

Boyle McCauley + PCN = Wound Care

Contributed by Cecilia Blasetti, Executive Director, Boyle McCauley Health Centre

When you're poor and homeless, and are struggling with addictions and mental illness, accessing health care services is often difficult and overwhelming. At Boyle McCauley Health Centre (BMHC) our goal is to help people overcome these barriers and to offer services and programs that reflect the needs of some of the most challenged members of our community. With this in mind we offer a broad range of services on-site at the Health Centre rather than making referrals that are often frustrating for everyone involved.

A year and a half ago we received funding from the Edmonton North PCN's Supporting Specialty Interest (SSI) program to assist us in enhancing and expanding our wound care program. Injuries and infections are significant problems in a community where personal safety is not a given and high risk activities such as injection drug use are common; when you live on the street, even everyday activities such as going to sleep at night can be hazardous to your health.

With the SSI grant we have been able to make a number of meaningful changes to our wound care program. Our LPNs have received specialized training which has expanded their knowledge and skill set and augmented their ability to treat more complex wounds. This has had the positive effect of increasing the availability of doctors and NPs for patient encounters. The grant has also enabled us to purchase the most advanced wound care products available ensuring that our patients are given every opportunity for a positive outcome. Perhaps the most critical aspect of the grant is the support it provides for designated wound care staff. This has enabled us to expand access to this important service to whoever needs it, rather than limiting it to BMHC patients. Since receiving the grant, the number of wound care patients we treat has doubled.

For BMHC patients, and those who are referred from the community, wound care that is provided when and where it is needed, by staff who understand their circumstances, means the difference between following through with a prescribed course of treatment or not. The referrals we receive from hospitals indicates that our wound clinic is acknowledged for the high quality care that it provides and we are pleased to do our part in reducing the number of patients accessing emergency departments for care that is better provided in community. We look forward to continuing to partner with Edmonton North PCN in finding creative and innovative ways of delivering primary health care to a very marginalized population.

Your invitation to this event is enclosed. *Please plan to attend.*



The Boyle McCauley Health Centre turns 30 years old this month

...and that's a milestone worth celebrating! The realities of practicing a team approach to health care are new to many in the PCN, but that has been the model that BMHC has used for decades. They deliver a valuable service to a difficult population and the PCN is honoured that they are a part of our PCN family. **Happy birthday!**