

Cafeteria “Steps” Up to the Plate Success Story

Peace River Community Health Centre is committed to creating a healthy eating environment not only for those occupying the beds but all who are onsite. Staff and patient’s family members often spend 2 out of 3 meals onsite so the cafeteria becomes a noon-time hub.



The hallways leading to the cafeteria are lined with Healthy Eating Starts Here: Steps to a Healthier You posters, reminding patrons to practice healthy eating habits before they pick up a plate. One poster highlights that how much you eat is as important as what you eat. Putting this into practice, food services has started to offer a smaller dessert paired with a side of fruit instead of the standard 3 inch square piece, satisfying the sweet tooth and cutting calories.

Spinach, garden, and Japanese salads are just a few of the fresh salads available to help meet vegetable intake. Yogurt parfaits with low-fat yogurt, fresh berries, and a topping of crunchy granola are a healthy option for dessert or as a grab-and-go breakfast. Recently the cooks debuted a breakfast special of baked porridge with bananas, blueberries, and pecans. “The bananas added just the right touch of sweetness”, noted Karen Brideau, Health Promotion Facilitator, who came to ask for the recipe. The cooks use the ingredients they have on hand and showcase new recipes as cafeteria specials. There may be worry of sales dropping when offering smaller portion sizes or new recipes but Peace River patrons value having options to help control calorie intake or the chance to try something new. Knowing the kitchen is behind creating a Healthy Eating Environment for all those onsite creates confidence in eating the food provided. All of these efforts have brought us one “Step” closer to healthy eating.

