



# Our Compass

Summer 2010

Compassionate care led by Catholic values

## IN THIS ISSUE

- 2 Charting the Course
- 3 Ask a Good Question
- 4 Helping Haiti
- 5 Mission Award: Integrity
- 6 Workplace Wellness
- 7 Focus on Accreditation
- 9 Mission Award: Collaboration
- 10 Mission Award: Stewardship
- 14 Nursing with Compassion

Diane Berge is a volunteer member of the Family and Community Advisory Council at the Edmonton General and one of the founders of the award-winning Second Wind Dreams program. Diane continues to work with staff, community donors, family, and friends to make wishes come true.



## Second Wind Dreams Receives Minister's Seniors Service Award

**D**oris, a resident at the Edmonton General Continuing Care Centre, always wanted a lobster dinner. So she got it. Another resident had never been in an airplane and dreamed of flying over the farm where she grew up. Then it happened.

Dreams still come true for residents at the Edmonton General thanks to a group of dedicated volunteers who find ways to make it happen. "Second Wind Dreams" has fulfilled the dreams of over 100 residents since the program was launched four years ago. They have created countless special moments: a day at the spa, a symphony concert, a family reunion, and many more that lift spirits and change the lives of residents.

And now the efforts of these devoted volunteers have earned them a 2010 Minister's Seniors Service Award. Alberta Seniors and Community Supports present these awards to recognize those who give their time to help Alberta's seniors.

"The Second Wind Dreams' volunteers have a tremendous impact on the lives of our seniors," stated Janete Poloway, manager of projects and administration at the Edmonton General in her nomination. "They give the residents joy, new or familiar experiences and an opportunity to make choices in their lives."

Second Wind Dreams works in partnership with the Edmonton General Family Council. It includes

Diane Berge (chair), Dianne Stretch-Strang, Doreen Rendell, Edwin Collins, Kay Tsiandos, Priscilla Ramer, Edith Garner, and Claire Ethier.

Diane Berge helped establish the program and continues to work with staff, community donors, family, and friends to make wishes come true.

"Our greatest joy is to help spread cheer and change the face of long-term care. When dreams come true on a unit—like watching ballroom dancing, having the Edmonton Oilers visit, or being serenaded by an Elvis

**"It has been our greatest joy to help spread cheer and change the face of long term care."**

impersonator—everyone benefits," said Diane. "The break from the daily routine and the laughter bring back fond memories for many of the residents and their families."

The goal of Second Wind Dreams is to give residents the chance to experience something they never thought they could do while in care. "The small, but ambitious committee will take on almost anything, but sometimes we have to improvise. A dream to go to Hawaii turned into a luau on the unit, complete with music, drinks in a pineapple and some Hawaiian dancers," described Diane.

She is quick to add that the success of Second Wind Dreams is also due to supportive staff and administration, since granting a wish involves the whole team—social workers,

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## Second Wind Dreams

Continued from page 1

recreation therapists, food services staff and volunteers.

The program began independently at the Edmonton General, and has grown with tremendous support from community donors. Recently, the team joined the Second Wind Dreams foundation based

in the US, giving them new manuals and information to get high school students and other community members involved in making dreams come true.

“Over 50 donors have been thrilled to assist us in any way needed. They are always surprised with how little it takes to make a big difference. Our biggest problem? That we don’t know what to ask for until a resident shares a dream,” said Diane.

Anyone can request a dream for residents. Second Wind Dreams allows family, friends, staff, and volunteers the opportunity to do something special for their loved ones. It is a great way to let people know that individuals in care are a vital part of society and should be celebrated. For more information about Second Wind Dreams, contact Diane Berge at [dberge@shaw.ca](mailto:dberge@shaw.ca)

# Charting the Course

As we enter our second summer as Covenant Health, the words of our vision statement provide a great benchmark of how far we have come and a reminder of where we are going.

Thanks to your hard work, we have made some tremendous strides in our



efforts to grow in service and touch the lives of many more Albertans. Since last December—in addition to the incredible work in our facilities—we celebrated several major capital announcements. Government has given us the

green light to redevelop and expand our continuing care program in Killam, develop a new designated assisted living centre for the homeless in Lethbridge and build two new DAL facilities in Red Deer and Calgary.

This January, Alberta Health Services also confirmed the transfer and expansion of the Geriatric Psychiatry program at Alberta Hospital Edmonton to Villa Caritas on the Misericordia campus.

Together, these important developments establish a strong and vibrant role for Covenant Health in senior’s care and mental health to meet the needs of Alberta’s most vulnerable citizens. We are grateful to have been entrusted with a greater responsibility in the province to respond to those who are frail, marginalized,

disadvantaged and those whose needs are complex and difficult to meet.

As Harvard Business leader Rosabeth Moss Kanter reminds us, “A vision is not just a picture of what could be; it is an appeal to our better selves, a call to become something more.” This is both our legacy and our commitment.

This fall we look forward to welcoming new team members who will transfer from Alberta Hospital Edmonton to Villa Caritas to join us in an important piece of this work.

Villa Caritas, our new 150-bed facility, will address a growing gap in care for seniors who have complex mental health and medical issues. These elderly citizens struggle with such mental health challenges as Alzheimer disease or age-related dementia, long-term effects of addiction, depression, or psychiatric disorders—all while trying to cope with such medical conditions as chronic disease, cancer and other complications impacting their physical health.

The expanded program will provide appropriate, timely intervention and care options for these seniors—many of whom currently wait in hospitals for long periods due to the growing demand. At Villa Caritas, we will focus on marshalling the resources of the system to treat the complex needs of these seniors and transfer them back to an appropriate care setting—at home or in the community.

