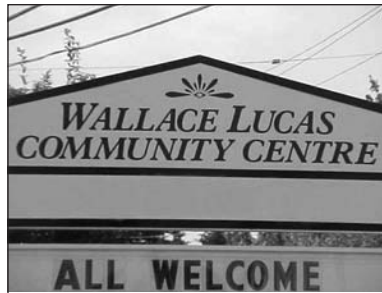




African Nova Scotian Communities

Speak on October 18, 2004



Capital Health

CAPITAL DISTRICT HEALTH

Heard You

Response October 18, 2005

Community

What We Heard

- The key issues of importance were:
 - The need for a strengthened sense of community
 - Racism and the way we deal with it
- You asked for ways to educate people and for ways to explore dealing with racism
- The need for local opportunities to access services delivered by black community members and professionals was seen as key to awareness building. This was seen as serving to model possible career paths for youth
- You identified the need for landlords to be more responsible in maintaining rental properties
- The need for an improved transportation system especially for supporting access to services was also stated

ACTIONS

- Opened Youth Health Centres in all high schools
- Opened North Preston Medical Clinic
- Partnered - Men's Wellness Day
- Mental Health Review, with community input, is completed
- Have become more visible in the communities
- Have used and encouraged use of the Black Cultural Centre
- Partnering with Health Association of African Canadians (H.A.A.C.) on a research proposal and on a public educational series
- Supporting transportation through H.R.M. regional planning
- Mental Health team is willing to meet with community groups to explore ways to support them in dealing with racism



Children & Youth

What We Heard

- A real need for education of children and youth with respect to the reality of being Black in today's world in Nova Scotia was identified. They need to be educated in the rich culture and history that is their heritage
- You recognized racism and the struggles and hurt it causes as a reality that requires a response on many levels and in many areas
- Needs of youth and children included good parenting skills, post-traumatic stress counselling, life skills training, support for children of welfare recipients, and ways to break the cycle of crime
- Victims of sexual abuse, including incest, need to have issues addressed

ACTIONS

- Encourage education for youth and children through a series of cultural diversity films and through Youth Health Centres in the schools
- CHOICES service for youth, programming is delivered with a culturally sensitive model
- Addiction Prevention Treatment Services 424-5623
- Mental Health 464-3312



Health

What We Heard

- Knowledge and awareness concerning the broad determinants of health and how they effect the population was acknowledged
- Again the need for Black professionals and cultural competency for all providers was identified as an important issue within the health care system
- Further awareness and education was asked for in dealing with tropical diseases, Sickle Cell Anaemia and food safety
- Of great concern is the relationship between racism and mental health
- It is felt people are not always listened to and are over-medicated
- Drug awareness, alternative medicines and healings were further examples of community needs

ACTIONS

- Your issues are included in the community health plan. The plan is due by October 2005. You will receive copies of it.
- The health plan will list your issues and recommend responses. Your community health plan will go to the CDHA Board for inclusion in their strategic plan. The issues around health will be addressed by Capital Health – if they cannot address them – you will be told why not
- Your community health plan will be given to Department of Health. It is through this mechanism that the community speaks to government and can effect policy changes



Education

What We Heard

- A recognition of the need for provision of accessibility and equal distribution of attainment for all students was brought forward
- The need for interventions at all levels of schooling and the need for strategies to support individuals throughout their education experience to break the cycle of “drop outs” were identified as crucial
- A multicultural workforce and a curriculum that teaches cultural competency is needed in responding to these issues
- Racial profiling is a continuing issue

ACTIONS

- We will circulate copies of our Community Health Plan and this report, throughout communities, organizations and systems
- We are willing to partner, to the best of our ability, with others to address issues



Communication

What We Heard

- A local community communications system like a newsletter/paper was seen as a necessary tool to inform and to educate the community on specific and current needs or events
- The absolute need to have more visible Black persons in all systems, in all levels of service provision is a way to have the Black Voice both seen and heard
- The importance of modeling possibilities for youth was stressed
- Having current reliable statistics and data on Black health issues is a predominant need within the Black population

ACTIONS

- Partnering with others to ensure research on African Nova Scotian's health status
- The issues around visibility of African Nova Scotian's in the workplaces has been heard. Awareness is the first step, we are there!



Capital Health Workplace Response

- A three year plan is in place to openly embrace making positive changes that will model Capital Health's vision of more diversity and inclusion within the organization.

ACTIONS

- A diverse core team is in place to lead changes
- 15 workshops have been held to address awareness and cultural competency. These will be on going.
- Have completed a summary report ... "Cultural Competency in Primary Health Care: Perspectives, Tools and Resources"
- Diverse core team is in place to lead research efforts
- We are partnering with Health Association of African Canadians (H.A.A.C.) on community projects
- A coordinator to work within Cultural Diversity initiative is being hired
- A communication strategy is underway
- We are working to review all policies through a diversity and inclusion lens