



# November / December 2009

## 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



### Canada Wide Anti-Discrimination Program for Mental Health

The eradication of discrimination surrounding mental illness took another step forward at the launch of "Open Minds", in Calgary on October 2, 2009. Honourable Michael Kirby, Chair of the Mental Health Commission of Canada introduced the Commission's 10 year Anti-stigma /Anti-discrimination program saying it is "aimed at changing the attitudes and behaviours of Canadians towards mental illness.

In a press release the Commission states Opening Minds is the largest systematic effort in Cana-

*(Continued on page 4)*

### Voices of Experience Training in December

A three day training (18 hour) for those who would like to volunteer on a board of directors or committee of a social service agencies, will be held December 2, 3 and 4 at Mental Health Rights Coalition. This course is particularly appropriate for those who believe they have something to add to an organization but are hesitant to join boards because of their lack of understanding and experience of the functions and operation of a board.

The three day training offers instruction in the basics of board structure, roles, and responsibilities along with discussion about legal issues facing board members, and meeting procedure.

Designed with the "consumer voice" in mind, this course offers discussion about how to bring that voice to a board table.

Mock meetings with rotating roles are also included in the training.

After training the Voices of Experience Board is available to assist trainees as they seek out positions on boards and offers

*(Continued on page 5)*



### Pandemic Panic

Senior staff at MHRC have spent many hours over the past month making plans and preparations for the possibility of a flu pandemic. Steps have been taken to help ensure the safety of staff and members in the case of a public crisis. In all the research and planning, the most important things staff can offer to the MHRC members is encouragement to maintain your health and a healthy attitude about this situation.

In the hours spent on the telephone updating member information for the planning MHRC staff found some people who were confused about whether or not to get the flu shot, and members who were both overly

*(Continued on page 6)*

### Open House

*Mental Health Rights Coalition  
Invites you to join us in the  
celebration of our new*

*location*

*Friday, November  
27, 1 to 4 pm.*



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Google Map

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

*Our Mission is to  
encourage, enable, and  
empower the voice and  
participation of  
consumer/survivors in the  
mental health system*



## Executive Director: Frances Jewell [mhrced@bellnet.ca](mailto:mhrced@bellnet.ca)

### On Discrimination

I don't have the answers around discrimination but I do recall this story

from a friend of mine.

Wayne's daughter Carly had just started Kindergarten. Wayne was curious about the children in the class. He asked Carly if there were black kids in her class. Carly said no.

What about Chinese kids? Where there Indian children? No, replied Carly. What about kids in wheelchairs. Again, Carly said no and added this gem; "Daddy, they are just boys and girls in my class." My friend Wayne was very pleased with his daughter but disappointed with himself for perhaps planting the seeds of discrimination in Carly's head. Wayne said he needed to think about his own assumptions and challenge his thoughts and behaviors.

My own bias was challenged recently when two new men moved into my neighborhood. I was frightened by their appearance. Tattoo flaunting, biker types I thought. I got to know them when they walked their little poodles Muffin and Fluffy. They love their

dogs, are community minded and brew a mean batch of wine. They were the first on the scene when our neighbor's house caught on fire. I couldn't have better neighbors.

### Scope Awards & Discrimination

The folks who are nominated for SCOPE Awards have touched someone with mental illness in some way. Perhaps they supported the person nominating them or advocated on behalf of someone. They may have helped a mainstream service provider understand recovery. This year I noted a number of people who were nominated have challenged discrimination on many levels.

### Notable Notables

This year 33 people were nominated. I would like to highlight the following recipients because I believe they work to challenge stigma and discrimination on many levels but in particular, mental illness.

**Regan Anderson**, Wayside House of Hamilton for working so hard to make the Mental Health and Addictions amalgamation work and for supporting the values and beliefs

around Peer Support.

**Catherine McPherson Doe Catherine**, Hamilton Family Health Team, devoted many hours to the 2009 Collaborative Mental Health Care Conference and took special care to ensure the voice of consumers was heard and heeded. We thank you Catherine for promoting the consumer perspective in the mainstream of health care.

**Chester Langile**, De dwa da dehs nye>s Aboriginal Health Care. The Aboriginal Health Care Centre provided a home for MHRC for 10 years and were accommodating, generous landlords. The entire staff were always ready to help and were kind toward our members and staff. We felt welcome and secure at De dwa da dehs nye>s.

