

August 2009

Good afternoon and welcome to our 38th AGM.

I would like to acknowledge the presence of a number of special people. First of all, I want to recognize the residents of the Behavioural Health Foundation. Your decision to make a difference in your own lives, and the lives of those you love, are an inspiration to us. Thank you for taking that crucial first step, showing us that change, though difficult and at times intimidating is possible. We applaud your decision to seek better things and we stand behind you in supporting you as you move forward. Thank you for giving us the opportunity to walk this part of your journey with you.

Secondly, I wish to recognize the dedicated staff, management and board of the Behavioural Health Foundation for their hard work and faithfulness to the Foundation's mission to provide quality behavioural health services of a holistic nature to men, women, dependent children and youth leading to personal and family wellness in areas of education, employment, health and family values. Your ongoing commitment to the fulfillment of this mission will reduce the harm to individuals and families that is caused by the misuse of substances, other addictive behaviours, and co-occurring mental health concerns. Thank you.

Finally, I wish to acknowledge our keynote speaker, Dr. Hines and our government representatives, Mr. Justin Swandel, member of Winnipeg City Council for St. Norbert, Ms. Marilyn Brick, member of the Manitoba Legislature for St. Norbert and Mr. Rob Bruinooge, MP for Winnipeg South. Thank you all for your continued support and dedication to the Behavioural Health Foundation.

Someone once said “Destiny is not a matter of chance; it is a matter of choice.” Each decision we make either brings us closer to or further away from our desired destiny. This truth underscores the importance of having a goal, a plan and markers to measure our progress in our journeys. Success leaves nothing to chance.

At the BHF we want to leave nothing to chance. Through diligent planning, conscientious work and dedication we intend to succeed. Already, we have realized successes due to our efforts. At the end of this fiscal year we were again rewarded a 3-year CARF accreditation demonstrating to you, our members, supporters and stakeholders, that BHF consistently exercises management techniques that assure efficiency, accountability, cost-effectiveness and successful outcomes of its programs and services.

In awarding the accreditation, the CARF survey team stated that the “caring, dedicated, and enthusiastic staff members demonstrate obvious pride in both their programs and in the progress of the adults and children they serve.” The survey team also explicitly singled out the maintenance department under the direction of Danny Calder and the staff of the adult programs under the direction of Gerry Verrier as having demonstrated a high level of dedication, commitment and genuine respect to the facility, its grounds and the people it serves. CARF wrote that this respect was obvious throughout the survey.

Another success we have earned is an increase in the per diem rates for our programs and services. This rate increase better reflects the cost of care and ensures we are able to continue to provide the exceptional care and services our members expect and deserve. We are glad to have negotiated this increase, and will continue to work in this area, ensuring we are able to provide not only the basic needs of our members, but also beneficial and complimentary services that will further add value to our services.

In May 2007 Conny Anderson, our Director of Clinical Services, received her doctorate in Psychology. Her expertise and dedication is a boon to the BHF. Under her direction we have a fantastic clinical team that include a therapist,

Conny Manson, a Registered Psychiatric Nurse, Pat Corner, and a General Practitioner, Dr. Ball. Congratulations, Conny, on this stellar achievement.

Regarding our staff achievements, we have 16 employees who will have been employed with BHF for more than 10 years this coming fiscal year; 6 of which will surpass the 20 year mark. Recently, Shirley Champagne retired from BHF after 24 years of service. Dedication has demonstrated by Shirley and her colleagues deserve recognition, reward and support. These long term employees help ensure the continuity of service and a stable environment in which our members receive excellent treatment services.

Another indicator of success is found in our statistics. Each year has shown an increase in the length of stay for the last five years. The average length of stay has increased from 73 days to 93 days – representing a more than 27% increase in lengths of stay by our residents. This increase results in better program utilization and improved outcomes for our members. Another benefit to these longer lengths of stay is a better program for new members as there is stability, continuity and supports provided by our longer term members. It also means less paperwork due to discharges and increased intakes. These processes are time-consuming and taxing on staff resources.

We are not resting on our laurels regarding these outcomes and positive indicators of success. This year we will again be soliciting help from you, our supporters and stakeholders, through our annual stakeholder survey. The information we collect helps identify areas in which we are doing well, where we need improvement and how we may best communicate with you, our members and supporters. This year will also see an expansion to our communications initiatives with an addition of a dedicated full time communications advisor tasked with identifying marketing and fund development initiatives, and creating positive exposure for the BHF through communication tools such as the website, events, advertising and promotional materials. You may have noticed as well the new and improved website we have launched this past May. We believe these steps will enable us to better liaise with our stakeholders and supporters while realizing opportunities for increasing program and financial supports.

These are just a couple of examples of how proactive decisions and choices we are making enable us to continue to offer the level of professional and compassionate care our members have come to expect of us. Other areas we are exploring are how to best address pregnant women issues and FASD using the resources we have on hand. Recognizing the urgency of need for pregnant

women seeking help with problematic substance misuse, BHF gives priority of placement to pregnant applicants.

What about our Residents? What successes have they experienced?

The St. Norbert Adult Education Centre saw two residents of BHF awarded Class Valedictorian for the 2008-2009 school year. This honour is bestowed upon students who have demonstrated dedication, excellence and achievement by their classmates and teachers.

This year also saw the number of parents regaining custody of their children double from 11 to 22. The number of days of child care also increased from 6,549 to 7,213. This increase of 664 days represents almost two more years of care being provided to children than in the last fiscal year.

While our intake numbers have been decreasing, our lengths of stay have been increasing showing that more and more people are choosing to stay in treatment. These people are being equipped with the tools they want and need to improve their successes in life **post** problematic substance use. Of the 324 adult residents in treatment, 184 have completed their primary treatment objectives with 120 achieving 90 day status and 5 others achieving 1 year status. Of the 108 youth residents, 41 have achieved 90 day status in their program.

About 94% of our members in a recent consumer based program evaluation indicated that they believed their lives have changed for the better as a result of their participation in treatment at BHF. In describing some of the changes, all residents reported only positive changes such as improved attitude, learning a routine, having a second chance at life without drugs, dealing with anger more effectively, having better self esteem, better parenting skills, self-control has improved, better able to set boundaries, thinking of consequences before acting, and being able to better express deeper feelings. These responses indicate that our members are experiencing success in treatment while remaining substance free. We congratulate and applaud them as they continue this journey.

While we are meeting the needs of our members, we are being ever vigilant and creative in exploring how we may improve even more – how we may go beyond meeting the basics and onto unlocking and tapping the potential in each person we serve. As we continue, we remember that “Success is a journey, not a destination.” The journey we are on is either successful – leading to change or improvements – or it isn’t. We don’t arrive at success; we define success through our choices.

I invite you to take a tour of our facilities, mingle with our staff and residents. Take a moment as well to review our Annual Report and talk to our Board Members, Management and Staff. You don't want to miss the great feast that our Chef Tim and Cook Nicky and the kitchen crew have prepared for everyone. Please see for yourself how we are involved in ensuring that this journey is a success for all involved. Thank you.