

# In Your

October 2016 | Issue 2

Community Health Needs  
Assessments in Action

# COMMUNITY



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## Making connections

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# CEO Message



Helping people be healthy is about more than budgets and buildings – it's about community.

Our communities play an important role in improving the health of the people who live there. In the pages that follow are examples of how individuals and organizations are working together to identify innovative ways to look beyond traditional health care and improve access to services at a community level.

In our first issue of *In Your Community*, we shared examples of the exciting things happening in the Fredericton and Oromocto areas and in the communities of Petitcodiac, Elgin, Salisbury and Havelock.

This, our second issue, is inspired by the progress in the Saint John and Grand Lake areas as a result of completing their Community Health Needs Assessments (CHNAs). We will explore the challenges and successes faced by these communities in their efforts to improve the health of the people who live there.

The work being done is as unique as the communities themselves. CHNAs help to identify the unique strengths and needs in a community, and provide recommendations to improve the health and wellness of its population. The recommendations are being acted on passionately at a community level across Horizon and we will feature successes from other areas in future issues.

Our communities are taking the lead to improve the lives of their residents by addressing the many factors that influence their health. Let's keep the momentum going.

John McGarry, President and CEO  
Horizon Health Network

## Horizon Health Network's number one priority: **Exceptional patient and family centred care**

**Horizon puts patients and clients at the centre of the health delivery system with a vision of delivering "Exceptional care. Every person. Every day."**

Some of the recent changes to our model of care include: replacing restrictive visiting hours with a Family Presence Policy; collaborating with the Foundations to provide free patient WiFi; and eliminating smoking on our properties.

Each New Brunswick community served by Horizon is unique. Working with key community partners, clinicians and other stakeholders, we've made progress in identifying and addressing their specific needs. This is an intentional effort initiated by Horizon to significantly improve community-based primary care, and support expensive tertiary services required by an aging population.

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## In Your COMMUNITY

Community Health Needs Assessments in Action

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# Health care today

A well-designed health system should feature both strong centres of hospital-based care and appropriate community-based care “close to home” for New Brunswick residents. It’s a system that would ensure every New Brunswicker has access to the services they need to be as healthy as they can be.

With our province’s aging population, southern migration, and shift from rural to urban living, health care as we know it is changing. Government and non-government organizations and communities alike are looking for ways to deliver care in a way that does a better job of meeting the

unique needs of the people in each community.

The good news is that work is underway. Horizon Health Network (Horizon) is working in partnership with communities to provide better preventive, primary, and long-term care to everyone that lives there.

## Community Health Needs Assessments

Since 2012, Horizon has been working with communities to gain a better understanding of their health care needs using Community Health Needs Assessments (CHNAs). A CHNA is a dynamic and ongoing process that identifies the unique strengths and needs of a community. This information provides both Horizon and the communities with a roadmap to achieving a common goal: to **improve the overall health of New Brunswick communities.**

Have you ever considered how housing or access to transportation might affect the health of an individual? You may not know it, but measuring community health goes far beyond studying rates of disease and the availability of health care services. Health services account for only 10% of what influences our health (see pie chart), which is why Horizon is working with individuals and agencies at a community level to

address the other 90%. The CHNA process provides an opportunity to get everyone around the table to look at all areas that are known to impact our health – health determinants (Table 1).

CHNAs help identify priority areas in the community that need attention and support the development of action plans to address them. This work influences programming that better serves the population and often supports the efforts of primary health care providers like family physicians, nurse practitioners and pharmacists.

**Nobody knows a community better than the people that live there.** This work to address priority areas is being driven by a local committee that is passionate about the well-being of the community. With support from Horizon and other stakeholders, they are advocating for your health.

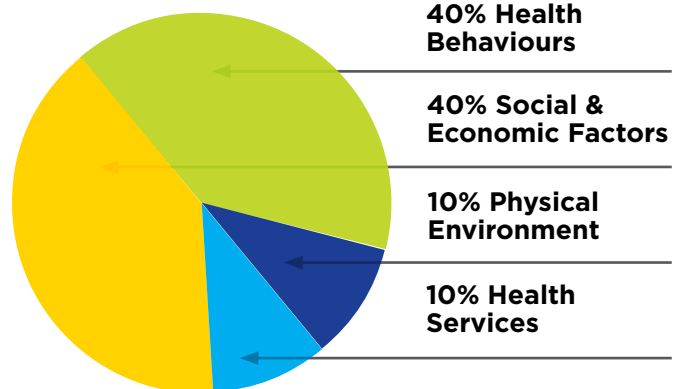
**Table 1: Determinants of Health as categorized by the Public Health Agency of Canada**