**Loraine Chapman**, Good Shepherd, is one of the few who "Gets it" ..

**Judy George**, Finance Manager, CMHA, Niagara Branch in her spare time works tirelessly for several consumer survivor initiatives.

On behalf of consumers everywhere I would like to thank the SCOPE Award recipients for the work they have done to break down barriers for people with lived experience of mental illness.

**SCOPE awards (Supporting Consumer Opportunities for Personal Empowerment)** recognize people for their contributions and efforts which empower consumer/survivors of the mental health system in Hamilton.

Nominations are made by mental health consumer/survivors who are members and staff of the MHRC. For more on the 2009 awards see page 3



## Program Coordinator

**Peggy Guiler-Delahunt**  
[mhrprograms@bellnet.ca](mailto:mhrprograms@bellnet.ca)

### eHealth—eNough

When news broke about Minister of Health and

Long Term Care, David Caplan, having to step down because of his inherited eHealth mess, my heart sank.

After the July summit on Mental Health and Addictions I felt hopeful there was political will to make significant, if not sweeping, changes to the mental health system. Now our champion has been dethroned I wonder if mental health as a priority will once again bite the dust and vapourize to the backbenches with the fallen minister.

The eHealth fiasco is unforgivable. Millions (maybe billions) of dollars was spent on lining the pockets of people who are already overpaid while many Ontarians struggle to find family doctors, have to pay exorbitant prices for life saving cancer drugs and struggle to find adequate mental health care and housing.

At the summer summit, the 1000 of us present were assured mental health is no longer a partisan issue and that the entire house is committed to the strategies which were presented.

In light of the new developments we can only wait to see if Deb Matthews will push the mental health agenda with the same passion as David Caplan.

In the mean time, be certain that it is not those who work at Queens Park who will be suffering while we wait to see the outcome.

### eNough

Further to all of this I have been pondering starting a campaign called "eNough". I've had had about eNough of the dishonesty and money grabbing that takes place at the expense of tax payers.

I wonder what ever happened to the people who took office and went on boards because they care about the constituents.



**Give Us A Call! A Peer Support Worker is available**

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

**905-545-2525**

eNough could be a grass roots movement to say we have had enough of people who don't really care in politics and political appointments. We've had enough of self serving "civil servants" who bend the rules to win position, power and pay.

For years people who live on the meager wage of welfare and Ontario Disability Support have been suspect for abusing the system. Perhaps those who have overspent and abused the public trust should be forced to live on that wage as their penance or penalty for their abuse of public funds.

## Scope Award Recipients 2008

Regan Anderson  
Robert Archer  
John Bouchard  
Matt Bowen  
Patricia Brezden  
Leeman Brown  
Lorraine Chapman  
May Ferguson  
Calvin Ferris  
Matt Fraser  
Kimoko Griffin  
Patricia Harrison  
David Holmes  
Georgina Kasumovic  
Peter Kibor  
Sheila Lancaster  
Nina Lewin  
Catherine McPherson-Doe  
Anthony Morgan  
Cindy Murphy  
C. Michael Ollier  
Danielle EA Roche  
Wayne Perry  
Matthew Purshouse  
Peter Pye  
Christine Ramirez  
Mark Slater  
Chelsea Thomas  
Sharon Trottier  
Dan Warburton  
Rory Wasserman  
John Webb  
Amanda Wilcox

## SCOPE Awards Supporting Consumer Opportunities for Personal Empowerment

This years awards were presented to those on the list to the left, at Good Shepherd's Emmaus Place on Aikman Ave., Tuesday, September 29.

Many recipients were present and joined members and staff for a light supper after the presentations.

SCOPE awards are a way for the membership and staff of Mental Health Rights Coalition to publicly recognize and thank individuals or service agencies who have helped empower them in their recovery process.

SCOPE is a non-competitive award event. Everyone who is nominated receives a certificate and is invited to the presentations.

MHRC congratulates all of those who received the award this year. You are the people who make a real difference in the lives of those who live with mental illness.

(See Executive Director's comments on page 2 for more info about 2009 awards.)

