos of our very special organization and sets the stage for an energetic and exciting day. Come ready to think, to work, to laugh, and to embrace new ideas. Be sure to wear your red shoes (if only in spirit). **See you in Stratford!**



This is one in a series of introductions to the South West CCAC board members.

Meet Claude Lanfranconi

Claude spent many years as a professor of accounting in the Richard Ivey School of Business at the University of Western Ontario. A former member of the London-Middlesex CCAC Board, Claude enjoys his daily jogs, crossword puzzles, spending time with his family and traveling with his wife Heather. He is currently writing a mystery novel set in the Northern England town where his youngest daughter lives.

"A good friend asked me if I would join the London-Middlesex CCAC board, which at the time needed a person with a strong finance and accounting background. At the time I had been looking for ways to give something back to my community. After the amalgamation I applied to become a member of the South West CCAC Board because my experience with the London-Middlesex Board had been so positive. I am surrounded by very competent and caring people who are dedicated to providing excellent service. Our Board meetings are interesting and challenging. We work well together, respecting each other's opinions. Doing something that is positive to help my community is very rewarding and therefore most enjoyable."

Students benefit from time at South West CCAC

If you want to learn, learn from the best. That is the approach of Angie Muir-Hughes (below left) and Chad Powell. Angie, who is the daughter



of Kathy Muir, a team secretary in Stratford, is completing her

Bachelor of Social Work at Dalhousie University in Halifax. She's doing a field placement in Stratford, working with Marilyn Zehr (above right), Children's Services, and Eva Schreiter, Community. Chad, a Fanshawe College student, has just started a placement in the Human Resources Department. In our next issue, we'll let you know how they're doing and why they enjoy learning from the masters at the South West CCAC.



Left to right: Kathryn Henderson, Charlene Shantz-Tepker, Angie Muir-Hughes, Leanne Baird, Cheryl Bart, Mary Flewitt and Marilyn Zehr

1. Staff members from the Stratford site celebrate Valentine's Day.

2. Staff members in Seaforth get together to enjoy a Valentine's Day lasagna lunch sponsored by the Social Committee.



Left to right: Case managers Debbie Beauchamp, Janine Sissing, Sharon McClenaghan, and Fran Hook

Welcome to the South West CCAC Family

London: Casual Case Managers Lori Drury, Michelle Facchina, Margaret Fitzpatrick, Brenda Hoffman, Carolyn McGiverty, Margaret Vallee, Sherrill Wright

Stratford: Nicole Marshall, Casual Team Secretary

Seaforth: Janine Sissing, Casual Case Manager



Baby Boy

Stratford Case Manager Jen Dixon and husband Scotty are delighted with the new addition to their family. Sister to Maddy, **Bryce** was born on November 29, 2008 weighing 7 lbs 9 oz. Now three months old, he is starting to smile and is growing quickly.

The 64-Dollar Question

Q. Are there eligibility requirements for CCAC services?

A. No. Anyone who contacts the CCAC will receive information and referral and case management services. There are eligibility requirements for specific in-home services.



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