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Fraser Health Hackathon brings brilliant minds together

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When Michael Marchbank, Fraser Health's President and CEO, Dr. Victoria Lee, Vice President Population Health and Chief Medical Health Officer, and Philip Barker, Vice President of Planning, Informatics and Analytics, started having conversations about organizing a hackathon, it wasn't long before the name Dr. Daniel Schwartz came up.

The medical director of Fraser Health's renal program, Dr. Schwartz is known for his affinity for technology. He uses innovative technologies in his nephrology practice, has created many online and mobile medical education offerings, knows "enough programming to be dangerous" and has participated in other hackathons. So on January 21-22 he'll be one of the judges at the **Fraser Health Hackathon (https://www.healthhackathon.ca/)**, presented with the City of Surrey, Innovation Boulevard and Simon Fraser University.

The hackathon will see around 80 developers and programmers gather with clinical experts to tackle nine different challenges, including creating tools for:

- the public to navigate the health care system and connect to resources;
- health care leaders to better use data to make decisions;

- health care providers to communicate and collaborate more effectively;
- and a wild card challenge for a great project that defies categorization.

"At these events you see people who have deep technical expertise but the health care system is a mystery to them. They don't understand what we do. And you have people with decades of clinical experience who don't necessarily understand how technologies can help them do their job," said Dr. Schwartz. "If you pair the right people in the right room together, fantastic ideas can come alive."

He has high hopes in combining the creativity and passion of Fraser Health staff with the depth of experience in the Vancouver-area tech community. He points out that many videogame developers or e-commerce programmers are keen to get involved with projects that can make a meaningful difference, such as in health care.

"If you ask them why they don't do it on their own, well, they don't have the health care expertise. So bringing together our folks and the community of talent out there, I think we'll be shocked and amazed to see what comes out of this event."

Dr. Schwartz believes there is great potential to see solutions that could emulate advances in other industries, which could require minimal investment yet reap significant rewards. "We are literally still using pen and paper and fax machines to share information. What I'd love to see is people be inspired by technologies that allow for digital collaboration and bring that to the frontlines of health care. That's a huge opportunity."

He's also hopeful some solutions will focus on data visualization, meaning graphical interfaces that can reveal usable insights from our data.

The Fraser Health Hackathon is more than one intense weekend of collaboration, rapid prototyping and proposing possible solutions. Dr. Schwartz emphasizes Fraser Health's commitment to work with promising projects to see them come to fruition, and to consider the hackathon as part of a culture of innovation in health care.

"This really is not just a two-day event. This is a jumping off point. Partners we discover at events like this we hope will be partners for years to come. We can't do this alone. We need to look outside the boundaries of our organization and look to the talent and passion that lies in our community."

At the Fraser Health Hackathon on January 21-22, Dr. Scwhartz will join fellow speakers and judges Michael Marchbank, Dr. Victoria Lee and Philip Barker as well as Mayor Linda Hepner of the City of Surrey; Peter Payne, President and CEO of Health Tech Innovation Foundation; and Arvinder Kang, co-founder and Chief Technology Officer of CommunityLoqiq. For more information, visit **healthhackathon.ca (https://www.healthhackathon.ca/)**.

THE (9) CHALLENGES

① PATIENT CENTERED

Create a tool that helps the public navigate the health care system.

② DECISION MAKING

Produce systems that reveal usable insights from available data.

③ CLINICIAN COLLABORATION

Develop tools that make workflows more efficient.

④ FRONTLINE ENGAGEMENT

Develop strategies that allow health care providers to communicate and collaborate more effectively.

⑤ SPECIALIST E-SCHEDULING

Create a tool to coordinate referral scheduling in a robust and transparent manner.

⑥ TAKE-HOME NALOXONE

Create an app that provides Naloxone kit users with emergency response support

⑦ OVERDOSE ANALYTICS

⑧ MENTAL HEALTH SUBSTANCE USE

Produce an application that produces a database and visual map of overdoses, including real-time and historical.

Produce an application that connects people to mental health and addictions resources and support.

9 **WILD CARD**

If you have a great idea that can help our health care system, we want to see it!

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