

*I pledge to... spend a day with
home support/home health.*

*– Michael Marchbank,
President and CEO*



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Written by Diane Wild

Change Day BC pledge brings our CEO into the community

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"I pledge to ... spend a day with home support/home health" – Michael Marchbank, President and Chief Executive Officer, Fraser Health

When **Change Day BC** (<https://changedaybc.ca/>) launched with the goal of encouraging people to commit to an act of change that will improve health care, it gave our CEO the perfect opportunity to play the role of Undercover Boss ... without going undercover.

Well, maybe a little undercover. "The two clients were impressed when Mr. Marchbank introduced himself as the Fraser Health CEO," said Larry Shih, the New Westminster Home Health nurse who was shadowed.

"The following week, I had the opportunity to revisit the same clients. Both shared the same thought: 'Is he *really* the CEO?'"

"They definitely appreciated the fact that someone from the executive team shared an interest in their care and well-being."

"I was very appreciative of them allowing me to join them for the day because sometimes CEOs can get in the way," Michael said. "The clients were only too glad to tell me the value of the services they were getting and the people who were providing the services as well. You could see the really positive interactions between the clients and the staff."

His Change Day pledge came out of a desire to gain a better understanding of the work we do in the community. "I sit here in our corporate office and there is a tendency to be a bit removed from the actual business of what we're doing. Getting out to the various sites and shadowing these two employees brings home to me the value of what we're doing for our patients, clients and residents."

He was struck by how clearly people wanted to stay in their homes as long as possible, and how we can help make that happen. "Larry was assisting the clients he visited with things beyond the direct care he provided," Michael explained. "He was going to be in touch with their physicians, in one case he was going to be speaking with our occupational therapy area to come in and do an assessment on their home to continue to support them. That's important."

Michael's pledge had a profound effect on the people he encountered during his tour, too. "To have the CEO to see what I do on a daily basis was both an intimidating yet exhilarating experience," Larry shared. "I feel valued in my nursing profession because this gave me the chance to show him how I interact with different people, and I was able to show him the problems that people face in the community."

He pointed out that many people aren't aware of home health services at all, or of the breadth of services offered -- including end of life care -- with the aim of keeping clients safe and comfortable at home instead of being admitted to a hospital. Many of us also don't realize how poverty and other social issues can make someone more vulnerable to long hospital stays.

"Home care nurses encounter different people and environments every single day," Larry said. "By showing Mr. Marchbank the homes we visit, he can see how some of the elderly population live and understand why some have prolonged hospital stays due to an unsafe home environment."



Pictured, from left: The New Westminster Home Health team of Cindy Mo RN, Larry Shih RN, Shay-Lee Henderson LPN, and Julie Kudo LPN.

With his pledge, Michael was able to experience the connection between the strategic goals of Fraser Health and the work our home support and home health workers do. "Our overall direction as an organization is to enhance community services, to provide care for our patients, residents and clients in the best setting for them. Given that, it was a terrific opportunity to see first-hand what our people do."

*Change Day BC invites anyone involved in health and social care across the province to commit to an act of change that will improve care for patients or the system we work in. **Pledge online** (<https://changedaybc.ca/pledge/>) or email your pledge to changeday@bcpsqc.ca (<http://mailto:changeday@bcpsqc.ca>).*

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Doug Cochrane

Michael - a inspirational pledge in support of home care. Congratulations - the impact will be felt far and wide

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