This is just the beginning of the good work we can do as Covenant Health to make a real difference in the lives of Albertans.

This fall we will share the work of our Rural Health Strategy initiative and work

Covenant Health will positively influence the health of Albertans and be of greater service to those in need by working together with compassion, quality and innovation.

COVENANT HEALTH  
VISION STATEMENT

with Alberta Health Services to identify next steps to strengthen our service to rural communities. We will also continue our work on other priorities: to improve quality, enhance our mission, work with our communities and build our team to benefit those we serve.

There is much to do for Covenant Health and we have much to be thankful for as we look forward to a busy and exciting year ahead. So I hope you will take some time this summer to rest and relax, to spend time with family and friends, to enjoy the sunshine and summer activities, and to do the things that make your spirit soar.

God bless,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Patrick Dumelie'. The signature is stylized and fluid.

**Patrick Dumelie**  
President and CEO

# Ask a Good Question



**Jennifer Haggerty**

As VP of Planning, Jennifer oversees strategic and capital planning for Covenant Health. She is skilled in change leadership, project management, and strategic planning—including training in Balanced Scorecard methodology. She has also worked as a change specialist for Providence Health Care in Vancouver, and holds a Bachelors of Science and a Masters of Health Service Administration.

**I'm confused as I am getting instructions from Alberta Health Services and from Covenant Health. We also have our own way of doing things at our site. I'm being pulled in three different directions. What am I supposed to do?**

**—(anonymous) Covenant Health employee**

## **Answer from Jennifer Haggerty, Vice President, Planning:**

The quick answer to your question is that we are Covenant Health and not Alberta Health Services—so we set our own direction.

However, I'd also like to address the tension you feel. I'm sorry you are frustrated! You might call it the growing pains of a new organization. Without details, it's hard for me to give you specific advice on your issue. I encourage you to talk with your immediate supervisor. For now, perhaps it will help to explain what is happening, and what you can expect in the months ahead.

At both the site and corporate level, our 14,000 team members and 16 sites are united by our distinct Covenant Health mission, vision and values and strategic directions. This is our common ground. However, we are still building our connections as Covenant Health and laying the groundwork for future success as a new organization. We're calling this coming together "integration" and it's a term

you'll be hearing more of.

It's true we are aligned with Alberta Health Services (AHS), and in a number of areas (i.e. information technology and contracting, procurement, and supply chain management) Covenant Health is fully integrated with AHS. In these instances, we adopt the same policies, procedures and processes. We will do this whenever it makes sense, and is a sound fit with our organization.

However, we are establishing our own quality and safety practices, financial accounting procedures and human resource processes. While the standards in these areas may be the same as AHS, how we design and implement them is customized to fit the needs of Covenant Health. You will learn more about these initiatives as we finalize and roll out our Covenant Health policies, procedures and processes. Establishing Covenant Health-wide policies and procedures in these key areas is one way that we are working on integration. We will also develop initiatives to ensure better communication

and connection between our sites in other areas. In short: integration is a long-term work in progress and it involves every one of us!

So what will successful integration at Covenant Health look like in the years ahead? Let me start with what it won't be. It will not involve making each site a cookie-cutter imitation, or making team members into robots. We also don't want Covenant Health to be 16 separate sites that merely operate side-by-side under a Covenant Health umbrella. Instead, we hope to embrace our full creative potential—to build synergy between sites and corporate services. We need to walk this journey together: building relationships, and balancing the autonomy and traditions of each site with opportunities to maximize accountability and

efficiencies, and to strengthen our voice and mission.

I think the tension you're feeling will wane soon. Let me know if it does not! I hope that you will take heart in knowing that we are taking these important steps for a reason: to build an efficient, effective and inspiring organization—one that is clear, consistent and compassionate to every team member.

This will all take time, patience and two-way communication so please raise your questions and concerns with your supervisors and site leaders at every step along the way. These people can bring your concerns to the VP level if necessary. Future questions for this feature can also be emailed to [goodquestion@covenanthealth.ca](mailto:goodquestion@covenanthealth.ca)

## **Are you in the Loop?**

Please be sure that your primary email address is a Covenant Health account ending in [@covenanthealth.ca](mailto:@covenanthealth.ca) This way you will get the news that impacts Covenant Health employees and physicians only. It will also help to clear up some confusion when direction at Alberta Health Services is different from our own. For more information or to correct your default email account, contact your local IS help desk.



Jody Mombourquette receives a welcome reception from a group of children in Haiti



# HELPING HAITI

## Misericordia staff give their hearts and nursing expertise to Haiti

The world paused to observe, reflect and pray after a catastrophic earthquake struck Haiti on January 12, 2010. A few, including Kim Sykes and Jody Mombourquette from the 5-West Surgical Team at the Misericordia Community Hospital, saw a window of opportunity to help some of the estimated three million people affected by the earthquake.

The Alberta team—including Kim, Jody, a physician, three other Registered Nurses and two support workers—left Calgary on May 6th for a 12-day mission in Haiti. They set out to serve in two centres: Port-au-Prince, Haiti’s capital city and the city nearest the epi-centre of the earthquake, and Carre Four, a poor commune in the Port au Prince metropolitan area that lost about half its infrastructure during the earthquake. The team’s goal was to provide immediate care and support to people requiring health services.

This was Kim’s second trip to Haiti since the earthquake struck. “It was a humbling experience and one that called me back to Haiti,” explains Kim who provided health services for over a week on her first trip in February. “People were lined up as far as we could see for medical care, and we knew the devastation around us ran deep. We couldn’t change everything in the time we spent there but we did make a difference to all the people

we met.” She kept her feelings front and centre and motivation high after returning to Canada, and started planning her return trip. It didn’t take a lot of convincing for Jody to join her.

