



# Connecting People for Health



## A New Generation of Co-operatives

September 2006



## **The Nova Scotia Co-operative Council is**

- The economic development arm of the Nova Scotia co-operative and credit union sector
- Owned, governed, and mandated by the sector
- Board of 12, representing co-operatives and credit unions across all regions



# Priorities & Activities

- Economic development
  - New co-ops, new jobs, growing existing co-ops, securing jobs
- Government advocacy
- Alternative finance
- Strengthening the sector
- Marketing and profiling co-operative economy



# **Nova Scotia Co-operative Economy**

- 402 businesses
- \$5 billion in assets
- 7,000 employees
- Exit across all sectors and industries
- 308,000 Nova Scotians



# Health Care

- Co-operatives: Why?
- We ask “Why Not”?
- Next generation of co-operative enterprises



## **Canadian Health Care Consensus Group:**

- “Patients are bystanders in our health care system”
- “Canadians want more control”



## **Harris Research Study**

- Consumers want options for accessing doctors & nurses, including face to face, online and telephone.
- 89% said they would use a nurse triage service to manage a chronic medical condition



- 40% feel as time crunched as their physicians
- 83% want their lab tests available on line
- 69% want online charts for monitoring their own issues
- 84% want electronic communication with their doctors





# Health Care in a State of Crisis

- Increasing health care costs
- Lengthening wait lists and times
- Lack of patient support
- Burden of costs
- Political power plays
- People are suffering
- Professionals are losing motivation



# Gov of Canada Website (Co-ops)

- The principles of co-operative health care organizations and the way they operate are consistent with the evolution of thinking generally about the health care system:
  - A shift from treating disease to promoting health
  - Greater accountability
  - Care tailored to individual needs
  - Innovative delivery models
  - Greater engagement of individuals in their own health care



# Government of Canada Cont'd

- The model has shown itself to be cost effective and to respond to the evolving needs of individuals and communities, whether those of culturally diverse populations, or the growing numbers of seniors, or the special challenges of rural communities



# Recommendations

- The co-operative model for health care should be recognized as an exemplary model of community based, citizen centered service delivery in the health care field
- All levels of government and the co-operative sector should collaborate to raise the visibility of the co-operative health care option
- Governments should ensure that their policies encourage innovative means of delivering health services (i.e. community based models, focusing on the promotion of wellness, alternative payment methods, and team-based approaches)



## Recommendations Cont'd

- Research showing how and when to best use the co-operative model in health care should be supported
- Adequate resources and assistance should be available to help people who wish to start up co-operative health care organizations
- Home care should be recognized as an essential component of the health care system, and the co-operative model of home care promoted
- Co-operative approaches that address the broader social and economic determinants of health should be supported



# The Time for Action is Now

- We want a business model that:
  - Empowers patients
  - Puts control, ownership, and responsibility in the hands of patients
  - Encourages self-help and self-management
  - Improves health care outcomes
  - Enhances (not competes) with existing system



# The Time for Action Cont'd

- Builds value for patients and communities
- Leverages resources, supports
- Embodies the strength, history, and success of the co-operative model
- Utilizes technologies



# **1<sup>st</sup> Project: Patient-Owned Facility**

North Nova Health Care Co-operative

- 4,000 patients
- One doctor
- One nurse
- Office staff





## **2<sup>nd</sup> Project: Professional-Owned Facility**

- Mudcreek Health Care Clinic Co-operative
- 8,000 patients
- Four doctors
- Four nurses
- Three support staff



## **3<sup>rd</sup> Project: Connecting People for Health Co-operative**

- Online virtual health care clinic
- Owned by the co-operative sector
- Co-operative member access in pilot stage
  - Privilege of membership

