

Report  
 4<sup>th</sup> Annual Community and  
 Patient Fair for Health  
 Professional Education  
**Allies in Health 2012**  
 31 October 10:30am-4:30pm  
 West Atrium, Life Sciences Centre  
 Part of UBC Celebrate Learning  
 Week

**Participating Organizations:**

BC Bereavement Helpline  
 BC Cancer Agency Prevention Program  
 BC Coalition of People with Disabilities  
 BC Epilepsy Society  
 Canadian Association of Familial Ataxias  
 West  
 Canadian Diabetes Association  
 Canadian Mental Health Association –  
 Vancouver/Burnaby Branch  
 Canadian MPS Society  
 Canadian National Institute for the Blind  
 Canucks Autism Network  
 Developmental Disabilities Association  
 Fraser Valley Aboriginal Children & Family  
 Services Society (Xyolhemeylh)  
 Heart & Stroke Foundation of BC & Yukon  
 Huntington Society of Canada BC Chapter  
 Institute for Aboriginal Health  
 Iranian Educators Society for Families  
 Leukemia & Lymphoma Society of Canada  
 Mood Disorders Association of BC  
 MOSAIC BC  
 MS Society of Canada, Lower Mainland  
 Chapter  
 Muscular Dystrophy Canada  
 Myalgic Encephalomyelitis & Fibromyalgia  
 Society of BC  
 North Shore Disability Resource Centre  
 Ovarian Cancer Canada  
 Patient Voices Network  
 PeerNetBC  
 Positive Living Society of BC  
 Recovery Narrative Project  
 RésoSanté  
 Richmond Addiction Services  
 Richmond Mental Health Consumer &  
 Friends Society (RCFC)  
 S.U.C.C.E.S.S. Chinese Help Lines  
 Scleroderma Association of BC  
 Special Olympics BC  
 Spina Bifida & Hydrocephalus Association  
 of BC  
 Spinal Cord Injury BC  
 Stroke Recovery Association of BC  
 The Arthritis Society of Canada – BC &  
 Yukon Divisions  
 The Salvation Army – Kate Booth House  
 YouthCO

**40 Community exhibitors and 8 patient  
 panel workshops visited by over 500**



Allies in Health is an open-house Fair that connects community organizations, patient support groups, and people involved in these agencies with UBC students and faculty.

The Fair is an opportunity for students and faculty to learn about:

- the experiences of living with illness or disability from patients/clients/ community members, and their interactions with health professionals and the health care system
- resources and information available in the community for health professionals and their patients/clients
- patient and community organizations and what they do

The Fair brings patient and community voices to health professional education. It fosters familiarity, dialogue, and partnerships between the academy and the community.

**Community Engagement** – *“The University serves and engages society to enhance economic, social, and cultural well-being.”* The annual Fair is one of several initiatives by the Division of Health Care Communication that contribute to this mandate.



**Division of Health Care Communication**  
*informed and shared decision making*



Organized by the Division of Health Care Communication, College of Health Disciplines.  
 Additional UBC funding by:

- Social Accountability & Community Engagement initiative, Faculty of Medicine
- The Office of the Vice Provost & Associate Vice President Academic

Thanks especially to Melissa Patton and her team of Pharmacy student volunteers, and to the many community and university volunteers on the planning committee, chaired by Denise Kwan.

See reports of previous Fairs and other work by the Division at: [meetingofexperts.org](http://meetingofexperts.org)

## Visitors and Exhibitors

We estimate that over 500 people attended the Fair. Students from **dental hygiene, genetic counselling, medicine, occupational therapy, and pharmacy** attended as part of their programs. Everyone was invited to 'register' with their email address, to permit a follow-up about their experience and a chance on a draw for prizes given by our supporting donors. 298 registered. They came from over 16 different departments and programs.

In follow-up surveys, students were especially interested in the:

- "the many different organizations that we can collaborate with"
- "the specific health conditions that I never knew existed"
- "all of the amazing initiatives"
- "exhibits with actual patients sharing their personal stories"
- "people who were engaged and enthusiastic about the population they serve"

*"This event really opened my eyes to how certain diseases can impact a person's life so much. In our classes we learn about the signs and symptoms and treatment but what we don't learn about is how it affects a person's day to day life and how they manage to get through their treatment with a positive attitude..." Student*

40 community exhibitors attended the Fair to share their peer and outreach services with students. 33 were returning exhibitors and 7 were new to the Fair.

Each exhibitor had tracking sheets to record the number of visitors:

There was an average of 52 visitors per booth

The Scleroderma Association of BC recorded 133 visitors, the highest number!

Exhibitors were surveyed for their experience compared to other Fairs; on a scale from worst(1) to best(5) the overall rating was 4.3. Their highlights were:

- "the opportunity to meet students from various disciplines"
- "networking with other organizations"

*"We can live well by learning from each other and supporting each other. Knowledge and education is key and powerful."* Community Member



## Patient Panels

Eight 1-hour patient panel workshops were featured, each with 3-7 panelists, and a moderator. Panel experts included those who have lived long-term with chronic illness and advocates. They told their stories, discussed their experiences, and participated in a Question & Answer period with the attendees.

Panel themes were:

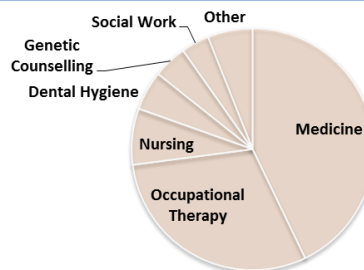
- Experiences of the Health Care System** (presented twice)
- Experiences of Chronic Health Concerns** (presented twice)
- Living and Communicating with Aphasia**
- Barriers to Health Care Communication**
- Cultural Diversity in Health Care**
- Living a Life of Recovery with Mental Illness**

300 students registered for panels. 139 responded to the follow-up survey. They commented especially on:

- importance of communication between patient and practitioner
- importance of listening to patients
- value in hearing patient stories and experiences

On a scale from worst(1) to best(5) educational experience overall they rated this experience 4.0.

## Panel Attendees



### I learned:

*".. to see the parallels between patients with different chronic conditions ... I found their common experiences quite valuable."* Pharmacy Student

*".. what it was like to interact with a person who has aphasia .. Something you could never truly appreciate from a textbook or course."* Occupational Therapy Student

*".. that the idea of 'culture' has a lot to do with power structures and how we perceive and generate power for ourselves and in our communities."* Speech Language Pathology Student

*".. that physicians have a responsibility to lead the way to both right the wrongs done in the past and forge a new system of compassion and support for those with mental illness."* Medical Student

**A special 'Thank You' to our community donors for cash and kind that helped to make the Fair possible:**

### \$100-\$900

Developmental Disabilities Association  
Ethical Bean Coffee  
Leukemia & Lymphoma Society of Canada  
Sandman Hotels, Davie St & Sutton Place  
Scleroderma Association of BC

### \$10-\$99

2 Anonymous donors  
BC Coalition of People with Disabilities  
BC Pharmacy Association  
Canadian Mental Health Association — Vancouver/Burnaby  
Mahony & Sons  
Ovarian Cancer Canada

Pharmasave—Walnut Grove  
Recovery Narrative Project  
Sears — Willowbrook  
Spinal Cord Injury BC  
The Arthritis Society — BC & Yukon  
The Boulevard Coffee Roasting Co  
The Salvation Army — Kate Booth House  
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