



The Catholic Women's League of Canada

Archdiocese of Edmonton

OUR LADY OF GOOD COUNSEL, PRAY FOR US

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Education and Health Communique #1 August 2009

To: Education and Health Standing Committee Chairs
Council Presidents
Zone Chairpersons

I'm not sure where to begin with this report. There have been many issues facing us in the fields of education and health care during the past few months. I will try to highlight some of these issues of concern. I would also like to share some of the information from the Provincial Convention I attended in June in Medicine Hat.

Education

Bill 44 – Alberta legislators passed legislation June 2, 2009 that will give parents the option of pulling their children out of class when lessons on sex, religion, or sexual orientation are being taught. A clause in the bill requires that school boards give parents written notice when controversial topics are going to be covered in the curriculum. Parents can then ask for their child to be excluded from the class.

I believe schools are helping parents out with educating kids about sex in a matter-of-fact, nonjudgmental way. It is the parents' responsibility to teach their children about sex. Yet, for whatever reason, there are kids who don't learn the facts and are catching STD's (Sexually Transmitted Diseases) or getting pregnant. STD's and teen pregnancy will never be completely eradicated, but they can be reduced through education and a healthy understanding of sex.

The introduction of this bill also poses problems for the teachers re curriculum topics. Does this mean curricula related to sex education and religion will need to be reviewed and revised right across all subjects and grades?

Could this bill be a stepping stone to eroding our Catholic School religious programs?

What do you think?

Health Care System

“Doctors Predict Cancer Surgery Delays, Operations Cancelled, Waiting Lists Grow for Cataract Surgeries, Health Care Cuts Will Add to Painful Wait Times, Health Cuts Target Seniors – Again” These are only a few of the headlines we’ve been inundated with lately concerning the state of our Health Care System.

Are you worried about the kind of care you will receive when needed? Many of these health care reductions will adversely affect the health of our seniors (cataract surgeries, elective surgeries for hip, knee replacements). If these surgeries are not addressed in a reasonable time frame the health of our seniors will be crucially affected. An ailing senior population will indirectly burden the general population in other areas – nursing care that otherwise could have been averted had these seniors been cared for sooner.

Not only seniors are affected by these delays. An article in the Edmonton Journal (Sound Off) stated, “I’ve been waiting close to six months for day surgery to remove some cartilage in my knee. I can’t walk because of pain and can walk only short distances. The cost to keep me home on disability and to pay for my drugs is well over \$20,000, which could be saved if I could get treatment.”

Are we being softened up for privatization?

We need to take action. Write to our Minister of Health, Ron Liepert, to your MLA representative and voice your concerns.

The Provincial Convention – Medicine Hat – June 3-7, 2009

I attended a workshop facilitated by Gloria Lundberg, Provincial Chairperson for Education and Health. At this workshop Gloria presented information on **Preparing a Family Emergency Kit** and gave us some handouts on available **Rebates** by the Government of Canada as well as some available from local jurisdictions

Preparing a Family Emergency Kit can be purchased in Alberta at Canadian Tire, London Drugs, or Value Drug Mart. To obtain more information on this you may call 1 800 622-6232 or go on line www.GetPrepared.ca

On **Rebates** you may get more information

- by calling 780 408-4580 in Edmonton or Toll Free 1 888 537-7202
- On line www.climatechangecentral.com
- In the Edmonton Journal, June 11, 2009 there was an insert on Rebates – Rebates and tax credits take some pain out of renovation costs.

The Keynote Address by Dr. Clem Persaud “The Abortion Breast Cancer Link” was very informative. Studies have shown that women who have had an abortion raise their risk factor of getting breast cancer. **This is only one of the many risk factors for breast cancer.** Women **who have not had an abortion do get breast cancer.** There are many other unknown factors that make some women more susceptible to breast cancer.

On Sunday morning I attended a presentation by **Dr. Clem Persaud on “Preventing Breast Cancer”**. The key to the prevention is to keep our estrogen levels at an acceptable level. This can be done through diet, and a healthy lifestyle. The following are some things you can do to keep your estrogen at a healthy level:

- 1) Diet – these foods and vitamins are most beneficial
 - grapes, walnuts, cruciferous vegetables (broccoli, cauliflower, bok choy, cabbage, brussel sprouts)
 - flax – ground but not too fine
 - fish
 - grapeseed extract capsules – recommended one a day – has anti cancer benefits as well as anti aging agents (wow!)
 - vitamin D – recommended 1000 IU a day
- 2) Lifestyle
 - Exercise – 30 minutes at least 3x a week- increases oxygen into our system which lowers estrogen level
 - Weight control – extra estrogen is stored in fat cells
 - Rest –one good night’s sleep – 8 hrs in the dark will restore immune system by 1/3

Environment awareness is most important too. Many cancers are environmentally related.

Ride to Conquer Cancer

The weekend of June 27 and 28 my husband and I followed the riders who participated in the Ride to Conquer Cancer. The Ride to Conquer Cancer, benefiting the Alberta Cancer Foundation, was a cycling journey along the majestic Canadian Rockies (Highway 22). There were 1,742 riders (our son, Greg was one of them) who cycled from Calgary to Sierra West Ranch, a few kilometers north of Pincher Creek. The riders raised 6.9 million for cancer research.

Greg raised \$10,131.10 for the cancer research fund. He thanks his many sponsors, family, friends, colleagues and his students who had fund raising events to support his cause. A special thank you to Annunciation Catholic Women’s League for their spiritual support and generous donation.

The journey was an emotional one for us. Greg rode in honour of his wife, Alicia, who was diagnosed with bile duct cancer Oct. 31, 2008 and died less than 6 months later on April 16, 2009. We pray that the funds raised for research will someday realize a successful treatment for all cancers.

Education and Health Kit

Last Spring each council was sent a kit “CWL Day of Peace and Hope Activities Kit”. If you have not already done so I encourage you to use and plan an activity or workshop for a council meeting. For Education and Health there are three suggested workshops, Caring for Ourselves in a Stressful World, Palliative Care, and Illiteracy.

Senior Issues

As chairperson of Health and Education I would like to focus on **Senior Issues** during my term on the Diocesan Council. Areas of concern are:

- 1) Continuing Care for Seniors
- 2) Elder Abuse
- 3) Palliative Care
- 4) Nutrition and Wellness
- 5) Soliciting Concerns re Seniors
- 6) Care of Caregivers – Respite Assistance

Indirectly improvement in dealing with these areas of concern for seniors also benefits the health and welfare of all age groups.

May the Peace and Hope of Christ be with every one of you as you pursue your goals and meet your challenges as chairpersons of Education and Health.

Your sister in Christ,

Caroline MacDougall
Education and Health Chairperson