1	Income and Social Status
2	Social Support Networks
3	Education and Literacy
4	Employment and Working Conditions
5	Social Environment
6	Physical Environment
7	Personal Health Practices and Coping Skills
8	Healthy Child Development
9	Biology and Genetic Endowment
10	Health Services
11	Gender
12	Culture

Photo: Village of Minto



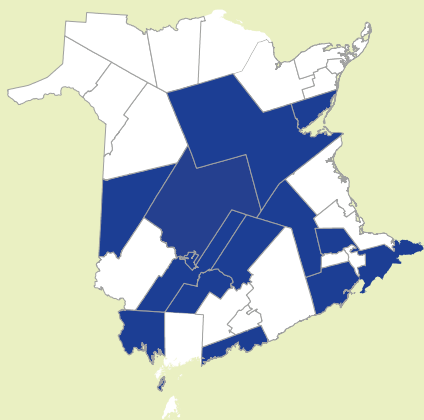
### What influences our health?



# What is primary health care?

Primary health care refers to an approach to health and a spectrum of services beyond the traditional health care system. It includes all services that play a part in health, such as income, housing, education, and environment. Primary care refers to health promotion, illness and injury prevention, and the diagnosis and treatment of illness and injury. (Health Canada)

## 13 Community Health Needs Assessments completed to date



The province is divided into 33 unique communities to ensure a better perspective of regional and local differences.

Community Health Needs Assessments have been completed in 13 of them.

- Oromocto and Area
- Fredericton and Surrounding Area
- St. Stephen, St. Andrews and Surrounding Area
- Petitcodiac, Salisbury and Surrounding Area
- Saint John
- Moncton and Surrounding Area
- Grand Lake Area
- Neguac Area
- Miramichi Area
- Tantramar Area
- Central NB
- Albert County
- Carleton County



**Mental Health**



**Primary Health Care**



**Home Care**



**Transportation**

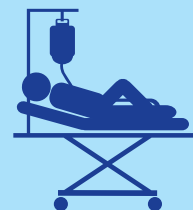
**Common Themes Emerging**



**Recreation**



**Access to Information, Awareness**



**Acute Care**



**Intersectoral/Community Partnership**



**Obesity, Food Insecurity**



**Housing**



**Poverty**



**Substance Abuse**



**Supporting Families**



**First Nations**



**Language Issues**

## In your community

Knowing what is happening in your community is important. In the first issue of *In Your Community*, Horizon collaborated with three communities that had completed CHNAs: the Fredericton and Oromocto Areas and the communities of Petitcodiac, Salisbury, Elgin and Havelock. This, our second issue, profiles what is happening in two more communities with completed CHNAs: Saint John and the Grand Lake Area. In the pages that follow you will get a better understanding of what they are doing to build healthier communities and we will dig deeper into the specific priorities, challenges, and successes they face.

Watch for our next issue that will feature news from other Horizon communities.



# About Grand Lake Area

The Grand Lake Area includes the villages of Minto, Chipman, Cambridge-Narrows and 14 other communities spread across the predominantly rural region of New Brunswick.

In 2015, the results of the Community Health Needs Assessment (CHNA) for the Grand Lake Area were released. The report reflected some of the well-known challenges in the area and helped identify other unique needs of the community. It identified eight priority areas and recommendations to inform the work of Horizon Health Network, municipalities, the provincial government and other community partners.

The members selected to form the Grand Lake Area Community Advisory Committee (CAC) are familiar with those challenges and have been working hard to improve the overall health of the people living in the area. Following the completion of the CHNA, the CAC formed small working groups to tackle projects together.

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The area experiences elevated rates of mental illness, higher than the New Brunswick average, therefore much of the work to date has focused on enhancing both treatment and prevention services.

Today, there is a strong, community-based effort gaining momentum as new services and programs are implemented. This work is impacting the overall health of people living in the Grand Lake Area in a much-needed positive light.

## What was learned through the Community Health Needs Assessment?

There are eight priority areas to work on:

1. The increasing rate of adult overweight/obesity in the community.
2. Families in the community that are struggling and facing new complex challenges.
3. The increasing rate of child and youth mental health issues in the community.

## Key Stakeholders

### Advisory Committee

- Healthy and Inclusive Communities / Department of Social Development - Wellness Branch (Wellness Consultant)
- Christian Community Church, Minto
- Chipman Forest Avenue School
- Minto Memorial High School
- Cambridge Narrows Community School
- Chipman Village Council
- Minto Village Council
- Chipman Health Centre (Management)
- Queens North Community Health Centre (Management)
- J.D. Irving Mill
- Community Development
- Care'N'Share (Chipman)
- Primary Health-Care Providers
- Home Care Plus (Jemseg)
- Local Pharmacy - Minto/Chipman
- Chipman Community Care
- Chipman Youth Centre

4. Limited time and resources to spend on preventive/educational health programming.
5. Lack of awareness about services and programs available in the community.
6. A decrease in mental resiliency and coping skills in children and youth in the community.
7. Limited recreational programming for children and youth in the community.
8. Limited options for palliative care and respite care in the community.



