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The **Canadian Society for International Health (CSIH)** is a national non-governmental organization that works domestically and internationally to reduce global health inequities and strengthen health systems.

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csih@csih.org

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15th Canadian Conference on International Health

The 15th Canadian Conference on International Health (CCIH) took place October 26-29, 2008 at the Marriott Hotel in Ottawa, Ontario. The theme, "Checking In: Health for All or Health for Some?" was organized and hosted by the Canadian Society for International Health (CSIH), in partnership with the Canadian Coalition for Global Health Research (CCGHR).

CCIH 2008 aimed to provide a kaleidoscope of perspectives on primary health care and offer a forum for re-examining both successes and failures of practice, policies and research. Practitioners, community members, policy makers and researchers met to explore new global partnerships, to share new visions and ways of working in primary health care that offer possibilities for achieving improvements to community health, progress toward the Millennium Development Goals, improved equity on the social determinants of health, and strengthened health systems.

The Conference attracted a total of 562 participants and speakers from 46 different countries!

Once again, Sunday was dedicated to Continuing Education Day workshops, organized by the CCGHR. It opened and concluded with two plenary speakers and offered concurrent sessions of continuing education workshops, with a total of 15 different workshops offered throughout the day.

Monday, Tuesday and Wednesday used the typical format from past conferences, which included plenary sessions at the beginning of each day,

followed by a variety of concurrent sessions – oral presentations, workshops and symposia. All sessions were grouped by sub themes of the main theme provided an opportunity for audience participation. The CCIH also offered panel presentations, and a designated time slot for poster presentations.

A number of features and sessions were also added to this year's program, including:

- ◇ Partnership Panel: Models for Global Partnership and their Role in Primary Health Care
- ◇ PHAC: Hepatitis C in the 21st Century: A Global Challenge—A Global Opportunity

Each year the Conference also attracts auxiliary events hosted by like-minded groups wishing to take advantage of the Conference's audience to hold meetings, seminars, and other group events. This reflects the role the CCIH plays as a forum for exchange among the health in development community and also the crucial networking opportunity it provides.

CCIH 2008 combined new ideas with lessons from experience, offering participants an opportunity to revive the spirit of Alma Ata, and lead to a renewed commitment to Health for All.

Detailed information on the conference as well as news about the upcoming CCIH 2009, October 25 – 28, Crowne Plaza Hotel, Ottawa can be found on our website at www.csih.org

CSIH's Balkans Youth and Health Project

During the month of November, CSIH's Balkans Youth and Health Project hosted three study tours for stakeholders from Serbia and Bosnia and Herzegovina. Two of these study tours focused on youth engagement, while the other was centred on capacity building for health surveillance. Participants included students, youth outreach workers and epidemiologists from Serbia's Institute for Public Health.

In addition to a workshop and networking session at the CCIH and a presentation at the World University Service of Canada (WUSC) Annual General Assembly, participants visited NGOs and learned about services and programs offered by local government and healthcare institutions. Delegates from the Serbian IPH also had the opportunity to work closely with their counterparts at the Public Health Agency of Canada to share best practices

and lessons learned around current health surveillance challenges, specifically with respect to infectious diseases such as Hepatitis C and HIV/AIDS.

For their part, youth delegates were particularly enthusiastic about the opportunity to visit local outreach and drop-in services aimed at street-involved youth and to discuss the challenges of outreach work with Canadian peers, with an eye to the possibility of implementing some of the programming they learned about (i.e., safe spaces for young girls and employment and skills building for marginalized youth) within their own organizations.

These recent study tours build on past educational exchanges hosted by the BYHP, including a health promotion summer school held in conjunction with the University of Toronto and a joint study tour for

high-ranking Balkan government officials sponsored by BYHP, CSIH's Primary Health Care Policy Project and the Canadian Public Health Association. It is the project's intention that events such as these will ultimately contribute to strengthening the capacity of stakeholders to identify, prioritize and adopt more inclusive, youth-friendly and gender sensitive approaches to the development and implementation of PHC policy and services. This strengthened capacity is supported by participants' interaction with Canadian NGOs, government departments, practitioners and academics working in the field of youth health.

For more information on this and other CSIH projects, please visit us on the web at www.csih.org



BYHP study tour participants meet with counterparts from CHEO to discuss best practices in youth engagement

ABOUT BYHP

The Balkans Youth and Health Project, a CIDA-funded initiative that started in August 2006, works with ministries of health and other government ministries, PHC service providers, NGOs and youth in Serbia and Bosnia and Herzegovina. It contributes to the achievement of responsive and accountable youth-friendly primary health care systems that promote increased youth access to primary health services and help improve the health status of citizens. In Serbia, the project is assisting in the implementation of selected priorities of the National Strategy for Youth Development and Health (NSYHDP), while in Bosnia and Herzegovina, it is supporting the government in the development of youth-related health policies and strategies.

Volunteer Opportunities

WUSC - CECI UNITERRA Programme

The Uniterra Programme provides numerous opportunities for Canadian citizens and permanent residents of Canada to volunteer abroad in their field of expertise. They work with local partners in 13 countries in Africa, Latin America and Asia.

