Campbell River docs share their top 10 energy saving tips

The Seldons’ top 5 energy saving tips:
1. Did you know temperatures in igloos run anywhere between -7° and 16° Celsius? Next winter, shut off your heater and imagine you’re in one. Don layer upon layer of thermal underwear under your ski clothes until you feel comfortable.
2. When unpacking your groceries, organize your refrigerated items on the counter before quickly stuffing them into your fridge. This will help keep the cold air inside and require less electricity to reset the thermostat.
3. Cut down on shower time. Have someone time the showers and bang on the door when time’s up.
4. Hang dry your clothes outside. Don’t have a clothesline? Try using the trampoline that the kids have outgrown.
5. Gather up your musical neighbours, write a song about electricity savings and form a band dedicated to spreading the word through song.

The Loeb’s top 5 tips for saving electricity:
1. Switch to black socks; they show less dirt, tricking you into believing they don’t need to go into the washing machine.
2. Having a medical journaling session with other GPs? Who needs overhead lights and heat? Jacket up and have everyone BYOL (bring your own lantern).
3. Rig up the blender to a bicycle and squeeze in some exercise while whizzing up that morning smoothie.
4. Go lights-out in the office when you don’t need them. On Earth Day, Dr. Kask only used lights when necessary during examinations.
5. Create a solar powered oven and make one giant, delicious cookie in it. Yum!

* For more information on the City of Campbell River 2013 Energy Challenge sponsored by BC Hydro, visit their website. To learn about our green efforts visit Green VIHA on our intranet.

A note of thanks to Amy van den Hooven, Energy Challenge Coordinator (COOP), City of Campbell River.
Do you have a best friend at work? Find out how one department fosters an environment where friendships thrive

In our ongoing series highlighting questions from the Vancouver Island Health Authority 2013 Employee Engagement Gallup Q12 Survey we are featuring Question #10 “I have a best friend at work.” According to Gallup, quality relationships featuring trust and loyalty between employees have positive benefits for the workplace.

The IMIT/Project Delivery Management Office agrees. According to Sandy Alberg, Manager, Workflow and Process Improvement, one of the keys to their success is a buddy system for new employees. “We pair new employees with a seasoned team member so they have someone to help them transition into the department, to answer questions and generally make them feel welcome – in fact many of these mentorships turn into friendships.”

“We take special care to make sure everyone knows everyone else. There are lots of laughs and a generosity of spirit that makes our department not only effective at getting the job done, but also a great place to work.”

Hats off to the IMIT/Project Delivery Management Office for encouraging positive relationships between employees.

Making waves: Honouring colleagues for their far reaching contributions to health services and staff safety

The Vancouver Island Health Authority brought home two awards from this year’s Health Employers Association of BC (HEABC) 2013 Excellence in BC Healthcare Awards ceremony.

Congratulations to Allison Cutler, Executive Director for Population and Community Health, for receiving the Gold Apple Award and being named a Health Care Hero for her inspiring leadership and significant contributions to population and community health services on the Island. Some of her many accomplishments include leading integrated primary and community care across Vancouver Island, overseeing the development of the new Oceanside Health Centre, creating the Aboriginal Health Council that led to the Vancouver Island Health Authority’s Aboriginal Health Plan, heading the development of the Nanaimo Regional General Hospital’s state-of-the-art Perinatal Unit, and establishing Youth Clinics across Central and North Vancouver Island.

Congratulations also go to the Violence Prevention Task Force team winning the Award of Merit for Workplace Health Innovation for their work in developing new violence prevention policies based on feedback from 80 frontline clinical staff within the Health Authority. This award also marks the fourth year in a row the Health Authority has received recognition by HEABC for workplace safety. The team was led by Lesley Moss, Executive Director for Occupational Health and Safety, with team members Dorothy Morris, Tracey Newlands, and Stephen Rose.

This department manages a number of projects for different clients across VIHA in a fast-paced, deadline driven environment. “There is a high level of trust and we rely on each other for input,” notes Tanya Chan, Project Analyst. “We use each other as sounding boards, which not only enhances the project but builds relationships as well.” Employees organize social events like potluck lunches and birthday celebrations regularly. “We take special care to make sure everyone knows everyone else,” adds Alberg. “There are lots of laughs and a generosity of spirit that makes our department not only effective at getting the job done, but also a great place to work.”

Above (l-r): Tracey Newlands, Dorothy Morris, Lesley Moss and Stephen Rose accept their award on behalf of the Violence Prevention Task Force team.

