



Winnipeg Regional
Health Authority
Caring for Health

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News and information for staff working in the Winnipeg Health Region

BY KELLY LANGEVIN

Germ killers

"Grime-scene investigation" spotlights ongoing battle against infectious micro-organisms

As part of a campy Infection Prevention and Control information campaign, staff of the Winnipeg Health Region are being asked for their assistance in locating three suspects wanted for questioning in the death of MRSA and C. difficile – two infectious micro-organisms murdered in a hospital and personal care home in Winnipeg.

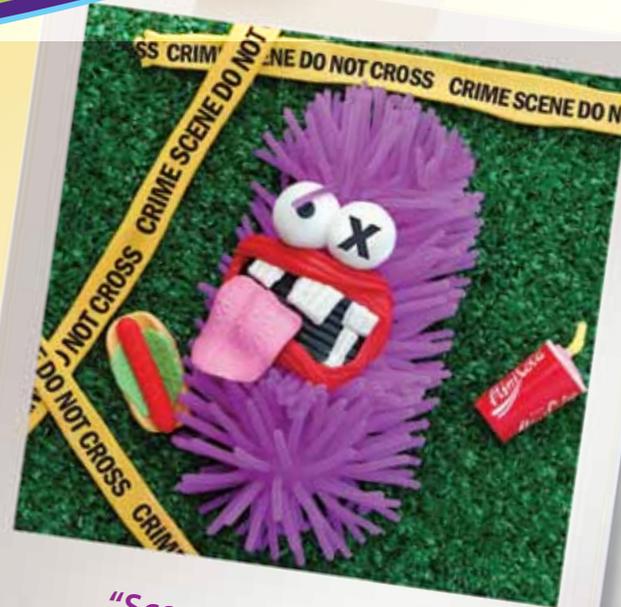
"It is believed that the deaths were an act of vigilantism performed by the rogue group of infection grime fighters known as "The Cleansers," exclaimed Infection, Prevention and Control spokesperson Mandy Towelette.

"Lola Liquid, Doris Disinfectant, and Abraham HandRub (ABHR) are all wanted on warrants for the suspected killing of these and other members of a micro-organism grime family, "The Soapranos," which also included the likes of: H1N1, Influenza and VRE.

The Infection Prevention Control (IPC CSI) forensic team was called to the scene of the murders around 2:30 a.m. last Thursday. MRSA was found in a bathroom in an acute care facility while C. difficile was discovered on the floor of a personal care home

Both murders were a result of thorough disinfection, while alcohol was believed to be a factor in at least one of the killings, said Towelette.

"The Cleansers" have been known to work silently in these facilities, killing organisms at will, plus terminating germs and generally intimidating bacteria to the point that they are afraid to show their feces in WRHA facilities any more," said Towelette. "They could be hanging out anywhere in the Region, hiding in plain sight, in our acute care facilities, PCHs, Pan Am Clinic, community offices, ACCESS Centres,"



"Scene of the Grime."
MRSA found dead in local hospital.

But Towelette is hoping staff can lead them to their suspects, and as an incentive, a substantial reward will be offered.

Stay tuned for more breaking news on this murder mystery in the next issue of Inspire, Insite and Health Care Connections.

Who shot MRSA?

Infection Prevention and Control is asking Winnipeg Health Region staff to participate in a fun, interactive campaign to boost hand hygiene levels and build awareness of how important infection prevention and control is to the health of both staff and patients across the region.

In the coming months, staff will be asked to be on the lookout for three suspects wanted for questioning in the death of MRSA and C.difficile. Their faces will be posted on 'wanted' stickers where IPC products (hand sanitizers, cleansers) are used. Stay tuned to future issues of Inspire, Insite and Health Care Connections as this campy drama unfolds.

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Lyme Disease ALERT

Blacklegged ticks out in southern Manitoba

BY SUSIE STRACHAN

Between a mere 1 to 5 mm in size, blacklegged ticks are incredibly hard to see, yet they're something you have to keep an eye out for.

