



Burnout/ Rustout Or Shine?

How often do you come home from work feeling tattered and battered, like a used-up stuffed animal?

That question caught everyone's attention when it was posed by Dr. Beth Perry to caregivers from Sun Country Health Region at a lecture in Tatagwa View on Sept. 14. Dr. Perry was sponsored by the Weyburn General Hospital Positive Workplace Group.



Dr. Beth Perry

That feeling of burnout, or rustout as she also calls it, is not good for you, your families or clients, or for the employers, she warned. The alternative is to remember, or relearn, how to shine as an exemplary caregiver, and how to gain satisfaction from the care you give others, she suggested.

"It's all about making a difference," she says. That sense of satisfaction might come from only brief moments, or small acts, but they make a powerful difference in the lives of both the caregiver and the patient, she says. After two years of research, Dr. Perry believes she has discovered some of the keys to ca-

reer satisfaction that will help enliven people in very challenging environments.

She uses the stories gained from two years of interactive research on a web site at <http://moments.athabascau.ca/about.html> to illustrate her points.

In one instance, a nurse from Ontario wrote to tell her about a woman with skin cancer. The odor from her wound was intense and made it difficult for many to see past her physical state and to care for her, wrote the nurse. So she did the opposite. She used the power of touch, concern for privacy, and other kinds of care to make a difference. "I saw her as more than a wound. I wanted her to know I was there for her, cared for her, and she could trust herself with me," she wrote.

Dr. Perry believes one of the basic requirements for job satisfaction is this willingness to make an intimate human connection with a client.

"A patient wants to know he or she is cared about, that they are still valued as a person," she says.



"They come to us in such a vulnerable state. They are in our hands. When the caregiver responds with sensitivity and compassion, that lets people know they're more than a bed number or a disease," she says.

Those moments don't need to be long or complicated, she notes.

She illustrates the point with this story. An Australian nurse wrote to say the caregiver should never leave a hurting person without a hand to hold, even if they appear not to want to hold that hand.

Everyone wants to leave some kind of foot-print before they leave this earth and it's part of my job to help them do that, the nurse wrote. "The greatest tribute to the people who pass through my care is that part of them live on in me after they die," she said.

Dr. Perry had several other suggestions from her research to help people regenerate. Humour is one approach she offered. One nurse wrote to tell her that using humour is like changing a diaper: it doesn't fix anything permanently but it makes thing better for a while. Creating hope, shielding dignity, seeing it through, and the power of a simple gesture are other ways for the caregiver to gain as much from the experience as the client, while energizing her(him)self.

They all help to "create the shine," said Dr. Perry. "Both caregiver and patient are changed by the experience and become better human beings," she said.

One of Dr. Perry's methods for helping herself and her co-workers achieve more satisfaction from their work is to use what she calls "the Appreciagram."

Please increase in size and photocopy. It can be used liberally in the Region for your co-workers and clients.

Appreciagram

I appreciate you because I saw you do

_____.

Sun Country Health Region/ September 2006

We Get Letters!

Staff thanks EMS in Sun Country Health Region

To the Editor of Sun Country Chatter:

I am writing a bouquet to thank the Weyburn EMS staff for all the things they do in their profession, as well as when they come to the Weyburn General Hospital every evening and night. The EMS staff assists us on third floor, primarily, but also help out in ER or ICU when they are needed.



They are always eager and willing to help us with all our requests. No matter how trivial, they are cheerful, energetic and helpful. The EMS staff will never be able to understand how much we appreciate them. We don't always tell them so this is one way of letting them all know. They are genuinely missed when they are unable to assist us. Every effort they make is greatly appreciated. They are all great people.

(I hope they) Keep up the good work. Thanks again.

From Jeannie Schlacter and some evening and night staff at WGH

And more letters!

SCHR's **Employee Recognition Committee** received numerous letters from employees after the June 9 Employee Recognition Evening at Prairie Place in Arcola.

Roberta Freitag wrote to say everything was very nice, from the food to the gifts, to the entertainment. Roberta received recognition as a 20-year employee.

Helen Powers wrote to say thank you for the gift from the region to appreciate her 15 years of service.

Beatrice M. LeClaire wrote to thank everyone for the hard work involved in organizing such a large event. She received a gift on retirement.

Marilyn Brady wrote to say she enjoyed the evening, especially in Arcola. She has worked for the Region for 30 years.