“I was eager to hear about Kim’s experience as it has always been a dream of mine to nurse in third world countries,” says Jody. “I was so proud of her and thrilled when she asked me to join the team on the next mission,” says Jody.

Similar to Kim’s first trip to Haiti, the Alberta team was met by an overwhelming number of people looking for care. “We had to be very efficient,” says Jody, explaining that hundreds were waiting for them each day. “The time management skills we use in our work at the Misericordia were put to good use.” The language barrier was also a challenge for the team. They communicated with their patients mainly through translators, but found that small things, like a simple smile, make a big difference in developing



Jody Mombourquette (left) and Kim Sykes (right) stand with a mom and baby who received care from the Alberta “Hearts to Haiti” medical team in Port au Prince

trust and providing the best possible care.

Kim and Jody agree they are challenged and rewarded every day in their work at Covenant Health in Edmonton. However, these 24-year olds also agree it is a gift to take their combined seven years of experience and help people who might never otherwise receive care. “Everyone has a story,” explains Kim. “Part of my job as a nurse was to keep my heart, mind, and ears open while in Haiti. It was critical to communicating across language and cultural [barriers]—to connect with people and help them to heal.”

Kim says her experience in Haiti opened her eyes to suffering. “I found a lot of our patients quietly suffered through pain that wasn’t obvious to me at first,” says Kim. “A young boy might come to us with an open wound but be more affected by hunger pangs and the effects of waiting for treatment in the hot sun.”

Kim explains that the ground support they received really helped the team

provide the best care possible. “Thankfully we had English-speaking locals who were eager to help with everything from setting up our clinic to translation work. It was inspiring to be part of something so much bigger than ourselves—something driven by the generosity and compassion of so many people.”

The ladies are happy to say this applies to the support they received from Canada as well. WestJet offered the entire team free airfare and transportation for their 19 bags of supplies. Friends, family, and staff at the Misericordia Community Hospital gave their time and money generously, and helped the team more than double their fundraising goal of \$2000. “So many people wanted to be part of this experience and they expressed it with their time and money,” says Kim. “Nothing has been as valuable as the enormous support we have received from 5-West and the entire Misericordia Community Hospital.” Jody is quick to add: “We may be the face for the mission but we went on behalf of a Covenant Health hospital. Our colleagues showed us they have hearts as big as the challenges we saw.”

As this newsletter goes to print, Kim and Jody have just returned from their mission to Haiti. They are keenly aware that devastation, chaos and sadness is a reality for many Haitian people. But they also know they have played a role in fostering hope and healing. “Although the days were long and hot, I left each day knowing we had somehow touched the lives of people that were struck with such devastation. I hope this trip will be the first of many more to come,” concludes Jody.

Kim, Jody and the other members of their medical team wrote about their journey to Haiti in a blog. It includes stories about their experience providing health services in Haiti and stories from some of their Haitian volunteers and clients as well. Read more at: <http://heartstohaiti.wordpress.com>.



## Leader's integrity quietly shapes team and community

During her 32 years with Our Lady of the Rosary Hospital in Castor, Marilyn Weber has never sought public attention for her work. But recognition has now come her way, as recipient of the 2010 Covenant Health Mission Award for Integrity.

Marilyn's nominators describe her as a strong advocate for seniors and rural communities, a leader who fulfills her role with creativity, professionalism, compassion, and a dedication to providing quality care.

Marilyn served as an RN and Director of Nursing at Our Lady of the Rosary before becoming Executive Director of the hospital 13 years ago.

She believes her upbringing played a large role in her decision to get into healthcare. Growing up on a family farm with a number of younger siblings helped develop her nurturing side, she explains. The importance her parents placed on education led her to choose a career in nursing.

The most rewarding aspect of her work is the way the staff work together as a team—all focused on providing quality service to their residents and patients.

A point of pride for Marilyn is the support the hospital has from her community. “We have a proud heritage that continues to inform who we are as an organization,” she said.

Marilyn is quick to share the recognition for her nomination. “I'd like to acknowledge the whole team of staff, doctors and community. It's not me alone that does any of this. We do it together for the greater good.”



**Marilyn Weber, Executive Director, Our Lady of the Rosary Hospital, Castor**



# Workplace Wellness

## Take simple steps to prevent musculoskeletal injuries

By Lisa Bendfeld, MSKIPP (Musculoskeletal Injury Prevention Program) Educator/Coordinator, Edmonton General, Grey Nuns, and Misericordia Sites

If you work in the health care sector, you are at risk for musculoskeletal injuries—a range of disorders involving muscles, bones, tendons, blood vessels, nerves and other soft tissues. Some examples are Carpal Tunnel Syndrome, Tendinitis, Tennis Elbow and Bursitis.

Every member of our team can benefit from an injury prevention plan that creates awareness of unsafe practices and how to apply simple biomechanical principles to their day.

We need to be aware of our own risks. For some it includes patient handling, inanimate object handling, repetitive work or office ergonomics. We also need to know how to assess each situation and

make safe decisions. The key areas to be aware of are: environment, load (patient or object), individual capabilities, task and equipment.

If your highest risk is patient handling, please communicate your individual capabilities and limits clearly with co-workers or supervisors. Overexertion injuries account for about half of all injuries. Take the time to get enough help or to ensure you are using the proper equipment to complete the patient handling safely.

If your biggest risk is repetitive injuries, you should vary your tasks, and be aware of your movement patterns and posture. Take the time to prevent injuries by taking several micro breaks throughout the day to stretch. Stretching can be helpful in preventing injury. Your body is not designed to be in one position or doing the same movement all day! If you sit at a desk

for the majority of the day, review your office ergonomics to ensure you are not putting your body in unnecessary strain.