## How are we doing?

The Grand Lake Area may be comprised of many small rural towns and villages, but they have demonstrated that they are focused on delivering big ideas in response to the priorities identified in the CHNA.

Promoting recreation for children and youth and addressing the increasing rate of obesity in our communities is a priority. In rural communities, having access to arenas, fitness facilities, and even extracurricular activities is often limited for all ages. For some, travelling to participate in events and activities is not possible, highlighting the need for new and exciting initiatives close to home.

The first annual Coal Miner's Lung mountain bike race in Minto took place on July 17, 2016.

The event brought together people of all ages to participate in a local recreational activity.

Mountain biking is a recreational activity that is embraced in the area. A local physician, Sean Morrissy, worked with members of the community in advance of this

event to improve the bike trails and ensure bikes were available.

Many opportunities exist for bringing people together and increasing community participation and engagement, both of which can contribute to improved mental, physical and social well-being.

The NEW Clinic is a weekly program focused on wellness and helping those at risk for chronic disease. To find out more call 327-7800 or 327-7902.

In recognition of the higher than normal mental health-related issues in the community and the lack of awareness about services and programs available, a new program has emerged. The "I Got This" program is offered to high school-aged students in the area. For more information see page 8.

People in many urban areas rely on both the service and the space made available at coffee shops, libraries and independent health providers in order to gather, participate in activities, learn about upcoming events, and to relax.

Chipman's Care'N'Share Family Resource Centre found an innovative way to bring community programs and services under one roof – a wellness café. The café offers a comfortable setting and access to a variety of services and programs like acupuncture, painting, crafts, coffee, and reading corners. Supported by the Department of Social Development, the service is expected to be expanded.

The Wellness Café is located on Main Street in Chipman. Call 339-6726 for more information.

While leading this change for improved health and well-being is a collaborative effort, the impact on primary care providers must not be forgotten. Learn more about how Chipman Outreach Inc. is keeping its staff healthy with monthly sessions focused on self-care, healthy eating, and managing shiftwork on page 10.

## Where do we go from here?

There is an opportunity to connect these smaller communities and leverage resources to offer more robust programs and services to serve their population. The CAC for the area is focused on making those connections and improving in all of the priority areas identified in the CHNA.

Progress has been made on the mental health and addictions front, however there is much more to do. Recreational programming and care for seniors are other priority areas that must be addressed.

The more community members use these new programs and services the more likely they will be sustainable. Providing the necessary programs and services to address the needs of the area and eliminating the barriers to accessing them will help to maintain and rejuvenate the community spirit.



Photo: Rob Linden



Photo: Village of Minto

# ‘I Got This’ – School program helps spread confidence, reassurance

Students in the Minto area are being introduced to a new wellness program that helps them understand and cope with pressures that can lead to addiction and mental health issues.

Lacey Stewart, a social worker with the Queens North Community Health Centre, helped with the design and co-facilitates ‘I Got This,’ which was first offered last December at Minto Memorial High School (MMHS), grades 9 to 12.

Several factors can contribute to mental health issues in children and youth, Lacey says, including high stress, abuse, trauma and learned patterns of negative thinking.

“There has been a lot of loss in the area recently and it is crucial for the community social worker to not only be interested in clinical practice but also going out into the community, creating partnerships and helping to establish and run programs and support groups in order to address this issue,” Stewart said.

“Stress is one of the most common issues I see in my work. People often mention having a low mood, sleeping problems, anxiety and loss of interest in everyday things when reporting stress and feelings of depression.”

## That’s where ‘I Got This’ comes in.

Stewart learned from working in the community and through her association with MMHS guidance counsellor Ronna Gauthier that

youth mental health issues were on the rise and a harsh reality that needed to be addressed.

‘I Got This’ embodies the principles of empowerment, resilience and positivity. While each grade at MMHS received the program last year, going forward the program is being offered to each new Grade 9 class and, hopefully, to each grade at Chipman Forest Avenue School, grades 6 to 12, Stewart explained.

The program covers statistics on stress, important terms, and coping tools such as deep breathing, journaling, physical activity, positive self-talk, mindfulness, spirituality, sleep and helping others. The goal is to improve students’ coping skills and to have them realize that everyone has and can get through stressful and difficult times.

One MMHS Grade 11 student said ‘I Got This’ was extremely helpful and that all students should receive it.

Horizon Health Network conducted a Community Health Needs Assessment for the Grand Lake Area in 2014. The following article highlights key outcomes of that assessment.