Uniterra's objective is to support development initiatives that address world poverty. Volunteers share their experiences with their community, encourage international solidarity, and help shape policies

towards meeting the UN Millennium Development Goals. Uniterra volunteer positions are open to Canadian citizens and landed immigrants. Applicants must be between the ages of 18 and 70 and be in good medical condition.

For more information visit Uniterra's website: www.uniterra.ca

To contact Uniterra directly email: info@uniterra.ca

Unite for Sight's Opportunities

Unite For Sight's High Impact Volunteer Abroad Opportunities program is currently accepting applications for 2008 and 2009 for placements in Ghana, Honduras and India.

Volunteers are part of global problem solving and have the thrill of experiencing and contributing to change on the highest level. With the assistance of volunteers like you, Unite For Sight has restored sight to 15 958 patients and provided eye care to 600 000.

Unite For Sight welcomes volunteers who may not have previous health or eye care experience. Volunteers receive all necessary training from Unite For Sight so that they are able to assist eye doctors with community eye outreach programs. Unite For Sight also welcomes volunteers to participate as photographers and filmmakers.

For more information visit : <http://www.uniteforsight.org/volunteer-abroad>

CSIH Lifetime Achievement Award 2008

CSIH presented its annual Lifetime Achievement Award to Dr. Maureen Law during our recent international health conference (CCIH 2008).

Dr. Law has an MD from Queen's University and is a Fellow of the Royal College of Physicians of Canada in Public Health. She spent a major part of her career in the Canadian Department of National Health and Welfare where she served in various capacities during the 70's and 80's, including that of Deputy Minister. After leaving Health and Welfare she began to pursue full-time her longstanding interest in International Health – first as Director of the Health Sciences program at the International Development Research Centre and subsequently as the Director for Human Development for the East Asia and Pacific Region of the World Bank. Since her retirement from the Bank, she has continued to act as a part-time consultant, mainly to the Global Alliance for Vaccines and Immunization.

She has received several awards including the Prime Minister's award for "Outstanding Achievement in Public Service", the "Health for All" Medal of the WHO, the "Canadian Health Hero" award of the Pan American Health Organization, and a "President's Award for Excellence" from the World Bank.

She is currently Chair of the Independent Review Committee for the Health Systems Strengthening component of the Global Alliance for Vaccines and Immunization, and is a Chair of the HealthBridge Board of Directors, member of the Canadian Public Health Association and a member of the External Advisory Committee for the International Program of the Public Health Agency of Canada.

On behalf of the board, management and staff of CSIH: Congratulations!



Dr. Maureen Law

Letter from the Co-Chair of the 15th Canadian Conference on International Health

Well, what a conference!

The discussions were great, the buzz, fantastic.

Over 500 people attended, making it the best attended in the event's 15-year history. Certainly the overall goal was met: the conference provided a forum for learning and action about global health and development challenges.

Canada's role, Canada's own hidden low income country within a country were highlighted throughout the conference.



As co-chair, it was all a bit of a blur; the final bang after all the work and preparation.

We launched the Global Health Watch -2: which is highlighted in a recent issue of the Lancet, with a review by Ilona Kickbush. Like those who participated in the GHW-2, she too feels that it is an important document on which to continue to base an analysis of health systems and health system needs.

We highlighted the many issues raised by the Commission on the Social Determinants of Health.

We created dialogue and discussion about the values of comprehensive primary health care, about vertical programming, about Canada's role in the next G-8, about HIV/AIDS exceptionality and about the World Health Report.

We gave prominence to the posters this year. These excellent posters were visited by many people and created a lot of discussion, both about

the specific poster topics and about the conference themes. We are well on the way to proving that posters are a central part of the whole conference.

In future years, we need to strive to bring more people from LMICs: subsidy budget constraints only allowed for a small subsidy

Although some 30 countries were represented, it was primarily people who could finance the trip independently, or were temporarily in Canada who were able to attend. We will need the imagination and suggestions of many people to improve attendance of people from a program level, people who do not have access to other funds.

The final proof of the success of the 15th annual CCIH can be found in the fact that some 20 people have already volunteered to serve on the planning committee for next year. So let's keep building to a better and even more inclusive conference in 2009.

M. Kagis, CCIH2008 Co-Chair

Synergy Job Board

The Faculty of Medicine & Dentistry at the University of Alberta invites applications for the position of Director, Global Health Program within the new Division of Community Engagement and Social Responsiveness (CESR). This fulltime tenure track position will consist of education, administration and research.

Interested candidates should submit a curriculum vitae outlining their current clinical and research interests as well as their leadership experience and three letters reference by January 31, 2009.

To view the complete job posting visit:
<http://www.csih.org/en/opportunities/jobops.asp>

Become a CSIH Member!

Interested in the important role health plays in society's development ?

Then consider membership in CSIH. We link individuals and organizations from all health sectors, help develop professional skills at home and abroad, advocate for health policy development and promote awareness of health issues.

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