

For immediate release — Monday, June 24, 2024

University of Lethbridge nursing students help establish a new wellness partnership

University of Lethbridge third-year nursing students helped create a partnership between [Medical Mercy Canada](#) and the [Blood Tribe Department of Health](#) as part of their community health initiative earlier this spring. Medical Mercy Canada provides medical supply donations to various countries worldwide, such as wound-care necessities and medical equipment.

During their community health clinical rotation, the students were placed with the Blood Tribe Department of Health at the Lethbridge Wellness Shelter and Stabilization Unit.

Chloe Crosschild (BN '14, MN '19), assistant professor of nursing and a member of the Kainai Nation (Blood Tribe), encouraged her students to first build relationships with the guests at the wellness shelter. The students gradually got to know the guests and clients, asking about their needs and how they could help fill those needs.



Students placed in the wellness shelter's security section noticed that wound-care supplies were needed so they began searching for ways to procure bandages and gauze. They soon discovered Medical Mercy Canada, a Calgary-based non-religious, non-partisan, registered Canadian charity that provides supplies and

services to people and communities in need, and reached out to Dr. Myron Semkuley, founder of Medical Mercy.

“The students quickly realized that their community health clinical placement was an opportunity to build bridges and create sustainable partnerships between the Lethbridge wellness shelter and community stakeholders,” said Crosschild. “This partnership would

not have happened had the students not taken the leap to call Medical Mercy. They were able to see the long-term benefits of making those connections.”

The students arranged a partnership between the two organizations that will see monthly deliveries of supplies to the wellness shelter. In addition, Semkuley travelled to Lethbridge to meet with the students and Kash Shade (BN '12, MHSM '22), chief operations officer at the Blood Tribe Department of Health, visit the wellness shelter and bring a truckload of supplies like bandages, slippers, hand sanitizer, masks and walkers. The students shared their experiences and how the donations impacted the guests at the wellness shelter.

“I have never met you before, but I am already proud of you,” said Semkuley. “There is nobody better than people who look after people in need.”

Students in the rotation said they gained experience working in community health and learned much from the clients and guests staying at the wellness shelter.

“There is a lot of negative energy towards the wellness shelter, and I think people could have a lot more empathy and compassion if they were to put themselves in the shoes of the guests here,” said nursing student Denby Ettenhofer. “These are not bad people; they are just in bad situations and any one of us could be in the same situation. Knowing people care and are there and want to help makes a huge difference.”

A more detailed story is available [online](#).

This news release can be found online at [wellness partnership](#).

—30—

Contact:

Caroline Zentner, public affairs advisor
University of Lethbridge
403-394-3975 or 403-795-5403 (cell)
caroline.zentner@uleth.ca

Our University’s Blackfoot name is Iniskim, meaning Sacred Buffalo Stone. The University is located in traditional Blackfoot Confederacy territory. We honour the Blackfoot people and their traditional ways of knowing in caring for this land, as well as all Indigenous Peoples who have helped shape and continue to strengthen our University community.