Rotary Club of Camrose Daybreak
EyeOpener May 4, 2021 Primary Care Network Response to COVID

May is Youth Service Month

Odell opened the meeting with a Westcoast Harmony Chorus rendition of *O Canada* for guest Melissa Berg and 14 members present

Odell offered **Food for Thought** sharing an easy-to-read informative article in the May *Rotary* magazine – *Advanced in Years* by Frank Bures, page 24. The article is Frank’s response to a letter to the editor in the local newspaper. The letter posits that you cannot compare the US death toll of COVID to the death tolls of various wars. A soldier’s death was at age 25 representing 50 years of lost life based on a life expectancy of 75 years. Most COVID deaths are those over 70, so even with a life expectancy of 85 years, that is only a loss of 15 years. Many of us feel the death of a young person is more tragic that that of an old person – that is, potential life is more important than actual life. Looking beyond this notion, Frank explores research into societies around the world. He finds that most societies value elders over the young. He imagines how actions may have been different if 80 percent of infected children died – outrage, panic, serious attempts to control the virus? Consider the actions of less youth-centric cultures like China, Italy and Spain to imagine this. **Insightful article worth the read.**

Jackie will offer **Food for Thought** on May 18

**Happy Bucks**

* Proud dad, radiant bride at wedding on Saturday
* Lots of blue flowers shooting up by elm tree
* Thousands of sandhill cranes riding the thermals
* Enjoyable birding tour of sloughs north of town – lots of activity
* Planting trees with son and daughter-in-law

**Presentation** – *Primary Care Network (PCN) Response to COVID-19*, Melissa Berg

Melissa, a Registered Nurse, has experience with the Wetaskiwin PCN, at St Mary’s Hospital and for the last couple of years with the PCN based in Camrose that serves many communities in our area. PCNs have four main areas of service: geriatric, pre-natal, disease management and electronic file management. When the pandemic was declared, the Camrose PCN environment underwent significant changes. While their pre-natal site by Peavey Mart stayed open to in-person consultations, their main Recreation Centre site was closed to in-person services. Most staff shifted to work-from-home, telephone appointments were the norm, and available technology was examined to assess better ways of serving patients. The electronic file system supported video appointments and Camrose was among the first PCNs to offer this option.

As the pandemic evolved, patients were offered the choice of telephone, video and in-person consultations. Those hesitant or unfamiliar with video technology were supported with a pre-appointment session with a staffer to become comfortable with the technology. If the internet failed to work during a video appointment, a fallback to telephone or a reschedule was offered. Today, excluding geriatric and pre-natal, approximately 40% of appointments are video, 40 to 50% telephone and 10% in-person.

The technology and team willingness allowed the PCN to shift from regular office hours, 9 to noon, 1 to 3 for appointments, to offering earlier, noon-hour and later appointments. Recent quality surveys show patient satisfaction is close to 99% and 48-hour cancellations are down by two-thirds from pre-pandemic levels.

In April 2020 at the outset of the pandemic, staff had to find ways to ‘see’ patients, ‘see’ how they feel, without the normal visual cues in a personal visit. Early introduction of video appointments resolved most of this issue. Supports were offered to all staff and wellness checks made sure staff were in a good place.

For positive COVID diagnoses, staff would establish a care pathway for the patient that considered the level of risk, age, disease, etc. Self-monitoring, some every 24 hours, some every 48 hours, is part of the regimen for the patient. Patients are supported by the family physician weekdays and PCN offers the support in the evening and on weekends.

**Announcements and Reminders**

* Register for the June 12-16 2021 Virtual RI Convention at <riconvention.org>
* **Monday May 10, 7:00 pm – Joint meeting**, former diplomat Richard Bruneau
* Tuesday May 11, 8:00 am – Board meeting
* Tuesday May 18, 7:00 am Club meeting – *Purple Martins in Camrose*, Glen Hvenegaard

Alan closed the meeting with the *Four Way Test*

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