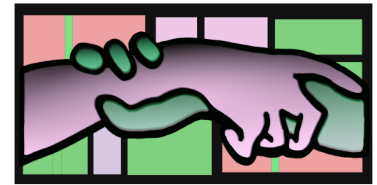


The Rights Stuff

Spring 2013

March • April • May 2013

MENTAL HEALTH RIGHTS COALITION



*Our mission is to encourage,
enable and empower
the voice of consumers in the
mental health system*

A message from our Executive Director...

After lots of hard work, with the help of dedicated staff, volunteers and members, MHRC is finally settled in our new location at @ 20 Emerald Street South (formally Martha House, Good Shepherd). Members love the new location because it's homey, inviting and warm. There's an abundance of extra space here, including a room in the back for crafts and other activities. We have a large kitchen area that still needs some work before we can open it to members. We hope to have a monthly collective kitchen in the future. The drop-in area feels like a living room with our lovely leather couches purchased last year with an Ontario Trillium Foundation grant. There's a north facing porch on the side of the house and we hope to plant flowers and herbs in containers. Out front there's a garden with shrubs. The garden needs a bit of work and we plan to plant annuals, perennials, and bulbs for next spring. If you haven't come by yet I encourage you to drop by to visit with us. We hope you will be interested.

MHRC is grateful to Good Shepherd for leasing 20 Emerald to us for five years. In particular I would like to thank Brother Richard MacPhee, Lorraine Chapman and Alan Whittle for having faith in MHRC and for making it happen.

The last round of opportunities to attend Wellness Recovery Action Plan (WRAP) sessions will be this March. See the newsletter for details. Mental Health Rights Coalition, Consumer Survivor Initiative of Niagara, Oak Centre and St. Joseph's Healthcare would like to express our sincere gratitude to Ontario Trillium Foundation for supporting people with lived experience of mental illness by funding WRAP.

Frances V Jewell

We look forward to hearing from Amanda Carey in the next newsletter!

Introducing Kimiko Griffin... "Hi, I'd like to take this opportunity to introduce myself to members of the MHRC. My name is Kimiko (or you can call me "Kim"), and I will be working on Mondays as a Peer Support Worker. When you get the chance, please stop by MHRC and introduce yourself. I will do my best to make the atmosphere @ MHRC welcoming and comfortable. I began my struggles with Depression during my senior years of high school. Since I was born & raised in Haldimand County, I consider myself to be "a country girl". My last diploma, Pharmacy Technician, was obtained at Mohawk College, Continuing Education. Many years before that I received a diploma from Lethbridge Community College, in Rehabilitation Practitioner. This program, along with my work experience in Alberta and the peer support training through MHRC has prepared me for my new position as a Peer Support Worker.

Volunteering is one of my many passions - there are so many benefits to volunteering that I wouldn't know where to start. Being an avid reader, I like nothing better than to explore libraries, Chapters and second-hand bookstores. Creativity is an important part of my life. I enjoy a variety of arts & crafts and like to share my enthusiasm by teaching others. Personally, I like to work with beads, making cards; Knitting and crocheting. You may have seen me downtown, I'm the one who is knitting while she walks. I hope to be able to work with members in these and other interests. I am hard of hearing, and thus may be wearing one or two hearing aids. You may be asked to repeat yourself, so that I can understand what you are saying. I may not respond, if you start talking to me from another room. It is easier for me to understand you, when we are facing each other and if I can watch your lips - so that I can "lip-read". I was diagnosed with lupus, or SLE, about 15 years ago. It is a chronic autoimmune disease, with no known cure. Lupus is called "the disease with 1,000 faces".

In closing I wish to say that I believe I can be of assistance to our many members of MHRC. By working with other members, and co-workers, I hope to become more aware of opportunities related to Mental Health.
Hope to meet you soon," - Kimiko

Inside this issue:

WRAP	2
Hope Conference	3
CSI Consult Integration	4-7
Calendar	8-10

**WRAP®:
Wellness Recovery
Action Plan®**



WRAP

Wellness Recovery Action Plan



WRAP:

- Is a structured, facilitated, peer-led self management process
- Offers each participant an opportunity to develop an action plan in a group setting

Groups support people living with mental illness to find effective strategies for wellness and recovery.

