

Chez nous

MCH EMPLOYEE NEWSLETTER

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We should talk: Innovative campaign sparks a new conversation

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Hôpital de Montréal
pour enfants
Centre universitaire
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Montreal Children's
Hospital
McGill University
Health Centre

We should talk

Innovative patient safety campaign launched at the Children's

By Pamela Toman and Stephanie Tsirgiotis



Whether you're a Montreal Children's Hospital staff member, patient or family member, everyone's role is important when it comes to communicating concerns as they relate to patient care. Effective and open communication is truly a two-way street and requires all of us—regardless of our roles—to speak up when something doesn't seem quite right, and in turn, listen when someone raises a potential issue.

AN IDEA BORN FROM A PROBLEM

The idea of creating a patient safety campaign based on the importance of communication was first brought forward by three enthusiastic physicians, Drs. Sasha Dubrovsky, Nadine Korah and Samara Zavalkoff. They had identified a problem. Only one eighth of staff felt it was easy to speak up, two eighths of patients and families reported they were always listened to, and half of families said they were encouraged to ask questions. "This data proved that staff did not feel



Martine Alfonso, Associate Executive Director, MCH

comfortable speaking up and they were not effectively communicating with each other," says Dr. Dubrovsky. "The research shows that this sort of behaviour can directly impact the quality of care being delivered, thus hindering the patient experience, not to mention decreasing staff satisfaction and workplace safety."

A multidisciplinary group of individuals from various areas of the hospital and community then got together to brainstorm on how to resolve this problem and the "We should talk" campaign was born.

On Monday, October 26, during Patient Safety Week, "We should talk" was officially launched in the P.K. Subban Atrium. The campaign addresses a very serious matter in a modern, funny, and impactful way. To mark this important milestone, the organizing committee gave a special presentation about patient safety and communication, and colourful posters and stand-up banners with the campaign's main messages were put up throughout the hospital.

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Patients had fun with the custom-made activity booklets which were designed for preschoolers and adolescents.



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AN INNOVATIVE CAMPAIGN MEANT TO INSPIRE ACTION

The "We should talk" campaign aims to inspire each of us, whether you're a housekeeper, nurse, medical student, physician or parent, to speak up and listen when a situation arises. Whether it's questioning your colleague about why a certain medication is being prescribed or raising a concern about a particular type of treatment, each one of us has a responsibility towards our patients and families to speak up when necessary.



Patricia Vandecruys, Carlo Galli, Lisa Grilli and Dr. Sasha Dubrovsky give the "thumbs up" to the new "We should talk" campaign.

HOW DO YOU SPEAK UP?

Asking patients, families and staff to speak up, however, is easier said than done, especially if people haven't been taught how to do so. It's an important concern that has been brought up in the past, which is why the "We should talk" campaign is tied very closely to other hospital initiatives like Patient and Family Centred Care (PFCC). The campaign complements much of the work being done throughout the hospital that aims to improve our partnership with families by offering tools to patients and families, as well as staff members to help improve communication. *continued >>>*



A series of colourful, eye-catching posters was developed for the campaign.

Did you know you're reading an award-winning magazine?

Chez nous came in second for best internal health care newsletter in Canada! The award was given by the Health Care Public Relations Association of Canada.

Cover photo: Sophie Lavoie



A group of nursing students also came out to support the campaign.

The Mutual Learning Mindset, which was featured in last month's issue of *Chez nous*, is one of these practical tools that teaches people how to speak up effectively and how to become better listeners when we hear someone expressing a concern or asking a question.

Another important question to consider when a concern arises is, "who do I speak up to?" The campaign aims to create an open dialogue between different parties, so that issues are brought up and resolved on the spot. If you feel that you are not being listened to, the most appropriate alternative is to speak to the person in charge of your department or service.



NEXT STEPS

In the coming months, four videos will be produced and broadcast around the hospital with the goal of raising



The Mutual Learning Mindset quick reference cards. Patients, families and staff can get a copy by calling Marie-Claude Proulx at ext. 22253.



