

**Centre for Rural and Northern Health Research (CRaNHR)
Laurentian University**

Health Care Research Seminar Series 2006-2007

Tuesday June 5, 2007

12:00 pm to 1:00 pm

Room 105
Health Sciences Education Resource Centre
Laurentian University

Rural Health Dimensions of Volunteerism

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Specializing in Health Geography, Dr. Mark Skinner's research explores connections between the processes and outcomes of health care restructuring, the contemporary challenges facing the voluntary sector, and the provision of health and social care in the community. Mark's work focuses on rural and small town settings in Canada and internationally, and contributes to several research areas including ageing rural communities, health services research, public policy, rural health and social care, and voluntary sector studies. Prior to his appointment at Trent University, he held a SSHRC Postdoctoral Fellowship and he was awarded a CIHR Strategic Training Fellowship in Health Care, Technology and Place. Mark is currently principal investigator of a 3-year SSHRC-funded project on volunteer caregiving in the countryside (www.trentu.ca/geography) and he is a collaborator on the CIHR New Emerging Team for Health in Rural and Northern British Columbia (<http://nethrnbc.uvic.ca/>). Mark received his PhD in Geography from Queen's University in 2005.

This presentation introduces a research program aimed at understanding the evolving role of volunteerism as it relates to health and social care in rural and small town Canada. The purpose is to scrutinize our growing reliance on non-profit organizations, community groups and volunteers to take on more responsibilities for providing services in light of the distinctive challenges facing rural people and places. A review of key findings from rural Ontario reveals considerable uncertainty surrounding the viability of voluntary sector provisioning, which suggests that downloading, and other changes associated with recent health care restructuring, are exacerbating the uneven ability to cope among rural communities. The underlying argument is that the (un)sustainability of rural voluntary sectors remains a critical challenge for health policy, research and practice. In closing, new directions for developing a better understanding of the rural health dimensions of volunteerism are discussed.

**This free seminar is open to all interested persons
Pay parking available in Lot D**

Call Linda Liboiron-Grenier at 675-1151 ext. 4358 for more information