



January/February 2010

The Rights Stuff

Mental Health Rights Coalition

Our Mission: To encourage, enable and empower the voice and participation of consumers in the mental health system in Hamilton.

**Drop In and
Peer Support**

Hours:

11a.m- 4p.m,

Mon - Fri

A Glimpse of Surviving

By Tina Mulholland



Over the past two months it has been our great pleasure to host a student intern, Tina Mulholland, as she finished up placement requirements for the Personal Service Worker Program at tioOS College. Tina has been a wonderful

addition to our daily life at MHRC and has given us the gift of her time and her laughter. While Tina was here we made an effort to expand her horizons in Mental Health and she was eager to take part in many events in the community. Here is Tina's reaction to her trip on the Walk About to city shelters.

Early in December I participated in a "Walk About" organized by the Good Shepherd and designed to acquaint local community workers with the services of several of the shelters in the city. The Walk About was a guided tour of the shelters located in the downtown Hamilton core. They included the Good Shepherd, Salvation Army, Notre Dame House, Mission Services. There was also a verbal presentation about Mary's Place.

The tour was guided by Tom Rouse, director of the Wesley Centre, and Lori Matwy-chuk of Mary's Place. We had a group of approximately twenty which included social workers, case managers and students working in the mental health field.

The tour began at the Salvation Army, a shelter for men located on York Blvd. We were met by the program director and escorted through the inner workings of the facility. We were given a chance to see a reality unseen by many. These shelters provided a safe place for the homeless, the near homeless, people living with addictions, and people escaping abuse. Many are people living with concurrent disorders.

We proceeded to visit Mission Services, a shelter located on James St. N, then to Notre Dame House, a shelter for youth, located on Cannon St., the Good Shepherd, a men's shelter located on Mary St., and the Wesley Centre located

"...one thing I noticed the most, was the dedication and kindness of those who worked and volunteered at the shelters. "

on Ferguson. Lori of Mary's Place, a shelter for abused women, spoke to us how their shelter works.

All of the shelters offer the same thing - food, shelter and hope. The shelters provide help with obtaining medical care, finding affordable housing, assistance getting financial support, and counselling for those in distress.

As we were guided through each facility the one thing I noticed the most, was the dedi-

cation and kindness of those who worked and volunteered at the shelters. Each day they are face to face with the reality of a world that most do not, or choose not, to see, the part of society which struggles each and every day to survive. The workers and volunteers do their job without judgment, and without discrimination. They work with acceptance, and human kindness. It is because of this work ethic that people can have hope. Hope without action is delusional. All of the workers and volunteers take action, each and everyday. I felt privileged to take part in the Walk About, and strongly encourage everyone to sign up for the next one. It was a wonderful experience.

Mark your Calendar—Of Note in our calendars are speakers about Self Abuse and Registered Disability Savings.

Scope Award Recipients 2009

In the list last month we missed a name
Margie Goold
also received a SCOPE award.

If you prefer to receive an email copy of this newsletter please notify the editor. mhrcprograms@bellnet.ca

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**MENTAL
HEALTH
RIGHTS
COALITION**

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Google Map

<http://maps.google.ca/maps?hl=en&q=20+Jackson+St.+W.+Hamilton+file=UTF8&ll=43.254609,-79.870522&spn=0.005017,0.009602&z=17>

*Our Mission is to
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mental health system*



Executive Director: **Frances Jewell** mhrced@bellnet.ca

As I sit down to write for the newsletter Christmas is still a week away.

We have already experienced a number of bitterly cold days with wind chill factors of -13 and winter is most definitely in the air.

January will arrive with the usual fanfare; a promise to improve finances, health, relationships and create a more positive outlook on life. This year will be no different for me. I will resolve to eat healthier foods, exercise daily, (I walk most days.) and take better care of my skin.

But this year I've got an extra bonus. Through Steps to Health, I will have access to the YMCA, a walking program and even Wii Fit for those

days when it is just too darn cold to get outside. Good Shepherd spear-headed Steps to Health about a year ago and has now received permanent funding to further promote fitness and well being. The program is open to all people with lived experience of mental illness. I hear if I show up for ten consecutive mall walks I will be rewarded with a new pair of running shoes... Free!

