

## **CFAN 2008 Workshop Report**

The annual CFAN workshop took place on October 19 in Edmonton, at the Westin Hotel. The session was in conjunction with the bigger CAPHC conference that was taking place that week.

We had a total of 30 participants at the day-long workshop, and they travelled from all across Canada – from Halifax to Montreal, a healthy constituency from Ontario, and prairie folks from Saskatoon and Calgary and some friendly faces from BC. Each group gave a round-table report.

We were fortunate to have Juliette Schlucter open our morning with words of inspiration about the successes of Family-Centered Care initiatives at the Children's Hospital of Philadelphia. Her eloquent words set the tone for the rest of the day.

Robin England from IWK in Halifax made a presentation about the 'Yakkers' – the Youth Advisory Council at IWK. She was refreshingly honest about the challenges in supporting youth to have a voice in the health system.

A large portion of the morning was devoted to launching a multi-year advocacy project, The Child and Family in the Healthcare System, that CFAN will lead as part of The Canadian Child and Youth Health Coalition.

Several Coalition partners, including Co-Chair Dr. Bob Armstrong, and Diane Hart, President of The Canadian Association of Child Life Leaders, took part in the session that was facilitated by Tamara Krbavac from McMaster Children's FAC. All present broke into small groups to identify issues and needs the project should--or must--address. Some were quite broad (e.g. information available to families post-diagnosis); some were very specific (e.g. use of restraints in emergency departments). A Working Group to guide the project began to take shape at the end of the session.

After lunch, there was a panel entitled, 'The Elephant in the Room'. This panel consisted of Dr. Leonora Henderson, a neonatologist, Holly Gusnowsky, a parent rep, Daniel Martin, a sibling and Lindsay Ames, a social worker. The panel was moderated by Jim DiPinto, the chair of the Glenrose Parent Advisory Council. The focus was sharing experiences relating to the disclosure of diagnosis and the very important concept of hope.

The final presentation was about Peer-to-Peer Support Groups, and Troy Stooke from the Southern Alberta Child and Youth Network spoke about a Network based program, and Mike Waddingham presented on a community-based program with the Edmonton Down Syndrome Society.

The day finished off with the always-exciting AGM portion, where a new slate of Steering Committee members were elected:

Sue Robins, Chair  
Frank Gavin, Past Chair  
Lisa Hawthornthwaite, Vice-Chair  
Lisa Rosati-White, Secretary  
Angie Christman, Treasurer  
Robin England, Director  
Ruth Hartanto, Director  
Sherri Wuetherick, Director

The Glenrose hosted the day, and organized such extras as sweet treats from Wild Earth, a local bakery, afternoon entertainment in the form of the lovely [Ballerina Dreamers](#) dance troupe, and an after-workshop social dinner at Ric's Grill.

Eighteen evaluations were returned, with comments such as: "This was my first CFAN experience. It was great, really loved the dinner option at the end of the day. Great group of people, so much knowledge to share!" "The best CFAN meeting yet."

Of course, we can always improve, so next year we will endeavour to improve on the quality of room, and look at suggestions for topics such as storytelling, family faculty, and working with hospital administration.

Next stop: CFAN Workshop in Halifax on October 18, 2009!



