

## **MLUWC Community Night – October 6, 2014**

*The following eight groups participated in the MLUWC Community Night held on October 6, 2014. A large number of MLUWC members were in attendance to speak to the representatives from these groups. We also heard from our three scholarship recipients this year. All these groups were present to share what they do for our community and for us. This provided an opportunity to chat with the women from these organisations, pick up a brochure and see what they do. This was also an opportunity to sign up or to join them in their missions.*

### **Project DOvEE, McGill University, Dr. Lucy Gilbert**

Dr. Gilbert is a full Professor at McGill University in the Departments of Oncology and of Obstetrics and Gynecology, and also Director of Gynecological Oncology at McGill University and the MUHC. She spoke to us about ovarian and endometrial cancer and her research in the early diagnosis of ovarian cancer, as even a small shift in the proportion of patients diagnosed early in the course of the disease translate into substantial reduction in suffering as well as cost to the individual and the healthcare system. Their DOvE study identified the root cause being that the deadliest and most common type of ovarian cancer did not really start in the ovary but in the fallopian tubules. She described the symptoms of this disease to build awareness and thereby improve women's chances of survival.

## **Community Offers**

### **West Island Cancer Wellness Centre**

The West Island Cancer Wellness Centre (WICWC) is a registered charity dedicated to improving the health and well-being of people living with cancer by providing free programs and services to address their emotional, physical and spiritual needs. This type of psycho-social intervention in cancer care supports and complements traditional medical practices. Through their wellness programs, participants will receive personal support, gain coping mechanisms, discover additional alternatives, and become better educated, empowered, active participants in the management of their health and well-being. In the last 5 years the WICWC has helped over 1000 families in the West Island and surrounding areas.

### **West Island Community Resource Centre**

The West Island Community Resource Centre is a non-profit organization dedicated to improving individual and collective well-being in the West Island. It provides information and referral services and strengthens and supports the development of the West Island community in collaboration with community partners. MLUWC is a founding member of this group and Jodie Gibson is our current representative on their Board following in the footsteps of Anna Wilkins and Irene Steffen both of whom have served for many years.

### **West Island Palliative Care Residence**

The West Island Palliative Care Residence is an independent, community-based non-profit institution, accredited by the Quebec government to provide palliative care health services. It is not part of any other hospital or health institution. The Residence was opened in 2002 with nine beds. It expanded in 2012 to 23 beds, making it the largest free-standing palliative care residence in Canada. Our medical and volunteer teams work together to manage symptoms and meet emotional, social and spiritual needs with comfort and dignity in our warm, home-like environment. We also provide support services for families to manage a difficult time.

## **NOVA**

NOVA West Island has been serving the West Island of Montreal since 1911. Programs offered are Palliative and Oncology Care Program, which is specialized nursing care and support to persons living with cancer or ALS; the Carousel Support and Bereavement Program for youth; an Adult Bereavement Program; Adult Day Centre Program; Foot Care Program and Home Support Service Program. Through all their services, NOVA takes care of over 1000 vulnerable people per year in 16 different municipalities of the West Island.

## **Women's Healthy Heart Initiative**

Heart disease is the major cause of death in Canadian women. The Women's Healthy Heart Initiative is the first Nurse-led heart disease prevention clinic for women in Quebec and Canada. Our mission is to increase the awareness of women's risk of heart disease and empower women to improve their heart health. Improving lifestyle choices such as better nutrition, regular physical activity, smoking cessation and weight control are the cornerstone of preventing heart disease and the success of this project. To date, there are 440 women enrolled.

## **Alzheimer Groupe**

Alzheimer Groupe Inc (AGI) is a not for profit organization that arrives to improve the quality of life for individuals and their families living with Alzheimer's disease and related disorders. AGI provides programs and activities for those diagnosed with the disease and training, education and respite for their caregivers. AGI has served the greater Montreal community for 30 years, and has plans to expand its vital services and training programs into the West Island.

## **West Island Women's Shelter**

For the past 35 years, the West Island Women's Shelter has helped women and their children who live in situations of conjugal violence. The Shelter is the only house available to them in the West Island of Montreal. They offer confidential and free support to women and their children that are victims of conjugal violence. They have a 24 hour telephone crisis line and they offer short term shelter, external counselling services, partially subsidized second stage housing and have support groups. They also have prevention and awareness programs.