

# Family Connections

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JANUARY 2016

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### Your Family Support and Involvement Team

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So here we are at the beginning of 2016! The start of a new year has a lot of us scrambling to make resolutions about the year to come. Quit smoking, exercise more, eat healthily, finally achieve a work/life balance, etc... We may even choose to change the way we think about certain things, stop using *“but it’s hard to change”* as an excuse to keep from reaching beyond what’s comfortable. Whatever we decide, it is important to avoid being vague in our goal setting.

In this edition of the Family Connections Newsletter we are going to present approaches and resources which you and your family can use to initiate new beginnings in a manageable and sustainable way.



Please remember that if your loved one is at risk to themselves or others the best resources are your local Emergency Department, and 911.

Other resources available to you are:

**Mental Health Emergency Services (MHES):** 604-874-7307

**Vancouver Adult Mental Health Intake (VAMHI):** 604-675-3997

**Children and Youth Mental Health:** 604-675-3895

**Older Adult Mental Health Intake:** 604-709-6785

**Access Central (Addictions Services):** 1-866-658-1221



## S.M.A.R.T Goals

New Years resolutions (and any other goals for that matter) can sometimes have a tendency to take on a very vague form. This can be one of the biggest barriers to being successful in achieving goals.

There is a “tool” that many professionals use to support their clients in setting and achieving goals, but its use is not limited to that setting. As you may have guessed, it is called the S.M.A.R.T goal setting tool.

S.M.A.R.T is an acronym which is broken down as follows:

S	M	A	R	T
<b>Specific</b>	<b>Measurable</b>	<b>Attainable</b>	<b>Realistic</b>	<b>Timely</b>
What <u>specifically</u> do you want to do?	How will you know when you've reached it?	Is it in your power to accomplish it?	Can you realistically achieve it?	<u>When exactly</u> do you want to accomplish it?

As you can see, this tool does not let us get away with goals like “I will look after myself better this year”. The SMART version of this goal will look more like this:

**S** I will attend 1 of the 2 Family Connections Support groups offered by the Family Support and Involvement Team in January 2016 (You could be even more specific and pick which session. The group times are listed in this Newsletter’s calendar).

**M** I will keep track of my attendance on the calendar in the kitchen.

**A** I am able to attend the group after work, and I am able to take the bus to the group.

**R** There are no present reasons why I can not achieve this goal.

**T** I will accomplish this goal in January 2016.

You may find it helpful to keep SMART in mind as you read through this newsletter.

# Your Brain Will Believe What You Tell It

The changes that we decide to make can be as simple as committing to look at things from a different perspective, and reflecting on how we tend to perceive the world around us.

Here is a fun little example of how a different perspective of the same thing can make a world of difference.

**Today was the absolute worst day ever  
And don't try to convince me that  
There's something good in every day  
Because, when you take a closer look,  
This world is a pretty evil place.  
Even if  
Some goodness does shine through once in a while  
Satisfaction and happiness don't last. And it's not  
true that  
It's all in the mind and heart  
Because  
True happiness can be obtained  
Only if one's surroundings are good  
It's not true that good exists  
I'm sure that you can agree to that  
The reality  
Creates  
My attitude  
It's all beyond my control  
And you'll never in a million years hear me say that  
Today was a good day**

Look at things in a  
DIFFERENT  
Perspective

**Now read from the bottom to the top**

## Knowledge is Power

Another goal that you may want to consider as a family member of a loved one with a mental illness and/or substance use problem, is to increase your own understanding of what your loved one is dealing with, and how best to support them. This goal can be worked towards by talking with your loved ones care team and connecting with the various support groups available to you in the community. Here are just a couple of the groups available to you, the back pages of the newsletter provide write ups and contact information for other community groups, and a calendar showing their times and dates.

### Parents Forever

#### supporting families affected by substance use.

PARENTS FOREVER is a professionally supported, mutual support group for parents and family members of adult addicted children (18 years of age and up)

Every second Friday evening, PARENTS FOREVER provides a safe and confidential place for parents and family members to come together and share their experiences, their wisdom and their courage. With the support of the group, they learn new strategies and ways of coping, including how to remain Ever Hopeful, With No Expectations.

<http://www.parentsforever.ca/>



From Grief to Action is a volunteer-based not-for-profit association in British Columbia. They are a voice and a support network for families and friends affected by drug use. FGTA developed and

published *The Coping Kit for families*. Available for free on their website, this toolkit offers practical advice and information for families who are supporting someone living with addiction.

Topics addressed in the book include:

- Information about addiction
- Reliable information on drugs including risks, harm reduction, signs of overdose and withdrawal
- Communicating as a family
- Addiction treatment and support resource information
- How to find help
- Information about recovery

If you would like to receive a copy of this free resource, visit [www.fgta.ca](http://www.fgta.ca)

*“Learn new strategies and ways of coping.”*

## The Family Connections Support Group

The Family Support and Involvement Team has a new support group for family and friends of individuals with mental illness and/or substance use concerns.