IMIT Project Delivery Office—The team that potlucks together, stays together

Hats off to the IMIT/Project Delivery Management Office for encouraging positive relationships between employees.
Celebrating Aboriginal employees and community connections

The Vancouver Island Health Authority’s annual Island-wide Aboriginal Week celebrations took place June 18-21 to honour the contributions of Aboriginal employees. Staff at Cormorant Island Health Centre, Campbell River Hospital, West Coast General Hospital, Nanaimo Regional General Hospital, Cowichan Regional District Hospital, Saanich Peninsula Hospital and the Royal Jubilee Hospital in Victoria enjoyed traditional dances, ceremonies, food and music from Aboriginal artists and community members.

Steve Sxwltuh’txw, coordinator for VIHA’s Aboriginal Employment Program and one of the event organizers feels we have many reasons to celebrate the ways in which our staff work with Aboriginal communities and people. “I am proud to promote VIHA as an employer of choice to Aboriginal students and job seekers. Our staff live their C.A.R.E. values every day: they have the courage to talk about Aboriginal experiences in healthcare; they aspire to learn how to make care culturally safe and respect traditions and, even when those traditions seem unfamiliar, our staff demonstrate empathy for people of all backgrounds, creating an environment that welcomes diversity.”

Sienna G., Disability Management Consultant at RJH, echoes Steve’s sentiments, “As an employee, it felt great to see my culture acknowledged and celebrated within the organization I work for.”

For those who missed out on the celebrations this year, please enjoy the photo submissions (at right) and mark your calendars for next year! Steve anticipates more sites will be added to the 2014 event schedule in honour of our commitment to improved health and care for Aboriginal people.

Thank you for making Privacy Week a smashing success

A huge thank you to everyone who participated in Privacy and Security Awareness Week 2013, including, in particular, the information sharing Survey. Cathy Yaskow, program director, notes, “The staff response was phenomenal and speaks volumes about our collective commitment to care for people in every aspect of our work.”

Cathy has read each and every completed survey response. She and her Information Stewardship, Access & Privacy (ISAP) team will be developing materials to answer frequently asked questions and address common scenarios. Cathy added, “Staff feedback has been remarkably thoughtful and has given us a clear sense of areas where teams may benefit from further information sharing guidance to support them. It also highlighted great examples from staff of how they already respect and care for people by considering the circumstances before sharing personal information.”

Congratulations to all puzzle, quiz and survey prize recipients! The winners have been notified and the names of those consenting to publication will be posted on the ISAP website for the next month. A big thank you to all our sponsors who provided the prizes for this important educational event!

Keep an eye on the ISAP website and The Weekly for an upcoming summary of the Survey findings, as well as ongoing Privacy and Security education. If you haven’t seen their latest educational video (and gag reel!) featuring your colleagues, it’s on-line any time you need it.

Above: Cheryl Wolosch, Health Information Management (HIM) practicum student kicked off Privacy & Security Week in style at St. Joseph’s General Hospital in Comox. Cheryl and manager Dawn Lawrie crafted an irresistible, interactive kiosk that just so happened to match Cheryl’s pink leather jacket.
In April, the Michael Smith Foundation for Health Research (MSFHR) awarded the Vancouver Island Health Authority $50,000 through the BC Nursing Research Initiative to support a Point of Care (POC) Research Initiative. VIHA’s proposal titled “Bringing Research into Practice (BRP)” consists of four projects involving nurses and other frontline clinicians in focused activities to raise awareness of and appreciation for research through direct participation.

All projects are up and running with Dr. Belinda Parke, VIHA’s scholar in residence, leading two teams examining different aspects of safe care practices for older persons in Emergency Departments at NRGH and RJH. Two other projects include Sandie Somers, Clinical Nurse Specialist, Seniors’ and Spiritual Health, working with teams at PCC 2 South and Cowichan Lodge to implement new clinical guidelines for use of secure environments and Diana Campbell, Professional Practice Consultant is examining best organizational practices for assisting new grad RNs to transition into the work place.

A Knowledge Mobilization* strategy developed for BRP will ensure exchange and uptake of findings where possible and showcase successful activities for the purpose of motivating others to participate in research. Overall coordination for BPR is provided by Lynn Cummings, VIHA’s Nursing Research Facilitator.

*Knowledge Mobilization is a term that refers to moving available knowledge (often from formal research) into active use, in this case, with the goal of improving and informing practice.

Wondering what’s new with the North Island Hospitals Project?

Check out the project team’s community newsletter and find out how we’re building for health in Campbell River and the Comox Valley.

