

Calgary Health Region Collaboration News

A brainstorming session was held in June. In attendance were a diverse number of professionals from Child Health (the child segment of CHR) and FSCD. The topic of discussion was how to effectively communicate and collaborate between CHR & FSCD. Great ideas were generated. The honesty and candidness of the participants were most appreciated. This was the dawning of our new Collaboration Group and we will meet again in the fall.

The Specialist's Corner will have a regular column dedicated to 'The Calgary Health Region Collaboration News.'

Part of the collaboration movement is to have increased communication and consultation. Since January, the FSCD Intake Worker has been coming to the Children's Hospital to meet with families who are interested in the program. The intake worker is fully booked during her scheduled hospital times. Book early so your families can meet with the intake worker in person.

In October, we will be having an Open House, so that we can get to know each other better. It will be nice for everyone to put faces to the names!

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AND WHAT WENT ON THIS MONTH... INITIATIVES YOU SHOULD KNOW ABOUT

FSCD SERVICE DATABASE

As most of you know, I have been looking into centralizing in a simple to use format all potential services a child with a disability may use. Knowing full well there are several such databases out there, the comment most often received is that they are not user friendly. After having had a discussion with the boss (Christina Tortorelli – FSCD Executive Manager) about it, she had a better idea; that's why she's paid the big bucks. Her idea was: why not bring together everyone that has such a database and see how we can cooperate to build this thing? So, that is what we are going to do! Expect some news by late September about where this initiative stands.

INTAKE AUDIT

FSCD is currently in the process of reviewing the who, what, when and how of intake. On an average day, there can be up to 85 calls received in regards to our services so we are trying to figure out for what reasons these calls are coming in. Of course, some of these are pure intake calls i.e. families seeking services yet some others speak to issues we shouldn't be addressing.

We are looking into answering different questions: do they understand FSCD is not an emergent frontline service? Did the caller access other services prior to coming to FSCD? How much time is it taking between diagnosis, receiving info and applying? Do we need to better inform the public?

Stay tuned!

THE SCHOOL ACT AND YOU!

A board (principal) must take into consideration two passages under the School Act:

1. Section 47 (2) “a student who is determined by a board to be in need of a special education program is **entitled to have a special education program** provided in accordance to this Act,
2. A board shall ensure that each student enrolled in a school operated by the board is provided with a safe and caring environment that fosters and maintains respectful and responsible behaviours.

The above allows for temporary removal however the board must provide a program to all resident students, in a format that can vary in-school-out of school, in-district/out-of-district, home-based, community based, on-line, blended, outreach, etc., and all parents have access to an appeal process with all boards making their dispute resolution process open to the public.

Schools are required that grade 2 to 9 students have access to 950 hours of instruction per year in each grade. For grade 1 students, alternative minimum times enabling a smooth transition from ECS is permissible.

For more information about the educational opportunities a child with a disability is entitled to, please visit:

www.education.gov.ab.ca/k_12/specialneeds/

Thank you!

ERRATUM

STA is the **Society for Treatment of Autism** and not the Society for **the** Treatment of Autism; our apologies.

QUESTION OF THE MONTH

The family I am working with keeps insisting the only person that can treat their child in is another province and I tend to agree with them. There are several valid reasons they say so such as: familiarity, continuity of care, etc. I don't know what to do!

All appointments scheduled outside the province must be approved by Health and Wellness in order for the FSCD program to assist with the costs of meals, accommodation, sibling care, parking, mileage or transportation (to/from medical appointment from accommodation). The key contact for the family would be the child's physician who completes the documentation required for the child to receive services outside of province. Health and Wellness funds the travel costs for the child and one accompanying parent, to/from the receiving city. Any out of province medical treatment/appointment/services that is not approved by Health and Wellness would not be supported with FSCD services. There sometimes is confusion regarding out of province medical trips when parents wish to seek second opinions (outside the province), have their child participate in alternative therapy out of province, but the parents request is not supported by the physician, or they have a long-standing relationship with a treatment team outside of the province. Again, in the above-described situations the FSCD program does not provide funding if the service can be accessed in province.

International Day of Disabled Persons
3 December
2007 Theme: Decent work for persons with disabilities

The annual observance of the International Day of Disabled Persons aims to promote an understanding of disability issues and mobilize support for the dignity, rights and well-being of persons with disabilities. It also seeks to increase awareness of gains to be derived from the integration of persons with disabilities in every aspect of political, social, economic and cultural life. The theme of the Day is based on the goal of full and equal enjoyment of human rights and participation in society by persons with disabilities, established by the World Program of Action concerning Disabled Persons, adopted by the General Assembly in 1982.

