



Healing in our Resilient Communities

Unison's successful Response and Recovery Project enters its second year.

By Katie Mayerson

For many years, Unison has been deeply committed to supporting communities to heal from tragic incidents of community violence. This commitment has been demonstrated by providing support and counselling, and by connecting residents and community members to services that can support recovery. We have also been actively involved in community safety committees across our catchment — working alongside community leaders and frontline agency workers while partnering with the City of Toronto's Crisis Response Team. We have witnessed the deep impacts but also the incredible resilience of the communities we serve. In 2011, our community scan told us that safety was the number one concern of community members. In 2013, the City of Toronto funded Unison through its Community Safety Investment program, and the Response and Recovery Program was born.

When something touches the surface of water, its impact ripples out far beyond the initial point of contact. This is the model of Unison's Response and Recovery Project — to have its impact ripple out through the communities we serve. Our goal: to better equip folks with the skills and knowledge necessary to offer support and promote healing to their friends, family, neighbours, clients, and to themselves.

In 2013–2014, the Response and Recovery Project trained core groups of residents in Lawrence Heights and Neptune, and then collaborated with them to develop and deliver four workshops for specific audiences:

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youth, parents/caregivers, multicultural adults and seniors. Workshops used videos, hip hop, interactive games and activities to engage participants. In total, we touched more than 150 people.

This year, we are working with the community to come up with new and innovative ways to reach even more people. We are also continuing to develop and

distribute relevant and accessible resources to residents, such as our Parent/Caregiver Support Package, Community Crisis Resource Phone Lists, and interactive story/colouring book for children that fosters resiliency.

As we enter year two, we broaden the project and turn our attention to service providers in wards 11 and 12 to increase their capacity to support their clients through challenging times, whether they are personal or neighbourhood-wide. We have partnered with five diverse agencies across wards 11 and 12, and are currently surveying staff and community members to better understand what knowledge and skills they feel it is important for service providers to have. Next, we will create five unique trainings

tailored to each individual organization's wants and needs. These trainings will be as interactive, engaging and relevant as the trainings we rolled out in Lawrence Heights and Neptune. Our intention is to work directly with the residents of wards 11 and 12 next year.

For more information, please contact Katie Mayerson, Response and Recovery Training Coordinator at 416-653-5400 ext 1001 or katie.mayerson@unisonhcs.org.

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Check our most recent program calendar, or www.unisonhcs.org for information on all our current programs and services.



New Members Wanted!

You are invited to become a member of Unison Health and Community Services. There are benefits and privileges of membership.

- Members have the right to vote at our annual general meeting.
- Members receive regular updates about our programs and services.
- It's a great way to help strengthen your community.
- It's a great way to connect with others in your community.
- Bonus: New members receive a Unison t-shirt!

Sign up or renew your membership today! Get a membership form from the front desk at any Unison site, download it from our website at unisonhcs.org or call Ana Garcia at 416-787-1676 ext 257 for more information.

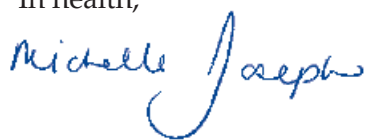
Message from the CEO and the Board Chair

The summer is a great time for Unison clients and community members to do gardening, enjoy the outdoors, join healthy lifestyles programs and enjoy the great Jane St. Hub BBQ — those activities are always fun for everyone! We hope you all had a healthy and fun summer.

With the arrival of the fall, you can still get outside to enjoy walking, take in the fresh air and appreciate the transformation of the trees' beautiful green leaves to shades of gold, yellow and red. Fall is a busy time for Unison with our Qmentum Accreditation process, annual general meeting and back to school for all our Pathways to Education staff and participants. We will keep you posted as we move through the accreditation process and will be reporting on our learnings and recommended changes that we will be implementing to serve you better. Of course, we will also be celebrating our successes and achievements as well. Please look for updates on the lobby TV monitors, in our *Unison Voice* newsletter and bulletin boards. Thank you to all our clients and community members who have been volunteering with Unison through this process.

2015 will bring the end to our current strategic plan and the beginning of accessing the attainment of our goals and objectives. It will also mean the Board of Directors will be designing the next planning phase and mapping out all the ways we hope you will participate in order to increase the health of Unison clients and the communities we serve.

In health,



Michelle Joseph, CEO



Janak Jass, Board Chair

Gathering Momentum for Quality Improvement

On the path to accreditation with Qmentum.

By Julie Callaghan

On September 15–18, 2014, Unison will host two external surveyors from Accreditation Canada for an on-site review. The surveyors have the task of assessing Unison's performance compared to standards of excellence in a number of areas, such as quality of client services, human resources management, emergency preparedness, infection control and partnerships with other organizations.