Participants will identify:

- Coping tools
- Triggers (things that make you unwell/ill)
- Family/friends/providers who can support your recovery plan

If you are interested in joining a group in your area, please call:

Amanda/Frances 905-545-2525

Dates: 2 day intensive (you must attend both) Mon Mar 25, Tues Mar 26

Time: 8:30 am 4:30 pm light lunch will be provided

Location: Good Shepherd Family Centre 143 Wentworth St S

Open to mental health/addiction consumer/survivors (FREE)

Group participants will be invited to take part in an exciting research study measuring recovery outcomes related to WRAP!



MHRC Hamilton
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Consumer
Survivor
Initiative of
Niagara

The notice above is a legally sanctioned advertisement and cannot be altered for any purpose.

Hope: Empowering Change



FREE conference for persons with lived experience of mental illness or addiction

Bus from MHRC and Mountain Plaza Mall provided

Tuesday, March 12, 2013

10am-2:30 pm (bus leaves at 8 and returns at 4:30)

Junior Farmer's Building, Simcoe Fairgrounds, Simcoe, ON

Hosted By:

Haldimand-Norfolk Resource Centre and H.O.P.E. (Brantford)

- 8:00 am Meet at MHRC 20 Emerald St S Hamilton
- 8:15 am Bus departs from MHRC
- 8:30 am Bus pick-up at Mountain Plaza Mall (entrance next to Subway, facing Walmart)
- 10-10:30 Registration
- 10:30-noon Poverty: Roadblock to Recovery (Video Presentation)
- 12-12:45 Lunch (provided)
- Program displays information available throughout the lunch hour
- 12:45-1:15 Q & A from program displays
- 1:15-2:15 Jan Vanderstelt (guest speaker) HOPE
- 2:15-2:30 Evaluation and wrap up
- 2:30-4:30 Bus back to Mountain Plaza Mall and MHRC

Education is the most powerful weapon which you can use to change the world. -Nelson Mandela

In October the Local Health Integration Network (LHIN 4) asked MHRC to consult with persons with lived experience (consumers) about how the health care system is working for them. MHRC hosted 25 people in three focus groups. We received a wealth of information on what works, what's not working and what makes it difficult to access service, and what would make it easier to get better service and health care. The results of the focus groups will help to inform the LHIN on its plan "ACTION: A call To IntegratiOn Now" and are outlined on the next few pages of this newsletter. For more information on "ACTION: A call To IntegratiOn Now" go to www.hnhblhin.on.ca.

Based on your personal experience with the health system...

Question 1: ...What are some things that made this a positive experience for you (e.g. what is working well)?

"I have a good family doctor. I can go to free groups through the doctor's office."

"I have a social worker at the diabetes clinic who is a very good support – for medical and other reasons, such as mental health."

A family doctor who can listen - Mentioned by 2 people.

"Support with a clinician at St. Joe's and ADGS [Alcohol, Drug and Gambling Services]. I have to give them credit. I can go to St. Joe's and hang out without questions [at the doctor's office]."

"It is important to be respected by professionals."

"I have a long history with illness and a long history with HPS [Hamilton Program for Schizophrenia]. It is helpful to have one organization following me for a long time. I have a very supportive family doctor that augments my care."

"Medical receptionists and secretaries recognizing signs when I am not well and not telling me to get lost."

"When I was first diagnosed I got in quickly into the hospital and then a doctor for ongoing treatment. I received good treatment on D1 [St. Joes Mountain Site], and was then able to get into a routine and I visit the hospital less. I used to go to Bridge to Recovery program and still go to Community Psychiatry."

"Peer support here [MHRC] is very natural and easy to access."

"I don't have to wait. I have a good relationship with my doctor and pharmacist."

"I was having trouble sleeping and called Barrett Centre to find out what it was. I can talk to someone there 24 hours a day." "Health lines are helpful if I can't get out. I can call to talk to a nurse."

"I have an assigned psychiatrist. I got them through COAST. I had to make a dozen calls. I was happy to get a call from St. Joe's."

"When I came to MHRC I felt very welcomed; it is non-judgmental. MHRC keeps me out of hospital; it stops the isolation."

"The feeling in here [MHRC] ...it's relaxing. I feel at home." "There is a comfort level at MHRC. It's accepting."

"The central, downtown location of MHRC is important. It is near other sites of interest."

"There seems to be a greater comfort level here [MHRC]. There is no stigma, a natural, more comfortable atmosphere, music, and activities daily. You can look at the calendar and find something of interest, or just come for drop-in. We need these social things. I am not treated like a patient or a number on a health card."

"MHRC is a safe place to be, to hang out, to get to know people to talk to. It [talking] doesn't have to be in depth. The environment is non-judgmental, non-controlling. I am not made to feel like a kid or dumb. It's okay to be unwell."

