

Friends of the ACHC

Where we have been and where we are going!

Attendance at these Granville Hall meetings does change from week to week, and since we'd like everyone to know where we've been and where we're going, here is a brief review.

At the meeting in the high school, Annapolis Valley Health assured us our health centre and our ER would remain. But many of us felt otherwise. Dr Barkwell said that very evening that either the Digby or the Annapolis ER would be closed, and we knew that a Dr Ross had been asked by the government to review all ERs in Nova Scotia.

In strong reaction, about 24 people met here at the Granville Hall on February 15th. From this group of 24, a small steering committee of around 8 volunteers formed to advance our goals. The steering committee identified several areas of the health centre issue that we needed to investigate in order to go forward. These areas include: how the health system and the collaborative practice work; how we could use the media to communicate our concerns; how we can lobby government; how we can bring to light the huge economic issues of any ER closure; and ultimately, how we should gather the community to join us. Working committees were set up at the second hall meeting to address these issues.

The working committees were then asked to meet and send written proposals to the steering committee for review by March 5. The working committees will present their proposals for approval by the whole group on March 8. From there we'll be off to the races, coordinating the individual assignments into an overall plan.

Please note: For the sake of coordination and solidarity, any contact with health care and government stakeholders will be done by the steering committee, if at all.

So this is where we've been, but where are we going? We want 24 hour full service emergency room capability, seven days a week. We want to meet with the Minister of Health in a community forum to discuss the issues and begin to find solutions. We offer a petition online, to be signed by everyone who wants to make this happen, and we intend to mobilize the community.

Accessible and timely medical care in Annapolis is absolutely crucial to our health. This is the issue beyond all others. Indeed, the Canada Health Act says health policy must 'protect, promote and restore the physical and mental well-being of residents of Canada and... facilitate reasonable access to health services without financial or other barriers'.