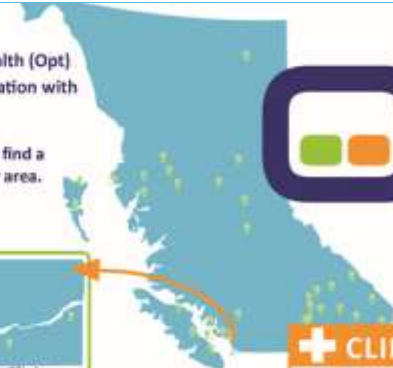





Options for Sexual Health (Opt) is a pro choice organization with 60 clinics around BC

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# Opt Options for Sexual Health

All Ages ■ All Genders ■ All Orientations

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# Options for Sexual Health Annual Report 2012 -2013

## President's Report

Thank you for your interest in Opt. I know you must be interested or you wouldn't be reading an Annual Report. What I do not know is *why* you are reading it.

You may be one of our funders, a donor, or perhaps someone who supports the Mission and Vision of our organization.

In that case, I want you to know how vital your support is to Opt's continued work in our province. That work is described further in various departmental reports you will see in this document. The careful management of our funding is evident in the Finance Report. You may not know, however, that your financial support (regardless of the amount) along with your support of our Vision and Mission, are a key factor in our many successful endeavours. Thank you, from my heart!

You may be one of Opt's many volunteers who work in our clinic and education programs, on our 1-800-SEX SENSE Line, our community outreach program, or you may be a Board member. If so, you already know about the many and varied programs and services Opt provides in communities throughout B.C., but you may not know how greatly your contributions are valued and appreciated. Thank you, so very much, for all that you do.

You may be one of Opt's clients: a young woman checking the website, looking for information, or a safe place to get that STI test, or to find out about contraception; a teacher looking desperately for some help because you've been assigned the job of teaching aspects of the school curriculum that make you squirm with embarrassment; a parent whose fifteen-year-old daughter is pregnant and plans to have and raise her baby, because she thinks it would be "cool"; or perhaps a first-year university student trying to figure out your sexual orientation.

Congratulations! You have come to the right place for accurate information, exemplary clinical services, non-judgemental, supportive counselling, and appropriate referrals. You will get the help you need.

During the past year, Opt's staff and volunteers have continued to provide our programs and services while moving forward with new and exciting initiatives. You will read more details in the following sections of this Annual Report, but I wanted to note one of the highlights. Opt's First Annual Sexual & Reproductive Health Day Breakfast was a great success, and one of the many ways that Opt is moving toward ever

greater visibility. Our revamped website and our reputation as a reliable media resource have also played a large part in Opt's much greater "brand" identity.

Opt's Board of Directors recognizes and appreciates the hard work and creativity of our Executive Director, Jennifer Breakspear, and her Management Team and staff. The excellence of your professional work and your accomplishments over the past year are individually and collectively amazing. Thank you.

As we look toward the next year, we will continue the work of increasing Opt's public profile. We will also continue our efforts to develop a more diverse funding base. And, equally as important, we will be working on a project to strengthen and rejuvenate our provincial organization. It will be a busy year!

Respectfully submitted,  
Barbara Hestrin, President



## Executive Director Report

From my perspective, the past year at Options for Sexual Health (Opt) has been one best characterized as a time of engagement and connection. We focused our efforts on better connecting Provincial Office to our clinics and our clinics to each other. We broadened our reach through social media. We launched a newly redesigned website with a fresh look and easy-to-navigate layout. We unveiled a new bus ad campaign with a clean look and clearly articulated messages about what Opt does, who we are, where we are, and whom we serve. All of this, and more, is necessary if we are to ensure that all British Columbians know that Opt is **their** sexual and reproductive health care provider. Achieving this goal will take us a long way towards the fulfilment of our mission "to provide comprehensive education, accurate information, support for sexual expression and reproductive choice, and confidential clinical services that help British Columbians enjoy healthy sexuality throughout life."