In Manitoba, both nymph and adult blacklegged ticks can carry the bacteria that cause Lyme disease and anaplasmosis. Different from the more common American dog tick, blacklegged ticks are found in a number of areas across the southern part of Manitoba.

This has prompted Manitoba Health to warn everyone to take precautions in order to avoid exposure to Lyme disease.

"Look for blacklegged ticks after you've been in habitat they live in," said Susan Roberecki, the Medical Lead with Environmental Health Public Health and Primary Health Care Division of Manitoba Health. "You want to take a good look at your skin and remove any attached ticks. Taking a shower or a bath after returning home after being outdoors is a good way to look at your skin."

The risk of getting a tick-borne disease is small, especially if the tick is removed soon after it becomes attached. But your chance of getting Lyme disease in Manitoba is increasing, especially if you frequent areas where blacklegged ticks are established.

Blacklegged ticks are different than the more common American dog tick, which poses little if any threat to human health in Canada.

"People should consider taking precautions because the ticks are out there," said Roberecki, adding that transmission usually does not occur until the tick has

been attached for 24 to 48 hours so daily tick checks can be very beneficial to prevent infection.

Since 2009, 28 human cases of confirmed and probable Lyme disease from blacklegged ticks have been identified in Manitoba. More patients are treated for Lyme disease than are reported to Manitoba Health.

"Early cases of Lyme disease are diagnosed and treated by physicians based on the patient's history and symptoms. Laboratory tests usually do not become positive until later in the illness," said Roberecki.

Symptoms of Lyme disease can start about three days to one month after a tick bite, often with an expanding circular rash around the site of the bite, which then fades. Early symptoms can also include headache, stiff neck, fever, muscle aches or fatigue, chills and swollen lymph nodes.

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The next issue of *Inspire* will be out September/October 2012. *Inspire* is distributed to over 100 sites within the Winnipeg Health Region. Do you have a story idea? Email it to inspire@wrha.mb.ca or call Mike at 926-7867. *Inspire* is published by the Communications and Public Affairs Department of the Winnipeg Regional Health Authority. It keeps staff in the know about what's happening in the Region and important issues they need on their radar. If you would like a copy of *Inspire*, e-mail your name and address to inspire@wrha.mb.ca.

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Read us online: visit Insite, the region's intranet <http://home.wrha.mb.ca/inspire>

Making summer memories

Build your relationships, build your health

Picnics. A day at the beach with the sand in your toes. Telling stories around the campfire. Stargazing. For many of us, summer is full of rich memories and special rituals and traditions with people we love.

It's a good time to do that, because often schedules are less hectic. Less rushing can mean more time to connect. Given the health benefits offered by connecting with people in our lives, health experts say it's important to make it a priority.

"If you have someone you feel you're close to, someone you're connected with, that can lead to physical and emotional health benefits," says Karen Kyliuk, Mental Health Resource & Education Facilitator. "It can be a colleague, neighbour, coach or elder in the community – someone you identify that this person really cares about you."

People with social support have lower stress and feel less upset when they face life struggles. That's why a workplace can be less stressful if you receive support from a trusted co-worker.

Studies have shown that socializing with people face to face can help reduce depression, anxiety, insomnia and feelings of loneliness. It can help release good endorphins and improve your satisfaction with your marriage and job. When you join your friend for a walk your body releases dopamine, the feel good hormone. That can even mean you have a better night's sleep.

Other researchers have promoted additional benefits of social connections: contentment with relationships is related to lower cortisol levels. This positive perception of your relationships may even add seven years to your life.

And a simple hug or holding hands can lower your heart rate. Touch can help increase your sense of calm and focus for the day. Petting your puppy can create the same results.

Isolation and unhealthy relationships, on the other hand, can negatively impact your health. Manage these negative relationships by setting boundaries and limiting contact. The goal is to create more peace in your life and reduce the chance your body will stay in high stress mode. That can help reduce the release of high levels of cortisol known to increase risk of the onset of health problems.