### Economy Cake

*Thanks to Margie G. for the recipe*

If there was one thing that World War I taught Canadian cooks, it was how to be frugal.

With water as one of its prime ingredients, Economy Cake was a dessert that was resurrected during the Great Depression and found its way to many a Canadian table.

The baker needed no eggs and no milk, and some versions even omitted butter and used only lard.

Also known as Poverty Cake, Poor Man's Cake, or my favourite, Mom's Minus Cake, this costs pennies to make and tastes pretty good. Adapted from How We Do It, Budget-Designed Recipes from the 1930's, a collection of recipes gathered from Montreal homemakers.  
Price: @ \$4.13

#### INGREDIENTS

1/2 lb raisins  
1 cup brown sugar  
1 cup cold water  
1-1/2 tbsp each: butter, lard  
1-1/2 tsp cinnamon  
1-1/2 tsp salt  
1-1/2 cups all-purpose flour  
1/2 tsp baking soda

#### DIRECTIONS

Bring first seven ingredients to boil on high heat in medium pot; reduce heat to medium- low and simmer 15 minutes. Cool.

Sift flour and baking soda together. Add to raisin mixture; mix well.

Bake in a greased 9-inch cake pan in 325F oven for 30 to 40 minutes, until cake tester inserted in middle comes out clean.

### 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](http://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, January 1, 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.*



# Mental Health Stamp and First Day Covers

## An option for gift giving

Coworkers and the hard to buy for folks on gift giving lists may appreciate a few stamps or a "first day cover" of this years new stamp promoting mental health. Canada Post raised \$1.2 million last year toward their fund which set out to eliminate stigma in Mental Health. \$300.000 of that money came from the sale of the mental health stamps.

Canada Post says, "Following last year's successful first release, Canada Post issues a new PERMANENT™ domestic rate semi-postal Mental Health stamp, again with a 10-cent surcharge (\$1 per booklet), to raise funds for the Canada Post Foundation for Mental Health."

A book of ten stamps costs \$6.40. First Day covers are \$1.64

In the Canada Post September newsletter this year it says, "

Funds will be used to help communities deliver mental health services to those in need, and to support families facing the challenges of mental illness.

This official first day cover expands upon the vivid and unique colour palette that forms the core of the stamp's message and is cancelled in Ottawa, home to the Foundation's headquarters.

## Opening Minds

(Continued from page 1)

dian history to reduce the stigma of mental illness." It goes on to tell about the programs first phase, saying, "it targets children and youth, and health care providers."

Kirby, in his address, said, "It's time for individuals living with mental health problems to live free of stigma and discrimination. It's time for them to move out of the shadows forever and into the light of equal opportunity in Canadian society."

*"It's time for individuals living with mental health problems to live free of stigma and discrimination. It's time for them to move out of the shadows forever and into the light of equal opportunity in Canadian society. It's time for us to remove labels they're branded with..."*

shadows forever and into the light of equal opportunity in Canadian society.

It's time for us to remove labels they're branded with..."

Kirby explains the targeted focus with reference to a survey where 1 in 5 parents said they would not tell anyone if their

child had a mental illness. He also suggests that attitudes in young people are the easiest ones to change so they want to begin with the change in younger Canadians.

When discussing the focus on health care workers, Kirby points out that attitudes of the professionals working with people with mental illness are no better than the attitudes of the average Canadian.

"It's time to offer Canadians living with mental illness *real* hope...*real* support...and *real* solutions for treatment and recovery," says Kirby.



For more information about Opening Minds or about the Mental Health Commission of Canada go to

[www.mentalhealthcommission.ca](http://www.mentalhealthcommission.ca)

## 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**



## Voices Training in December

(Continued from page 1)

mentoring support.

Voices of Experience Board and staff are also available to speak with existing boards or organizations to discuss the benefits of this program.

This program is open to anyone within the LHIN 4.

To register or for more information about Voices of Experience training please contact the coordinator by calling Mental Health Rights Coalition (905-545-2525) or email [mhrcprograms@bellnet.ca](mailto:mhrcprograms@bellnet.ca)

Web Site <http://www.mentalhealthrights.ca/Active%20pages/voe.html>



## VOICES OF EXPERIENCE

*An Equal Partnership of Service Users and Providers: A Time for Recovery through Change and New Ideas*

### Background:

Voices of Experience is a project developed in partnership with Good Shepherd and sponsored by the Mental Health Rights Coalition, with the encouragement and support of local mental health and addictions and social service agencies and other interested agencies.