"COAST: if you have an issue you can call them to talk about the situation."

"Women's Wellness Centre at Good Shepherd has helpful classes; 'Mindful Mondays' which include yoga and other things."

"I have peer support at MHRC, Mood Menders provides support and education. I have family, wife, kids and work, so I come here to MHRC for support. It keeps me from isolation."

"COAST saved my life. MHRC keeps me out of hospital."

"This place [MHRC] does help people stay well and out of hospital." "I call a crisis line. They are very helpful."

"Peer support - someone working with you to point you in the right direction. A person going through recovery can share resources and emotional help; talking things through."

"[Informal] Peer support happens naturally in the drop-in. People start talking things through in the drop-in area."

"Women's Centre of Hamilton [at Interval House] provides programs and activities that keep me well like knitting, women's wellness and legal lunch and learns at Jared Place."

Helpful agencies: Elizabeth Fry, Urban Core Community Health Centre, French Centre [The Centre de Santé Communautaire Hamilton/Niagara], Womankind for detox. There is a centre for men too (Men's Withdrawal Management Centre), COAST, MHRC, Women's Wellness Centre, and Good Shepherd Women's Centre.

"I have had a good experience with COAST and excellent support from Good Shepherd through the Barrett Centre. They helped me figure out where my head was at, what the issues were."

"COAST is comparable to 911. They directed me to the hospital because I was suicidal."

"CBT helped me."

"I have a tool kit from Chronic Pain Management Centre at Chedoke." EMDR Sessions (Eye Movement Desensitization and Reprocessing therapy)."

"I have stress issues, but am treated with respect at good places like: MHRC, Good Shepherd Women's Centre, Jared's Place, Martha House for Safety Planning, McMaster Sexual Support."

Important qualities:

Finding others with similar likes and dislikes; reducing isolation; reducing stigma and a non-judgmental environment.

"It is important to know that I am not alone. I didn't know there were others like me."

Helping others: "My peer support training experience has been helpful and I can get peer support here [MHRC]."

Socialization and recreational activities: People like the music at MHRC.

"If I have nowhere to go, evening rec at CMHA (Evening Social Recreation Rehabilitation Program) keeps me out of trouble."

Physical health: Good Shepherd Steps to health promotes getting active; "Once a month on a Saturday Good Shepherd has an activity for women."

Creating my life and routine - "The fact that it's open at MHRC to drop-in, share info, or talk to others. For some people, it's part of their daily or weekly calendar. It's important for me to come here. It's part of my lifestyle."

Empowerment: "On rare occasions where a professional asks me what I need, instead of saying, 'Ok, this is your diagnosis.'"

Directing my life and time: "I may feel upset when I come here [MHRC], but I feel better when I leave. I get to talk about what I want, not what my doctor wants to talk about."

Being informed: "There are good print resources on the shelves at MHRC."

Holistic approach to health: "When I had a kidney infection the emergency doctor helped me with medications for mental health as well."

"Medication and talk therapy together. They don't work as well stand-alone, but together they work. I am fortunate to get talk-therapy on a regular basis."

Friendship, peer support and socialization: "I come here [MHRC] to talk with others."

Reducing isolation. Reaching out. Meeting others.

Question 2: ...What are the barriers and challenges that you experienced (e.g. what is not working well)?

- Even professionals express stigma

Having a mental illness diagnosis impacts on treatment in the emergency department or hospital:

"I have depression, bipolar, Lupus and I'm hard of hearing. When I go to the hospital, the diagnosis of mental illness becomes a filter. They asked, 'Are you sure are where you need to be? Shouldn't you be in EPT [Emergency Psychiatric Treatment]?' Don't shuffle me off to a closet."

"I went to the hospital for breathing problems and was not really checked. The doctor said it was a mental health issue."

"I was on the 9th floor [St. Joseph Hospital, Psychiatry on 9], suicidal and wasn't getting the meds that I needed. The nurse confirmed they found my meds on the cart the next day, but when I told them I didn't get my meds, they didn't believe me. I felt like I was being considered ridiculous and stupid and that my intelligence was nil."

"I was addressed by the wrong gender."

"The psychiatrist at the family doctor's office didn't listen to me. They tried to pull my meds without monitoring ...

me. It was too quick to change. They didn't explain to me. They had a 'holier than thou' attitude and felt they didn't have to explain anything to me."