Social connections are important yet so is alone time. If you just need some time to read a book, soak in the tub, get outdoors or do nothing, clearing your mind and letting go of the hustle bustle of the day can be very rejuvenating.

"There are benefits to being alone – down time, reflective time to journal, meditate or simply relax – this is considered rest and recovery time. Some people don't need a lot of social contact. The contact they do have is very meaningful to them and they're selective in their relationships," says Kyliuk. "We all need different things from relationships, there's no right or wrong...it's about our perception of what we need, what we have to offer to others, in essence the quality of our reciprocal relationships."

How to improve your social support

- Make time for friends and family.
- Reach out.
- Be patient.
- Try new things.
- Volunteer.
- Take risks.

Interested in reading more?
Visit www.heretohelp.bc.ca, search social support or www.mentalhealthweek.ca/staying_on_top_of_your_game.php

Struggling with relationships?
You may want to explore the Employee Assistance Program.
Call 204-786-8880.

Things to remember

1. It's your perception of trust and safety that helps you realize the health benefits of connection.
2. Having someone who can offer support through difficult times will help protect us from the effects of stress.
3. Think quality, not quantity.
4. Build a community – different people offer different things that can help meet our support needs.
5. Being there for someone offers health benefits for the giver and the receiver.

You can reduce

BY ANDREA BODIE

WORKPLACE STRESS

Spirit at work: a wellness strategy

Strategies for spirit at work

1. Focus on what works.
2. Say thank you.
3. Appreciate yourself and your gifts.
4. Respect your contribution and strengths.
5. Teach people to treat you well.
6. Treat people respectfully.
7. Take care of yourself.
8. Manage your energy.
9. Be present in the moment.
10. Practice active listening.

Work-related stress is taking its toll. A survey done by the American Psychological Association identified that 74 per cent of people say work is a significant source of stress and 55 per cent say they're less productive because of stress.

Spirit at work is one wellness strategy. It was explored at First Line Manager's Day on May 29th. Dr. Val Kinjerski, the keynote speaker, has been researching spirit at work since 2000. She's familiar with workplaces full of stressed out people. The difference, she's found, is people who have a glass half full approach. Those folks are the ones who flourish right alongside of their burnt out colleagues.

But why?

"There seems to be an energy drive or life force that pulls people along to make a different contribution despite the environment," she says. "These people understand there is a power within each of us to get to the heart of what matters about our work. When we do that, everything changes."

If that sounds impossible, you might benefit from asking yourself some questions. What are your strengths? What are you proud of accomplishing? What brings you joy? Can you do more of that? What opportunities can you create or explore that would bring you a greater sense of fulfillment at work?

When you think back to times when you felt alive, engaged and energized at work, good about your work and committed to what you were doing because you felt like you made a difference, what adjectives would you use to describe that experience? Write those down.

What is the purpose of your work? What is meaningful about your work that makes a difference for others? What is the real point of the tasks that you do every day? Why does your work matter? Keep asking the last question until you feel something significant or



start crying...that's when you know you're onto something.

Now that you have the answers to those questions, what might you do differently?

"Answering these questions can help you realize why you put up with whatever it is and why you show up when the going gets rough," says Kinjerski. "There's a difference between doing your work and seeing your work as an act of service. It's not so much about what we do but how we do it and how we view it. We have a different mindset when we realize it isn't about us but the patients, staff or whoever we're serving."

Finding a sense of meaning in your work is time well spent. Along with helping you see and appreciate your contribution, it can also help create a sense of wellbeing at work. And that has far-reaching effects. Along with reducing our stress, improving our

health, enhancing our creativity and productivity, it can also benefit the people we work with, the clients we work with and ultimately the organization we work for.

"We experience a sense of calm, a sense of wellness. Then we can be fully engaged, excited and energized by our work," says Kinjerski.