I'll let you know how it goes.

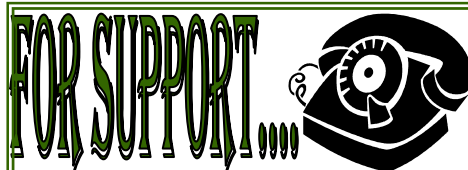
There have been many changes here at MHRC over the past year. We have moved twice since April. Our last move landed us here at 20 Jackson Street West. I can see St Paul's Presbyterian Church and Cottage Studio from my window. We are situated in one of the oldest areas of Hamilton and we love it. MHRC is

where it needs to be.

Thank you to all of our members, Board of Directors, staff and supporters. MHRC is where it needs to be because of you.

I would like to take this moment to wish each and every one of you a joyous holiday season.

Peace on Earth and Peace to you.



Give Us A Call! A Peer Support Worker is available

Monday to Friday, 11a.m.-4p.m.

905-545-2525

Matches Available

Any consumer looking for on-going peer support by a trained volunteer is encouraged to call the Program Manager at

905-545-2525.



Program Coordinator **Peggy Guiler-Delahunt** mhrprograms@bellnet.ca

Busy is hardly an adequate word for my work life over the past

year. Two moves certainly made life interesting. To complicate it I had a personal move too but now life has settled down and routines are beginning to emerge both at work and at home.

Over the year I have had the privilege of offering several training sessions. We had our own Peer Support Training in January/February/March and another in June. Voices of Experience Training happened over three days in December and was quite successful.

Along with our in house training we also offered training to two other groups. Niagara Consumer Survivors Initiative hosted a training over five weeks in November and December and we once

again offered a portion of the training for the Peer to Peer Mentoring Program.

We have noted that those who are coming to MHRC are staying longer so our actual hours of service are up. I think that speaks well of the security and friendship which consumers find when they come here. It is a safe place to be.

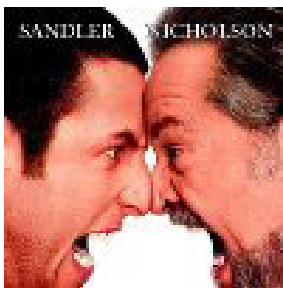
Now that moving is out of the way we can begin to concentrate on other areas of development. It is going to be fun to see where we go from here. There are interesting partnerships and projects in the development stage.

To increase our visibility in the area we have been making an effort to connect with other agencies and our staff have even found themselves in Gore Park handing out brochures and offering free coffee to prospective members.

I am very pleased with the growing number of enthusiastic volunteers and very happy that after much work and waiting we are beginning to put them to work on one to one matches with people recommended from other agencies.

The steps never seem fast enough but in retrospect they are usually just the right speed.

Best wishes to you all in 2010. Go for the gold.



Anger Management Course

For men and women

While Adam Sandler and Jack Nicholson

had some fun with their 2003 Movie called *Anger Management*, the truth is that Anger management is not much fun for those who live with the issue or for those who live them.

One of our members recently attended the program described below, which is offered by the Urban Cord Community Health Centre.

The participant said this about the program: **"The course was well managed. The instructor drew from us quite a bit, our personal experiences with anger. He taught us the steps of anger, and try to look long term at the issues that make us angry. For example a friend had agreed to take care of my dog but took him to the SPCA. I was angry but he was such a cute dog I'm sure he now has a good home with a backyard. That's the long view."**

By Maceij Kowalski , Hamilton Urban Core Community Health Centre

Hamilton Urban Core Community Health Centre is a thriving 13 year old inner city health centre and a leader in the provision

of high-quality primary health services and programs in more than 15 languages.

The Centre's client population is among the most marginalized and vulnerable in the inner city of Hamilton and their specific health and social needs are often overlooked. Clients include those who are homeless or at risk of being homeless, immigrants and refugees, individuals and families with low or no income, persons living with mental illness or mental health issues, isolated seniors and street involved youth.

