

## LIFESTYLE

## Parking Costs Parallel Universities Growth

Nathan Gill  
Reporter

Over the next few years, the cost of permits at UPEI is inevitably going up, and it will inevitably make every student who has car keys in their pocket groan. It's an unfortunate side effect to the growth of our university. However, this isn't the only change to the topic of on-campus parking on the horizon, one of the most important is a change to how outstanding tickets are paid. Effective October 16th all ticket payments will be handled through the accounting office in the Kelley Building. Al Veale of UPEI's Security Services gave several reasons for this change.

First, the security office cannot handle debit or credit cards and second it

ensures a more streamlined process. That is, there was a redundancy of information between the two offices. Security Services is also looking to tighten up the ticket payment process by working with the aide of Computer Services to implement a system that will help track ticket holders, ensuring those responsible for the tickets are paying for them.

UPEI Students compete each day for a total of 1334 spaces (1634 including those designated to the CARI Complex). Security Services also states that there are on average at least more than 150 vacant spaces available at any given point during the day. However, due to the growth of the University itself there is obviously greater demand for parking than ever. With further parking expansion being a part of

UPEI's Master Plan Initiative, it comes at a cost. Installing new parking lots runs at approximately \$1500 per space, meaning the cost of parking permits it soon to be on the rise. While Veale did not state how much this price hike would be, he did indicate that it would see a small increase in the cost of parking permits. However, consider a study done by Security Services which revealed that the sale of permits and money from tickets doesn't come close to covering the costs of running the lots. Specifically, \$114,000 was generated from the sale of parking permits. The total cost of maintenance (which includes snow removal, security, repairs, lighting, etc.) is around \$130,000. These numbers combined with the fact that Security Services will be forced to keep up with

growth provides a justifiable reason for any increase to permit prices. As you might suspect, Security Services has done significant research into the topic of on-campus parking by reviewing the situation at our university as well as others. This information will be considered to assess not only what would be beneficial to their department, but also what is fair to students. Currently, our \$80 price tag on permits is around par with other universities in the region (Acadia's permit is also \$80, UNB charges \$100 for a full year), but it's also well below average on a national level. That is to say, at least we don't pay \$537.71 annually like University of Toronto students for spots on their "outer lot".

## Talk about Taboo

Jaime Constable  
Reporter

When Mary found out she had a sexually transmitted infection (STI) four years ago, it was one of the most devastating moments in her life.

Mary, not her real name, is an average student at UPEI who had no idea she was going to be infected with the disease.

"I remember feeling really ashamed, like somehow I was dirty, even though it was my boyfriend who'd slept around, not me," said Mary, "He just got drunk one night and slept with this other girl, and that was that."

Being confronted with having a disease can be psychologically crippling. Anyone suffering an illness has to develop coping strategies for the physical and emotional issues raised.

"I was told I had HPV, which is the human papillomavirus," said Mary. "I didn't know anything about it at the time, and I was so afraid of the things I could imagine it was, and what it would do to me."

Many STI's have unpleasant symptoms, and can cause complications down the road. While Mary hasn't had any physical signs of the disease for almost three years,

she's aware that the virus is still there, just dormant.

"I try not to worry about it too much, but I've heard that HPV can sometimes cause cervical cancer. I go for PAP tests to make sure things are ok," said Mary.

Although there was a time when she thought she'd never be in a relationship again, Mary has been seeing someone for a while, having cleared the hurdle of explaining to him that she has HPV.

"Telling my new boyfriend that I might have an STI was one of the hardest things I've had to do. I was really afraid he'd break up with me when he found out," said Mary, "but he didn't, he was actually really supportive and said that we would work through it together."

Things don't always go this smoothly though, and there continues to be a lot of stigma around any issues related to sex and STI's. Dealing with it is a process.

"I wouldn't wish this on anyone, it's been really hard, and though for the most part I've come to terms with things, I still feel like people around me would judge me if they knew.



Only a couple of my friends know," said Mary.

Mary is not alone; according to Health Canada, "It is estimated that 75 percent of Canadians will have at least one HPV infection in their lifetime." On a more positive note, there is a new vaccine that can be administered to young adults that protects against several forms of the virus. Even those already infected can get the vaccine to avoid contracting other strains.

It is important to think about any disease objectively. "One thing I've learned is that there are some things you can't change. If you have an STI you have to stay positive and realize that your life isn't over, you just have to deal with this. Lots of people live with diabetes, and asthma," said Mary.

The most important message that Mary wanted to get across to UPEI students was that well-used word, prevention, or better yet, protection. Starting in grade school, students are lectured about the importance of safe sex but that message doesn't always get through.

"It is so easy to be safe, and this small effort can save a lot of grief down the road. Plain and simple, use a condom every time. People don't always know they are infected, and even scarier, sometimes they don't care," said Mary.

If you have questions or concerns regarding sexually transmitted infections there are many resources such as the UPEI Health Centre, or your local medical clinic.