At the heart of spirit at work is choice, or rather a series of small choices. It's important to remember the 40 per cent solution. According to Sonja Lyubormirsky, a happiness researcher, we're born with 50 per cent of our happiness. Ten per cent can come from where we live, what we do and our wealth. The remainder? That's within our power to create.

To help support you with that 40 per cent, in the next issue, look for an article about self care.

Spirit at work in action

These ideas for how to put spirit at work into practice were created at First Line Manager's Day:

- think positive
- create a gratitude/inspiration board posted where people can see it
- celebrate successes
- cultivate and have fun at work
- post positive quotes
- encourage one another
- smile
- perform random acts of kindness
- display pictures/sayings that remind you to take care of yourself

OUT & about!

A view inside of our Health Region



Congratulations to Susan Lepki, Home Care Coordinator at Seven Oaks' fifth floor Medicine Unit, on being selected by her peers for a Service Excellence award. Said one co-worker, "Susan is an amazing Home Care Coordinator... (she) is extremely approachable, she is available for patients and their families when questions need to be answered." Said another, "Great team member! Sometimes clients have misinformation from other sources or over expectations (about) what services Home Care can provide. Susan is always empathetic and there to assist clients to set up a safe discharge plan."

On June 14, Winnipeg Fire Paramedics Service members Ryan Sneath and Karen Martin received the prestigious Award of Excellence from the Emergency Medical Services Chiefs of Canada (EMSCC). The award recognizes their efforts in establishing the Main Street Project Community Paramedic Program. The program began in 2009 as a pilot project initiated by the Winnipeg Fire Paramedic Service and the Winnipeg Health Region aimed at increasing patient safety and decreasing dependence on Emergency departments and ambulances. Based on the success of the pilot project, paramedic coverage was extended to 24 hours a day in early 2011.



The 11th Annual Staff Appreciation BBQ, organized by the Staff Appreciation and Recognition (StAR) Special Events Committee, was another resounding success with unbelievable sunshine and lots of fun! The event was held outdoors on June 6, 2012. In total 4,200 smokies and 250 veggie dogs were served to staff as a gesture of thanks for their contributions to patient care at HSC. Participation was up this year again including an increase in night shift participants.

Special thanks to: the 140 staff volunteers for their contributions in making this event so successful; HSC Executive Team, Supply & Distribution, and Communication departments for their support and assistance; and to Maintenance, Housekeeping and Retail Food Services staff for their continued support.

BY MIKE DALY

Public Health Nurse Genevieve Lavallee, left, with French nursing student Vanessa Szatan



Winnipeg WELCOMES a French Connection

Student Vanessa Szatan wanted to travel beyond the *Institut de Formation en Soins Infirmiers Groupement de Coopération Sanitaire du Pays d'Aix* nursing school in her native France to take part in a nursing practicum in an exotic location.

She chose Winnipeg.

Vanessa, who arrived in Winnipeg on February 23 before returning home on May 19, was impressed with what she found in her first-ever trip to Canada.

“My English teacher, Mary McMeel Grawitz, had been a nurse in Winnipeg,” she explains, “After talking with her, I wanted to discover Canada and to get a different experience. One of the first things I learned when I arrived was that people in Canada are very nice, always ready and happy to be of service.”

During her stay, Vanessa was put to work in Population and Public Health, working out of 614 Des Meurons under the tutelage of Public Health Nurse Genevieve Lavallee. There, she worked primarily in the Healthy Parenting & Early Childhood Development program.

Vanessa noted the number of services and resources available to families here in Manitoba, counterparts of which don't exist in France. She feels Manitobans are lucky to have such great services.

“We don't have a Population and Public Health unit in France, so it was interesting to discover how it works here. For instance, in France, we don't visit a mother at home. And giving birth typically means a four or five day hospital stay – much longer than what is typical here in Canada. Most deliveries are conducted by midwives, with assistance from a physician only when the birth is expected to be difficult.”