## Mental Health

“I know personally what it’s like to think you cannot cope with a situation, and how that makes you feel,” the student said. “The program provided me with different tools to help deal with stress, like self-care and relaxation. It made me think ‘I can do this’ and also reminded me that I do not have to go through tough situations alone. There is help when I need it.”

According to the Canadian Mental Health Association, young Canadians are suffering from rising levels of stress, anxiety, depression and even suicide. In fact, 10 to 20 per cent of Canadian youth are affected by a mental illness or disorder, and the country’s youth







suicide rate is the third highest in the industrialized world.

Gauthier, in her role as school guidance counsellor, gets to know students personally and sees the issues when they surface, first hand. She is always looking for new and innovative ways to help students and create a positive learning environment. 'I Got This' certainly fills that bill.

"With 'I Got This' we take a proactive approach to mental resilience as opposed to a reactive one when issues arise," she said.

"Since we branded the message and have highlighted it in the school, it is not uncommon to overhear a student say 'I Got This' when confronted with a difficult situation, or to hear a peer remind a friend 'You Got This' while pointing at one of the many signs we have in

the halls. Teachers also use the phrase and reinforce the lessons learned in the workshop."

One activity associated with 'I Got This' created a lot of buzz in the classroom, Stewart said. Students were first asked to list on a piece of paper positive characteristics they felt could be attributed to them individually and then circulate the notes for classmates' input.

"This not only sparked conversation about the importance of positive self-talk, but also the realization that one small compliment can completely change someone's day for the better. Students were



Photo: Village of Minto

able to identify that when we compliment others it not only makes the recipients feel good, but we often feel good also, as a result of spreading positivity and kindness."

**For more information about 'I Got This', contact the Queens North Community Health Centre at 506-327-7800.**



# Queens North Health Centre supporting workers from Chipman Outreach

Sustaining a healthy community requires a strong and healthy workforce.

With that in mind, therapeutic staff members at Queens North Community Health Centre (QNCHC) are lending a helping hand to staff at Chipman Outreach Inc. (COI)

For several months this year, clinicians including occupational therapists, physiotherapists, dietitians and social workers have delivered monthly information sessions to personal care aides. The aides work with clients in need of support for daily living in their homes.

Eric Comeau, QNCHC's community developer, has organized the course schedule and ensures the offerings are answering an actual need in the community.

"Our objective is to offer practical sessions that help home care support workers affiliated with COI avoid burnout," he said. "With changing family structures in the Grand Lake area due to industry job losses and, in many cases, the men in the family having to relocate to the West, many women are working in home care and doing shift work in order to make ends meet."

Sessions have covered topics as varied as nutrition; mental wellness and self-care; fall prevention and environmental modifications; and cognitive changes/compensatory strategies. A training session on lift and transfer techniques was also on the schedule.

"The idea is to encourage healthy work habits, enabling COI workers to remain employed for the long term," Comeau said.

COI has 31 years of experience empowering senior, disabled, injured and convalescing community members and their family members to remain active and vital within the community and to live as independently as possible. COI staff and personal care aides take pride in their role in improving their clients' health and quality of life, and contributing to their sense of confidence and self-worth.

Speaking on behalf of the aides, Peggy Chase, COI coordinator, describes the arrangement with QNCHC as being very positive.

"The courses give the aides confidence in their ability to carry out their jobs and add to team building, encouraging them to share their insights on various situations that arise," she said. "The sessions also boost morale and endurance levels, and teach them about the importance of managing stress and looking after themselves."

Chase says there is high turnout for the sessions and that aides come forward quickly and regularly saying, "I'm here to learn. Where do I sign up?" There is demand, she said, for more information and different types of courses – informal training that can help them personally and that they can use to help their clients stay in their homes longer.

Horizon Health Network conducted a Community Health Needs Assessment for the Grand Lake Area in 2014. The following article highlights key outcomes of that assessment.



**Access to Information, Awareness**



**Intersectoral/Community Partnerships**

"The presenters from QNCHC are high-quality, organized and know how to engage the staff," Chase said. "There are always many options and a good schedule, and the information is very valuable. We hope to keep this relationship going."

In his role at QNCHC, Comeau works with community partners from various sectors.

"Partners of QNCHC are invested and interested in seeing





improvements in the health of the community. They're engaged, able to help with planning and development of community initiatives, and take on different responsibilities for different projects," Comeau said.

"The good relationship that our health care staff members have, as a team, with the community shows we are making a difference."

Hoping to offer an additional course to COI this year, Comeau says there are always things you need to work on from a population health perspective.

"The key to planning projects and initiatives is to ensure the work we are doing can be sustained without continuous input. We also have to be sure we are meeting a prescribed need in the community and that we are reaching the population the project was designed for."