If you have questions about musculoskeletal injury prevention, contact your occupational health and safety department, or email Lisa at [lisa.bendfeld@covenanthealth.ca](mailto:lisa.bendfeld@covenanthealth.ca)

### Provincial Stats

In 2008, the lost time claims were 11.3 times higher in the health services industry (person being the source of injury) than the average for all sectors in the province, and 11.2 times higher for disabling injury claims (Work Safe Alberta, Government of Alberta). Annually, the Workers Compensation Board (WCB) Alberta estimates that 12% of nurses leave the health care workforce because of musculoskeletal injuries.

## Centering Prayer for Teamwork

Grant us the wisdom and fortitude to focus on the work that is of critical importance, balancing the needs and demands of the day, remembering that you give us our daily bread.

*Together we pray...Lord, sustain us*

When we lose sight of the meaning of our work, enflame our hearts with your vision, remembering the awesome privilege it is to serve the sick in your name, accomplishing in our great works of charity.

*Together we pray...Lord, move us*

Finally, Lord, we ask for the grace of communion and solidarity, knowing alone we can only do so much. When our spirit falters, help us to lift one another up, to continue the work that you have called us to as a covenantal people.

*Together we pray...Lord, unite us*

# focus on... Accreditation

## Helping us to Continuously Improve Quality and Safety

### What is “Accreditation”?

Many of you may have heard about accreditation or have been involved in previous processes. As you may know, we are preparing for our Covenant Health first accreditation that will start at the end of November. So what does this mean for us?

Technically speaking, accreditation is simply the process of undergoing an assessment of performance against established standards. From an accountability perspective, an organization that is granted accreditation status demonstrates to the public that it cares enough about providing safe, quality service to undergo the rigorous process involved. It means the organization was assessed by its peers, met or exceeded national standards of excellence, and continues to strive for high quality health care.

Like most healthcare organizations in Canada, Covenant Health will be using Accreditation Canada as our primary accrediting organization. But more importantly, for us, the accreditation process is key to fulfilling our mission. Our healing ministry calls us to excellence—to continually examine our efforts, to learn and improve for the benefit of those we serve. Accreditation is a key component in the achievement of our strategic direction.

When we consistently provide safe, quality care, and meet or exceed standards, accreditation largely takes care of itself. But the standards are quite rigorous and meeting them consistently will take the cooperation and involvement of everyone.

The accreditation process enables health service organizations to embed accreditation and quality improvement activities into their daily operations.

This means that accreditation is not an exercise and is much more than a visit from surveyors. It is an ongoing process that will help our patients and residents receive the best care and help us meet future challenges. It is a key part of our ongoing commitment to quality and patient safety.

### What’s Next

Accreditation usually follows a three year cycle. Accreditation Canada is planning to complete our on-site surveys in November, 2010, 2011 and 2012. Long Term Care, Hospice and Palliative Care, Infection Prevention and Control, Governance, Effective Organization, Managing Medications and Reprocessing & Sterilization will be participating in the



### Jon Popowich

Jon is Vice President of Quality—a role that includes responsibility for quality and safety, performance reporting, Lean, patient relations, policies and procedures, and health information management. Jon’s education includes a post-graduate degree in management from the University of Leicester, with a thesis on Quality Management in Health Care. He is trained in process redesign with the Juran Institute and as an internal auditor for ISO9000. He is pictured here on a weekend ice climb on Cascade Mountain, Banff National Park.

November 2010 survey. Our 2010 Service Excellence Teams are well under way with their work. Other programs and services are scheduled for accreditation surveys in 2011 and 2012.

Covenant’s 2011 Service Excellence Teams are beginning their work and the 2012 teams will be underway this fall. In addition, all employees will be asked to participate in an upcoming Patient Safety Culture survey.

Culture is widely recognized and accepted as a significant driver in changing behavior and expectations to increase safety within organizations. A key step in this process is the ability to measure the presence and degree of safety culture. This provides valuable insight into staff perceptions of patient safety, as well as an indication of areas of strength, areas of improvement.

The on-site survey in late November 2010 will involve a team of surveyors visiting Covenant Health sites throughout the province. The surveyors will use the “tracer patient” approach, following a patient through the continuum of care. The surveyors will meet with board members, senior leadership, physicians and staff to ask for their expertise and perceptions of the care they provide. Whenever possible, they will also meet with patients to ask for their perceptions of the care they received. Based on its findings, Accreditation Canada will make a decision that will include required actions and recommendations. We will be required to respond, develop action plans and demonstrate compliance in a timely manner.

The increasing need for public accountability, and the demand to demonstrate quality improvement in health service delivery is high. Accreditation gives us the opportunity to assess our organization against national standards, identify areas for improvement and make improvements province-wide. Above all, it gives us all the opportunity to continuously improve quality and safety.

# SACRED WORK

## Aboriginal Cultural Helper Kyle Campiou fosters healing of body, mind and spirit



**Kyle Campiou holds an eagle feather and a braid of Sweetgrass**

The eagle feather comes from a bird of great spiritual significance to many First Nations cultures and Sweetgrass is used in virtually every sacred ceremony.

When people enter the healthcare system, it's often a time of stress and humbling vulnerability. Add a language or cultural barrier and the potential for fear or misunderstanding is intensified.

This is especially true for Aboriginal Canadians. According to the Canadian Institute for Health Information, they have a life expectancy that is five to 10 years lower than other Canadians. Their infant mortality rate is two to three times higher. And their death rate from injuries is four times higher.