### Mission:

To have trained members of Voices of Experience sit on social service agency boards and committees in the Hamilton and surrounding communities served by the LHIN 4.

### Vision:

Empowering social service users to have a voice as "consumer" participants on boards and committees of service agencies.

### Purpose:

To provide formal training and mentorship for those who seek to be active "consumer" participants on the boards and committees of social service agencies and to expand the opportunity for experience by encouraging participation on the Voices of Experience Steering Committee and/or other boards and committees in the community.

## 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 (10 weeks)

Nutrition group (5 weeks)

Yoga and Dance Fit (10 weeks)

Cooking group (10 weeks)

Gym membership (12 weeks)

Adventure and sports activities (canoeing, archery, wall-climbing, lasertag, 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:

People to exercise with

Help with getting the equipment you need to be active

Bus tickets

Information on food and health issues

Recipes and sample foods

#### Who can sign up?

Persons with a mental health issue

Anyone who wants to improve their physical health or prevent health problems

If you are struggling with weight or want to feel better

#### How Do I get started?

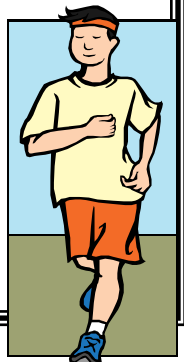
We will help you to look at some measures of your health before you start and with your permission, will ask your doctor to work with you and Steps to Health on improving your health.

#### To Find out More or Arrange an Appointment

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

Steps to Health is operated by Good Shepherd – HOMES Program, in collaboration with professionals at St. Joseph's Healthcare and the Family Health Team

Steps to Health is Funded by the HNHB LHIN



# Pandemic Panic

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concerned or not concerned enough about the possibility of a pandemic.

History tells us that in the last century there were three pandemics. IN 1918 the Spanish Flu, and in both the late 1950's and late 1960's the Asian flu and the Hong Kong Flu claimed many lives.

What sets pandemics apart is that they are caused by new strains of the flu and people do not have immunity to them.

With the current "H1N1" flu there is evidence that those who were exposed to the Hong Kong flu in the 50's may have some immunity because they are similar strains. This may account for the hard hitting affect of the H1N1 on the younger generation.

MHRC preparations for this threat have included development of "pandemic plan" which allows staff to do some work from home and make themselves available for telephone support to members if forced to close the office because of staff shortages.

It is very important to MHRC not to be spreading the virus so members are asked to use hand sanitizer which is provided and to take other precautions like frequent hand washing and coughing into sleeves rather than hands. Perhaps the best guard against spreading infection is for those who are sick to stay at home.

With few family and social supports staying home is not always easy for mental health consumers but it is important to guard the safety of the community.

The flip side of this loneliness dilemma is that often those who are sick and alone do not have anyone to care for their needs. MHRC encourages those members who do not have other sup-

ports to contact the office if they have special needs when they are ill. Staff may not be able to offer direct support but will make every effort to find support for you.



## What You Can Do

Public Health Canada says, "The best way to help reduce the impact of an influenza (flu) pandemic is to protect yourself, your family and friends, stay informed and provide support to others."

Below are a few suggestions which may be helpful in your personal pandemic planning.

### Items to have on hand in case you become ill

The information available stresses the importance of maintaining a high level of hydration if you have the flu. This means you need to drink lots of clear fluids. Fruit juices, clear pop and water are the best for this purpose. Caffeinated drinks may cause increased dehydration and stomach irritation.

Stock up on medications which you find helpful when you are ill. Also talk to your doctor or psychiatrist about what to do if you have trouble keeping medication down for any extended period of time because of vomiting. Missing medication could be dangerous for many conditions.

### Items in case of public shut downs

There may also be some wisdom in stocking up on some items in case the pandemic hits businesses and services so hard that many have to close.

If you can make arrangements with your pharmacist and doctor, it is a good idea to have a supply of medications on hand that will last you for a few weeks. Some people are getting extra prescription scripts from their doctors and having their pharmacists hold them in reserve.