VIHA Telehealth was awarded most innovative poster out of 72 entries during the COACH eHealth 2013 conference. The poster, entitled, TeleCardiology: Imagination to Implementation, highlights how VIHA has successfully implemented videoconferencing and digital stethoscopes within the health authority to enable heart specialists to see their patients, and also hear their heart sounds remotely.

“This service has saved me over $600 dollars, we need to get more providers on board,” said a recent TeleCardiology patient (2013). In addition to money saved, TeleCardiology receives extremely high care provider and client satisfaction, increasing the collaborative approach to care, not to mention preventing over 31,000 kilometres of patient travel.

The Telehealth team is exploring the use of the digital stethoscope for other clinical applications such as speech language pathology.

To learn more about Telehealth, visit their public webpage, their intranet site, call (250)-519-1944, email Telehealth@viha.ca or check out their infographic, 10 Things About Telehealth in VIHA.

Bringing research into practice: VIHA receives Point of Care research award

Since its introduction in 2006, VIHA Telehealth services have spared our clients (and the ozone layer) a whopping 3,700,000 kilometres of health-related travel.

Above: Connecting people with their caregivers up and down the island. The Telehealth team brings care close to home.

* Since its introduction in 2006, VIHA Telehealth services have spared our clients (and the ozone layer) a whopping 3,700,000 kilometres of health-related travel.
When is a plate of Chow Mein more than just a plate of food?

Have you ever wondered what secrets lay hidden in a simple plate of chow mein?

I’m Marina McLeod and I’ve worked for Vancouver Island Health Authority for over fifteen years, primarily as a Rehabilitation Worker with Mental Health and Substance Use Services. My team members and I work very hard to find ways to help our clients improve their quality of life. Our clientele for the most part are on a very limited budget. Grocery shopping can be a nightmare for them as they often must decide how they will pay the ever increasing food costs, rent, hydro and telephone bills. Eating within the Canada Food Guidelines can be a huge challenge.

I know the number one skill to staying balanced is to feed our bodies the healthiest food we can afford. We have a program called “Six Easy Pieces” which promotes cooking skills. There are six weeks of classes, six participants and six economical menus. We focus on the preparations of donated items from the food bank, and local non-profit organizations. We also take field trips to discount stores that feature food items.

The students who sign up are expected to be present for the duration of the course and to be on time (commitment, loyalty). Before we get started we wash up, and put on gloves and aprons (hygiene practices). We are diligent in prepping equipment (food safety and cross contamination awareness). Next we carefully read the recipe so we know what we are about to prepare (literacy skills). Then we line everything up in the order we will use them (food identification, organizational and time management skills). Next we measure our ingredients (arithmetic skills). We work in pairs (teamwork). We practice the techniques being taught by the instructor (memory retention, discipline, focus) and all the time we are doing food preparation we must practice good manners and kitchen safety (communication skills, safety rules).

What keeps me going you ask? I feel privileged to watch the students push their fears aside and try their best to produce a plate of delicious food that makes them proud. In so doing they learn that they are in fact, creative people.

A humble plate of chow mein prepared with love can be life changing.

A round of applause for…Brenda Warren
Physician Recruitment Manager

Brenda was awarded the Canadian Association of Staff Physician Recruitment (CASPR) 2013 Leadership Award at their annual conference in Saskatoon on May 7.

Brenda’s colleagues nominated her for the award in recognition of her outstanding leadership within our Physician Recruitment Office (PRO), but her work extends far beyond our walls.

Brenda actively works with mayors, town council members and community committees to develop strategies to assist them in recruitment and retention of family physicians. “I’m always working to find the right fit,” said Brenda. “In some ways, it’s like matchmaking. It’s just as important to find the right physician for the right community as it is to find the right community for the physician and his or her family. When those connections work out, it means physicians are more likely to remain in the community, which benefits everyone.”
The Cat in the Hat Comes Back to the Queen Alexandra Centre

Dr. Seuss would have loved this story: a 1957 first edition copy of his book *The Cat in the Hat*, which he autographed and dedicated to the sick kids at the Queen Alexandra Solarium, has made its way home after being M.I.A. for over 20 years.

Dr. Robert O’Connor, a Metchosin family physician, saw the book at Kilshaw’s Auctioneers and took the opportunity to return it to its home, to bring joy to another generation of children with special needs.

The book was originally brought to the Queen Alexandra Solarium (now the Queen Alexandra Centre for Children’s Health or QACCH to many) by Dr. Seuss himself, when he spoke there in the early 1960s.