The intended audience, Comeau says, could be anyone in the



community or a more specific sub-group, as in the case of the staff at COI. "Our projects are always inclusive, which we feel goes a long way toward minimizing any stigma that may be associated with being involved."

Comeau and the clinicians at QNCHC intend to compile a collection of resources from the various presentations that were delivered to COI staff. This will enable other interested stakeholders from the area to review the resources and request a session if the subject matter suits their specific needs.

**For more information about the services offered at QNCHC, call 506-327-7800.**

# About Saint John



Photo: Discover Saint John

Moving Saint John forward to improve the health of individuals, organizations and the community at large requires the input and engagement of the people who live there and the agencies that serve them. In 2013, a diverse group of community members came together to do just that, as part of the Saint John Community Health Needs Assessment (CHNA) Community Advisory Committee (CAC).

The CHNA process helped to identify and understand the needs of Saint John's communities – what development is required and what the future holds. It identified 13 formal recommendations to inform the work of Horizon Health Network, municipalities and the provincial government.

Many of the enthusiastic and energetic Saint John CHNA CAC members now participate in Living SJ, a movement to end generational poverty by removing barriers to education, health and employment for families who live in low-income neighbourhoods. Living SJ uses a Collective Impact approach and

works with a network of over 100 partners from three levels of government, the private sector, non-profits and neighbourhoods.

In January of 2015 a subcommittee of Living SJ was established to improve the health of residents through a neighbourhood-based model of care. This group reviewed the number of health issues that existed within the North End alongside the results of the CHNA.

Today, the priorities outlined in the CHNA continue to guide community-based efforts to improve the overall health of the Saint John population.

## What was learned through the Community Health Needs Assessment?

Saint John is a city that encompasses a landscape of neighbourhoods that have been defined as either of “poverty or plenty.” Five have been identified as priorities due to challenges with housing, literacy, income, employment, and social supports. It is with this

## Key Stakeholders

### Advisory Committee

- Horizon Health Network
- Department of Social Development
- Anglophone South School District
- YMCA
- Association Régionale de la Communauté Francophone de Saint-Jean
- Saint John Human Development Council
- City Market Seniors
- University of New Brunswick, Saint John
- TRC – The Resource Centre for Youth
- BCAP – Business Community Anti-Poverty Initiative
- City of Saint John
- Main Street Baptist Church
- Saint John Police
- Fundy Wellness Network
- Enterprise Saint John

neighbourhood lens that the following priority areas were discussed in the CHNA:

1. Access to Community-based Health and Wellness Programs
2. Defining Community School Concept
3. Fostering Community Partnerships
4. Engaging Community in Policy and Spending
5. Addressing Poverty
6. Safe and Accessible Recreation
7. Addressing Mental Health



8. Enhancing Public Transportation
9. Increased Focus on Prevention of Disease and Screening
10. Leveraging Tele-Care (211)
11. Coordinating Food Security Planning
12. Expanding Rehabilitation Services
13. Sexual Health Services

## How are we doing?

Since completion of the CHNA for Saint John, a significant amount of work has been done to validate the needs of the community and to address the recommendations. Living SJ is active in the community and should be credited for bringing various stakeholders together and taking a collective approach to addressing the many factors that impact the health of an individual.

With the help of ONE Change, the North End Wellness Centre (NEW-C) opened at 223 Victoria Street in February 2016 to enhance access to health services in the area - see page 14.

Enhancing access to **community-based health and wellness** programs has been identified as a means to address the high utilization rate for emergency rooms and after-hours clinics, the increasing prevalence of people living with chronic disease and the number of hospital admission rates for ambulatory care in Saint John. Using a patient-centred approach, the services being offered are helping patients understand their own health needs and are connecting them with the appropriate community services that support their health.

Many factors determine the health of an individual. That's why service providers from sectors like Education, Health, Social Development, Housing Alternatives, Churches, Addictions and Mental

Health, and the Saint John Police Force are working together to connect children and under-employed adults with the services they need to achieve health, wellness and improved quality of life. A Team Charter has been developed to ensure more equitable access to services particularly for those living in poverty or low-income neighbourhoods.

Sexual health services are delivered by a nurse practitioner (NP) at The Resource Centre for Youth (TRC) and plans are underway to have the NP deliver similar services at two high schools. Mental health services are also available at the NEW-C every Friday. Not only will this **foster community partnerships** but it will enhance service offerings to improve the health and well-being of everyone in the community.

A food purchase club serving various neighbourhoods is placing 150-180 orders a month, improving access to fruits and vegetables for families.

