Barsby Project
School Based Health Services in Nanaimo

Presentation to
Nanaimo Ladysmith Public Schools’ Board of Education
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Barsby Project

Purpose:
To develop, implement and evaluate a model of school based health services in an inner city school in Nanaimo
The Barsby Project is a Partnership between:

- Nanaimo Ladysmith Public Schools
- Island Health
- Nanaimo Division of Family Practice and GP for ME Initiative
- Nanaimo GP’s and Paediatricians
- Tillicum Lelum Friendship Centre
- FNHA
- Snuneymuxw
- MCFD
- Barsby PAC with a parent and student Representative
- Nanaimo Family Medicine Residency Program
- RCMP
- VIU
- CYMH Collaborative
Why do we need school-based health services?

There is an important link between physical health, mental health and readiness to learn at all ages (Brown & Bolen, 2008).

Further, increased anxiety and depression in children are associated with lowered academic performance, and ultimately, such mental health issues are related to increased school drop-out rates (Owens, Stevenson, Hadwin & Norgate, 2012).
Why do we need school based health services?

There is ample and growing evidence linking access to school-based health centres (SBHC's) and improvement in academic performance indicators such as:

- fewer absences,
- higher educational aspirations,
- attainment of grade level outcomes and
- higher graduation rates

through the improvement of health outcomes overall (Strolin-Goltzman, 2010).
Also….

- 40 – 60% of Canadian adolescents who are worried about a health related issue have not consulted a health care practitioner.

- Nanaimo has a high percentage of low income persons and vulnerable children as well as 29% are without a family doctor.

- Adolescents who do not have a primary care physician have a lower likelihood of receiving any type of health care.
And…. 

The American literature on the outcomes of SBHCs in high schools clearly illustrates improved health of adolescents in the medical, mental health and educational domains (Pediatrics and Child Health)
School and Community based services already present in the school would integrate with the medical practitioners to provide a comprehensive team.
What could the health services look like?

The services provided by the clinic could include the following:

1. Direct health care by the most appropriate health care practitioner

2. A continuum of care – nurse or NP to Family Physician to Paediatrician to Child and Youth Psychiatrist – all of which could have a “clinic” opportunity in the clinic.
What could the health services look like?

3. Fully Integrated interdisciplinary assessments and management of:
   - General health concerns
   - Sexual health
   - Mental health concerns
   - Developmental and learning difficulties
   - Chronic illness

4. Education and health promotion for students, staff and community
At a universal or Tier 1 level, the SBHC creates a platform for school-based practitioners such as school psychologists, counsellors, child, youth and family support workers and speech-language pathologists to be involved with preventive and health-promoting activities (Brown & Bolen, 2008), which is consistent with the Nanaimo-Ladysmith Public Schools’ adoption of an RTI model.
Why Barsby?

Young children from the geographic region of Nanaimo in which this school community is located have the highest percentage (47%) of vulnerability (considering physical, social, emotional, language and communication skills development) within Nanaimo-Ladysmith.
Why Barsby?

• Many children, youth and their families that live in this area have difficulty accessing health services and, therefore, often do not have their health needs met.

• Providing health services in the school would allow for timely, appropriate, close to home health care which would

• Help to mitigate the lack of appropriate health service delivery and

• Create a health care “safety net” for this vulnerable population.
Work to date:

✓ Spring 2014 a Working Group (WG) was formed

✓ June 2014 the WG presented to the Board in order to ask for space and partnership

✓ October 2014 the Board approved space at Barsby

✓ November 2014 $200,000 funding was secured through the GP for Me Initiative

✓ A further $60,000 is anticipated through the CYMH Collaborative

✓ January 2015 WG members grew to 31 representing 19 organizations
Work to date:

- WG meets monthly as a Steering Committee
- 6 subgroups have formed
- Developed plans to renovate space to suit purpose
- Soon to post for a Clinic Coordinator
- Submitted a proposal for an NP
- 6 GPs and Family Practice Residents ready to start work
- Plan to start basic “clinic” very soon
What are we asking?

• Your ongoing support and partnership in the development, implementation and evaluation of The Barsby Wellness Centre
“School-based health centers exist at the intersection of education and health and are the caulk that prevents children and adolescents from falling through the cracks.”

*US National Assembly on School-Based health Care*
Thank you