Dr. Sasha Dubrovsky, Dr. Nadine Korah, Dr. Jean-Pierre Farmer, Frédéric De Civita, and Dr. Samara Zavalkoff

awareness about why people don't speak up, why it's important and how to go about it. A "Quality Controller", played by a Quebec comedian, will interview MCH patients, families and staff members in a light and entertaining format. The videos will be posted on our MCH website, Facebook page and in individual patient rooms. ■

Want to learn more about this unique initiative and how to effectively communicate in a hospital setting? Visit our website: thechildren.com/we-should-talk

Natural born fighter

Brave little girl battles one disorder after the other



By Stephanie Tsirgiotis



Charlie-Juliette and Sandra

Charlie-Juliette Allard was born a fighter. At four months old, her pediatrician noticed she had a heart murmur, and quickly diagnosed a rare but serious congenital cardiac anomaly, called ALCAPA. Her left coronary artery, which carries blood to the heart muscle, was connected to her pulmonary artery instead of her aorta. Two months later, Charlie-Juliette underwent open-heart surgery to have the arteries switched. Without the operation, Charlie-Juliette had only a two per cent chance of surviving. Her parents Sandra Tremblay and Yvan Allard feared the worst, but their little girl pulled through. Three weeks later she was out of hospital, but little did they know it was just the beginning of a long road ahead.

A NEW DISORDER, A NEW DIAGNOSIS

In June 2013, when Charlie-Juliette was three, her parents noticed something wasn't right with their daughter. She looked

swollen. Over a matter of days, she gained six pounds of fluid and the swelling was most prominent around her face and belly. They rushed her to the hospital near their home where Charlie-Juliette was diagnosed with severe nephrotic syndrome, another rare but serious disorder with no link to her cardiac anomaly. Nephrotic syndrome affects the kidneys and causes large amounts of protein to leak into the person's urine. In Charlie-Juliette's case, the loss of protein further weakened her immune system, because she was also losing antibodies. "Charlie caught a lot of ear infections, and whenever she got sick, her immune system would begin to attack her kidneys which then caused her body to swell. There was major water retention, and she had to be on a severe low-sodium diet during the time of the relapse," explains her mom, Sandra. "It was a never-ending cycle."

A NEW TREATMENT BRINGS HOPE

By August that same year, Charlie-Juliette and her family met pediatric nephrologist Dr. Martin Bitzan at the Montreal Children's Hospital (MCH). He concluded that Charlie-



Juliette was suffering from both severe nephrotic syndrome and an autoimmune disease. She hadn't responded well to prednisone, a medication similar to cortisone; she had relapsed three times in a row, after each ear infection, and was suffering from insomnia and severe

Charlie-Juliette can spend up to three hours in the Pediatric Day Centre, so her mom packs lots of snacks.

Juliette was suffering from both severe nephrotic syndrome and an autoimmune disease. She hadn't responded well to prednisone, a medication similar to cortisone; she had relapsed three times in a row, after each ear infection, and was suffering from insomnia and severe

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Natural born fighter (cont'd)



tantrums. Dr. Bitzan decided to try a new treatment called Rituximab, which although primarily used to treat cancer patients, has gained traction across other disciplines like neurology and nephrology. "Every time Charlie catches an infection, her body's B and T cells awake and attack the podocytes in her kidneys, the cells that regulate the barrier between her blood stream and urine," explains Dr. Bitzan. "Rituximab works by attaching itself to these B cells and killing them, which is the reason it's often used to treat (B cell) lymphoma. Eliminating B cells from the circulation removes the stimulus that damages the podocytes in the kidney."

AN OUNCE OF PREVENTION

Charlie-Juliette was first introduced to Rituximab after she relapsed, and spent a full day getting her first treatment intravenously. Since she reacted well, Dr. Bitzan decided to use Rituximab as a preventative measure for her. "We knew that roughly every five months Charlie-Juliette's B cells would recover, so the hospital tested her urine and blood every two months to look at her protein levels and B and T cells; and at home, we checked her urine for protein weekly and sometimes daily. The protein levels in her urine were the first

indicator and the recovering B cell count helped verify that a relapse was imminent," says Sandra. Whenever this happened, Charlie-Juliette would undergo another Rituximab infusion. Charlie-Juliette is now in full remission and hasn't had a relapse in over a year. And she's now old enough to go to school, something which introduced a whole new challenge for the Allard-Tremblay family.