Priority populations for Saint John are often disadvantaged by poverty, therefore lack access to transportation. Many of the services being introduced are focusing on those areas or moving to different communities in an effort to provide equal access to primary care. For years, nurses and NPs from St. Joseph's Community Health Centre have been dispersed to outreach sites in several disadvantaged areas, with social workers, dietitians, occupational therapists, and pharmacists spending time at all of the outreach sites to provide access to quality, team-based care. Among the services offered are smoking cessation and respiratory health screenings to address the rising rates of chronic disease.

Zoomers on the Go is a seniors-led fitness program intended to improve both social and recreational engagement, while focusing on rehabilitation - learn more on page 16.

Saint John has had an influx of refugees and the demand for many of the primary health care services has increased. The Saint John community has really stepped up by welcoming and engaging these families. They are offering assessment, education, referrals and follow-ups when required as a means to ensure that their needs are met. Service providers like the YMCA, Department of Social Development, and many other not-for-profit organizations have offered support.



## Where do we go from here?

The momentum to date has the potential to create a shift in the way Saint John communities experience primary health care. With the NEW-C up and running to complement the other neighbourhood outreach sites and the Living SJ movement in full swing, the focus must shift toward measuring the success of these community efforts. To fully support the needs of the people of Saint John, fostering community partnerships must continue to be a priority.

In the following pages you will learn more about how service providers can work together to deliver multiple programs and services in key communities to improve access to care.

# NEW-C connects residents to wide range of health, social services

The North End Wellness Centre (NEW-C), a new satellite site of St. Joseph's Community Health Centre in Saint John, offers various services to local residents that have an impact on their determinants of health, including education, employment, housing, social support networks and personal health practices.

An important cog in the wheel that keeps NEW-C rolling is Tanya James, the centre's Community Connector.

As part of a three-year project funded by Saint John's United Way and the Department of Social Development, James works with and supports individuals and families in their efforts to access and navigate government and community programs and services. She brings together aspects of the more formal health care system with recreation, job training, education, employment and other supports, using a resident-centred approach.

James works exclusively with residents of the city's North End, with a focus on Anglin Drive, Crescent Valley and the Old North End, where many people are living in poverty and struggling with food security and affordable housing.

"I am a partner in my client's wellness journey, acting as a guide, mentor and advocate who builds capacity for achieving goals," she said.

James has a passion for community health that was cemented early in her career during an internship at



an inner city community health centre in Halifax.

"My preceptor, who is now director of a successful, grassroots social enterprise, saw outside of a purely clinical scope and believed in building up a strong and resilient community by valuing its assets," James said. "I have brought this mindset with me to all workplaces since."

James points out that living in poverty affects a person's ability to choose healthy foods, take care of health issues, live in safe, quality housing, and integrate into the

Horizon Health Network conducted a Community Health Needs Assessment for the Saint John Area in 2013. The following article highlights key outcomes of that assessment.



**Primary Health Care**



**Intersectoral/Community Partnerships**

community. As a consequence, clients might look to her for one thing, such as where to go to upgrade their education, for example, only to reveal later that they don't have a health care provider and are looking to become more involved in their community. At this point, James needs to connect with her network of partners to get clients the help they need.

"I reach out to a multitude of sectors, both to give and receive client referrals and to gain insight into my target population from people who have extensive experience in their fields," she said. She also has a guidance committee in place that works to ensure that sectors outside of health care are engaged in the work she does.

"It broadens my perspective to share with people who have a different lens through which they see neighbourhood development. Our group includes representatives from community centres, Centennial Elementary School, Social Development, and the





faith community, in addition to Horizon Health Network,” James said.

Clients of NEW-C often arrive without a support network and the skills needed to overcome challenges. Having new resources and support can mean the difference between having a problem and being in crisis, she said.

Stroke patient Cara Carr-Stewart says she cannot measure the benefits of NEW-C because they are so numerous. In addition to medical tests and assistance with filling out forms, she says the centre has given her a sense of peace. “Just knowing there is an organization to turn to if things go wrong means so much. They are generous with their time and will see me at the drop of a dime. They are very pleasant and interested in me as a human being.”

Diabetes patient Eric Garnett would not hesitate to recommend the services of NEW-C. He was unable to operate the tools needed for self-administered blood testing. “Tanya was patient and took 45 minutes to show me how to operate the equipment,” he said. “Now I can really do it myself. I also have plans to see a dietitian there to help me with my diet.”

James says people have much potential in them already.



“It is just a matter of decreasing the barriers they face, such as finding affordable child care so a parent can go to work. If they have the confidence and a good support system in place, people will make changes to improve their own lives.”

After NEW-C opened its doors in February 2016, it became apparent quickly that there was a need to provide additional services to North End residents, specifically around addictions and mental health. As a result, two clinicians – an RN and

a social worker – are available to see clients one day a week.

