



Health Matters Newsletter November 7, 2014

Today's Health Matters Includes:

- Meeting Schedules
- Community Meetings and Events
- Profile Essential Reading for Decision- Makers (Cowichan News Leader Pictorial)
- Food Costing In BC
- Seasonal Affective Disorder (SAD)



What do you do in a windstorm when the power is out? Go for a walk to check out the action (staying far away from the trees) Then embrace the dark with some candles and a warm fire!

Our Cowichan- Network Member Meetings-

- ✓ **Next Our Cowichan Network Meeting –November 13**, CVRD Board Room. Light dinner at 5:30 pm – Meeting starts at 6:00 pm
- ✓ **Next Admin Committee Meeting-** Wednesday November 19, 5:30 pm CVRD Com. Room 2
- ✓ **Small Group planning meeting** for Personal Health Practices and Coping skills combined with Chronic Illness and Mental Health – Wednesday November 19- 9:30 to 11:30 Venue to be announced.
- ✓ **SAVE THE DATE-** Community Gathering Day to discuss the Cowichan Communities Health Profile and More! January 22 9 am to 3 pm at the Island Savings Centre Duncan

Upcoming Events/ Workshops/ Community Meetings

- **Together Against Violence Workshop**- November 26- 8 am to 12 pm breakfast included – Duncan United Church \$10 or by donation

Profile Essential Reading for our Decision- Makers

Our Take Cowichan News Leader Pictorial

Health Network: findings should be a guide for local policy moving forward

We say: Profile great start to building a healthy community

Everyone knows the basics of staying healthy: eat right, get plenty of exercise and stay focussed on the bright side of life.

So why are most of our health care dollars spent on fixing the sick instead of holding illness at bay by making sure that people are well fed, fit and made to feel safe, secure and important?

It's an intriguing question and one that is certainly brought into sharp focus by the Cowichan Communities Health Profile.

The profile does an excellent job of isolating some of the peculiarities of our community: where our strengths are and where we need to improve.

It will succeed or fail based on how many decision makers read it and how seriously they take it.

Most would likely consider teen pregnancies, employment rates and the percentage of people graduating from Cowichan high schools as serious issues. But health issues?

The answer is an emphatic yes.

Years of research has conclusively proven people who come from stable homes, who have secure and fulfilling jobs and are better educated, are also healthier.

It makes sense, but seldom seems to play a prominent role in our decision making. That needs to change.

Ladysmith and Lake Cowichan Mayors Rob Hutchins and Ross Forrest appeared to be the only elected officials present at Thursday's profile unveiling at Vancouver Island University.

The rest need to immediately add this document to their reading list. It gets right to the bedrock of community, and clearly illustrates issues that affect us all.

It will open our eyes.

Food Costing in BC 2013 –

Every two years the Population and Public Health team at PHSA works with the regional health authorities and Dietitians of Canada to coordinate the food costing in B.C. The aim of this work is to monitor the cost of healthy eating in British Columbia. [Download here.](#)

Seasonal Affective Disorder

Weather often affects people's moods. Sunlight breaking through clouds can lift our spirits, while a dull, rainy day may make us feel a little gloomy. While noticeable, these shifts in mood generally do not affect our ability to cope with daily life. Some people, however, are vulnerable to a type of depression that follows a seasonal pattern. For them, the shortening days of late autumn are the beginning of a type of clinical depression that can last until spring. This condition is called "Seasonal Affective Disorder," or SAD.

Maximize your exposure to daylight.

Make your house brighter—trim the bushes around your windows and keep your blinds and curtains open during the day. Use bright colors on walls and light-colored upholstery. Get up early to take advantage of as much daylight as possible. If possible, sit near a window at work.

Engage in activities that you enjoy.

Take some time off in the winter, instead of using all of your vacation time during the summer. Volunteer or participate in activities that make you happy. Spend time with friends and family members who are caring, supportive, and positive.

Practice healthy habits.

Exercise, get enough sleep, eat a well-balanced diet, and reduce stress. Spend time outdoors if possible—skiing is an excellent way to get lots of light and exercise in the winter. Practice good sleep hygiene and make time to relax. Eat healthy foods for more energy and limit caffeine.

Take all medicines as directed.

Talk to your health care provider about prescription and over-the-counter (OTC) drugs and diet supplements (including vitamin D), as well as any herbs you take. Follow directions carefully and watch for interactions and side effects. Avoid alcohol and illegal drugs.

Consider light therapy.

There are several devices available—from battery-powered visors, portable light boxes and special light bulbs, to dawn simulators (lamps that switch on before dawn and gradually light your room, like the sun rising)—but be cautious and talk to your health care provider before trying light therapy.

Watch for early signs that SAD is getting worse.

If you suffer from severe winter depression, consult a psychologist or psychiatrist. A qualified health care provider can help determine if your symptoms are related to SAD or may have another cause. Additional treatments available include psychotherapy, behavioral therapy, stress management techniques and antidepressants.

Do you have a resource, event or information you would like to share?

Send it to cindylisecchn@shaw.ca and it will be included in the weekly

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