Annual Report
2016-2017

Sexual Health Centre
Lunenburg County





Sexual Health Centre Lunenburg County
A member-centre of Sexual Health Nova Scotia
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Introduction

Sexual Health Centre Lunenburg County (SHCLC) is a small charity serving Lunenburg and Queens Counties in Nova Scotia. Our mission is to promote sexual and reproductive health throughout the lifespan by providing information, education, and services, and encouraging informed, responsible attitudes toward sexuality.

Some of the services we offer everyone for free include:

- Education
- Outreach
- Pregnancy testing and options guidance
- Health supplies like condoms, dams, and lube
- Individual guidance
- Resources

Behind the scenes, this fiscal year differed from previous years. Although it is not profoundly noticeable on the front lines, the SHCLC has been supporting its parent organization, Sexual Health Nova Scotia, in becoming a strong provincial voice for sexual and reproductive health.

This support has come at the expense of some operating funds and staff time. Thankfully, we were assisted by project grants from several organizations, allowing us to improve our resources for people, parents, and professionals.

While our future continues to remain uncertain without guaranteed funding for operating costs, we keep doing the best we can to promote health and wellbeing on the South Shore.



Team

Julie Veinot, Executive Director
Katie Renner, Summer Outreach
Jan Cressman, Co-Chair, Board of Directors
Kendra Fevens, Co-Chair, Board of Directors
Rhonda Haines, Financial Officer
Kaitlin Richard, Secretary
Susan Berry, Director
Jill Skinner, Director

Trends

While the core issues of sexual health remain the same—sexual violence, inequality among genders and orientations—there are numerous trends we've spotted this past year.

Sexting, including the sharing of intimate photos, has become a norm for our youth. Our community partners are noticing an increase of this. We are collaborating to address this issue through workshops for junior high students.

More and more people are becoming aware of trans health needs. People are requesting resources both to help them learn to become allies, but also to improve services for this underserved population. Unfortunately, the South Shore has few medical resources for its trans patients and many must travel to Halifax for services.

The amalgamation of the local health authorities into one provincial body has led to a decrease in services, especially for those who have experienced sexual violence. Previously, under Sexual Assault Services Lunenburg Queens, victims and survivors who attended emergency rooms for sexual assault, including accessing "rape kits", were provided with immediate mental health support. This service has been discontinued on the South Shore despite positive feedback from victims and survivors.

The ongoing lack of doctors and nurse practitioners means we continue to see many people who are looking for basic health care like prescriptions and sexually transmitted infection (STI) testing and care. We receive many requests from folks without a primary health care provider.

Impact

Although we have seen a drop in individuals seeking our services directly at our office, we have seen an increase of professionals using our resources. Instead of making clients "come to us" we do our best to "go to them".

We continue to distribute thousands of safer sex supplies to the community, with 18 sites giving out our condoms, dams, and lube. This includes non-profit organizations, schools, and community clinics.

As the health care system continues to offer patchwork services for sexual and reproductive health, especially in rural areas like ours, we offer vital navigation for people who are unable or unsure about accessing trans care, STI testing, affordable contraception, or abortions. Individuals and professionals call us regularly about how to get these services.

Finally, we continue to be a public face for sexual and reproductive healthcare at a time when worldwide services are at risk. Promoting positive sexuality is one of the most important things we do, whether it's highlighting the positive aspects of pleasure, or denouncing homophobia and transphobia.

Requests

As a unique organization, we get various requests for information and how to navigate the health care system. Here is a sample of what we answer:

- Where can I get tested for sexually transmitted infections?
- Can I get pregnant on my period?
- Where can I find a local doctor who is trans friendly and comfortable initiating hormone therapy?
- Can you pay for my prescription?
- How do I get free birth control?
- Can I get an abortion in Bridgewater?
- Where in Bridgewater can I get an IUD inserted?
- Where can I get cheap birth control?
- How do I get blood tests after a sexual assault?

If you don't know the answers to these questions, give us a call or email and we'd be happy to help.

Annual Statistics

	2016-17	2015-16	2014-15	2013-14	2012-13	2011-12
Total services accessed	57	135	126	113	379	532
Guidance or support	9	5	10	9	76	83
Pregnancy tests	11	22	9	8	14	39
Info requests		214	148	158	3009	2441
By phone		44	45	44	122	146
In person		140	76	66	43	116
By email or social media messaging		31	27	48	2844	2179
Clients	57	103	91	66	176	338
Women		63	57	40	82	223
Men		31	31	26	61	71
Trans		9	3	0	33	44
Estimated age						
Less than 11		0	1	0	0	0
12 to 14		0	1	4	0	8
15 to 19		22	28	18	65	141
20 to 29		48	40	15	29	64
30 to 50		30	25	25	54	90
Older than 50		6	6	4	18	28
Distribution						
Condoms	5408	7366	6077	6613	5582	8323
Lubricant	1070	2978	683	730	1050	3345
Oral dams	30	156				
Internal condoms	75	48				
Gloves	8	7		143		
Print Resources	388	1622	401	1464	3721	4292
No. of locations for distribution	18	17				
Education sessions	20	31	23	25	27	32
Schools	16	19	19			
Community Organizations	0	7	2			
General	1	1	1			
Professional	3	4	1			

Please note that in 2016-17, we have been transitioning to a different data collection system. Thus, we now track individual clients separate from professional requests.

Promotions

Thanks to the free marketing and promotional power of social media, we are able to extend our reach beyond our borders to collaborate with provincial, national, and even international supporters.

Our website continues to be a resource for anyone looking for sexual health information. This year, our summer student Katie Renner began the Sextionary, which is a page filled with definitions about sexual health. Look it up today and email us if you have any suggestions.