Since joining Opt in May 2012, I have personally visited 20 clinics. Such clinic tours are very important to me. They allow me to meet our clinic staff and volunteers, observe their physical locations and set-ups, learn of their unique challenges and perspectives, and find out how we at Provincial Office can better support the vital sexual and reproductive health services that our clinic staff and volunteers provide in their communities. It is my commitment to visit every one of our Opt clinics by the time you read our next Annual Report.



We are committed to continuing this trend of engagement and connection. A major step in this project is to electronically connect all our clinics. Once every clinic is kitted out with a laptop computer we will begin our next phase of connectivity: Electronic Medical Records (EMR). Within the next two years it is my hope that any Opt client will be able to visit any Opt clinic and the clinic staff will be able to pull up their medical records electronically. This will mean, for example, that a client who lives in Nelson and regularly visits the Nelson Opt clinic but who goes to school in Kelowna will be able to go to one of our Kelowna clinics and their records from Nelson will be available to the Kelowna clinicians. With an EMR system we will ensure that Opt clinics are connected and that Opt clients are assured of continuity of care across the province no matter where they may be and which Opt clinic they may visit.

All this connection does not happen without some challenges and significant investments of time, money and resources. We have begun the initial investments in the past year as we modernized our Provincial Office technology. This is a priority area so, if you wondering where your donation dollars can make a big difference this year, please consider donating to Opt to support upgrading our technology. *Any donations that we receive which contain a direction to technology upgrades will be specifically targeted to purchasing laptops for the clinics.*

I am exceedingly proud of **everyone** within the Opt community. It is through the commitment and dedication of all Opt staff, volunteers, donors, members and partners that we will achieve our mission and ensure healthy sexuality for all British Columbians. Thank you for all that you do to support Opt's mission and the sexual health of all British Columbians.

Jennifer Breakspear  
Executive Director



## Departmental Reports

### Clinical

Options for Sexual Health (Opt) is an organization that is stronger than ever. This is only possible due to the dedication and passion of our physicians, nurses, admin staff, and volunteers. These wonderful people are what drives this organisation to provide sexual and reproductive health accessible to all ages, all genders, and orientations.

This past year has been no exception. The Nursing and Clinical Services Department has observed upcoming trends, created new partnerships and renewed old ones, embarked on new ventures, and had the opportunity to provide expert opinion and knowledge to various groups.



In April 2013, the clinical services launched a year-long campaign called "52 Clinics in 52 Weeks" graciously funded by MERCK, Bayer HealthCare, and Pfizer. The theme for this campaign is "Heart your Parts" and have shared this theme with the Canadian Federation of Sexual Health who have taken the campaign nationally. The campaign will allow each clinic the opportunity to creatively highlight themselves over the course of 2013 and 2014.

Opt clinics in British Columbia saw approximately a total of 25,428 clients in the 2012-2013 year. In January 2013, Opt opened its 60<sup>th</sup> clinic in Fort St. James in partnership with the Northern Health Authority.

Some of the trends seen in 2012-2013 include, but are not limited to an increase in male clients and clients 30 years old and above, increased demand for testing in sexually transmitted infections and Pap smears, and inquiries related to peri-menopause. Opt observed a 5% increase in clientele aged 30 and above and a significant increase in male clients at 28%. With improved staff and client education, support, and resources available, the number of HIV testing services provided has grown by 36%.

Another trend observed is that some clinics in specific regions are feeling burdened in providing certain services. These services include STI testing and Pap smears. Opt's initial infrastructure set-up and funding was and always has been to provide contraception counselling and services. However, due to recent program cuts in various Health Authorities, the responsibility to provide other sexual and reproductive health services has fallen to Opt in these regions. In Interior Health alone, STI testing has increased by 14%.

Opt continues to foster existing partnerships with the British Columbia Institute of Technology (BCIT) to manage content and deliver courses supporting the Reproductive Health certified practice for BC registered nurses. Other partnerships include the British Columbia for Communicable Disease Control (BCCDC), Contraception Access Research Team (CART), and Northern Health Authority.

