



# What does a clinic look like?



## *You have signed up and are ready...what comes next?*

The **Clinic Coordinator (CC)** (the CMG who facilitates the specific clinic) will reach out to you by email or phone the week before to coordinate who is bringing what resources and who is picking up the VIMGA Clinic Kit. The following takes you through some of the steps, but know that the CC will support you throughout.

## **What do I bring?**

- lunch
- water
- gardening references
- iPad or phone for researching
- clothing for the weather

## **What do I do at the start?**

- arrive early
- assist the Clinic Coordinator with the set up, e.g., table cloth and VIMGA materials, banner, sandwich board



**Clinics may be inside or outside**

## **What do I do when the public comes up to the table?**

- be friendly and open
- give the public time to explain their questions
- take your time to thoroughly understand the problem by asking question to provide clarity
- ask MG colleagues for their ideas (you are not alone)
- if warranted, ask the client to forward pictures of the plant

Depending upon the problem ask questions about

- location
- lighting/ sun/shade
- irrigation
- soil type
- symptoms

*Refer to the example conversation on the back page.*

Throughout the clinic the CC will document questions asked by the public and assign any questions that need follow-up to one of the interns.

## **What happens when the clinic is finished?**

When the clinic is finished, the members pack up the clinic materials, and the CC thanks the venue organizer. The CC later enters all information into the Clinic Report on the VIMGA website, e.g., client questions, member's Clinic Advice Hours.



## VIMGA clinic cont.



Following is an example:

**CLIENT** My flowering cherries are looking very distressed. There seems to be some kind of black swelling on some of the branches. Do you know what this could be and what I could do to help the situation?

**INTERN and/or CMG** Let's start by diagnosing the problem. We'll try to narrow down the possibilities. Do you have any photos of that black swelling you mentioned?

**CLIENT** Yes, I took a couple of photos.

These are very helpful. For insects and diseases, I like to refer to Linda Gilkeson's book and website. Have you heard of her?

I don't think so.

**INTERN and/or CMG** Linda lives on Salt Spring Island and is an expert on plant pests and diseases. She wrote a book on natural control of insects, weeds and disease specific to West Coast gardening. She also was the instructor for plant diseases and pests in our Master Gardener course. One of the things we learned is that many diseases are plant family specific. So let's see what diseases affect cherries.

**CLIENT** Oh, I see. So it could be brown rot, black knot or a bacterial canker.

**INTERN and/or CMG** Right. So let's compare your photos to hers. And it looks like it is a fungal disease called black knot which is prevalent in wet weather (usually warmer than 13 degrees C.) and spreads through spores.

**CLIENT** Well that is part of the puzzle solved. What can I do to get rid of it?

**INTERN and/or CMG** This is the great thing about Linda's book. She says pruning out the knots, 4 inches back into healthy wood should control it. You could also check for any knots in nearby trees and eliminate them. Try to cut out the knots before the buds on the tree leaf out to reduce the chance of the spores spreading the fungus. And don't forget to clean your secateurs between cuts.

**CLIENT** What should I do with the cuttings?

**INTERN and/or CMG** It is best to burn or bury them or put them in your garbage to eliminate the chance of re-infection.

The above demonstrates the importance of asking questions for clarification and having resources with pictures. If you are unsure ask the CC. You can also mention to the client that if there are further questions to please reach out to the Garden Advice Line (GAL) found on the VIMGA website (or give the client the Milner business card with the GAL email on it.)