Another difference between the French and Canadian health care systems is one of familiarity.

“Nurses here develop more of a personal relationship with clients,” Vanessa says. “In France, we never address a patient by their first name; we use Mr. and Mrs. So for me, using a patient's first name was odd at first. It's just a cultural difference.”

Vanessa also noticed a number of cultural differences outside the realm

of health care. With wine being a household staple in France, she found the concept of wine-making kits amusing. And, of course, there were other differences such as dinner time.

“In France, we don't eat dinner until around 8:00 p.m. Lunch is taken casually, whenever we can fit it into our day; it's definitely more regimented here.”

Minor cultural differences aside, Vanessa was quick to give Winnipeg high marks for its amenities.

“I like the YMCA; it's very cool to work out at the gym and after go to the swimming pool in the same building. I also enjoyed Assiniboine Park and the Leo Mol Sculpture Garden, which are very beautiful.” She also attended a Winnipeg Jets game, where she met up with Genevieve.

Having enjoyed her stay in Winnipeg, Vanessa leaves with but one regret.

“I really expected to learn more English. Because Winnipeg is a bilingual city, I found it too easy to speak French! People here speak very good French, and I had no difficulty understanding them.”

The **IMPACT** of being mindful

How to build mindfulness into your day

Up to 60 percent of healthcare providers report symptoms of burnout: emotional exhaustion, depersonalization, and a low sense of accomplishment.

Many of us don't need a fact or figure to bring this point home. We want to contribute meaningfully to our work and be engaged and involved at home, in our extended families and communities. That can leave us exhausted, stretched thin and...stressed.

While we can't eliminate stress, we can decide how to respond to it. That's where our control lies. And mindfulness – particularly a mindful meditation practice – might help with that.

It's not a new concept, nor is it complex – mindfulness is being present on purpose. But the research shows it's one very effective way to cope. Scientists have studied and confirmed the benefits of meditation: lower blood pressure, increased calmness, and emotional stability.

Mindfulness meditation involves experiencing things without your internal critic's running commentary. Practicing mindfulness can help us approach our lives, relationships and situations we encounter with increased care and compassion.

Mindfulness meditation is more powerful than you might expect: functional magnetic resonance imaging shows meditative practices change the physical structure of our brain. Simply put, a meditation practice can change the way your brain works, thanks to noticeable “increases in the integrity of white matter pathways” that connect the regions of the brain.

“Engaging in daily formal meditative and reflective practice is like putting money in the bank for a rainy stressful day. It's the training of the mind and heart that prepares us for the marathon of life,” says Dawn MacDonald, Coordinator, Mindfulness Based Stress Reduction. “Formal practice results in an increased ability to actively listen, be patient, and be curious, skills that are valued and so appreciated by colleagues and those we serve.”

Health care providers who participated in formal mindfulness training experienced less psychological stress and increased empathy. Formal trainings available through the University of Massachusetts Mindfulness Based Stress Reduction and McGill's Mindfulness Based Medical Practice offer intensive training in meditative disciplines over an eight week period. Read more about this in *Full Catastrophe Living*, by Dr. Jon Kabat-Zinn.

Fitting mindfulness in

Adding meditation to an already full life may seem daunting.

Consider potential spots in your day to take “purposeful pauses”: While your computer boots up, when the phone rings or just before entering a patient's room might offer the chance to S.T.O.P. and connect with yourself:

Stop for a moment.

Take a breath. Fully feel the sensations of your in breath and out breath.

Observe all that is present – including the felt sense of your feet on the floor, the colours on the wall, what you are feeling, what you are thinking. This can be a quick sweep, with nothing to analyze and no judgement required.

Proceed with a new sense of connection to the present moment.

Why is this important? “Creating just a little room to breathe throughout the day is a great way to begin the practice of mindfulness,” says MacDonald. “Allowing ourselves the time to simply be human in an increasingly fast paced, technologically driven world is an act of kindness. Learning to be kind to ourselves can build our capacity to be kind and connected to others.”

