



2011 Year in Review

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2011 has certainly been a year to remember! As we move into an exciting new year shortly, we want to dedicate this “year in review” to celebrating a remarkable year of progress in efforts to raise awareness of the impact of Community Health Centres in improving the health of Canadians and strengthening our health system.

2011 was a year of renewal; a year of building for the future!

Throughout 2011, CACHCA placed primary emphasis on member engagement and partnership-building, both across Canada and internationally. Through a series of cross-Canada consultations, initiated in 2010, we heard from Community Health Centre colleagues regarding priority areas for action.

We listened closely, and the messages that came back to us have gone into shaping the way that our association’s work is being planned and implemented, and the way that our association itself will be structured in the near future. Stay tuned for some very exciting announcements in 2012!

In 2011, we solidified key international partnerships, many of which were instrumental in our co-hosting of the largest-ever international Community Health Centres conference, right here in Canada. The Toronto conference, [Community Health Centres: Acting Today, Shaping Tomorrow](#), brought together 1000 delegates from over 20 countries.

We joined extraordinary co-hosts, the Association of Ontario Health Centres (AOHC) and U.S. National Association of Community Health Centers (NACHC), in exploring innovations and best practices in primary health care from around the world.

The palpable energy and momentum created during this June 2011 conference sparked discussions about the need for an international voice focused on community-oriented primary health care and the Community Health Centre solution around the world.

Soon after, CACHCA joined the European Forum for Primary Care and the U.S. National Association of Community Health Centers in signing a **Memorandum of Understanding** that will lead to establishment, in 2012, of an International Federation of Community Health Centres. Our associations are also in discussion with other global allies, such as the Community Health association of Victoria State, Australia, to broaden participation in this exciting global effort.

A quick snapshot of other efforts on the international front gives a flavour of progress to date in other areas:

- CACHCA contributed to European Forum for Primary Care (EFPC) led discussions, in Italy and Belgium, focused on advancing the European Alliance for Community-Oriented Primary Health Care.
- CACHCA provided a keynote presentation at the Belgian CHCs Association (La Fédération des Maisons médicales) conference, in Brussels, underscoring experiences and lessons from Canada's Community Health Centres.
- CACHCA's official delegation at the WHO World Conference on Social Determinants of Health, in Rio de Janeiro, Brazil, emphasized the need for increased Canadian Government action on the social determinants of health, and provided routine updates and communiqués from Brazil.
- In partnership with the U.S. National Association of Community Health Centers, CACHCA launched and maintains a weekly, online discussion forum for Community Health Centres and allies from around the world. The forum – **CHC Chat** – covers a broad range of issues in community-oriented primary health care, linking health centres, their health providers and program staff in dialogue to share lessons, resources and support.
- CACHCA is participating as an advisory group member of a Pan American Health Organization (PAHO) led primary health care “community of practice” for North, Central and South America and the Caribbean.

Efforts on the international stage complemented efforts at home, in Canada, to increase our association's public communications and input on public policy at federal and provincial levels. The **News/Actions section of CACHCA's website** testifies to a very busy year in this respect!

From engaging federal political parties in the lead up to the May 2011 federal election, to the six provincial and territorial elections that took place across the country in October and November, CACHCA was on hand. Our association has revitalized its efforts to support political parties and

decision-makers at provincial and federal levels in better understanding the impact and potential of Community Health Centres and the need to build healthy public policy. We continue to play a role in shaping discussions on future health system planning and public policy, including recommendations related to the 2014 Health Accord.

Very recently, CACHCA also had the opportunity to provide [recommendations to the Canadian House of Commons Standing Committee on Health](#), with emphasis on the role of Community Health Centres in improving health promotion and disease prevention across Canada.

Building on these recommendations, CACHCA met, this December, with NDP Official Opposition Health Critic, Libby Davies (MP - Vancouver East), and federal Liberal Party Health Critic, Dr. Hedy Fry (MP – Vancouver Centre), for some very productive discussions regarding steps to enhance our health system, including recommendations for the 2014 Health Accord. The association continues to pursue a meeting with federal Minister of Health, Leona Aglukkaq (MP – Nunavut).

Also in December, CACHCA was invited to participate in a Canadian Medical Association consultation, conducted in partnership with the Canadian Nurses Association, focused on health system transformation and principles to support such transformation. This was an important opportunity to raise the profile and importance of person-centred, community-oriented, trauma-informed, comprehensive primary health care, and factors affecting access to care and support for diverse Canadians.

In all, these recent meetings have allowed further progress in underscoring the particular contributions being made through Community Health Centres across the country, along with the need for increased federal government leadership on health to make these innovations available to more Canadians. Our efforts to collaborate with Canadians from coast to coast in sending these messages to provincial governments, via [online petitions](#), is gaining momentum.

Sadly, in 2011, CACHCA also said goodbye to a dedicated [Board Member, life-long leader and compassionate advocate, Dr. Joan Lesmond](#). Throughout 2010 and into 2011, Joan played an instrumental role in unifying voices within CACHCA and in helping set directions for the future.

As we move into an exciting year of further growth and development for our association, Joan's fingerprints will be everywhere evident. Our dear friend and colleague was taken from us too soon, all too soon this past year. She is very dearly missed. It is in her honour that we recommit to placing quality, equity and compassion at the core of everything to which our association aspires.

And so, a busy and remarkable year is almost at its end. We believe that this year of renewal, partnership and bridge-building has enabled Community Health Centres across Canada to see the contours of a stronger, revitalized membership association now taking shape.

To our Community Health Centre and CHC association colleagues, we thank you. We look forward to continuing to improve and expand the ways in which we support you to do the very important work that you do each and every day, in local communities across Canada.

And to the millions of Canadians who have not yet been given access to Community Health Centre services in your communities, we commit to redoubling our efforts to work with provincial and federal governments in 2012 to bring you the high-quality, comprehensive Community Health Centre services you want and deserve.

We also want to thank our many local, provincial and federal partners for the outstanding encouragement we have received throughout 2011, and for the many invitations to partner that have been extended to us and to Community Health Centres across the country.

We remain deeply committed not only to improving access to Community Health Centre services for all, but to doing so in partnership and collaboration with the broader spectrum of health and social service organizations and associations that are making a difference in the lives of Canadians.

To all, we extend our wishes for a peaceful, restful and healthy holiday season.

Sincerely yours,



Jane Moloney
CACHCA Chairperson



Scott A. Wolfe
CACHCA Federal Coordinator

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