The Director of Nursing and Clinical Services also had the opportunity to represent Opt on provincial working groups with the BC Centre for Disease Control and College of Registered Nurses of British Columbia for the review of Decision Support Tools in Certified Practice. Opt continues to work in partnership with BCCDC to offer the HPV vaccine Cervarix as a Public Health Initiative to girls born between 1991-1993 who may not be able to afford the cost of receiving Gardasil. Opt is committed to supporting UBC medical residents and students certifying in Sexually Transmitted Infections in collaboration with University of British Columbia and British Columbia Institute of Technology in finding them practicum placements. The clinical services department has begun the preparation for the upcoming 2014 Opt regional conferences. We hope to continue our steady growth through 2013-2014 while delivering exceptional client care services.



Nicole Pasquino  
Director of Nursing and Clinical Services

## Medical Director

Opt has a new Medical Director...  
but she's not new to Opt.

For the past 13 years I have worked at the busy Whistler Opt Clinic (previously known as Whistler S.A.F.E.) as part of the team providing sexual health services to the relatively transient young adults who are Whistler's workers.

I bring to Opt both interests and experience in professional education, research, community health, rural medicine, interdisciplinary practice, and outreach innovations. I hope and expect that all aspects of that background will be put to good use in the organization.

Beyond my day-to-day responsibilities, I have a long wish-list. A few of the items on it are: improved communication with front-line providers; adoption of electronic medical records; pilot implementation of video-health services for clinics without physicians; development of a trans-men's clinic; and delivery of an accredited sexual health conference in partnership with UBC Continuing Professional Development (where I am also one of the Medical Directors). Work on all of the above initiatives has begun, with the assistance and support of the great folks at Provincial Office. Acknowledged challenges include physician recruitment in an era of physician shortages and Provincial Health Services Authority funding that does not include physicians – not to mention fitting it all in to a “theoretically” one day per week role.

Dr. Marisa Collins  
Medical Director

## Education

Opt's Education Department has hit its stride this year. We added five new Field Educators to our team, including our first Opt Educator in the Yukon, bringing the total number of Opt Educators delivering sexual health education in B,C, to eight!. All of our Field Educators are graduates of Opt's unique Sexual Health Educator Certification (SHEC) Program. SHEC is the only North American program to train professionals to deliver comprehensive sexual health education to a variety of audiences. In 2012-13, Opt certified a new set of proficient SHEC students, bringing the total number of Opt Certified Sexual Health Educators



in the province to 29. We completed our fourth offering of the SHEC program to an impressive new cohort of sexual health professionals who are on track to complete their practicums within the next year. Our other popular professional workshop, the Multi-day CAVE/SAR (Comfort Attitudes and Values Evaluation/Sexual Attitudes Reassessment) workshop, was presented twice in 2012-13. This workshop is a provocative, experiential, cognitive, and affective experience designed to push comfort levels, elicit feelings, and confront attitudes, beliefs, and values about sexuality. Participants move toward greater knowing, acceptance, and tolerance of the many dimensions of human sexuality. This level of comfort is essential for sexual health professionals and is also beneficial for individuals striving for personal growth and the development of healthy personal relationships.

*“Opt really knows how to teach teachers by facilitating practical interaction that helps build confidence quickly. The knowledge shared by our SHEC Instructor is dynamic, highly entertaining, and highly informative.” – SHEC 2013 graduate*

In addition, we have noticed that our professional programs are gaining prominence beyond B.C.! We received registrations for our Multi-day CAVE/SAR workshop and SHEC program from participants as far away as Ottawa and Halifax. This is a wonderful affirmation that not only is Opt doing great work in the field of sexual and reproductive health, but that the desire for good quality sexual health and sexuality training is increasing across the country.