“The need to provide service where people live is critical,” says Sue Haley, director of Addiction and Mental Health Services for Horizon Health. “Transportation and child minding are key factors as to why some people cannot access service. Offering services that are easily accessible through a neighbourhood-based model of care ensures that people who require our service are supported.”

James says she and the NEW-C health care team see people on a regular basis who don’t realize the extent of the assistance that is available to them in Saint John. There are many helping organizations out there and it’s not always easy to find out about them, or you might not have the confidence, knowledge and skills to access them, she said.

“The impact of having great partners and relationships with residents is that if it is brought to our attention that there is a need that isn’t being met the NEW-C can work towards filling that gap.”

**For more information about the services available at NEW-C, call 506-649-2704.**





# Seniors in Saint John benefit from health promotion program

'Zoomers on the Go' – It's not your daughter's fitness class.

Developed by St. Joseph's Community Health Centre in Saint John, the program is a community-based, fall prevention and health promotion initiative that came into being after the centre identified falls as a serious health risk among people aged 50 and older.

Coordinated by Lynn Fletcher, an occupational therapist, Zoomers is a seniors-led fitness program with a focus on rehabilitation to prevent falls and improve health.

"Research shows that physical activity is the best way to prevent falls and to reduce the severity of injury when a fall occurs," she said. "As we exercise, even at a moderate pace, we improve heart function, lung capacity, muscle strength and balance, all of which help to keep us healthy. Exercise also helps blood sugar levels, weight loss and osteoporosis."

Over 300 people are registered and taking part in Zoomers classes in Saint John. The program is offered in local neighbourhoods and is free of charge in order to appeal to low-income seniors. In addition to participating in low-impact exercise classes, participants learn strategies to prevent falls and improve their health.

Senior fitness leaders volunteer their time to conduct one-hour classes in 10 locations throughout the greater Saint John area. Open to those with various fitness levels, the classes are available once a week after participants have completed a brief health assessment to determine health status and

basic fitness levels.

After results were studied from a sample group of 48 Zoomers on the Go to track their progress over just 12 weeks, post-assessment scores showed an improvement of 13.3 per cent in their general mobility and fall risk. Fletcher says those enrolled in the program for two years or more showed timed get-up-and-go scores had improved by an average of 8.67 per cent. The sit-to-stand scores were 13.44 per cent better, despite the fact that participants were two years older by that time.

One participant, who has scoliosis and was involved in a bad car accident, says she is unable to work but the program has made a difference.

"A friend got me to join Zoomers and now I come every week. It helps me to get going and stay moving for the rest of the week."

Fletcher says keeping track of Zoomers' progress is one of the best parts of the program. "We want them to see their improvements," she said. "It motivates them to continue and work to improve other areas of their health."

Coordinators check in with classes every couple of months and participants are able to ask them about any health issues they may be having. "We suggest options they may want to explore and refer them to various services at St. Joseph's Community Health Centre to help



prevent the issue from becoming a serious health problem."

Seniors involved in regular, organized physical activity also receive psychological benefits, Fletcher adds. Participants get to know each other, form a social network and often go on to participate in other activities together. One Zoomers group even volunteers at a local school to run their lunch program.

"Our program is a great first step as people don't have to commit to attending so they can gradually become more involved," Fletcher says.





Horizon Health Network conducted a Community Health Needs Assessment for the Saint John Area in 2013. The following article highlights key outcomes of that assessment.



Recreation

“All class leaders are members of the 50+ population and serve as great role models – able to set an example and also understand many of the struggles their fellow seniors are facing.”

Canadian Physical Activity Guidelines recommend at least 150 minutes of physical activity a week. For that reason, Fletcher would like to see additional classes added to the Zoomers on the Go schedule. She said they receive frequent requests from participants to be able to attend more than one class a week, and several communities outside of greater Saint John have also requested the program.

For more information on Zoomers, contact St. Joseph’s Community Health Centre at 506-632-5537.



## Community Health Recognition Awards

**Good health is more than just good health care – it starts where people live, work and play.**

**That is why Horizon Health Network is looking to celebrate individuals and/or groups that are making a difference in Helping People Be Healthy.**

With the creation of Community Health Recognition Awards, Horizon plans to recognize people, and/or groups, that understand the importance of health and well-being and are working to improve the factors that negatively impact population health in their community. These contributions will be varied, and in some ways unconventional, thereby creating a new way of thinking and living for many at risk groups. Horizon wants to recognize efforts that foster healthy living through programs or services where people of all ages can grow and thrive.

**Horizon Community Health Recognition Awards will be awarded based on the following categories:**

- Seniors Wellness
- Youth Wellness
- Multicultural Health
- Food Security
- Accessibility
- Mental Health

**There are a total of 12 awards and recipients will be recognized in April.**

**The awards will be based on:**

- scope of need
- overall number of persons to benefit from the program
- goals of program
- the positive impact on the community’s health status

Winners will receive a plaque and a \$500 donation towards their program. Visit [www.HorizonNB.ca](http://www.HorizonNB.ca) or follow Horizon Health Network on social media for more information on how to submit your application!

