



Participating Organizations:

Arthritis Society of Canada –BC & Yukon Divisions
 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
 Collège Éducentre
 Council of Senior Citizens Organizations
 Developmental Disabilities Association
 Fraser Valley Aboriginal Children & Family Services Society (Xyolhemeylh)
 Heart & Stroke Foundation of BC & Yukon
 Huntington Society of Canada, BC Chapter
 Indian Residential School Survivors Society
 G.V Counselling Education for Families
 Mood Disorders Association of BC
 MOSAIC BC
 MS Society of Canada, Lower Mainland Chapter
 Muscular Dystrophy Canada
 Myalgic Encephalomyelitis & Fibromyalgia Society of BC
 Neil Squire Society
 North Shore Disability Resource Centre
 Options for Sexual Health
 Ovarian Cancer Canada
 Parkinson Society
 PeerNetBC
 Positive Living Society of BC
 Recovery Narrative Project
 Richmond Mental Health Consumer & Friends Society (RCFC)
 S.U.C.C.E.S.S. Chinese Help Lines
 Scleroderma Association of BC
 The Salvation Army – Kate Booth House
 Umbrella Multicultural Health Cooperative
 Vancouver Coastal Health, Healthy Living Program

35+ Community exhibitors and 9 patient panel workshops visited by over 400



Allies in Health is an open-house Fair, held during UBC’s Celebrate Learning Week, 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.

This year’s fair was UBC’s designated event for the Association of Universities and Colleges of Canada’s (AUCC) [Open Doors, Open Knowledge 2013](#) celebration of University-Community Engagement.



For reports of previous Fairs and other work by the Division that involves patients and the community in the education of health professionals go to: meetingofexperts.org

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

- The Office of the Vice Provost & Associate Vice President Academic
- College of Health Disciplines

Thanks to all of our volunteers and 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 Brianne Nettelfield



Visitors and Exhibitors

About 400 people attended the Fair. Students from **genetic counseling, 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. 190 registered. They came from over 9 different departments and programs.

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

- “[How] many of the booths were manned by patients of the chronic illness that the booth is advocating for. It was wonderful just hearing about the diseases directly from them.” - Medical Student
- “I found the mental illness exhibits the most interesting because I was not familiar with these conditions to begin with” - Pharmacy Student
- “I loved the Scleroderma booth...I really appreciated the friendly and knowledgeable booth attendants. I didn't know anything about the condition, but I learned a lot. – Occupational Therapy Student

36 community exhibitors attended the Fair to share their peer and outreach services with students. 27 were returning exhibitors and 6 were new to the Fair.

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

There was an average of 51 visitors per booth

The Scleroderma Association of BC recorded 127 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 **4.2**. Their highlights were:

- “...networking with other organizations “
- “Very meaningful conversations with students. The interest level was amazing compared to other events I have attended. “
- “[The Students] were just sponges picking up any knowledge they could. It was great.”
- “There was such a wide variety of different illnesses and organizations.”



Patient Panels

Nine 1-hour patient panel workshops were featured, each with 3-5 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:

Barriers to Health Care Communication

Experiences of the Health Care System (presented twice)

Experiences of Chronic Health Concerns

Health & Money *NEW*

Illness and Spirituality *NEW*

Indian Residential School Survivors Society *NEW*

Living and Communicating with Aphasia

Living a Life of Recovery with Mental Illness

100 students attended panels. 49 responded to the follow-up survey. They commented especially on:

- value & impact of hearing first hand patient stories and experiences
- diverse array of perspectives from presenters

On a scale from worst(1) to best(5) educational experience overall they rated this experience **4**.



“It was really eye opening. I especially appreciated listening to their experiences with our health care system and how they aren't receiving the care from practitioners that they deserve.” - Medical Student

“Even though OTs don't work directly with clients with Aphasia in order to overcome their communication disability, I found it very helpful in understanding where they might be coming from.” - Occupational Therapy Student

“Sharing personal stories were a powerful way of explaining the difficulties in accessing healthcare, especially if you are poorer. It was frustrating to hear that there is so much evidence of the value in approaching health from a community perspective, yet the government is making cuts to social programs.” - Kinesiology 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
Heart & Stroke Foundation
PeerNet
Sandman Hotels, Davie St & Sutton Place
Scleroderma Association of BC

\$10-\$99

BC Coalition of People with Disabilities
Diabetes Association
Fraser Valley Aboriginal & Family Services
Mahony & Sons
MS Society
MPS Society

Neil Squire Society
Recovery Narrative Project
The Boulevard Coffee Roasting Co
The Salvation Army — Kate Booth House
Vancouver Coastal Health, Healthy Living Program