BUILDING UP THE IMMUNE SYSTEM

The downside to taking Rituximab is the person cannot be vaccinated, because B cells are necessary for producing protective antibodies against viruses or bacteria following vaccination. "I became very nervous about sending Charlie-Juliette to school, because she had a weak immune system. During her relapses, she lost most of her antibodies," says Sandra. "I didn't want her to get sick again and relapse." Because of her partial immune deficiency, Charlie-Juliette has once again started an innovative therapy to address this problem — the result of a collaboration between immunologists and nephrologists at the MCH. In October, she stopped the Rituximab treatment and started receiving intravenous immunoglobulin (IVIg) monthly at the Children's Pediatric Day Centre. This new infusion is made up of the antibodies

of over 10-thousand people and protects Charlie-Juliette from most infections. "It's working well so far," says her mom. "The goal is for her to regain full immunoprotection and, hopefully, start creating her own antibodies so that she doesn't catch another infection and relapse. But if she does relapse, we still have Rituximab to fall back on." Sandra says it's a huge relief that Charlie-Juliette is now ready to go to school. "She just got her flu vaccine so she's off to a good start. She will now be better protected than most of us this coming winter!" ■



Dr. Martin Bitzan talks to Charlie-Juliette and Sandra during a recent appointment at the Pediatric Day Centre.

Jouri goes home!

Staff say goodbye to longtime patient



Monday, October 26, was a particularly joyous day for six-year old MCH patient, Jouri—she went home! Staff organized a special farewell party to celebrate this important milestone and even surprised her with gifts and a cake.



Jouri and her mom Karima



Jouri smiles with some of her nurses (l. to r.) Sabrina Beauseigle, Nadine Vandal and Stephanie Mckinley.

Her parents, Karima and Salem, are thrilled to have their family under one roof now and Jouri is enjoying playing the role of big sister. She's been busy helping her mom and dad with daily tasks, practicing her Arabic and also enjoying taking her 18-month-old brother, Musbah, and six-month-old sister, Nermeen, for rides on her wheelchair. "As soon as Jouri arrived home, she asked us to decorate her room with all the drawings from her room at the hospital and to add some pictures and souvenirs from her farewell party," says her mom. "She also called her friend Arville at the hospital to see how everything was going!" ■



Jouri's "going-home" cake



Jouri and her friend Arville



November 8 to 15 marked Radiology Technologist Week

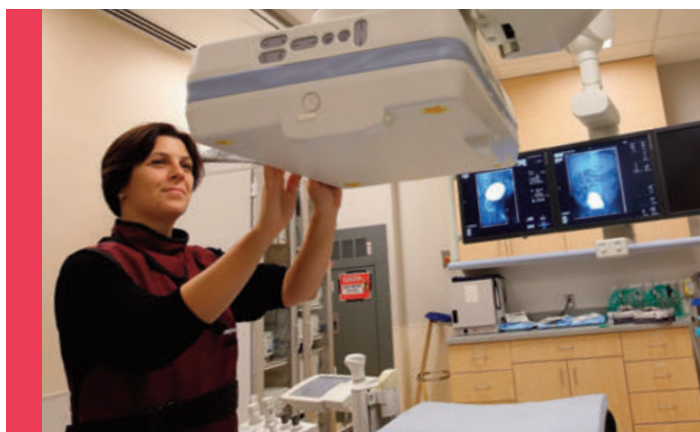
Whether they conduct X-ray exams, ultrasounds, fluoroscopy exams, CT scans or MRIs, each and every technologist plays a vital role in helping our specialists provide exceptional care to our patients and their families. Join us in thanking all of our technologists for the indispensable work they do every day! ■



(l. to r.) MCH Radiology Technologists Jean-Philip Garant, Marjolaine Boilard, Carole Proulx, Natalie Gemmell and Robert Dragomir (front) are all smiles as they pose next to a brand new mobile X-ray machine outside of an X-ray room in the Emergency Department.