The accreditation process is called Qmentum. If you are at the Lawrence Heights, Pathways or Jane Trethewey sites on one of the review days, you may encounter the surveyors — Karen Ingebrigtsen and Meaghan Thumath. Karen and Meaghan will be meeting with some

of Unison's clients and partner organizations, as well as board members and staff, to ask questions and gather information about Unison.

Qmentum is just one of the ways that Unison continually assesses and evaluates how we do our work, in order to determine what we need to change and how we can improve. We also conduct an annual client experience survey. Last year, we conducted our survey in October 2013, and we are expecting to conduct the survey again this fall. In the meantime, if you have any feedback for us, please use the suggestion boxes, located at all sites.

Thanks to everyone who has agreed to participate in Qmentum. Stay tuned for more information on the results of our on-site review!

Here is a sample of some of the types of questions that the surveyors may ask our clients and partner organizations:

Sample questions for clients:

How did you hear about this program or service?

How are the staff at Unison?

How do you make a suggestion or a complaint?

Do you feel respected when you visit Unison?

Sample questions for partner organizations:

When you send a message to someone at Unison, how long do you wait for a reply?

How and how well does Unison communicate with you?

How do you collaborate with Unison and how has this benefitted your organization/the community?

My Community

By Waleed Alesai ("Youth Do Care" 2013 Lawrence Heights youth childcare training program participant)

My community means a lot to me
It's a place I can feel safe and be free
This community gives me
happiness and joy
It doesn't matter if you're a girl
or a boy
Even parents could hang out and
drink a cup of tea

Where I live everyone is nice
They give delicious food to each
other with spice
There are also three amazing clean
schools
Which have good policies and rules
Everyone loves each other like a
pack of mice

I could go chill with my friends
Watch a hockey game till it ends
First I get the remote which my pal grabs
Next we watch the Leafs beat the Habs
Our friendship never bends

This community is so bright and neat
With many people I could meet
There is a big community centre
where kids could all play
It's so fun that sometimes we stay all day
And in the summer we could go
there to escape the heat

Adults could hang out at Tim
Horton's with a cup of coffee
And kids could play at the centre, a
quick game of floor hockey
Lawrence Heights is a great, green
area of friends and family
Where everyone talks and lives happily
This is what my community means
to me!



Seeking Citizenship

With the passage of Bill C-24, the rules for Canadian citizenship will change.

By Joanna Mullen

On June 19, 2014, Bill C-24, titled *Strengthening Canadian Citizenship Act*, was accepted by the Federal government and made into law. This means that the rules around how to apply for citizenship and becoming a Canadian citizen are going to change at some date in the future.

The changes to the legislation will make it more difficult for permanent residents to become Canadian citizens.

- The Canadian government will now require permanent residents to have lived in Canada for four out of six years in order to apply. This means permanent residents will have to have lived in Canada permanently for four years (at least 183 days per year) before applying and be able to demonstrate that taxes were filed for those four years.
- Permanent residents will have to demonstrate they intend to reside in Canada permanently.
- Permanent residents must also be able to demonstrate that they have adequate knowledge of one of the two official languages of Canada — French or English — and knowledge about the country in order to become a Canadian citizen. Under the new laws, if you are under the age of 65, you will be required to write tests to demonstrate your language proficiency and knowledge of Canada.
- The Minister for Citizenship and Immigration can now revoke citizenship from any Canadian if he or she believes that it was obtained through fraud or misrepresentation. Citizenship can also be revoked from any Canadian with dual citizenship who has been convicted of a crime relating to national security.
- Permanent residents convicted of fraud in their applications may face \$100,000 in fines or five years in prison.
- If permanent residents have criminal charges and convictions in another country besides Canada, they may be barred from applying for Canadian citizenship.
- It will cost more to apply: the application fee will be \$300.00 per adult.

Many organizations who work on behalf of immigrants opposed Bill C-24. Unfortunately, it was still adopted by the government. The primary concern of many organizations is the ability of the Canadian government to strip away Canadian citizenship. Citizenship is a right that once given should not be taken away from anyone.

While these legislated changes are not yet in effect, they may be soon. If you require more information about how these changes may affect you or wish to begin the process for applying for Canadian citizenship, please contact Unison's legal clinic at 416-653-5400 ext 1244.

There's No Place Like Home

Unison's Streets to Homes Follow-Up Program helps formerly homeless clients.

By Kam Lau

Adopting the "housing-first approach," Unison's Streets to Homes Follow-Up Program provides housing stabilization to at least 60 formerly homeless clients who had been housed by the City Street Outreach Program. Streets to Homes (S2H) provides intensive, integrated case management services. We have three S2H workers, and work closely with two specialized housing help workers, a community mental health worker and a mental health nurse. This program team provides timely, coordinated and outcome-focused housing support services for our clients.

