

CANADIAN MENTAL HEALTH ASSOCIATION

Winnipeg / Manitoba News

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Conversation Starters

“Chances are you or some of your coworkers will experience a mental health problem at some point,” says Stacey Krueger, CMHA-Winnipeg’s Community Educator, citing the well-known statistic that 1 in 5 Canadians will experience a mental health concern during the course of a given year. That translates to about 500,000 Canadians missing work on any given week because of mental illness says the Mental Health Commission of Canada.

CMHA-Winnipeg has been delivering a greater number of workshops on mental health in workplaces throughout the City.

This increase signals a growing awareness about the importance of positive mental health and what workplaces can do to support employees who may be experiencing mental health distress. How to start the conversation is a frequent question Krueger is asked by employees.

Employers and employees talk workplace mental health

“A coworker’s behavior may change or they may not be contributing or performing as usual,” explains Krueger, “What I teach is that instead of ignoring it, we can reach out to the individual and know ahead of time what resources we might need to do so.”

Employers are joining the conversation, too. The Mental Health Commission of Canada (MHCC) estimates that mental illness is costing the Canadian economy about \$51 billion every year. Employers have noticed. Both the MHCC and the CMHA have developed tools or workshops aimed at helping employers understand workplace mental health.

“Employers are increasingly interested in talking about mental health,” says Krueger, “They have social and economic interests for making their workplace psychologically healthy.”

Mental Health Works, the CMHA training program developed by CMHA-Ontario, defines a psychologically healthy work environment as a place that supports employee engagement, worker health and well-being. Having a psychologically healthy workplace can positively affect recruitment and retention, increase productivity and decrease the number of sick days.

Putting policies in place to support workplace mental health is considered a new best practice form of risk management point

Talk about Bell Let’s Talk Day



Above, Kieran Moolchan, student at Red River College talks about using his personal experience with mental illness to raise awareness about stigma with CTV Morning Live host, Rachel Legacé (foreground). CMHA Winnipeg / Manitoba organized a lineup of speakers for a live broadcast on Bell Let’s Talk Day (January 28), a national campaign to raise awareness about mental health.

of view as well as a part of corporate social responsibility. In 2013, the MHCC released a *National Standard of Canada for Psychological Health and Safety in the Workplace*, an action guide for employers to develop strategies that they can customize to their workplace. The guide and related tools allow employees and employers to respond to the needs of their workplace based on the nature of their workplaces or workplace size.

For Krueger, being able to talk about mental health in the workplace is often an important first step. “We don’t need to be mental health experts but recognizing when someone is struggling and asking someone how they are can make a difference.”

CMHA-Winnipeg’s Community Education Service assists workplaces to understand mental health and mental illness, support employees in proactive ways, and create mentally healthier workplaces. Contact the Winnipeg office for more information.

ONLINE RESOURCES FOR WORKPLACE MENTAL HEALTH

Mental Health Commission of Canada
www.mentalhealthcommission.ca/English/issues/workplace

The site includes employer and employee resources, including a webinar series on increasing workplace wellness.

Mental Health Works www.mentalhealthworks.ca

The site includes an overview of how and why workplace mental health matters from legal, business, social and health perspectives.



From the Desk

of the Executive Director

I am thrilled to have joined the team at CMHA Winnipeg / Manitoba. It has been an exciting few weeks of getting to know staff and volunteers, and meeting with various funders and our community partners. So much has changed since I worked at CMHA-Winnipeg region in 1999.

The organization has more than doubled in size. Today, we reach more Manitobans than ever before through diverse recovery and rehabilitation services, unique supports for families and youth, and a broad range of community education and capacity-building ventures.

These days we hear a lot about fiscal restraint in health and social services with little hope of new funding streams. Although this brings significant challenge for a non-profit organization such as ours, it can also bring great opportunity for CMHA. As the need for mental health support grows, across the province innovative solutions will be required to address needs around mental illness and promoting and protecting mental health. I look forward to working with each of the regional branches to generate and advocate for community-based solutions that are cost effective and evidence based.

At CMHA Winnipeg / Manitoba, 2015 holds great promise and a lot of hard work ahead. I would like to highlight a couple of exciting opportunities, including the preliminary work being done to move forward on a Manitoba demonstration project of *Bounce Back: Reclaim Your Health*, a supported self-

management program for individuals with mild to moderate depression and / or anxiety and stress. The program originates out of CMHA-BC Division and we are pleased to be moving forward with a pilot. Another area of development is our mental health

promotion work in schools. We continue to deliver the MILE 5 program and are excited about promising results of the evaluation to be released by the Mental Health Commission in the next couple of months. I believe CMHA has a role to play in an expanded school-based mental health promotion initiative.