MCH Radiology Technologist Mikel Laspalas prepares for the next patient's arrival in the CT scan suite at the Montreal Children's Hospital.



Maryanne Fortin starts her day in the brand new fluoroscopy room in the Medical Imaging Department at the Children's. This room is used for tests that require live images, sort of like an X-ray movie.



Six-year old Faithlynn undergoes an abdominal ultrasound with ultrasound coordinator Nancy Iannantuono in the Medical Imaging Department on the 2nd floor of Block B.

Halloween is not just for kids!



MCH staff members got their best costumes on for our first Halloween party at the Glen site on Thursday, October 29. Check out our first place winners!



▼ The 1st place prize for Best Group Costume went to the Social Services department for their tribute to P.K. Subban. Talk about the right timing!



▼ But Halloween didn't stop there... The entire 9th floor got together to organize a special trick or treat activity for all of their patients on Friday, October 30. Everyone had so much fun!



▼ The 1st place winner for Best Individual Costume was Carmen Teixeira from the Pediatric Test Centre. Who doesn't love gumballs?

Get your flu shot! Protect yourself and others from the flu



The annual employee flu vaccine campaign will be held until November 27, 2015. MCH employees can find the vaccine schedule on the MUHC Intranet page.

Encourage a colleague to get vaccinated this year and we'll enter your name and your colleague's name into a draw to win one of four dinner shows for two to see FOREVER

MICHAEL at the Cabaret du Casino on December 20, 2015. You must be vaccinated by December 4 to be eligible for this draw.

For additional information call the Occupational Health and Safety department at **extension 44-FLU (44358)**. ■

Lean Six Sigma:

A proven approach for better patient care

By Maureen McCarthy



Consultant Alex Boussetta led the three-day workshop with (l. to r.) Lynn Lebel, Dr. Sasha Dubrovsky, Dr. Nadine Korah, Dr. Jessica Stewart, and Frédéric De Civita.

Five MCH staff recently took part in a three-day workshop with the goal of attaining their 'black belt'. They weren't attending a martial arts class but rather a Lean Six Sigma workshop for continuous improvement in the hospital's operations.

Frédéric De Civita, Manager of Admitting and Registration Services and Assistant to the Associate Executive Director at the Children's, has been involved in the Lean Six Sigma implementation at the hospital since it was first introduced. "The work we're doing now comes out of the last major strategic planning exercise at the MCH. One of the objectives was to create the necessary knowledge and capacity for better continuous improvements and problem solving at the Children's," he says. "We've seen how the Lean Six Sigma approach has produced results in other hospital centres. It's a process that strongly encourages sharing what is learned and passing it on to others."

Lean Six Sigma combines key elements from two different quality improvement approaches. The Lean philosophy asks employees to look at how they do things with the goal of streamlining processes and eliminating waste. The Six Sigma

approach is more quality driven, and aims to improve quality while reducing errors.

The Lean term is familiar to many people as a business model associated with Toyota, which gained popularity more than 20 years ago. While there are no obvious connections between running a car company and running a hospital, the Lean Six Sigma tools target universal issues for any organization. Using a process called DMAIC

(*Define, Measure, Analyze, Improve and Control*), staff can take a step-by-step approach to analyzing a problem. "The process allows us to incorporate available data and information along with our observations and experiences to address and improve upon any issue," says Frédéric.

TRAINING THE EXPERTS, SHARING KNOWLEDGE

One of the first steps in bringing Lean Six Sigma to as many employees as possible is identifying staff members to train as experts or 'black belts'. Frédéric, Lynn Lebel, and Drs. Jessica Stewart, Sasha Dubrovsky and Nadine Korah completed their three-day workshop—the first in a series of three workshops—in October. As part of the training process, each of them is identifying a specific project for improvement within their area that can be completed with other team members in a six-month period.