The core services of the S2H program are:

1. Providing intensive case-management services for moderate-needs clients. Activities include crisis intervention, developing long- and short-term goals for clients, conducting regular home and community visits and regular landlord checks for rent payment, as well as connecting clients with appropriate internal and external services.
2. Running a weekly Community Kitchen program, which focuses on building life skills, nutrition education, employment preparation and social skill development. There are ongoing opportunities for clients to volunteer for the program.
3. Providing supplementary food hampers twice monthly through Unison's Food Cupboard Program, in order to mitigate clients' food insecurity. The hampers include fresh vegetables, milk and non-perishable items, and are delivered from North York Harvest Food Bank.

The program is based on a service integration model. Almost all S2H clients manifest issues related to physical health, mental health, addiction, behavioural management or social skills. This group is very often marginalized or facing systemic discrimination in housing and employment. These clients' needs are complex and challenging; the most effective approach is to coordinate all essential services with an inter-disciplinary team approach. We have had successful cases, where some clients have stabilized their housing, and even begun volunteering for different community-based programs and advocacy groups.

Stay Healthy with Adult Immunizations

They're not just for kids! Adults greatly benefit from maintaining immunizations, too.

By Barbara Lupu, RN

When you get sick with a virus or bacteria your immune system makes antibodies to fight the disease. This is called immunity. The immune system remembers and will protect you from getting sick a second time. The immune system responds by making antibodies that attack antigens on the virus or bacteria.

Getting a vaccination can help develop immunity without you getting sick. Babies, children and teens have a regular vaccination schedule. To maintain immunity adults require helper or booster shots. Some vaccinations such as influenza (flu) need annual vaccination every fall/winter, as the flu virus (antigen) changes frequently. A new flu vaccine is made each year as the virus changes.



Vaccine side effects are usually mild and temporary. Common side effects may be soreness, redness and mild swelling at the injection site. Serious reactions are very rare.

If you are unsure of what vaccinations you require, make an appointment with your healthcare practitioner, and bring any records of previous vaccinations. In some cases, a blood test can be done to check your level of immunity. Toronto Public Health provides certain vaccines for free.

Please call to book your appointment for the 2014–2015 flu vaccination.

References:

Canadian coalition for immunization awareness and promotion (CCIAP), <http://immunize.ca>

Canadian Immunization Guide, 2014, Public Health Agency of Canada

Let's Meet... Farah Begbie

Profile of the special projects manager.

By Julie Callaghan

Farah Begbie started out six-and-a-half years ago as a community dietitian with the Diabetes Education Centre (DEC) in Lawrence Heights. Since then, she has gone on to roles as DEC Program Coordinator, Acting DEC Manager and, most recently, as Unison's Special Projects Manager.



Q: What do you appreciate about the communities where Unison provides services and programs?

A: I enjoy the diversity of these communities. The people who come in as clients are very genuine, and so it's easy to work with clients and connect with them on a variety of levels.

Q: What have been the highlights of working at New Heights CHCs and Unison?

A: The merger stands out as a highlight. When the merger was announced, I was already a little familiar with York Community Services, because the DEC was already seeing clients at Keele-Rogers. From the start, I found it exciting to have the opportunity to contribute to expanding and improving our service offerings to clients.

Q: From your perspective, what is best about Unison?

A: I think it is meaningful that Unison has different ways of addressing client needs that are sensitive to the different neighbourhoods in which we work. The staff at Unison are as diverse as the clients, and they are very dedicated to their work — helping clients to improve their health and welfare, and creating "healthy communities."

Q: What are your biggest achievements so far during your career at Unison?

A: Last year, I helped the DEC achieve the Canadian Diabetes Association's Standards Recognition Program, and this was meaningful because we were able to identify ways of improving our work, such as how we assess clients living with diabetes. This year I have overseen Unison's transition to a new electronic client charting system — Nightingale on Demand (NOD). With our multiple sites and large staff, this was a very challenging and rewarding project. I am pleased to say that it was successful and NOD is now up and running!

What vaccines do you need?

Vaccine	Who should be vaccinated
Tetanus	Everyone, every 10 years
Diphtheria	Everyone, every 10 years
Pertussis (whooping cough)	Everyone, once in adulthood
Influenza (flu)	Annually for people at high risk of complications from influenza, and anyone who wants protection from influenza
Pneumococcal pneumonia	Everyone 65 and older, and people with specific medical conditions
Hepatitis B	People with medical, work or lifestyle risks
Hepatitis A	People with medical, work or lifestyle risks
Meningococcal meningitis	People with specific medical condition and people living in communal residence, including students and military personnel
Measles	People who have not had the vaccine or the disease
Mumps	People who have not had the vaccine or the disease
Rubella (German measles)	People who have not had the vaccine or the disease, especially women planning to get pregnant (cannot be given during pregnancy)
Varicella (chicken pox)	People who have not had the vaccine or the disease
Human papilloma virus (HPV)	Females 9–26 years of age
Herpes zoster (shingles)	Anyone over 60 years of age
Travel vaccines	Varies by destination; consult a travel health clinic, your doctor, nurse or local public health officer