In 2012-13, Opt delivered 515 sexual health education sessions in schools and 11 Askable Adult workshops throughout BC. We also established a few new markets. One that we are particularly excited about is training for a Seniors Wellness Fair dedicated specifically to sexual health for seniors. There were well over 500 seniors in attendance at this fair. We have been expanding our focus on families with children of varying learning needs and abilities.

This year, Opt delivered a specialized training to the staff of Science World to prepare them for their summer exhibit “The Science of Sexuality”. This training was designed to assist the staff feel more comfortable with the contents of the exhibit and increase their knowledge and awareness with accurate sexual health information and a positive outlook on sexuality for young people. This type of training is a fantastic opportunity for Opt to build on our visibility to a new demographic.

Saira Hansen  
Education Manager

*"I cannot even begin to explain all that I have learned in this short time. The knowledge and experience that I have acquired in the past five months (and in CAVE/SAR), is incomparable and unforgettable! My knowledge base in regards to sexual health is at a different level now. It is no longer an interest, but now a career! I look so forward to learning more and practicing this new found knowledge!" – SHEC 2013 graduate*



## Communications

This year the outreach role previously coordinated by Ashleigh Turner was developed in to a Communications Department. In addition to previous responsibilities, the Communications Manager oversees Options for Sexual Health's branding and communications, media requests, reception management, and development and monitoring our social media platforms. Maggie Murray joined Opt in June to cover Ashleigh's parental leave.

Opt's rebranding and website redesign have been well-received. Our new bus ad campaign launched province-wide in late June and while we have received a lot of positive feedback, the key responses have been from people who had not previously known about Opt or what we did until they saw our bus ad and realized we provide services that they need. The Communications Department also connects with each of Opt's clinics to ensure that they have the business cards, information cards, letterhead, and other promotional material that they need to do their jobs most effectively. The addition of the QR codes on promotional material has been well-received and is working well as a redirect to our website.

Over the course of the past year we refreshed our online presence. Our newly redesigned website launched in January and traffic to our site continues to grow. We revise and tweak each section on a quarterly basis to ensure that all the links, resources, and widgets are up-to-date and fully functioning. Given the widespread reach of social media platforms such as Twitter and Facebook, we endeavour to increase traffic to our “pages”. Our “likes” and “followers” continue to grow and we post and share interesting articles and links that support our mission, with particular attention to our commitment to provide sexual and reproductive health services and education to people of “all ages; all genders; all orientations”. Our Facebook reach has seen people “liking” our page from as far away as Egypt and Iran!

February saw the launch of our inaugural Sexual Reproductive Health Breakfast with our keynote speaker sex columnist Dan Savage receiving the first ever “Sexual Health Champion” award. The breakfast was a great success and we received considerable positive feedback from attendees and media coverage. All big ventures have their learning moments and we had our fair share. These will help us to continue to develop and grow our annual SRH breakfast event into an even more successful event in February 2014 and the future.

Outreach continues to be an important part of Opt’s mandate. Our Community Outreach volunteer team has grown this year and is working on development opportunities for the Level Three volunteers. We again participated in the Shambala Music Festival this year which continues to be a popular event with both the volunteers and the attendees of the festival. Building community relationships and letting people know who we are and what we do continues to be a focus across the province. Connecting through events such as music festivals, Pride events, and high school and post-secondary Welcome Weeks and Health Fairs are a great way to connect with our core client populations.



Maggie Murray  
Communications Manager

## Sex Sense

The 1-800-Sex Sense line is a free, confidential and anonymous phone and email service, open from 9 am to 9 pm Monday to Friday. Sexual health professionals answer questions and provide referrals about sex, contraception, sexually transmitted infections, pregnancy options, abortion, pleasure, sexual orientation, and gender identity.

In its 17<sup>th</sup> year of existence, the Sex Sense line experienced a decrease in the number of calls but an increase in email questions. There were 7,621 calls in the past year, down 8.3% from last year. In contrast, there were 1,550 emails answered which marks a 1% increase over the previous year.



The average length of the call was six minutes; however, calls can range considerably in length with some taking less than a minute and others being more than half an hour.