As an Aboriginal Cultural Helper, Kyle Campiou supports this vulnerable population. He strives to bring peace to the care setting and fosters healing for Aboriginal patients, residents, and their families at the Misericordia and Grey Nuns

Community Hospitals and the Edmonton General Continuing Care Centre.

On the spiritual care team since 2008, Kyle feels he's been training for this role his whole life. "I'm from the Driftpile First Nation, just over 300 km north of Edmonton," he explains. "I was raised in a traditional manner by both my late Chapan (great grandparents) then by my late Nokum (Grandmother). I was raised from birth to be an Oskpewis—a Cree word meaning "helper."

Kyle is a peacemaker, an educator and spiritual guide. Sometimes he is called in to find out why a family is withdrawn, absent or frustrated. At other times, he's asked to perform a smudging or Sweetgrass ceremony, an end of life right of passage, or a ritual to help prepare a person for surgery. He is often a go-between for families and care teams when a patient wants to incorporate native spirituality practices with their medical care.

He knows his work makes a difference, and takes pride in easing the journey for patients and their families. One woman he helped quickly comes to mind—a homeless patient suffering from depression. "She had lost a brother with similar health concerns," he explains. "I quickly discovered she had not done anything ritually to honour the loss of her brother," explaining that Aboriginals traditionally have a ceremony to signify loss and symbolically feed relatives who have died with a feast of soup, bannock and other food, prayers and Sweetgrass. With some help from his colleagues, Kyle and the care team were able to support this patient in performing the ritual. Months later, the woman reconnected with Kyle and thanked him for the difference the experience made in her life. "She had her own home, had

reconnected with an estranged member of her family, and was thrilled to be feeling better," he explains. "This experience had a profound impact on her whole outlook."

Kyle is happy to work for a Catholic organization. He stresses that our emphasis on Healing the Body, Enriching the Mind and Nurturing the Soul is "almost the exact core teaching about Sweetgrass and why we braid it in three."

What makes the greatest difference to our Aboriginal patients, residents and families? Kyle asserts that "demonstrating kindness and respect is key, just as it is with all patients." He adds, "nine out of ten times when I'm dealing with an irate patient, it has to do with how they or their personal items have been treated." He says it is especially helpful to ask permission before moving personal items, so patients feel informed and respected.

*The Aboriginal Helper Program was established by Capital Health in 1994—a program that has grown to include national standards endorsed by the Canadian Association for Pastoral Practice and Education. Kyle was one of the first students trained as a helper over a decade ago.*

### Diversity and Inclusion Strategy

How can we better support patients, residents and their loved ones with cultural or language barriers? How can we promote the values of respect, social justice and respect for every member of our team? These questions underpin Covenant Health's Diversity and Inclusion Strategy. For more information, contact Gordon Self, Vice-President, Mission, Ethics and Spirituality at [gordon.self@covenanthealth.ca](mailto:gordon.self@covenanthealth.ca)

Emergency Medical Service (EMS) team at Banff Mineral Springs Hospital



# *Saving lives* a collaborative effort

Recipients of the 2010 Covenant Health Mission Award for Collaboration, the Banff EMS team includes experienced paramedics and emergency technicians who provide pre-hospital and inter-hospital medical care to individuals in Banff National Park, the Town of Banff and the Village of Lake Louise.

When a dispatch call is received, members of the Emergency Medical Service (EMS) team at Banff Mineral Springs Hospital know it is critical to reach their patient as quickly as possible. But the wilderness and the weather in the mountains brings unique challenges, so close collaboration with others such as the Fire Department, RCMP, Ski Patrol, and Parks Canada for the Banff EMS team is needed.

“Particularly in the mountains, it is essential to collaborate with other

agencies,” said Jane Cusden, Manager, Emergency Services and OR. “When we have to recover a patient from the backcountry, we rely on other teams of experts to look after the safety of the patient and our own safety while we provide medical care, and also to transport the patient to hospital.”

The EMS team responds to approximately 1600 calls a year, ranging from road accidents to sport injuries. These paramedics must have the skills and the stamina to work under extreme weather conditions, and to provide patients with medical assistance while traveling long distances. Based out of the Banff hospital, the team is in the unique position of providing care for patients as they are being transported to the hospital; they also work closely with Emergency Room nurses on arrival.

Paramedic Mike Sibbald describes his role as a continuum of care from the moment the patient is picked up to the moment he or she is registered in the Emergency Room at the Banff Mineral Springs Hospital, or transferred to another health care facility in Calgary, if the individual is critically ill.

He noted that working with other agencies is critical to their work. “The number one element in collaborating with other agencies is mutual respect. If you recognize what the other team is trying to achieve and identify the areas where you can help, that guarantees a successful outcome,” said Mike.

**“The number one element in collaborating is mutual respect.”**

—MIKE SIBBALD

The EMS team clearly touches the lives of the people they serve. They believe in prevention and collaborate with other organizations to deliver seminars about road safety and alcohol prevention for youth.

“The team is very well respected by the community, they participate in community events and support patients in the community,” said Jane. “They have great community spirit!”

# OUTSTANDING STEWARDSHIP

springs from a positive work atmosphere

The Hospitality and Clinical Nutrition Team, Edmonton Acute Care, achieves outstanding results as stewards of all the resources entrusted to them.

A positive work atmosphere, and employees who take pride in their work and participate in decision-making: These reasons led to the 2010 Covenant Health Mission Award for Stewardship.

The team includes Sharon Sutherby, Amanda Magee, Roy Kennedy, Patricia Kossey, Alice Lee and Florian Lancot. They oversee food supplies, nutrition, housekeeping, portering, laundry and linen services at the Misericordia and the Grey Nuns Community Hospitals. They manage the daily production of 1800 meals for patients and 1500 meals for elementary and junior high school students participating in the E4C School Lunch Program. The team also provides nutrition intervention and education to patients, and manages two cafeterias and catering services.

