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Country: **Canada**

Titel of the project: **The Driving Wellness Van**

## Project details

### **Kurtis Sisk**

Heart and Stroke Foundation of New Brunswick

Award amount: €100,000

To develop and implement a mobile healthy living education campaign, that will educate citizens in over 30 communities, focusing on four key areas: Nutrition, Physical Activity, Tobacco and Hypertension. By focusing on these four key areas we know we can dramatically reduce the occurrence of heart disease, stroke or atrial fibrillation.

It is estimated that up to 15% of all strokes are due to atrial fibrillation. If we can educate more Canadians about the risk factors for stroke and/or Atrial Fibrillation, we know we can help save many more lives. A Driving Wellness Van, staffed by students pursuing careers in health related fields (i.e. Nursing or Human Nutrition), will tour the province during the 2011 spring/summer. The purpose of the Driving Wellness Van is to promote a healthy lifestyle for individuals, families and communities. Particular focus will be given to nutrition, physical activity, tobacco and hypertension education which we know will help reduce the incidence of heart disease, stroke and atrial fibrillation. The Driving Wellness Van will distribute information to individuals and families using Heart and Stroke Foundation, provincial and community resources. The program will run from May, 2011 through until August 2011. This project will focus on educating individuals and families both in the community and at the workplace. Prior to the May launch these communities and workplaces will be identified to ensure that advertisement of the Driving Wellness Van takes place and people are aware when it will be visiting their community. The Driving Wellness Van will visit community picnics, parades, festivals, staff days, sporting events, concerts and even tourist attraction areas. New Brunswickers will be able to access these dates on the Heart and Stroke Foundation website. We believe that these types of community initiatives are at the heart of not only individual health, but also public health. The Driving Wellness Van will specifically offer heart health risk assessments. The goal of one of the students will be to conduct a quick assessment on participants. Above all we want to offer people the option of having their blood pressure taken. Alarming hypertension statistics, and the fact that hypertension is a major risk factor for atrial fibrillation, has prompted us to encourage individuals to know their blood pressure (CHEP, 2007). This will serve three purposes. First, participants will be given information, in the very least, regarding their blood pressure and lifestyle modification. Second, full health assessments will serve as a strong public education tool and help us gather a grounds level assessment of the needs of New Brunswickers. Third, it will also aid in the evaluation of this program. The Nutrition component and Physical Activity components will be closely related. Interactive games, learning stations and activities will be the focus of these components. Most activities will take place in the canopy tent that will serve as an adjunct to the van. Smoking is the number one cause of preventable death, disability and disease (NBATC). The Driving Wellness Van is a perfect opportunity for us to deliver this message at the community level. This project will work towards educating individuals to recognize the serious consequences of our current health trends. We want people to see that the perceived barriers to taking action are outweighed by the benefits of reducing their chances of having heart disease, stroke or atrial fibrillation.

## **Audience**

### **Type**

- AF Patients
- Healthcare professionals
- Carers of AF Patients
- General public
- Employees
- workplace nurses or wellness champions
- etc

### **Location**

Canada, North America