We also completed our first videos for Sex Talks, a series that tackles subjects ranging from Anal Sex 101 to Hypersexualization. We were delighted to get grants from the Lunenburg County Community Health Board, Queens Community Health Board, and the Sexual Violence Strategy (Department of Community Services, Nova Scotia). Already, we've had almost 500 views on our You Tube channel.

Our newsletter continues to go out to individuals and professionals. Subscribe today for all the latest in sexual health.

Finally, we also continue to cultivate a presence on social media, including Facebook, Twitter, and Instagram. Despite the size of our organization, we've managed to create 166,156 impressions on Facebook and Twitter. Our website and Twitter profile received 7,884 visits from people learning more about our organization.

Finances

The core operating funds of our organization remain tiny ($34,000-35,000 annually), but we manage to do a lot with a little. Unfortunately, the grant we receive indirectly from the Department of Health and Wellness (channeled through Sexual Health Nova Scotia) has not increased in over a decade while the costs of doing business continue to rise.

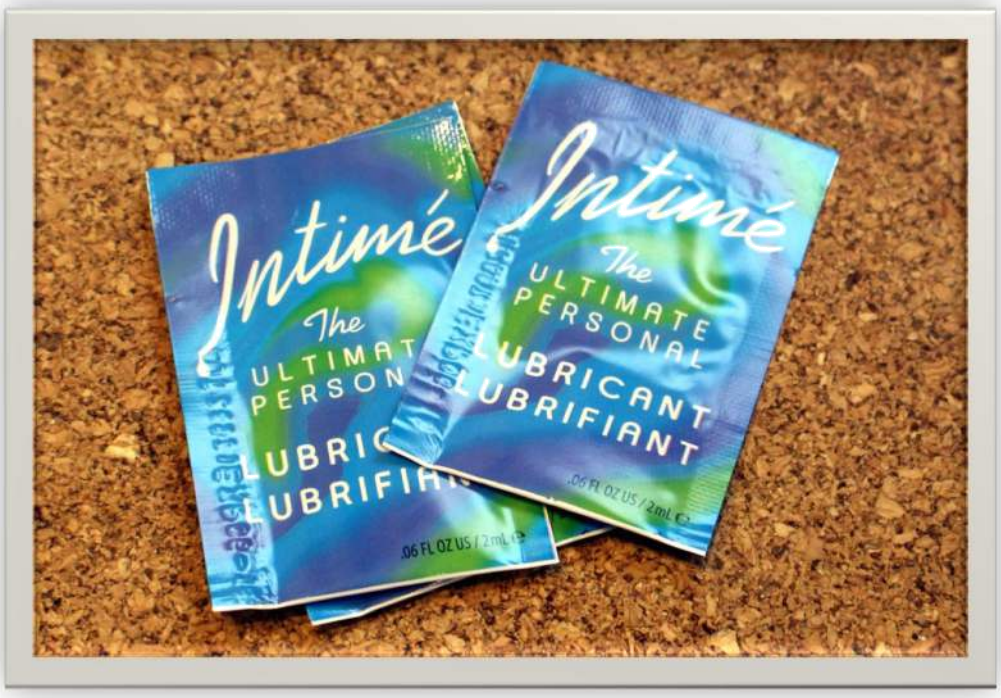
This year, we were delighted to receive extra funding to provide support to our provincial organization, as well as grants from Canada Summer Jobs, Lunenburg County Community Health Board, Queens Community Health Board, and the Sexual Violence Strategy. We have also been able to continue using funds from the United Way of Lunenburg County to ensure we reach youth in the schools.

Most of our finances go to payroll and rent, with the remainder going to office supplies and safer sex products as well as pregnancy testing.

Needless to say, we continue to operate a fiscally conservative organization.

Top 10 Highlights of the Year

1. Creation of our first You Tube video, SEX Talks: Emergency Contraception.
2. The addition of the Sextionary to our website.
3. Offering Safer Spaces for LGBTQ… on the South Shore for the first time.
4. Our summer student Katie Renner completed research on sexual health on the South Shore, the first we've had in years.
5. Loss of mental health component of Sexual Assault Services Lunenburg Queens.
6. Collaborating with CATIE to bring Hep C and HIV workshop to Bridgewater last October.
7. Addition of Susan Berry to our Board of Directors while saying goodbye to our legal guru Jill Skinner. Susan comes with a background in volunteering at another sexual health centre. Welcome Susan… and thanks Jill!
8. Distributing silicon lube for the first time ever.
9. Helping Sexual Health Nova Scotia revitalize itself, including hiring a Provincial Coordinator.
10. Our Valentine's/Sexual and Reproductive Health Week contest.



Thanks

Our tiny organization relies on many partnerships and supporters to reach as many people as possible. They are all listed below, with apologies if we missed anyone.

Action Canada for Sexual Health and Rights
Better Together Family Resource Centre
Bridgewater Police
Canada Summer Jobs
CATIE
Community Hub
Department of Health and Wellness
Family Service of Western Nova Scotia
Fresh Air Films
Harbour House
Hep NS
Lunenburg County Community Health Board
Lunenburg Pride
Nova Scotia Community College
New Germany Promotional Society
Nova Scotia Health Authority
Nova Scotia Public Libraries
Mental Health and Addictions
Public Health
Queens Community Health Board
RCMP
SchoolsPlus
Second Story Women's Centre
Sexual Assault Services Lunenburg Queens
Sexual Health Nova Scotia
Sexual Violence Strategy
South Shore Regional School Board
United Way of Lunenburg County

Finally, thank you to our volunteers, who provide their free time and passion to running the Centre. We value your contribution to keeping the South Shore healthy!