Somehow, the book went missing — no one knows when. In 1992, a book collector purchased it for 25 cents at a rummage sale, but didn’t notice it was autographed until 2002, when she chose it to read to her daughter, who receives services at QACCH. In January 2013, she auctioned it off at Kilshaw’s, where O’Connor purchased it for $550.

Children’s Health Foundation of Vancouver Island has placed the book on display in a glass case (at children’s height) in the main entrance to the QACCH.

Gold River Health Clinic staff know how to get things rolling

Gold River Clinic had 100% staff participation during this year’s Bike to Work Week! All employees at the rural site were either biking, rollerblading, or walking to work throughout the week.

One Gold River Clinic team member, who participated for the first time, shared her Bike to Work week story:

“I never thought of riding a bike to work before. I haven’t owned a bike for years. When our team leader was encouraging the employees in our clinic to participate, I agreed to give it a try. I found a used bike at our local free store and I biked to work every day of Bike to Work Week. It was great and I won a prize, too! Mornings in our rural town are very quiet and peaceful when you’re on a bike. I really enjoyed it and will continue to bike to work when I can.”

Teresa Beer, also from Gold River Clinic, commended her colleague’s courage to try something new, “I think it’s a great message to get out. You don’t have to spend a lot on fancy gear or a new bike, just find one, get on and go!”

Delivering customized care for people with chronic conditions

The following letter was submitted to the Campbell River Mirror on May 23, 2013 by Barbara Swanton in thanks for the programming and care offered by the Integrated Health Network team at Campbell River Hospital.

‘It is like an oasis in my busy life.’

“Both my husband and I have used the IHN since April, 2011. It is open to anyone with a chronic health issue (my husband had a heart attack and I have high blood pressure). There are so many services available. We have used many of them. We go to Strathcona Gardens three days a week for fitness classes (the first four months were free) that are tailored for our specific needs. We have attended many of the free workshops to improve our health. I attend the weekly one-hour meditation led by Sheila MacKenzie. It is like an oasis in my busy life.

You must be referred to the IHN by your doctor. If you are eligible and your doctor has not mentioned it - ask! It is a wonderful service with a caring, supportive and helpful team.”  ~ Barbara Swanton, Campbell River
Our accreditation all-stars are teams taking the initiative to meet the highest standards of care. This month we feature the Campbell River Home and Community Care (HCC) team for their work on information transfer.

With 18 offices across the islands, day and evening service, and more than 800 visits a day, transferring accurate and thorough information can be challenging in Home and Community Care. But because it is critical to providing excellent care to their patients, they make it a priority.

The HCC team in Campbell River communicates using many vehicles to share the necessary information across the team, taking advantage of technology when possible.

One of the more complex communication processes Campbell River HCC clinicians use is the “Delegation of Task.” This process informs Community Health Workers (CHW) on changes to care for specific clients, whether identified by family or one of the caregivers.

Communicating information between health-care professionals is a fundamental component of patient care. The information shared between providers who are changing shifts (e.g., hand-over) helps inform patient care plans, identifies safety concerns, and keeps the care team informed. Transferring patients between units and services also requires information transfer between health care professionals. Absent or inaccurate information can have disastrous effects on patient care. According to the Joint Commission on Accreditation of Healthcare Organizations, almost 70% of all sentinel events are caused by miscommunication.

How can you ensure information is transferred effectively, within your team, with other areas, and with patients & families?

Click Here for the new VIHA 2013 ROP Brochure!
the members of the care team.

Something as simple as the eye drops needed pre or post-surgery involves many steps to ensure the client gets the right care, from the right person at the right time. When a change in care is needed, the information has to get to the HCC clinician. It may come from the family or doctor’s office, via anyone on the care team.

Phone calls and paperwork ensue, between the care team, HCC clinician and home support nurse.

Then the HCC clinician has to ensure one of the team goes to the home at the right time of day for the new treatment. A written procedure for administering the treatment has to be delivered to the client’s home, or it can’t be provided.

Close attention to all details in the information pathway is required. The process can feel like the old game of hot potato. It is easy to drop, and can have serious consequences if it is.

All the HCC staff in Campbell River involved in this process collaborate and communicate using the telephone, fax, and/or courier to ensure the information is transferred in a timely and confidential manner. This way, they successfully “pass the potato” between players and our clients are safe and well cared for.

“We point to information and highlight a lot, so we are flagging rather than just leaving information for staff to read. It works very well for us.”

~Diane Fietz, Leader HCC

**Definition of the Month**

Transfer of Information, one criteria within the Communication ROP, occurs on a daily basis in our practice whether we are receiving or sending. By providing timely, accurate and understandable information to clients, families, and other health professionals we reduce errors and contribute to optimal care provision.