

The South Okanagan Health Fair – About Us

Our Mission:

We are a team of diverse community resources creating opportunities to inspire and guide people of all ages to enjoy the success of setting and achieving personal goals for healthy living.

Our Overarching Goal:

The overarching goal of the South Okanagan Health Fair (SOHF) is to reduce the burden of chronic disease in our region through a cultural shift that embeds healthy lifestyle as a social value.

Who We Are:

The SOHF is a community initiative that provides targeted resources to thousands of our region's residents who want to lead a healthier life and are looking for practical support. Spearheaded by volunteer health professionals, the Fair merges the resources of the Interior Health Authority, the City of Penticton Recreation Department and numerous business and non-profit exhibitors with a focus on healthy living. The event is organized by over 150 volunteers including over 50 health professionals.

What We Do:

The cornerstone of this unique partnership is a cardiovascular risk assessment program (Hearts@Work) that provides up to 300 participants – 30% of whom came from communities other than Penticton last year – with a personalized profile of their modifiable risks and an opportunity to set SMART goals for improvement with the assistance of professional coaching by local physicians. These participants, along with the thousands of others who attend, are then able to browse the large array of over 60 exhibits and demonstrations to find information and tools suited to their needs and preferences. The Fair has content for people of all ages; a special section is devoted to engaging our youth in the joy of an active, healthy lifestyle.

The Need We Address:

SOHF goals are strategically aligned with both Provincial and IH priorities to reduce the burden of chronic disease in our population. Building healthier communities will not only increase their productivity, it is a critical step to controlling and eventually reducing health care costs to taxpayers and the only way we can make quality healthcare sustainable.

We in the South Okanagan are very fortunate to have one of the best performing regional hospitals in the province right here in Penticton. Like all our hospitals, PRH is under intense pressure from growing demands for healthcare that threaten to exceed its capacity. The overarching goal of the SOHF is to reduce the burden of chronic disease in our region; this will have a direct positive impact on the demands faced by PRH and other regional hospital facilities.

How We Are Resourced:

There is no charge for admission to the Fair. For this reason, we are dependent on exhibitors' fees, sponsorship and grants support for sustainability. Special mention should be made of the generous support we have received during the first 2 years from the Provincial Government through Act Now BC, the healthy heart Society of BC, Interior Health Authority, The SOS Medical Foundation and the City of Penticton. We will pursue ongoing support from these agencies and from others with a direct interest in the long-term health of our region in order to maintain this event as a valuable regional asset.

South Okanagan Health Fair FACTS 2009

Participants' Feedback

"Excellent. The whole focus is on SOLUTIONS. The sessions were first class"

"Volunteers were very Up-Beat- Great!"

"Thank you for the Doctors! What a benefit to have them there to make sense of it all."

"Thanks for a great, great health fair. So appreciative."



Constructive Criticism and Solutions

"Improve Signage"

*SOHF
committee will
review and
improve signage
and flow*

*"More chairs to sit
while waiting"*

*SOHF will
provide more
seating areas*

What we said we would do.

- Pre-register using an online process 300 people for the Health Heart Screening Program
- Engage local Municipal, Regional and Provincial Leaders in this event.
- Engage the youth of the community through targeted activities
- Host 50 exhibitors during the Health Fair
- See 1500 participants at the event.

What were our benchmarks for success.

- Provincial, Municipal and Regional leaders along with Dr Brian Goldman led the 3 kilometer walk that launched the event.
- We recognized 7 leaders in the South Okanagan area through our first annual Health Awards reception
- Hosted over 60 exhibitors and managed a wait list.

What we achieved.

- 270 people pre-registered online for the Healthy Heart Screening program with the remainder signing up manually and onsite during the day of the event.
- Overall attendance for the two day event was approximately 4000 people; 500 people attended the key note speaker Dr. Brian Goldman.
- 150 volunteers supported this event, including 50 health professionals and 15 physicians,.
- We created a great partnership with our local media who worked hard with us to get the message out regarding this annual event.
- Built partnerships with Interior Health Authority and the Penticton Indian Band.
- Received full support of 15 local Family Physicians (Penticton Doctors for Healthy Living) coaching participants with Goal-setting
- Engaged the youth through a "Sport Fit Challenge"

What we learned and our plan for 2010.

- Through our survey of the attendees we learned that this is an event the community wants every year.
- That our sponsors see the benefit to the community and want to be a part of this important event.
- That the political leaders in our community see this event as a benefit to the South Okanagan.
- That the climate is right for people in the South Okanagan to move towards better health through sustainable lifestyle change.
- That this is a priority for our community and is a catalyst for helping people to take responsibility for their health and wellbeing.
- That our Health Fair goals for healthy lifestyle and physical activity align with the goals of Interior Health and the Province of BC,

What our goals are for 2010

- To secure another spectacular motivational key note speaker.
- To engage more South Okanagan leaders in the promotion of healthy communities the through this event.
- To actively engage the residents of all South Okanagan communities as participants in this event
- To increase participation and attendance by 20%
- To increase exhibitors and activities specific to youth
- To incorporate peer coaching and lifestyle support groups into the Fair; to encourage successful Hearts@Work participants from previous health fairs to train to be coaches.
- To engage in research to measure health fair outcomes