"My family doctor has no knowledge of mental health issues. She uses checkboxes to determine a diagnosis, and then she becomes nervous with me when I am diagnosed. She asks me, 'Are you psychotic right now?'"

"COAST sends a uniformed officer in a cruiser with the social worker. This is not helpful."

"The social worker and therapist offer talk therapy, which is essential, but they don't offer other tools (e.g DBT or CBT). I need to be able to take skills and transfer into every day life."

"Doctors are quick to prescribe. A lot of times a prescription only masks the problem. It is a quick fix but does not solve anything."

"Doctors are pushing meds instead of dealing with complex issues. I am not allowed to talk about issues because I am dwelling on them."

"Being in HPS [Hamilton Program for Schizophrenia] for so long, they think they know you so well that they overlook your aspirations and goals. They've got things planned for your future. You don't have much input."

"Family members are not allowed in hospital rooms at times. This ignores patients' needs."

"Breaking through at Emerg [the Emergency Department] was very difficult; to let a doctor know the severity of my situation. I think they think that people just want to go hang out there. It took a lot to get them to say, 'Ok, we'll let see a doctor.'"

"COAST only goes to 10 pm and it must be life-threatening to get COAST or police; you must be suicidal to get help. It would be good to have a place for the night to get my meds checked."

"MHRC should be open longer during the day and on weekends." "CMHA only offers certain groups at certain times."

"There are no services on the weekend. What the F***?"

"Things take a long time to get treatment, unless you are really sick. You fall through the cracks. If you look well, you present well, they think you are looking for attention."

"It has taken two years to get a psychiatrist and the psychiatrist comes in once a month for an afternoon. I don't want to talk to the counselor. Sometimes I want to talk to the psychiatrist."

"I had trouble getting into the system until I got into the hospital. Now I am being encouraged to be discharged and I don't feel I am ready."

"A lot of people are disabled with a mental health issue and they get services. The middle class pay for services. As a person with a low income, I can't get help because I don't fit into a program's criteria. I'm between the cracks."

"I went to the hospital and was treated like I was being ridiculous because I wasn't suicidal. The nurse needs to retire or go work in a morgue."

"COAST needs to improve service and not have an answering service. I called in the middle of the night and got an answering machine." "I went to Mac. I was told to follow up with my doctor. One month later, the family doctor did not have the paperwork. There is too much waiting."

"I have to wait six months to see a specialist." "There is no place to go on weekends."

"McMaster and St. Joes need to be connected."

Lack of resources and aftercare following hospitalization - "They do not provide resources. There is no aftercare. It is expected family will chip in." "When I ask my worker for help she doesn't know where to send me."

"The dentist reminds me of appointments, but the doctor does not."

"The doctor tells me to go to the emergency department when he is not open."

"When I call Barrett Centre I always talk to a new person and have to tell my story over again."

"It took 10-12 calls (over a period of time) through COAST to get help. By the time you get help you are too far gone. I have had to threaten to get help."

"I was pushed to be discharged on a Friday when I wasn't ready. It seems like the system just wants to put out the fire. You have to be suicidal to get help."

"I have a good worker I can count on, but she is not always there when I need her."

"Doctors aren't patient. They are always in a hurry and only allow one item in a 15 minute appointment."

Paperwork was lost or disappeared.

Question 3: *What are your ideas to improve the health system? (What would make things better?)*

- Quicker, shorter referral to services when it is not an emergency. A walk-in clinic for mental health. Easier access.
- Less waiting time.
- Better hours at MHRC. Someone to talk to. Help getting resources from MHRC. There is no other place like MHRC.
- More money needs to be spent on mental health.
- A resource sheet for family doctors on mental health. Better communication between organizations.
- Registry of services offered on Ministry, LHIN, City websites.
- Crisis line or warm line here at MHRC.
- Telephone peer support during off hours "from MHRC not CMHA (Canadian Mental Health Association). They have "workers". Peers don't judge."
- Peer support workers need more training, refresher courses and workshops.
- Peer support workers at the Emergency Department or hospital and available for personal crisis.
- Peer Support Worker role enhanced at MHRC with more branches (locations)
- Peer Support Worker at MHRC going off site/outreach into the community
- Need to inform others about peer support
- Replicate MHRC's approach in other communities
- A peer support worker to meet you when you go to the hospital or emergency department ("like a Walmart greeter")
- - More education for professionals and public about mental health issues and addiction
- "Hamilton needs more psychiatrists." "I want the LHIN to ask me again for input." "I want to go to a safe place and not be bothered."