“Good stewardship for me is looking at every little piece of the business and ensuring we are good keepers of Covenant Health resources so we can achieve our



Back: Amanda Magee, Florian Lancot, Roy Kennedy, Linda Chow-Turner  
Front: Sharon Sutherby, Alice Lee Missing: Patricia Kossey

goals,” said Sharon Sutherby, Manager, Nutrition and Food Services, Misericordia Community Hospital. “The most important part is building a culture where staff trust us and feel comfortable providing their input.

Two-way communication is a critical element in building a positive culture for over 500 staff members who have many different roles. Rather than having a staff meeting with 100 people or more, each area meets in smaller groups so employees feel at ease.

“For instance, we brought the National Geographic video ‘Celebrate What’s Right with the World’ to our team meeting. The video addresses how to focus on the positive side of things,” said Roy Kennedy,

Manager, Housekeeping, Portering and Laundry Services. “Afterwards, we talk about how much easier life is when we celebrate what we do right. It makes us feel good about our job and ourselves.”

The Hospitality and Clinical Nutrition Team also encourages innovation by enabling staff to experiment with different ways of doing things while maintaining quality standards.

The team’s approach to management is all about engaging staff so they can be creative and efficient in their jobs. They believe when staff take ownership of their work, and the hospitals and take the time to celebrate achievements, the result is a strong, cohesive team that feels fulfilled.

# Let's talk about engagement!

Roy Kennedy (pictured on facing page) is the Manager of House-keeping, Portering and Linen Services at the Grey Nuns Community Hospital. He is a member of the Edmonton Acute Care Hospitality and Clinical Nutrition Team. He was asked a number of questions on how employee engagement principles can be applied to any team with excellent results.

## What does employee engagement mean to you?

Employees who are actively involved in their jobs. When employees understand the purpose of their role and feel a sense of belonging, they take pride in what they do every day.

## How do you increase engagement with your team?

I've divided my 185 employees into smaller teams for meetings. In larger groups, people don't tend to speak up because they're too shy. The feedback I've gotten from my staff is they now feel more comfortable to share their opinions and feedback. I am trying to change the mentality so that employees focus on the positive aspects of our jobs, which contributes to about 90% of our day. As a result, the other 10% don't feel like problems anymore. You start to naturally fix the headaches and obstacles.

## How do you foster accountability within your team?

Laying down expectations is more than just simply stating facts, but actually providing the training and then leading by example. Take front-entrance maintenance, for example. At one time, expectations were just stated. But now, our supervisor shows employees what their work should look like so they see the standard and can know exactly what we're looking for.

## How did the employee engagement survey results help you increase engagement on your team?

It has helped us get to know our employees on another level—a great tool to provide focus while supporting our vision. It allowed us to see what we're doing really well, where we're doing just OK, and what areas we can improve. The action plans developed out of the survey were our smaller team meetings, performance reviews and emphasis on recognizing the good work done on the team.

## Effective July 1, 2010 your benefit plan carriers may be changing

As part of our work to align processes and resources across Covenant Health and to ensure everyone has a competitive benefit plan, all employees will have the following carriers on July 1, 2010:

- Health and dental, health spending accounts — Alberta Blue Cross
- Life and disability insurance — Sun Life Financial
- Accidental death and dismemberment insurance — Industrial Alliance Pacific
- Employee and Family Assistance Program — Catholic Social Services

We are also introducing a common RRSP carrier: RBC Financial.

This change stems from our values of social justice and stewardship. It also supports the strategic direction to Build and Engage the Team by making sure all employees are treated fairly and respectfully.

If your health and dental carrier is changing, please submit your claims to your current carrier and make sure your personal information is accurate by June 30, 2010. This ensures your new Blue Cross ID cards are accurate.

An information package will be sent to every employee. If you have further questions or need forms for your benefit plan carriers, please contact your local benefit administrator.



# Nursing with Compassion

## Your tone of voice can make a lasting impression

*By Joanne Ostepchuk Cowie, RN, Director Medical Services and Infection Prevention and Control, Covenant Health*

Once upon a time, I was a nurse in the pediatric burn unit at the Winnipeg Children's hospital. I was the primary nurse for a sweet young man named Norm. He was 9 years old with burns to 85% of his body. Every day for the next 9 months, it was me and Norm on this journey to recovery.

I never heard from him again until 20 years later, when I got a stat call to the Emergency Room. Someone was trashing our suture room. I went down to

look at the patient's chart—and there was Norm with a rather bloody lip.

I walked into the room, and in a normal voice said, "Norm...what the hell are you doing?" He stopped, turned around, and looked at me. I repeated: "What the hell are you doing?" He replied with, "You're my nurse...I could never forget your voice."

Norm and I discussed what he was afraid of—and I walked him to a mirror to show him why we needed to fix his lip. I

convinced him to get a couple of needles to freeze it so the doctors could suture. He asked me to stay, which I did, and he got stitched up.

On his way out he apologized to all the staff for trashing the room. It was something he did because he is terrified of hospitals and needles. So nurses out there—never underestimate the value of the time you spend with your patients. Sometimes, the tone of your voice is all that is needed to calm a patient.



Bill Grace

## Kudos!

### Covenant Health Board member is recognized with a Lifetime Achievement Award

Covenant Health board member Bill Grace was recently highlighted in the Centennial edition of "Spotlight," a magazine from the Institute of Chartered Accountants of Alberta and recognized with a Lifetime Achievement Award for making an "outstanding contribution to the Chartered Accounting profession in Alberta and to his community." He is ranked in Alberta's 25 best chartered accountants.