Can mindfulness in medicine improve outcomes?

Possibly. Being present with the patient/client/resident may reduce medical errors and enhance patient-centred care. It can also reduce the likelihood of making snap judgements and being distracted, which can lead to mistakes.

Health care providers who have tried to incorporate mindfulness into their practice are often surprised at the impact it can have. Characteristics like active listening, curiosity and detachment from judgement don't necessarily take more time – and they can help health care providers foster health and wellness in more

effective, creative ways. The person feels heard and respected. And the health care provider can also feel good by honouring professional commitments to deliver compassionate, respectful care.

For more information, visit:

Mindfulness in Medicine
<http://www.fammed.wisc.edu/mindfulness>

The Center for Mindfulness in Medicine, Healthcare and Society
<http://www.umassmed.edu/content.aspx?id=41252>

(LYME DISEASE)...CONTINUED FROM PAGE 2

“An indicator is the red rash, five centimetres or larger, usually at the site of the tick bite. Sometimes, it’s in the shape of a bull’s eye,” she said. “Not everyone develops or notices the rash, so it’s also important to be alert for other possible symptoms of Lyme disease – fever, headache, chills, fatigue, sore throat, a stiff neck, and pain in the muscles or joints – especially if you’ve spent time in ‘tick country’ during the past month.”

Lyme disease can be successfully treated with antibiotics. Treatment is most successful in the early stages of infection. Talk to your doctor if you think you have Lyme disease.

For more information, call Health Links-Info Santé at 204-788-8200 (in Winnipeg) or 1-888-315-9257 (toll-free). Additional information about the ticks and what you can do to protect yourself is available at www.wrha.mb.ca.



REMINDER: 10-digit dialing is coming to Manitoba

Important dates:

July 29: Seven-to 10-digit dialing transition

- Local 10-digit dialed calls will be connected without interruption.

Oct. 20: Mandatory 10-digit dialing

- Calls dialed using only seven digits will not be connected. A recording will advise you that the area code is required.
- Local 10-digit dialed calls will be connected without interruption.

Nov. 3: New area code

- Assignment of the new area code (431) will begin.

As of July 29, 2012, 10-digit dialing – the area code followed by the phone number – will apply to all local communications in Manitoba. MTS has completed the reprogramming of all WRHA hospital and community office telephone switches to support this new dialing format.

The introduction of 10-digit dialing is the result of a decision by the Canadian Radio-Television and Telecommunications Commission (CRTC) and will pave the way for an additional Manitoba area code, 431, starting on Nov. 3, as the familiar 204 area code reaches capacity.

Manitoba eHealth has reviewed all supported regional/provincial clinical and business applications and has been working with vendors to ensure supported applications are compliant with 10-digit dialing on or before July 29, 2012.

If you have any questions about 10-digit dialing, please contact the Manitoba eHealth Service Desk at (204) 940-8500 or servicedesk@manitoba-ehealth.ca. Additional information about 10-digit dialing is available on Insite.

What do I have to do to prepare for 10-digit dialing?

- 1) Fax machines with speed call lists/one-touch programmed keys must update all telephone numbers as soon as possible. Please work with your hardware vendor or site support staff to make the necessary telephone number changes.
- 2) Personal voicemail recordings that provide a callback number must be re-recorded to include 204 plus the seven-digit telephone number. Remember to confirm and re-record your internal/external and temporary absence greetings, if applicable.
- 3) Cellular and BlackBerry users should begin updating their personal contact lists to include the 204 prefix before all seven-digit telephone numbers.
- 4) Email signatures should be updated to reflect the new 10-digit telephone/fax/cell numbers.
- 5) New business cards and letterhead should also reflect 10-digit numbers.

Correction

We referred to the Critical Learning Simulation Facility in our last issue. The correct name of the facility is Clinical Learning Simulation Facility.