"I don't want services offered in one place. I want different services all over the place. I don't like it that one service knows stuff from another service about me. It's better to have different types of things for me. I'm not a 'one size fits all' person."

"I need to deal with eating issues plus trauma, but treatment is not co-coordinated. The service providers need to talk to each other. The services need to work together so I don't get dropped."

"More and more peer support. I don't like to hang out at St. Joe's. I would like to see a peer support worker while I'm waiting.

- Person focused. "Ask me what I need – and listen, dammit!"
- More talk therapy. More easily accessible. More EMDR.
- Get in to services faster and get follow up in the future.

"More places like Barrett Centre with staff like that, phone line, someone to talk to."

-Having alternative safe places to go, like MHRC. "MHRC needs to be open more. I would call and come in."

"More locations for MHRC. Being lonely is not good. I can have an adult conversation there."

-More peer support at mental health organizations. Less isolation.
























"They have been hacking programs like PRP [Psychiatric Rehabilitation Program] at St. Joes and not replacing them. I would like to see more programs like this, where you can meet others like you, have a life that is more than just mental illness-related goals."

"More action, faster access, better services, less stigma."

"I need not to fit criteria. Programs need to fit me."

























Our Mission is to encourage, enable, and empower the voice and participation of consumer/survivors in the mental health system 20 Emerald St S. Hamilton, ON L8N 2V2 Phone: 905-545-2525 Fax: 905-545-0211 Email: mentalhealthrights@bellnet.ca Web page: www.mentalhealthrights.ca

March 2013



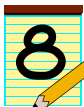


















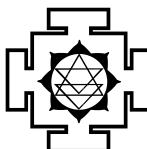
Sun	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Sat
<p>Calendar Activities begin at 1 p.m. unless otherwise stated.</p> <p>Walking/Exercise activities are dependent on weather.</p> <p>Please wear appropriate shoes and clothing.</p>					1	2
			MENTAL HEALTH RIGHTS COALITION 		Dance Away The Winter Blues (at Emmaus Place) 	
3	4	5	6	7	8	9
	Current Events 	Women's Issues Group 	Board Games 	Air Hockey 	Music 	
10	11	12	13	14	15	16
	Crazy Eights 	St. Patrick's Day Crafts 	Members Meeting 	St. Patrick's Day Party 		
17	18	19	20	21	22	23
	Apples to Apples Game 	Birthday Party 	Walkabout 	Skip-Bo 	Music 	
24	25	26	27	28	29	30
	Learn to Knit & Crochet 	Crafts & Karaoke 	Bingo 	Easter Eggstravaganza! 	GOOD FRIDAY 	

Mental Health Rights Coalition— 20 Emerald St S., Hamilton, ON L8N 2V2
 Phone: 905-545-2525— Facsimile: 905-545-0211 Email: mentalhealthrights@bellnet.ca



Sun	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Sat
	1	2	3	4	5	6
	Easter Monday 	Women's Issues Group   Dominoes	Coffee Walk 	Members Meeting 	Music 	
7	8	9	10	11	12	13
	Yahtzee 	Current Events 	Karaoke 	Walk About 	Card Games 	
14	15	16	17	18	19	20
	Euchre 	Crafts 	Apples to Apples Game 	Birthday Party 		
21	22	23	24	25	26	27
	Movies & Manicures 	Skip-Bo 	Walk About 	Karaoke 	Music 	
NATIONAL VOLUNTEER WEEK						
28	29	30				
	New Foods 	Knit & Crochet 		MENTAL HEALTH RIGHTS COALITION 		

May 2013

Sun	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Sat			
<p>Calendar Activities begin at 1 p.m. unless otherwise stated.</p> <p>Walking/Exercise activities are dependent on weather.</p> <p>Please wear appropriate shoes and clothing.</p>			1	2	3	4			
			Karaoke 	Members meeting   Crazy Eights	Monopoly Card Game 				
			5	6	7	8	9	10	11
				MENTAL HEALTH WEEK <i>STAY TUNED FOR DETAILS...</i>					
12	13	14	15	16	17	18			
	Board Games 	Women's Issues Group 	Birthday Party 	Karaoke 	 Wii Fit				
19	20	21	22	23	24	25			
 Closed	Crafts 	Movies & Popcorn 	Card Games 	Music 					
26	27	28	29	30	31				
	Card Making Demo 	Air Hockey 	Improv Workshop 	Dictionary Game 	Mandalas 				

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