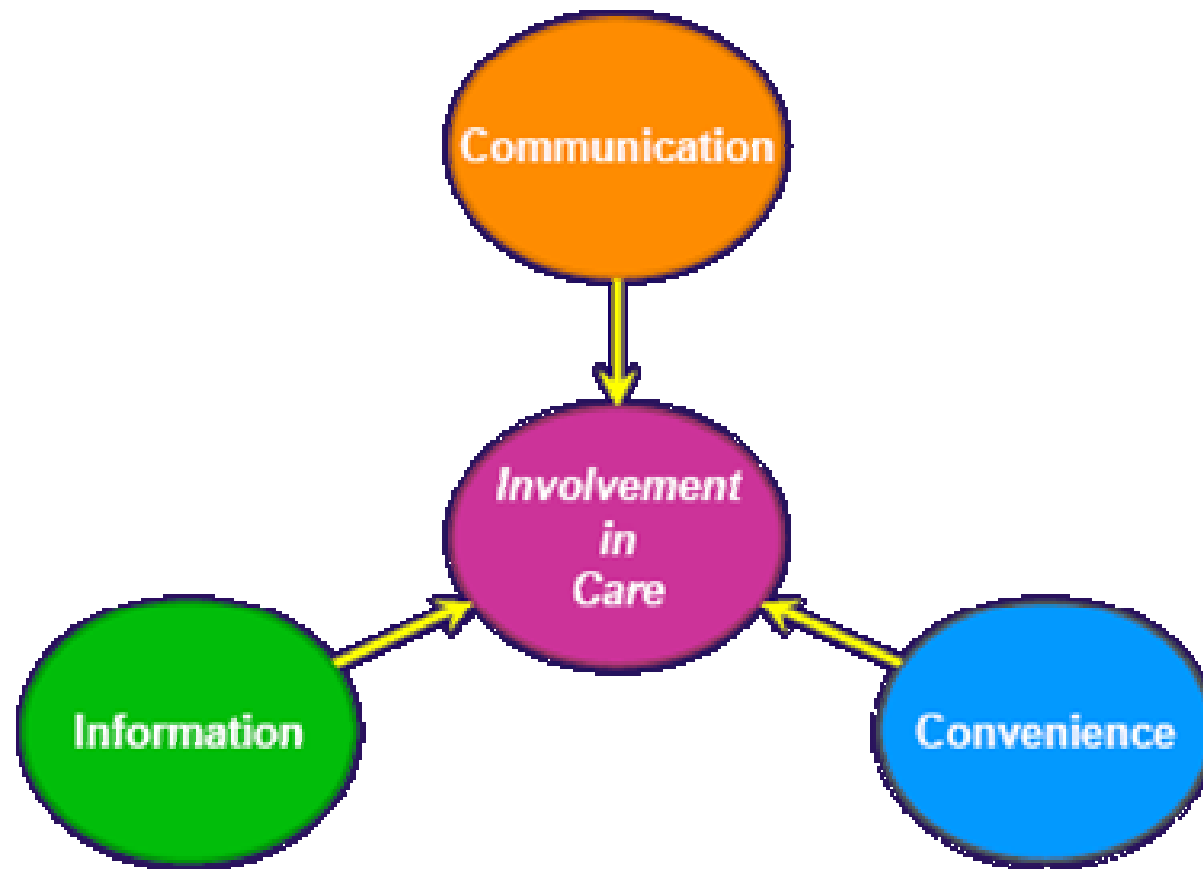


# Members & Patients

- Access to a doctor online for questions, referrals, supports
- Online prescription renewals (co-op pharmacies)
- FAQ Site
- Health information/education site
- Health record management site
- Test results database and interpretation centre
- Support groups for specific illnesses, lead by a specialist
- Peer support groups



# What Patients Want





# Arguments

- Two Tiered System:
- We already have a multi tiered system (public, insurance, private, union agreements).
- Public system already charges for “extras”.



# Rape and Pillage the Public System

- Reduce the strain on the public system so that those who need the system the most can access (emergency rooms)
- Build capacity in rural areas
- Build a system of support for health professional (particularly in rural areas)



- Support and augment what it is already there
- Opportunity for existing physicians to participate
- Foster self help, self management and self responsibility for one's own health
- “Community” owned and led solutions



# Co-operative Enterprises

- Are social economy enterprises, with a focus on:
- People
- Greater, common good
- Inclusion of both social and economic outcomes
- People doing for themselves
- Protection of values, resources, and communities





# **102 Co-operative Health Care Enterprises already exist in Canada**

- 62 in Quebec
- Community Health Centers
- Home Care
- Ambulance



## 100 Years Ago

- We were told we couldn't possibly manage our own money: the big guys would eat us.
- Today, the Credit Union network is the second largest financial network in Canada, second only to the Royal Bank



## Also told.....

- We wouldn't be successful in managing or marketing our own products (dairy, fish, etc). We needed the big guys in the middle.
- Today, 85% of all agriculture activity in Atlantic Canada is done through co-operative enterprises.
- Scotsburn Dairies largest co-operative in NS with nearly \$300 million in annual sales



## Conclusion

- Great potential for the co-operative movement to show leadership, diversify, respond to a community need, contribute to and protect an important social service (health care), and develop a new line of services based on solid values and principles.



## **We have:**

- Broad based ownership
- Commitment to people and to community
- Solid business experience and expertise
- Longevity
- Resources (financial, insurance, HR, Marketing etc)
- Systems and Processes



# Inventing the Future



Alan Kay

- “The best way to predict the future is to invent it”



- We have a responsibility to think, to act, to be innovative, and to be part of the solution, not part of the problem.
- We will not ask for permission to do what is best for our people, our communities, for Nova Scotia.



- Thank You!