Females call the line more than males by a ratio of 2.7:1. The majority of callers fall into the age range of 20 - 24 (19%) and 25 – 29 (14%). Callers' ages range from under 12 to over 60.

The majority of calls were regarding contraception, sexually transmitted infections, clinic information, pregnancy risk, and female sexual health. Calls came from all across B.C., with the Vancouver Coastal Health Authority area accounting for 26% of calls, Fraser Health Authority 11%, Interior Health Authority 10%, and Vancouver Island Health Authority 4%.

When callers access the Sex Sense line from outside of B.C., they pay long distance charges, and yet we continue to receive calls from throughout Canada and around the world. This year we received calls from other B.C. provinces including Alberta, Manitoba, Ontario and Quebec, and had worldwide calls from the USA, the UK, Germany, India, and Africa.

The Sex Sense line is primarily marketed through bus ads across B.C. Sex Sense cards and posters are also given out at events, Opt clinics, conferences, and educational initiatives, as well as being mailed to other clinics, educators, or anyone who requests them.

The Sex Sense team is comprised of registered nurses, clinical counselors, and sexual health educators. All Sex Sense staff are committed to ongoing learning and professional development to stay on the forefront of sexual health and technology research.

This year, the Sex Sense line organized a one-day conference for all Sex Sense staff. The workshops included a sex positivity and values assessment workshop, trans\* sexual health care provision, and a clinical update presented by Dr. Unjali Malhotra.

Some of Sex Sense's staff members also attended Opt's Clinical Perspectives on Sexual Health conference. This full-day conference included updates on advanced reproductive health, STI with consideration for the male patient and new perspectives for HIV testing, and a keynote speech by a transgender advocate.

### Finance Report

Fiscal 2012-2013 was a good year for Opt financially. We achieved our first surplus in the last five years. Cash flow was carefully monitored and managed. The Sexual and Reproductive Health Day Breakfast was a great fundraising and branding opportunity and netted a profit which is outstanding for an inaugural event.

Many thanks to the East Kootenays, Grand Forks, Kaslo, Nakusp, Penticton, Kelowna and Vernon branches for raising at least \$2000 each in their communities to support their clinics and outreach.

The move to regional conferences was successful for Opt clinic staff - as well as financially for the organization as a whole. The branch board and staff really enjoyed the visits from the director of nursing and clinical services, executive director, and medical director to their communities. Plus, the new format cut our expenses by over \$60,000, compared to the April 2011 clinical conference. Thanks to Merck and Pfizer for their conference sponsorships.

I looked at ways to cut operating expenses during the fiscal with Jennifer Breakspear, Executive Director, and were able to lower them by about \$70,000.

Contraceptive sales in the clinics continued to drop by about 10% over last year. It is hoped that future SRH Day breakfasts, the new Opt website, and other promotion initiatives will help Options for Sexual

Health become more well-known in B.C. and increase client visits. We continue to look at other revenue streams in education and funding.

The Opt Penticton clinic opened in September 2012. They received a \$20,000 grant from the Community Foundation of the South Okanagan, for start-up costs. Their total sales for September 2012 to March 2013 were \$1300, which is very low for an Opt clinic open twice a week. We are confident that sales will improve this year. Because our base PHSA funding has not been increased in years, expansion of Opt clinics in to other communities has been put on hold.

Our auditors, Manning Elliott, continue to recommend tighter control of contraceptive inventory at the individual clinic level. A new recommendation this year is the closing of branch bank accounts in order to decrease risk of misappropriation and streamline administration of branch finances.

In the current fiscal, the finance department looks forward to continued success, and the changes that come with this success!



## Donor Acknowledgements

Everyone at Options for Sexual Health is truly grateful to all of our donors and sponsors who have given generously to support our mission. We would also like to appreciate the hard work and dedication of individuals and companies who organised and raised funds through events held on our behalf. Your gifts are making a difference in our clinics, in classrooms, and in society. Thank you!