**We know there are so many individuals and groups that work hard every day to**

**Help People Be Healthy,  
and we want to say  
Thank You!**

# Message from Jean Daigle



In June, we brought you the first issue of *In Your Community* as a means to report back on the hard work that goes into preparing and implementing the Community Health Needs Assessments (CHNAs). Our second issue does not disappoint with the Saint John and Grand Lake areas highlighting the considerable effort that they have put into this process.

Every community we visit is unique, however, as you have seen in our first two issues, common themes have emerged. This is consistent across all 13 communities that have completed CHNAs to date.

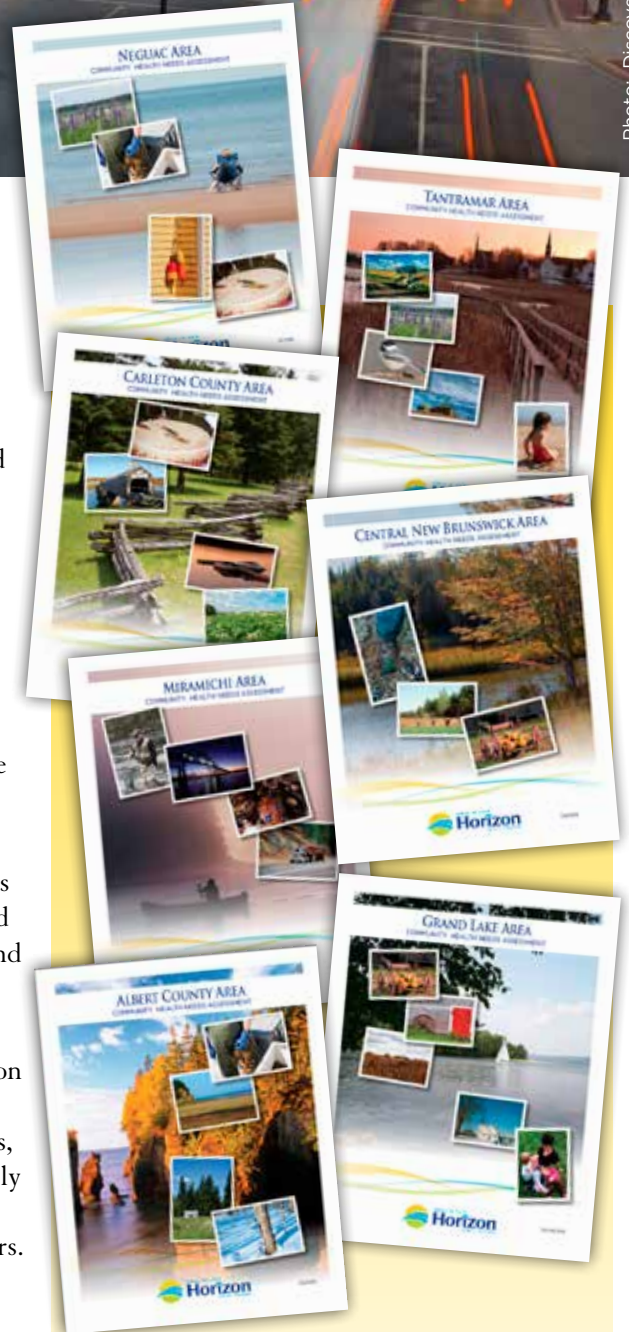
This magazine is an opportunity to put the spotlight on both the benefits and challenges of investing in community-based care, all while applauding the impressive achievements of our communities. From Horizon's perspective, this initiative is paying off for all of us.

We recognize that understanding a community's strengths and needs is the foundation for making informed decisions about community-based health care. It is important to remember that health care is complex, and that measuring the health of a community goes far beyond looking at rates of disease and the availability of health care services.

Horizon is a large organization, yet we contribute to just a small portion of what determines the health of an individual. This is why we are focused on working with many stakeholders, health care organizations, government, community organizations, and individuals like you to fully meet the unique needs of everyone in our communities. We each have an important role to play in improving the health of New Brunswickers.

I would like to thank the communities for participating in the CHNA process and for sharing their stories with us. If we are to change the habits of our population, address our demographic challenges and truly respond to the unique health care needs in our communities, our priorities must continue to be guided by the needs of the population.

Jean Daigle, Vice President Community  
Horizon Health Network



Completed Community  
Health Needs Assessment  
reports can be found at  
[www.HorizonNB.ca](http://www.HorizonNB.ca)