

NEWS RELEASE

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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Chilliwack Division of Family Practice reports on community feedback at final community forum

Chilliwack, BC- For the past couple of weeks, community members have been able to gather and voice their opinion on various social issues at community forums hosted by the Chilliwack Healthier Community in partnership with local organizations. The wrap-up forum for the series was held on the morning of March 12, 2014 at the Rotary Hall in Chilliwack Cultural Centre.

Reporting back findings from the first four community forums, the final forum, titled Time for Action, was guided by the objectives of moving talks forward, forming new alliances and strengthening existing ones, so community members' concerns and feedback become an integral part of social planning and policy-making. The forums covered a diverse range of pressing social issues and attracted audiences from all sectors of the community. Overall, the series boasted an attendance of nearly 300 over the five forums.

To conclude the series, spokespeople from earlier forums shared what they had learnt through this community engagement event series. The Chilliwack Division of Family Practice hosted the Partners in Health Care Community Forum, where preliminary findings from community surveys conducted as part of A GP for Me initiative were shared. Katrina Bepple, Program Manager for A GP for Me at the Division reported on the experiences of community members in accessing primary care, finding a family physician and the challenges and strengths of our primary health care system.

Marc Tremblay from the RCMP elaborated on the primary concerns that were expressed at the Crime and Public Safety Community Forum; namely drug abuse, property crime and road safety. Anne Todd from Fraser Health shared insights regarding the Mental Health and Substance Abuse Community Forum, identifying possible solutions through better resource and service integration, rather than hoping for increased budgets in a time when the purse strings are being tightened. Karen Stanton, a representative of the City of Chilliwack addressed the issue of homelessness, the barriers to affordable housing and potential ways of overcoming these obstacles. The community forums have served a prominent role in furthering the Chilliwack Healthier Community's objectives of increasing public education and awareness of community issues through resource collaboration and networking.





Katrina Bepple, Programs Lead, Chilliwack Division of Family Practice reports on the Partners in Health Care Community Forum

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