Thanks and appreciation to these individuals and groups who gave gifts between \$1 and \$100

Hasan Abdessamad – Janet Ames – Beverly Anderson – Laurie Anderson – Eilsha Argyropoulos – Joyce Arthur - Betty Ball – Lindsay Balson – Nicoletta Barber – Maureen Bendick – Janice Bennett - Adriel Bennett-Forsyth – Gwen Bird – Alda Blanes – Catherine Bleich – Cat Blythe – Clayton Boehler - E. Bongie – Megan Borchert - Carla Bortoletto – Serina Brain – Jocelyn Braithwaite – Jennifer Breakspear – Patricia Brown – Leanna Buffie – Marie Carlson – Rose Cass – Christina Chant - Hanna Cho – Cathy Cronin – Maggie Crowe – Michelle Crowley – Gary Dalton - D'Anne Davis – Jenn De Roo – Margo Deane - Dave Deveau – Carol Dodd – Linda Duncan – Allen Eaves – Susan Eide – Gwen Enquist – Catherine Evashuk – Kristy Fadley – Elizabeth Food – Theresa Fresco – Janice Fryzuk – Margaret Fulton – Brandon Gaukel - Ryan Gerrard – Kristen Gilbert – Manav Gill – Christine Gillespie – Bryarley Gillis – Marnie Goldenberg – Lauren Goldman – Viviane Gosselin – Charles Gosset – Ennis Greene – Priya Gupta – Devon Haag – Saira Hansen – Tracy Harford – Margaret Haugen – Boris Henriquez – Caroline Hickman – Shea Hocaloski – Jess Hocker – Ruth Hopling – Travis Hottes – Lesley Houle – Jane Hughes – Shirley Hunter-Oglow – Ken Janzen – Caitlin Johnston – Darren Jukes – Michele

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Thanks and appreciation to these individuals and groups who gave gifts between \$101 and \$500

John Andrews – Siobhan Aspinall – Ellen Bailey – Sharon Barbour – Laura Bliss – Lori Brotto - Margaret Cook – Malcolm Crockett – Michael Danielson – Thomas De Marco – Sheila Dobie – Jill Doctoroff – Jean Donaldson – Anne Drader – Stacey Elliott – Celia Evanson – Carolyn Forbes – Janet Foster – Dorothea Gensch – Arlene Henderson – Sandra Henson – Janelle Holmes – Elaine Hooper – Jim Jamieson - Jewish Federation of Greater Vancouver – Darren Kopetsky – Meriko Kubota - Lady Minto Hospital – Kimberly Law – Erica Levy - Lionel Investments Ltd – Denise MacKean - Patricia Ann Mirwaldt - Mow and Snow Land Care – Saleema Noon – Wendy Norman - Pegasus Gallery of Canada Art Ltd. – Pharmasave – Janine Porritt - Provincial Employees Community Services Fund – Patricia Radcliffe – Joan Robillard – Aura Rose - Rotary Club of Lake Country – Donna Schmirler – Stanley Shapiro – Jean Shoveller – Eliane Silverman – Lori Smith – John Spinelli – Anne Stewart - TELUS Community Affairs – Veronica Thomas – Meaghan Thumath – Dianne Turner - United Way of the Fraser Valley – Eli Van der Giessen – Michelle Warrington – Miriam Williams – Elizabeth Woods



Thanks and appreciation to these individuals and groups who gave gifts between \$501 and \$1000

Amuse Consulting Inc. - Maureen and Jim Bradbury – Barbara Hestrin – Michiko Kariya – Allison Lenters  
- Erin Mitchell – Royal Comete Hotel & Bar – Suzie Soman – Jane Wilde

Thanks and appreciation to these individuals and groups who gave gifts between \$1,001 and \$5,000

A. Jean Elder – Carmen Venturi



*"I cannot even put into words how much this workshop will forever be with me! I have to say that all activities and presentations have been meaningful and I feel like a better "me" since meeting these people and having this experience." – CAVE/SAR participant*