At CMHA we have always strived to deliver services that are recovery-oriented and grounded in the principles of hope and person-centeredness. We are a member of the Provincial Recovery Champions Committee and are excited about the commitment of the Provincial Government to advance the agenda of a recovery-oriented mental health system. CMHA Winnipeg / Manitoba recently received funding from Manitoba Health to hire a Recovery Coordinator who will work closely with the Recovery Champions Committee, the Mental

Health and Spiritual Health Care Branch and other stakeholders to advance this work. We are excited to be a part of this vital initiative.

I look forward to hearing from CMHA staff, volunteers and our broader community on how we can advance our collective vision of "mental health for all." Please feel free to contact me at mcooper@cmhawpg.mb.ca.

— Marion Cooper



BE MIND FULL

CHAMPIONS FOR POSITIVE MENTAL HEALTH SINCE 1918

In November, CMHA - National released our new slogan: **BE MIND FULL**. The slogan is a call to action that we all must be mindful and compassionate towards others and what they may be going through. It places focus on both the importance of the mind as a part of an individual's overall health and the fullness or wholeness of one's mind.

THANK YOU to the 37 vendors who took part in the Holiday Sale, a fundraiser for the United Way held on December 4 at CMHA - Winnipeg. The event raised \$850.

The United Way supports over 100 agencies in Winnipeg, including CMHA - Winnipeg.

STAFF NEWS

CMHA - Winnipeg welcomes Dale Pike, Skills Coach in our Parent Wellness Initiative.

CMHA - Parkland welcomes Teresa Roberts to the role of Self-Help Facilitator in The Pas Branch, and Lori Parker, Public Relations / Self-Help Facilitator, Swan Valley Branch.

Thanks and appreciation to students who completed their practicums at CMHA - Winnipeg:

- Vanessa Barrientos (Red River College, Nursing)
- Ashley Braun (Red River College, Nursing)
- Corrinne Coutts (Red River College, Counselling)
- Meghan Franklin (Red River College, Communications)
- Filip Podkanski (Red River College, Child and Youth Care)
- Nikolina Simunic (Red River College, Nursing)



A Most Fascinating Recovery Journey

Volunteer Ryan Dion on Peer Support, Recovery and Recognition

Ryan Dion laughs when asked “How does it feel to be one of Manitoba’s ‘Most Fascinating’?” In late December, Dion was included on local radio personality Ace Burpee’s annual list, published in the *Winnipeg Metro* on December 12, 2014.

This follows other high-profile recognition Dion received for his work starting the peer-support group Action-in-Recovery at CMHA-Winnipeg just over a year ago, including being awarded the Manitoba Liquor & Lotteries Volunteer IMPACT Award at CMHA-Winnipeg’s Heroes of Mental Health Awards in October.

“I’m humbled in thinking about it,” says Dion.

The idea of starting a peer group was inspired by the Wellness Recovery Action Plan (WRAP), which Dion was introduced to as a participant in CMHA’s Recovery Workshops. In the workshops, Dion learned skills that support wellness and what Dion calls daily maintenance strategies.

“It is easy to come in, take a course, learn the material and go back to your stressful life and forget it all,” Dion explains. The peer group is there as a place to review how members are using tools or strategies in their daily life. The group meets once a week and has expanded to include social activities like bowling and coffee.

Coordinating the group has enhanced his own journey of recovery as well as tested its limits. Peer support is not therapy, says Dion, even though having a place to “get things off one’s chest” is an important part of why peer support matters.

“A lot of people don’t have access to therapy and of course it is a place to talk,” Dion says. What makes the Action-in-Recovery group distinct from therapy though is its focus on the strategies and tools taught in CMHA’s recovery workshops.

Dion cites staying on task, engaging in self-care, and not being triggered by other member’s challenges as some of what he’s learned.



Ryan Dion coordinates the Action-in-Recovery Peer Support group.

“You have to be at a certain stage of recovery [to contribute to and take away from peer support],” muses Dion.

Dion says he values hearing how others have dealt with challenges he hasn’t faced. “The gains have been well-worth any challenges,” says Dion.

“I locked myself away for a couple of years when I was going through some bad depression,” he says. But being involved in a peer support group has meant he shares in the success of his peers, and they do the same. “I have a toolkit now,” he says, “I’m going to school and getting back on the right track.”

Plus, being named one of Manitoba’s Most Fascinating gives friends an opportunity for a good natured tease. With a light-mocking voice, he says more than one invite during the holiday season referenced his public recognition: “*Oh, as Manitoba’s 60th Most Fascinating person, we’d love to have you for New Years’ Eve’...that kind of thing,*” Dion says with a smile.