The Centre offers over 20 unique programs and services with one of the longest running programs being the Anger Management Program for Men. In its 11th year, this program provides men with information, techniques and strategies for dealing effectively and appropriately with anger, which in turn, improves the overall health and quality of life of the men enrolled in the program and those impacted by them.

The program is laid out as a series of interactive workshops held once a week for ten weeks. Each session is approximately two hours long and works through such key strategies as identifying anger triggers, problem solving, and portraying real life scenarios through attendee role playing. The men are encouraged to be present at every session and actively and honestly participate in order to experience the maximum benefit.

Upon successful completion of Anger Management for Men, a graduation ceremony is held and participants receive a Certificate of

Graduation. Many men have reported that this certificate is the first one they have ever received.

The target population for the program is men between ages of 18-65, who are single with low or no income. Participants in the program are comprised of self-directed individuals who enroll voluntarily along with those who are requested to attend an anger management program by their health provider or mandated to attend by the courts. Many times, enrollment and successful completion of this program fulfills a requirement of bail or assists in the facilitation of child custody / visitation issues.

Following the long-running success of the Anger Management Program for Men, in 2000, the Centre developed the Women's Approach to Anger Management. This program is a series of eight interactive two hour sessions hosted once a week. In a group setting women learn how to recognize and implement effective steps for appropriate decision making, to identify and select short term coping strategies and to develop a long term plan for managing anger throughout their lifespan.

Hamilton Urban Core Community Health Centre

71 Rebecca Street

Hamilton Ontario

L8R 1B6

The Poor—Who Are They?

From the Canadian Mental Health Newsletter December 10, 2009.

The index was developed the the Daily Bread Food Bank, the Calendon Institute of Social Policy and Statistics Canada. If you can't afford two of the items you are considered poor.

According to the index 12.5 percent of Ontarians are living in poverty. Here's what's included:

- Do you eat fresh fruits and vegetables every day?
- Are you able to get dental care if needed?
- Do you eat meat, fish or a vegetarian equivalent at least every other day?
- Are you able to replace or repair broken or damaged appliances such as a vacuum or a toaster?
- Do you have appropriate clothes for job interviews?

- Are you able to get around your community, either by having a car or by taking the bus or an equivalent mode of transportation?
- Are you able to have friends or family over for a meal at least once a month?
- Is your house or apartment free of pests, such as cockroaches?
- Are you able to buy some small gifts for family or friends at least once a year?
- Do you have a hobby or leisure activity?

For more information see "Ontario Deprivation Index," December 2, 2009 at www.news.ontario.ca

Bring Change to Mind—A Ron Howard & Glen Close Film

For a wonderful take on the stigma of mental health, several personal clips from those who are affected by mental illness and other information take a look at Ron Howard's film. The film features Glen Close and members of her family affected by mental illness. <http://www.bringchange2mind.org>

Peer Support In the ER

By: Amanda Carey

There are two main issues facing consumers using the emergency room (ER) to access mental health services. According to Theresa Claxton, as quoted in *Network*, the number one barrier to accessing care is attitudinal. She says, "Instead of ER being a safe haven and a gateway to a cure, consumers were treated as unwanted burdens." ¹ The second issue is that of treatment, with long wait times being the norm. "People with mental health issues don't have a good time in emergency rooms. They are treated inequitably and have inordinately longer wait times." ¹ In the current system patients with mental health concerns must first see an ER physician, even if there is no physical concern. Patients wait for hours before even being sent to see a psychiatrist, and then they may again wait longer still.

As peer support workers we can fill a gap in services. Peer support workers could provide direct support to patients who are waiting to see a doctor, potentially reducing the level crisis. With training in crisis intervention, peer supporters could also provide support which might prevent or relieve symptom escalation which often occurs as the wait time goes on. They use their experience, training and internal resources.

Another key role that peer support workers could fill is that of advocate, standing up for patient rights and needs that the patient themselves may be uncomfortable expressing on their own.