Have plenty of food and water on hand.. Even if you don't use bottled water regularly it is a good idea to have some on hand in case of power outages and keep some basic, non perishable food supplies in the cupboard. Items which do not spoil easily and do not require cooking are the best. Cans of tuna and beans along with crackers and peanut butter never go astray.

Also make sure you can stay warm if the

heat goes out. Extra blankets and some extra warm clothes are readily available at the second hand stores and are a good investment for cold nights.

Candles and matches will keep away the darkness but be very cautious about their use. Never leave a candle burning when you leave a room and always use heat safe dishes for burning candles.

Having some cash on hand



## Do You have the Flu

Canadian Public Health says everyone is at risk of catching the H1N1 flu virus — even healthy, young adults. We do not know exactly what symptoms the virus will cause in each case, but we expect that an average sickness will show the following symptoms:

**Almost always:** • Sudden onset of cough and fever

**Common:** • Fatigue • Muscle aches • Sore throat • Headache • Decreased appetite • Runny nose

**Sometimes:** • Nausea • Vomiting • Diarrhea

### Severity Indicators

**If you develop the following symptoms, you need to see a health care provider right away:**










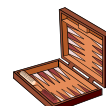




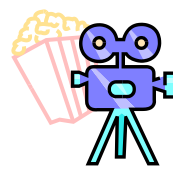








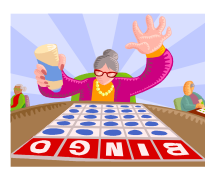
• Shortness of breath, rapid or difficulty breathing • Chest pain • Bluish or grey skin color • Bloody or coloured mucus/spit • Sudden dizziness or confusion • Severe or persistent vomiting • High fever lasting more than three days • Low blood pressure

For more information about the flu we suggest you visit the Hamilton Public Health web site. It has many resources including screening tools and local resources. It also has current information about vaccination clinics.


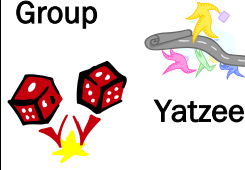





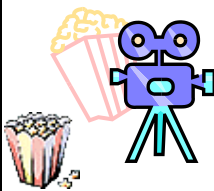








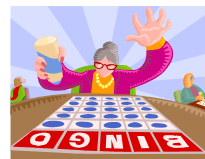


[www.hamilton.ca/H1N1](http://www.hamilton.ca/H1N1)

Anyone who needs assistance accessing these important web based tools is welcome to use the members computer at MHRC. Staff are making every effort to stay updated on the flu situation.

# November 2009

S	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	S
1	2	3	4	5	6	7
	Movie and Snacks 	11 Support Group 	Window Shopping 	1 Talking about the Flu 1:30 Skip Bo 	1-2 Steps to Health Program Introduction 	
8	9	10	11 Remembrance Day	12	13	14
	Walk About 	Crafts 	 Euchre 	Backgammon  2:30 Talking About the Flu	Cards 	
15	16	17	18	19	20	21
	Current Events 	11 Support Group  Coffee Walk 	Movies 	Board Games 	Members Meeting 	
22	23	24	25	26	27	28
	Cribbage 	Birthday Party 	Knit & Crochet 	Air Hockey 	 <b>OPEN HOUSE</b> 1—4 pm Come see and celebrate Our new location	
29	30	<div> <b>MENTAL HEALTH RIGHTS COALITION</b></div> <div>Calendar Activities begin at 1 p.m. unless otherwise stated</div> <div>Outings may be dependant upon weather.</div> <div>Please wear appropriate shoes and clothing. Rain dates are scheduled for special outdoor events .</div>				
	Bingo 					

# December 2009

S	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	S
		1	2	3	4	5
		11 Support Group 	Karaoke 	Cribbage 	Skip Bo 	
6	7	8	9	10	11	12
	Walk About 	Crafts 	Movie & snacks 	Skip Bo 	Air Hockey 	
13	14	15	16	17	18	19
	Cards 	11 Support Group  Current Events 	Coffee Walk 	Euchre 	Members Meeting 	
20	21	22	23	24	25	26
		Christmas Open House 	Limited Service	Limited Service	Limited Service	
27	28	29	30	31		
	Limited Service	Limited Service	Limited Service	Limited Service		