Community Education Courses at CMHA - Winnipeg

Mental Health Education for Families

\$20 members; \$25 non-members 6 weeks: Wednesdays, April 20, 2015 to June 1, 2015, 5:45 PM to 7:45 PM

Mental Health First Aid Basic

\$99 members; \$125 non-members 2 days: May 26 and 27, 2015, 9:00 AM to 4:00 PM

Mental Health First Aid for Adults Who Interact with Youth

\$99 members; \$125 non-members 2 days: April 21 and 22, 2015, 9:00 AM to 4:00 PM

NUTRITION

An Ingredient for Good Mental Health

“It can be difficult to eat a healthy diet,” says CMHA-Winnipeg’s Deborah Hargreaves, “especially if you experience depressive symptoms. Many people with depression skip meals or eat diets that are full of carbohydrates and low in nutritional value.”

In other words, it’s easy to eat junk food when getting through a day is struggle enough. Recent evidence suggests that good nutrition is important for mental health. And, a number of mental health conditions may be influenced by one’s diet.

“Proper nutrition is likely to keep you feeling better physically and emotionally,” says Hargreaves.

Hargreaves says she was initially surprised by the mental health connection to nutrition and good eating when she started researching the topic for what would become a recovery workshop titled “Livin’ Better – A Wellness Program.” The workshop was designed to give general nutrition and physical activity information to individuals with mental health concerns.

“Missing meals, especially breakfast, leads to low blood

sugar and this can cause low mood, irritability and fatigue,” Hargreaves explains.

One challenge for people experiencing low energy is just that – low energy can mean having no energy to cook. Hargreaves suggests keeping staples such as rice, crushed tomatoes or canned beans in your pantry. “That way, when you do have energy, you have the main ingredients on hand.”

For those wanting to jump-start healthy eating, Hargreaves suggests finding recipes with a limited number of ingredients or recipes that can be made in 20 minutes. Another idea is to freeze batches of healthy food so nutritious eats are on hand.

“Eating healthy as a strategy for good mental health can seem daunting at first,” says Hargreaves. “But there are many ways to eat healthier. The trick is to find the ones that work for you.”

CMHA - Winnipeg’s Recovery Workshops are part of the Rehabilitation and Recovery Services. To find out more about the workshops, participants can sign up for the Exploring the Journey of Recovery workshop offered throughout the year.

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SEEKING BALANCE?

Cultivate life-long tools with Mindfulness Based Stress Reduction

5 Day Intensive Retreat

Retreat: 8:30 AM on April 27 – 2:00 PM May 1, 2015
St. Benedict’s Retreat and Conference Centre

9 Day Teacher Training Practicum

5 Day Retreat as above plus 4 Day Teacher Training Practicum: May 2 – May 5, 2015
8:30 AM to 6:00 PM, CMHA Winnipeg

To register for the retreat or apply for the teacher practicum, visit our website: winnipeg.cmha.ca



Sign up to receive our newsletter electronically

Go to our website (Winnipeg.cmha.ca) or send an email to office@cmhawpg.mb.ca with the subject line “Newsletter sign-up”.

Sign up before March 31 to be entered to win a CMHA toque and water bottle.

EmployABILITY Lunch and Learn

Three lunch and learns for service providers assisting people with employment goals started February 12 at CMHA -Winnipeg, with a second lunch planned for March 17 on innovative strategies to assist people with disabilities to find employment. Registration is required and lunch is provided. Cost is \$9.50. Watch our website and twitter feeds for upcoming sessions and registration deadlines.

Support CMHA

Your gift to mental health :

- \$10 \$25 \$50
 \$100 \$200 \$_____

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Address _____

City / Prov _____ Postal Code _____

Please charge my gift to my credit card

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Winnipeg / Manitoba
930 Portage Avenue
Winnipeg, MB R3G 0P8



BE MIND FULL
CHAMPIONS FOR POSITIVE MENTAL HEALTH SINCE 1918

Want a NEW Challenge?

Join Our Board of Directors

The **Canadian Mental Health Association (CMHA), Winnipeg / Manitoba** is part of a nation-wide charitable organization supporting mental health and promoting the resilience and recovery of people with mental illness. CMHA Manitoba / Winnipeg is currently seeking new directors for its Board of Directors.

CMHA Winnipeg / Manitoba strives to have a Board that represents our community. Currently we are recruiting for various backgrounds. Persons of cultural diversity with a focus on newcomers and refugees, and persons with disabilities (inclusive of mental health issues) are encouraged to apply and self-identify in their covering letter.

**CVs and letters of interest can be provided in person, by mail, or email to
(office@cmhawpg.mb.ca) by 4:30 p.m. on March 9, 2015.**

Only potential candidates will be contacted.