Peer supporters could provide a unique insight while remaining sufficiently detached from the situation to provide an objective view to both the patient and the doctors.

Having been to the ER as a peer support worker, I can tell you that this I believe to be true. There are pilot programs taking place (such as Waterloo, and the Central LHIN) and this is the future I see for peer support and mental health emergency services.

¹ Lahey, Pam. "Here's Your Hat, What's Your Hurry? – When Mental Illness Visits the ER) *Network* Fall 2009. http://www.ontario.cmha.ca/network_story.asp?cID=348698

STEPS TO HEALTH

Wellness & lifestyle change program for persons living with mental illness

People with mental health issues can be at higher risk of chronic health problems (like diabetes, heart and cholesterol)

Getting active and changing what you eat can improve your health and prevent medical problems.

Steps to Health provides:

Walking groups, Nutrition group, Yoga and Dance Fit, Cooking group, Gym membership. Adventure and sports activities (canoeing, archery, wall-climbing, laser tag, golf, floor hockey, baseball, bicycling, skating) Breathe Easier group (for people who want to cut down on smoking)

It's FREE and has lots of benefits:

Bus tickets available for participants.

How Do I get started?

We will help you to look at some measures of your health before you start and with your permission, will ask your doctor to work with you and Steps to Health on improving your health.

To Find out More or Arrange an Appointment

Call Sarah Stevens, Steps to Health Facilitator at
905-528-3655, extension 229



Support Group

**This Consumer
Group meets twice a
month to talk about
things of interest.**

**All consumers of Mental
Health and Addictions
are welcome
1st and 3rd
Tuesday
of each month**

11-12

**Facilitator:
Jennifer Armstrong**

The Rights Stuff

Published every other month

by

Mental Health Rights Coalition

Editorial Policy

The Rights Stuff is published every other month by the Mental Health Rights Coalition. Our purpose is to inform our membership and other interested partners in mental health and the community about issues and events which may be of interest. Included is a calendar of events for the upcoming month at MHRC.

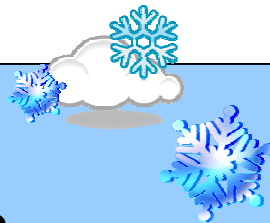
The Rights Stuff is available to our members via mail and to others as requested via email and our web site at: www.mentalhealthrights.ca

The Rights Stuff welcomes submissions & letters of 250 words or less. Be advised that MHRC reserves the right to edit and/ or decline publication of any submissions.

Deadline for submissions is the 15th of the month previous to publication.











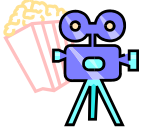



























Printing dates are September 1, November 1, December 23, March 1, May 1 and July 1.

Views and opinions expressed in this newsletter represent those of individual contributors, and not necessarily of The Mental Health Rights Coalition.



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February 2010

S	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	S
	1	2	3	4	5	6
	Cribbage 	11 Support Group  Movies 	Walk About 	Book Trade 	Cards 	
7	8	9	10	11	12 	13 
	Backgammon 	Members Meeting 	Movies 	1 Coffee Walk 	Mental Health Olympics— A discussion about the gold we have won 	
14	15 	16 	17 	18 	19 	20
	Movies 	11 Support Group  Speaker—SAFE— Self Abuse Finally Ends	Bingo 	Skip Bo 	Yatzee 	
21 	22 	23 	24 	25 	26 	27
	Air Hockey 	Crafts 	Current Events 	Birthday Party 	Crazy Eights  crazy 8 Countdown	
28	<p>Activities begin at 1 p.m. unless otherwise stated</p> <p>Walking/Exercise activities are dependant upon weather. Please wear appropriate shoes and clothing.</p> <p>The 2010 Winter Games begin February 12 and run through the 28th They are a great way to entertain ourselves on cold winter days but don't neglect your own healthy activities. Check out what is happening with Steps to Health. Get out and about a little. Breathe some fresh air and expose yourself to the winter sun. Steps to Health Activities are posted at MHRC</p>					