How the Day may be observed

- **Involve:** Observance of the Day provides opportunities for participation by all interested communities - governmental, non-governmental and the private sector - to focus upon catalytic and innovative measures to further implement international norms and standards related to persons with disabilities. Schools, universities and similar institutions can make particular contributions with regard to promoting greater interest and awareness among interested parties of the social, cultural, economic, civil and political rights of persons with disabilities.
- **Organize:** Hold forums, public discussions and information campaigns in support of the Day focusing on disability issues and trends and ways and means by which persons with disabilities and their families are pursuing independent life styles, sustainable livelihoods and financial security.
- **Celebrate:** Plan and organize performances everywhere to showcase - and celebrate - the contributions by persons with disabilities to the societies in which they live and convene exchanges and dialogues focusing on the rich and varied skills, interests and aspirations of persons with disabilities.
- **Take Action:** A major focus of the Day is practical action to further implement international norms and standards concerning persons with disabilities and to further their participation in social life and development on the basis of equality. The media have especially important contributions to make in support of the observance of the Day - and throughout the year - regarding appropriate presentation of progress and obstacles implementing disability-sensitive policies, programs and projects and to promote public awareness of the contributions by persons with disabilities.

For more information, please contact:

Department of Economic and Social Affairs - Division for Social Policy and Development
United Nations Headquarters - Two United Nations Plaza, 13th Floor
New York, N.Y. 10017

Fax: 1 (212) 963-3062

WHAT DO YOU MEAN YOU CAN'T DO THAT?

We often find ourselves in a position where a parent asks for something we simply cannot provide due to our Act. Understanding the basics may help:

An act is...

... a collection of rules proposed by and adopted by a society and its government; the body of rules and principles governing the affairs of a community and enforced by a political authority. An act leads to...

Regulations, which are...

... the act of controlling and directing according to the rules i.e. what will this act look like when its applied; an authoritative rule; *specifically* : a rule or order issued by a government agency and often having the force of law, which brings on ...

Policies, which ...

... derive from the regulations and is the plan of action of how the regulation will be applied; a plan or course of action, as of a government, political party, or business, intended to influence and determine decisions, actions, and other matters leading to...

Procedure that...

... is a set of established forms or methods for conducting the affairs of an organized body such as a business, club, or government; describing how you do what do.

Parents, service providers and FSCD representatives can impact procedure which in turn, over time, may impact policy, which is reviewed provincially. However, changing regulations, often having force of law, and the Act itself cannot be accomplished in our day-to-day operations.

The FSCD Parent Advisory Committee for Calgary and Region update:

Hello, my name is Carol Alderson. I am the mother of two young boys with special needs. I am proud to serve for the coming year as the parent co-chair of FSCD's Parent Advisory Committee together with Christina Tortorelli, Executive Manager of the FSCD program.

It was by choice that this region elected to keep FSCD as a part of our chair position as it was felt by most of our PAC members that this would empower our region for making important decisions and changes. Incidentally, the fifteen other regions in Alberta have chosen to have a parent or parents chair the PAC, without representation by FSCD.

Our region reports to the Provincial PAC through a member representative; it is here that we are able to make decisions and effect changes on an Alberta-wide level. Regionally, we are a fairly new group: we have just now come through a year of establishing our processes and terms of reference.

Our group of parents is joined each meeting by a Board Member, FSCD secretary, and several managers from the FSCD program. These people may vary from meeting to meeting, depending on the topic up for discussion and the allowance of their schedules. Generally though, we are a group of about 20 people and our round-table discussions feel very democratic in nature.

Our group came to be from a process that most of you are familiar with and likely had a hand in. In the spring of 2006, a notice and application were mailed out to all families of children with special needs with existing FSCD contracts. Twelve applicants were chosen from this process. It has been decided that these twelve committee members will serve for a period of two or three years. At the point that people leave the committee, the application process will begin again.

What our group wishes to accomplish in the coming year is to tackle issues that are foremost in the minds of those families who we were chosen to represent. Our first meeting of this new session, on September 20th, will focus mainly upon prioritizing a list of issues to be dealt with over the coming months.

Please let the families that you are meeting with and speaking to know that our committee is in place to address their issues. Our email address is: Calgaryarea.PAC@gov.ab.ca

Thank you very much,
From Carol Alderson