Christine Slykhuis wrote to say the event brightened her day. She said she will treasure the blanket she received on retirement along with the “many fond memories” of 25 years in home care.

Gail Crump wrote to say she likes the style of the watch she received on retirement, after 35 years.



Larry Babbings of the Galloway Health Centre was nominated by his co-workers this summer to receive the newly created Safe Worker Award. The award was created by WorkSafe Saskatchewan.

Pet Peeve

One employee of Sun Country Health Region who uses a computer all day says her pet peeve is the failure of people to place a specific subject in the subject line of all emails.

“It would be very helpful if the subject line named the particular meeting (or event) the email is about,” she says. In other words: June EMS meeting.

“This little step would avoid my need to search through 15 different emails to find the one I need,” she says.

Send your pet peeve to Joanne Helmer at Jhelmer@SCHR.sk.ca or 842-8353

Employee Family Assistance Program

Shirley Thera, manager of Workplace Health and Safety for Sun Country Health Region, reminds employees of the Region of the Employee Family Assistance Program offered here.

The program offers a free, confidential, voluntary counselling and referral service for employees and their immediate family members to help with personal or work-related issues before they become more serious.

The program is intended for all kinds of issues, from grief and stress counselling, to legal or financial information, and help to tackle addictions or weight control.

Pamphlets are available in any work site in the Region. Employees can call Shirley or their union or for assistance to 1-800-347-4765 24 hours a day, seven days a week.

Staff changes

Bernadette Wright has accepted the position as manager of the South Sector of Home Care, on Monday, Oct. 2. Bernadette will work from the Estevan office, telephone number 637-3635. Former manager Jane McMurtry resigned on August 31.

Paula Bradley, a dietetic intern from the University of Alberta, will spend four weeks with Candace Kopec and Laura Burns. Paula grew up in Milestone. After four years of university towards a degree in Nutrition, she will complete the “Introduction to Clinical Nutrition” rotation of her internship here.

Nicole Soares, an international candidate seeking registration with the Saskatchewan Dietitians Association, has been working in the Region. Nicole completed her university education and internship in South Africa and worked for two years in clinical nutrition there. She will complete the six-week practical experience portion of the application process. She spent one week with Shelley Miller-Hertes in food service administration and long-term care, and two weeks in clinical nutrition with Maeribeth Sullivan, clinical dietitian at St. Joseph’s Hospital in Estevan.

Halifax 6

The Canadian Healthcare Safety Symposium Patient Safety Management: Changing the Way We Do Things

Tracks

- Safety Management Systems
- Designing for Safety
- Aspects of Change
- Not Now, I'm Busy:
- Measurement for Safety
- How Patients and Families can Effect Change

**For more information, please
contact:**

Local Liaison: Mark Pettitt
Webcast Site: Tatagwa View
Telephone: 306-842-8739
Time: 9 a.m. – 5 p.m.
(both days)



Sir Liam Donaldson

Keynote address: "Advice for Leaders and Participants Undergoing Change Initiatives" –

Sir Liam Donaldson, Chair, World Alliance for Patient Safety Chief Medical Officer, Department of Health, United Kingdom: Sir Liam Donaldson will discuss the purpose of and key programs delivered by the World Alliance for Patient Safety, a World Health Organization (WHO) initiative that he helped launch in 2004.

See, I am Doing A New Thing (Isa. 43:19)

Creative Collaborative Leadership

The Catholic Health Association of Saskatchewan will hold its 63rd Annual Convention on October 22 - 24, 2006 at the Delta Bessborough Hotel, Saskatoon, SK

Public Lecture: 7 p.m. Sunday, October 22
Steve Hill, Mission Director, Alberta Catholic Health Corporation speaks on 'Welcome to our Multifaith Culture'

Convention Keynote Address

Laura Richter, Director of Workplace Spirituality, Ascension Health, St. Louis, MO, speaks on 'Taking the Temperature: Challenges Facing Catholic Healthcare Ministry,' and 'Tools for the Mission-minded Caregiver.'

For Convention Brochures or Registration Forms contact CHAS at: T 306-655-5330 F 306-655-5333 E cath.health@sasktel.net W www.chassk.ca

**Please call me with information
about the activities
in your workplace!**

**Joanne Helmer - Editor - (306) 842-8353
or jhelmer@schr.sk.ca**