

Published on Axiom News (<https://axiomnews.com>)

Grassroots organization forms to put focus of health care on people

'We're bankrupting the country trying to fix everyone'

A grassroots movement is forming in Canada, aimed at helping create a health care system in the country that is more people-centred.

Launched a year ago, the Canadian Association for People-Centred Health (CAPCH) is recruiting ordinary people with an interest in improving health care to join them. The CAPCH currently has a membership of about 100. Through networking and fundraising the not-for-profit non-partisan organization has a long-term mission "to create the world's first people-centred health care system," says Dr. Vaughan Glover, founder of the organization.

"We're bankrupting the country trying to fix everyone," says the dentist and author of 'Journey to Wellness'.

Dr. Glover says he isn't implying Canadians are unfortunate to have the current system, however, he believes "there's so much more to health care."

"You can't fix people in health care. You can fix things. You can help a person be all they're capable of. Our goal is not to fix people; it is to help people become all they're capable of."

For instance, a person visits his or her doctor complaining of a headache. The doctor conducts a three-to-seven-minute exam and writes a prescription. This scenario is illness-centred, says Dr. Glover. Where as in a person-centred model, less emphasis is on the condition and more attention is given to the individual. "I'm not a headache; I'm a person with a headache."

He uses the person-centred approach in his dental practice where medical examinations are two hours long. “You get to know the person,” he says. “Is it the symptom or the cause? Do we want an illness system or a health system?” Dr. Glover asks.

People are defining wellness in much broader terms these days, he says. The current system “is unable to fulfill the needs of an informed population. Physical illness does not mean you are sick. You can be well.” His father died with a host of medical problems but was never “a victim,” says Dr. Glover. “To me, he died well. He was all he was capable of.”

He refers to the life and legacy of Terry Fox. He died at 21 but changed the world, says Dr. Glover. “By definition, he was probably one of the most well Canadians who ever lived.”

The current system is built on trying to win elections and Canada needs a vision that goes beyond the next election, he says.

The CAPCH consists of a board of directors and members who communicate via e-mail and meet annually. Its goals are to research, design and implement a health care system more responsive to the needs of Canadian residents. The association also wants to develop a voice. “We want to have an open dialogue on how the system can be people-centred. We can also create a platform for the average person to be heard.”

One of the ways it’s doing that is through its ‘People-Centred Health Challenge’ aimed at finding Canada’s leading visionaries who can help design a better system. The first prize for the best submission is \$10,000.

“It’s time for (Canada) to be a leader again. Imagine how strong our country could be if everyone was everything they are capable of.”

To learn more about CAPCH visit the website at <http://www.capch.ca/>