In his role as manager of Admitting and Registration, Frédéric's project is to reduce the number of registration errors in Emergency by 50 per cent. Dr. Dubrovsky's project will target an increase in the percentage of patients presenting with asthma in Emergency who are treated with steroids within one hour of arriving.

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Lynn Lebel, Administrative Head, Ambulatory Services, is looking at identifying a project for the OR central booking procedure. "In the past, we've followed some of the Lean Six Sigma principles in our department. For example, last fall, our team embarked on an analysis of the call centre's workflow and implemented a number of changes leading up to the development of the Appointment Referral Centre (ARC)." One of the most outstanding results from that exercise was a 70 per cent reduction in phone wait times for parents from an average of more than seven minutes per call to less than three minutes.

BRINGING EVERYONE TO THE TABLE

Frédéric points out that Lean Six Sigma is not just for managers. "It's a process that brings people from different departments and different levels together to work on projects," he says. "And in our organization, that also means bringing patients and families into the process when appropriate." He also points out that the Lean Six Sigma methods can be applicable to some of the hospital's new initiatives like 'We should talk', and Mutual Learning.

Starting in the new year, Lean Six Sigma workshops will be available to all managers and staff at the Children's.



Frédéric De Civita at the Lean Six Sigma black belt workshop.

By the spring, more workshops will be scheduled so that anyone can learn the basics of implementing the Lean Six Sigma process in their work environment. The Toolbox, which will eventually be available on the Intranet site, will greatly support this process and allow anyone to define their project, gather data, and analyze a problem or issue.

Frédéric is enthusiastic about what's to come. "Employees are often in the best position to say what does or doesn't work in their departments, and which areas need improvement. Lean Six Sigma will give people the tools to create continuous improvement throughout the hospital." ■

Guess what? The yellow school bus is back!

You heard right! Our beloved yellow school bus from 2300 Tupper is now at the Glen site. It's located at the MCH front entrance next to the information desk. Stay tuned for info on a staff celebration later this month! ■



The base of the yellow school bus recently got a new paint job and was brought over from the legacy site by Greg Beerwort and Sylvain Parent from Technical Services.

Seasonal flu vaccination clinic for patients and families



Patients, along with their family members, may get their seasonal flu vaccinations while at the hospital until December 4 from 9:00 a.m. to 3:30 p.m. (closed on weekends). No appointments are required.

- **Location:** commercial space #2, block A, level RC in the Montreal Children's Hospital at the Glen site
- **Hours of operation:** Monday to Friday 9:00 a.m. to 3:30 p.m. (Closed for lunch between 12:00 p.m. and 1:00 p.m.)
- **Who should get the vaccine:** patients followed at the Montreal Children's Hospital for chronic diseases as well as their family members are strongly urged to get their flu vaccine. Patients who do not have chronic illnesses and their family members can also get vaccinated at the clinic.
- **What to bring:** Patients need to present a valid *hospital card*

in order to obtain their vaccination. Family members do not need to show any identification.

This vaccination clinic is operated by nurses from the *MUHC Vaccine Study Centre*, located in Pierrefonds, Qc. ■

Memorial Service

A memorial service is being organized to remember the children who have died recently at the MCH. We shall also be commemorating children who have died of SIDS. All staff members are warmly invited to attend this service, which will be held on **Thursday, November 26 at 2:00 p.m. in the Auditorium (ES1. 1129).** ■

Multimag's now open, Boulangerie & Co. coming soon

The launch of the new retail spaces at the Glen is now official with the opening of three Multimag's locations: a dépanneur, toy store and bookstore. The beautifully designed spaces are proving to be very popular with staff and visitors alike. Next up on the Galleria is a Boulangerie & Co. Comptoir Express, which will serve a range of food and beverage items throughout the day. Keep an eye out for their opening day, which is planned for December.



Boulangerie & Co. will open on the Galleria in December.



Passe-Temps et jouets Multimag's

If you haven't yet had a chance to check out the Passe-Temps et jouets Multimag's across from the clinic area on the Children's ground floor, or the Librairie-Papeterie Multimag's in the Galleria, take a few minutes to pop in. You might even get a head start on your holiday shopping! ■