"Mr. Grace is a busy corporate and community director, and was also a former president of both the Alberta and Canadian Institutes," his profile reads. "He served as chief financial officer of three Alberta public corporations and was a senior partner of Price Waterhouse until his retirement in 1994."

For more details about Bill Grace and the rest of the Covenant Health Board, visit [www.covenanthealth.ca](http://www.covenanthealth.ca)

# Ready to Serve and to Lead

By Sandra Loy, Organizational Development Facilitator

Congratulations to the first group of leaders to successfully complete the Covenant Health Leadership Program (CLP). CLP is rooted in the belief that effective leaders are key to our success in fulfilling our vision, mission, values and strategic directions. This program develops a community of leaders deeply grounded in a spirituality of service and ethical reflection as well as effective leadership skills.

The program focuses on helping leaders develop skills that result in a workplace where everyone feels appreciated and engaged in Covenant Health's important work. All our leaders are expected to complete the program. They will each receive individualized leadership coaching



**Back Row - Left to Right: Barb O'Brien, Linda Dobson, Deanna Smith, Heather Hackett, Carol Green, Don Ridley, Catherine Smith. Front Row - Left to Right: Debbie Elliott, Carmen Hatcher, Janet Wass, Alison Morin, Teresa Lucier, Patricia OToole, Liz Priest**

so they can apply what they have learned to their specialized areas.

At Covenant Health we define leaders, appointed or front-line, as people with the ability to shape organizations and teams. This is why we also offer a "Leading From the Front Lines" leadership program

for those in front-line leadership roles, including charge nurses, and team leaders.

*For more information on the Covenant Health Leadership Program and Leading from the Front Lines, contact Cathy Kirkland at 780 735.2724 or [cathy.kirkland@covenanthealth.ca](mailto:cathy.kirkland@covenanthealth.ca)*

## School Opens in Youville Home

The residents in the basement of the west wing of Youville Home, a continuing care facility, are very different than the others. They are younger... a lot younger. They are students in grades 7 to 10 at École Alexandre-Taché, a francophone Catholic school.

Like the Sisters of Charity (Grey Nuns) who came to St. Albert almost 150 years ago, the team members at Youville Home are good stewards of their resources. When the new Youville Home building opened over two years ago, they decided to offer the space in the basement of the old building to someone in the community who needed it.

It was the answer to the prayers of Principal Claude Viel and a group of committed parents fervently trying to establish a francophone Junior and Senior High School in St. Albert.

"It offered us a chance to start our program because you need numbers to justify building a new school," explained Claude. "By starting up the school here, as the numbers continue to

improve every year, it proves there is a need. We have 80 students enrolled this year, and next year 110."

On April 21, 2010, the school had its official opening ceremony, complete with a ribbon cutting, blessing from the Archbishop Richard Smith, and a rocking performance of the school song written and performed by the students.

"We are delighted to have you here. This situation gives both residents of Youville Home and students of École Alexandre-Taché wonderful opportunities to learn, grow, and have fun together," said Cecilia Munro, Executive Director of Youville Home at the opening.

Next year, with students entering grade 11, Claude and Cecilia are optimistic about working together on a work experience program and other volunteer opportunities.

Above all, Claude is thankful for the new home and warm welcome. "It is very nice to have neighbours who are totally cooperative."



**Archbishop Richard Smith (left) blesses the halls of École Alexandre-Taché with Principal Claude Viel (right)**

# Judy's Story

## A little help from her friends made a big difference

By Deanna Nachura, Bsc. R.D., Bonnyville Health Centre

On February 7, in the five minutes it took to roll her grocery cart from one end of Sobeys to the other—one of our team members, Judy Cardinal, lost everything she owned in a fire that burned her trailer to the ground.

Thankfully, a quick-thinking family friend stepped in to help, and her mother, brother, stepdad, her daughters, and their friends all escaped with their lives. But as a single mom of two teenage girls, how was she going to put a roof over their heads? With no home insurance, how would she replace basic items they need for daily living?

Judy was devastated.

Our Executive Director, Alex Smyl, and our Food Service Manager, Leanne Tilley, were determined to do all that they could to help. Judy needed the basics. Staff arrived hours after hearing the news with clothes and toiletry items for her and her girls. They also brought in financial donations and food gift cards to get her through those difficult first days.

The next obstacle Judy faced was a \$3000 bill to have her charred trailer removed from where it lay in ruin. Through the grape vine of good Samaritans, a generous Bonnyville businessman had her lot completely cleaned and the trailer removed, for free.

Her colleagues hosted a party to shower Judy with household items. We helped stock her kitchen, refrigerator, bathroom and linen closet. An in-house fundraiser

generated \$4500—enough money for Judy to put a down payment on a newer trailer. And she also received many other generous donations from others in the community.

Settled in her new trailer, Judy is forever grateful to her colleagues at Bonnyville Health Centre. She now knows how much she is valued there as a colleague and friend.

Judy has been a food services worker in the kitchen at Bonnyville Health Centre for over six years—making drinks, doing dishes, chopping vegetables and whatever else is needed. “It’s a good job...very fast-paced” she says with pride. “It’s physical but I love it.”

When a house fire destroyed everything she owned, her colleagues stepped in to help see her through her darkest hour. “I never expected people to be so generous. I was overwhelmed. “When something [like this] happens you see how many caring people are out there. This is one caring hospital. I love this place—I love the people.”



Image Xtreme Photography, Bonnyville

Pictured here are a few of the colleagues who supported Judy and her family after a fire destroyed her home. Front row sitting, L to R: Alanna Paradis, Sister Mary Ellen O’Neill, Judy Cardinal, Danielle Sutherland Back row, L to R: Annette Meashaw, Deanna Nachura, Ann Chislett, Leanne Tilley



## On Perception

“How you see is what you get. How you see determines your reality and determines where you go. When we change the way we see the world...we change the world.”

—WARREN MACDONALD, as quoted on May 11, 2010 at the Covenant Health Spring Leaders Retreat in Banff. Visit [www.warren-macdonald.com](http://www.warren-macdonald.com) for details on Warren’s story

# Supporting Each Other

Staff participate in Critical Incident Stress Management Training

**33** Covenant Health staff from across the province were recently trained in Critical Incident Stress Management (CISM). They joined Covenant Health's CISM Team and are available to assist in crisis or stressful situations at work and in the community.

Through a three-day interactive workshop offered by the International Critical Incident Stress Foundation, participants learned and practiced a wide range of peer support crisis intervention services. "The CISM training increased my knowledge of dealing effectively with critical traumatic incidents. I believe it

will assist me in both my professional and personal life. An awesome experience," notes Bev Brace from Bonnyville.

CISM is designed to help people work through traumatic events by encouraging them to talk about the incident without judgment. Examples of critical incidents include line of duty deaths, serious work related injury, the suicide of a colleague, multi-casualty events or disasters and significant events involving children.

"The purpose of the CISM Team is to work with our colleagues as they go through a difficult time and help them

manage stress in a healthy way," says Father Thomas Stefanyk, Director, Mission Services. He notes it's best to call CISM as soon as an incident occurs so those impacted can talk about it and work through their feelings immediately. The team provides support through one-on-one or group discussions, education, follow-up meetings and referrals.

The Covenant Health CISM Team is available 24 hours a day. Any Covenant Health staff, physician or volunteer can call 1.780.735.9000 for support following a critical incident.

**Back Row, L to R:** Liz Hamblin (Edmonton), Robert Protz (Edmonton), Alex Smyl (Bonnyville), Trevor Ellerby (Edmonton), Toni Wheeler (Edmonton), Ralph Warnock (Killam/Vegreville), Diana Warowicki (Edmonton), Lila Harter (Banff), David Quigley (Edmonton), Lucie Knudsen (Bonnyville)  
**Middle Row, L to R:** Sheila Hordal (Edmonton), Megan Carleton (Edmonton), Sandra Graham (Edmonton), Tracy Tarapaski (Edmonton)  
**Front Row, L to R:** Bev Brace (Bonnyville), Mark O'Flanagan (Edmonton), Tammy Burrows (Edmonton), Bob van Goethem (Instructor), Tayreez Mushani (Edmonton), Jan Huard-Lazanik (Edmonton)



**Learn more about crisis intervention**  
 If you'd like to participate in CISM training or are interested in becoming a CISM Team volunteer, please contact Fr. Thomas at 780.735.9589 or [thomas.stefanyk@covenanthealth.ca](mailto:thomas.stefanyk@covenanthealth.ca)



**Back Row, L to R:** Cassandra Carr (Banff), Paulette DeCoste (Instructor), Alex Ingamells (Banff), Mike Milne (Banff), Barry Straub (Castor), Rhonda Beierle (Trochu), Fr. Thomas Stefanyk, Victor Kemble (Lethbridge)  
**Front Row, L to R:** Lise Schmidt (Instructor), Natalie Palmer (Banff), Pamela Newton (Lethbridge), Llan Baceda (Lethbridge), Susan Nielsen (Trochu), Brenda Achtemichuk (Lethbridge), Tanya van Oene (Lethbridge).

# Show Your Colours CONTEST

Where did you wear your  
Covenant Health jacket?



Monique Trudelle,  
Communications  
Manager, at  
the Vancouver  
Olympics!



Darlene Pranke,  
Spiritual Care  
Provider, in the Cloud  
Forest of Costa Rica



Lori Bartley, Rural  
Information Systems  
Manager, on a  
sailboat trip through  
the Greek Islands



Debbie Kohoutek, Head Cook  
at St. Michael's Health Centre, Lethbridge  
on West Kootenay Lake, BC with a 9 pound  
Gerard Rainbow Trout (24 inches long!)

Contest deadline is August 30.  
Prizes will be awarded for:

- Greatest distance from corporate office in Edmonton (TAWA Centre)
- Most creative photograph
- Largest team shot
- Silliest photograph

Email your original photographs to  
ourcompass@covenanthealth.ca.  
Don't forget to tell us where and when  
they were taken!

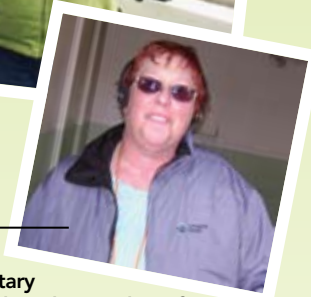
Submission of photographs indicates that you  
have obtained consent from all people visible  
in your photograph to appear in Covenant  
Health publications, promotional materials  
and on the website. Therefore, many people  
will see your photo.



Kimberly Small, Women's Wellness,  
Menopause Practitioner in the  
Butchart Gardens outside of  
Victoria, British Columbia



Cindy Mulherin,  
Executive Director,  
Banff Mineral Springs  
Hospital with her son  
in Shinjuku, Japan



Gillian Chopin,  
Executive Secretary  
to Greg Hadubiak and Jan Schimpf  
in a jail cell on Alcatraz Island,  
San Francisco

The "Hug the Hospital & Show your Colours"  
team at the Misericordia Community Hospital



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We welcome your comments and  
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Our Compass Newsletter  
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Thank you to all of you who participated in the Our Compass newsletter survey. Your input is invaluable and has helped shape this newest edition. Keep the feedback coming!