The group is being held at the CIBC Centre for Patients and Families at the Jim Pattison Pavilion at VGH and is co-facilitated by a family member and supported by a Library Technician. We are very excited to pilot this approach of having an embedded Librarian Technician in the group and are grateful to the CIBC Centre for Patients and Families for partnering with us on this exciting endeavour. The Library Technician will provide research and up-to-date information based on the needs of the group, while showing participants how to access useful and reliable information by asking the “right” kinds of questions. In addition to all of this, we aim to create a welcoming and supportive space in which family members can share their experiences with each other and feel supported and strengthened in their efforts to help their loved ones.

The group runs twice a month and family members are free to attend on a regular basis or drop in as needed. We hope that having the group on the VGH campus will make it easier for families to attend who are supporting a loved one at the Psychiatric Assessment Unit (PAU), Inpatient Psychiatry or Willow Pavilion, though all family members and supporters are welcome.

**DATE:** Every first Thursday and third Monday of the month

**TIME:** 6:00 – 8:00 p.m.

**PLACE:** CIBC Center for Patients and Families at the Jim Pattison Pavilion, Vancouver General Hospital, 899 W. 12th Ave (behind the Information Center)

For questions or more information please contact:

isabella.mori@vch.ca, 604 290-3817 or

becky.hynes@vch.ca , 604 313-1918



*“The Library Technician will provide research and up-to-date information based on the needs of the group, while showing participants how to access useful and reliable information by asking the “right” kinds of questions.”*

Another part of becoming more educated about the care available to your loved one, involves supporting the care providers to improve the services they are providing by sharing your experiences, both positive and negative. One way in which to do this is to contact the Family Support and Involvement team (our contact information is on the front of the newsletter), another is to use the communication protocol described below.

## Communication Protocol for Individuals

### Receiving Services in Vancouver Coastal Health's Acute

Seeing the need for better communication among health care providers, Vancouver Coastal Health Mental Health and Addiction has created a Communication Protocol which came into effect August 2015. This protocol promotes collaborative partnerships between VGH and UBC hospital and families, family physicians and community mental health and addiction services,



as well as within the hospital itself. This protocol was forged in collaboration with family and consumer representatives, mental health teams, UBC, VGH Emergency, family doctors, mental health housing, and the police. It focuses on persons who are using the “acute” system: people who experience relatively short hospital stays in Emergency, the Psychiatric Assessment Unit, the Health Centre at Heather and 12<sup>th</sup>, or UBC Hospital.

We have gathered a few questions to help you determine whether you were provided all the information and collaboration you and your loved one need in order to optimally support your loved one. As you can imagine, achieving 100% satisfaction in reply to all the questions below will often not be possible. However, it is useful for you to know the benchmarks, and that VCH and UBC are committed to working towards transparent and speedy communication in all these matters. If you have concerns or questions regarding communication between or with health care providers, please contact us!

*“If you have concerns or questions regarding communication between or with health care providers, please contact us!”*

To make it simple, we are calling your loved one “X” in the questions below. We are also talking about “key care providers”. These are the most important care providers for your loved one and would typically be people like family physician, case manager, psychiatrist, psychologist, nurse practitioner, etc. Here are the questions:

1. Were you the key care provider and X’s mental health team contacted “as soon as possible” at admission?
2. Did the team contact you “as soon as possible” to arrange participation in collaborative treatment and discharge planning?
3. Did X’s mental health team visit X?
4. Were you, the key care provider and the mental health team contacted as soon as discharge plans were clear?
5. Were you, the key care provider and the mental health team contacted prior to discharge?
6. Did you and X receive a copy of the “When I Leave Hospital” form?
7. Were you and/or X provided with information regarding follow up services?
8. Was X seen by the key care provider and/or mental health team within 28 days of discharge?
9. How much do you feel that the Guiding Principles were followed?

*Guiding Principle for Patient and Family Centered Care Collaborative communication among service providers, patients and their family/ support system is related to successful outcomes for patients. All patients will be actively engaged in a dialogue about their rights to confidentiality and what collaboration with family/supports, ideally looks like. Patients are asked to identify supports, who they would like to be involved in their care, and to what extent. Service providers will adhere to the “Family Involvement with Mental Health and Addiction Services” Policy CA\_4200. [The policy can be found here <http://www.spotlightonmentalhealth.com/family-involvement/>]*

Additional questions arising from the family policy:

10. Did you generally feel supported as a family member/supporter?
11. Did the care providers help you feel educated about X’s illness, treatment options and choices?
12. Did you feel that you were treated in a culturally sensitive manner?
13. Were your strengths, expertise and contributions acknowledged and taken into consideration?

**Mood Disorders Association of BC (MDABC)** – Mutual support groups for families of individuals living with a mood disorder. 2<sup>nd</sup> and 4<sup>th</sup> Tuesday each month, 7 - 9 p.m., Mount St. Joseph Hospital, 3080 Prince Edward St, Harvest Room A. 2<sup>nd</sup> Monday of each month, 6:30-8:30pm at Evergreen Community Health Centre (3425 Crowley) .Contact 604-873-0103

**Raven Song Family Support Group**– Support group for families who have a loved one living with mental illness. 2<sup>nd</sup> Wednesday of each month 6:30 – 8:30 p.m. at Raven Song Community Health Centre, 2450 Ontario Street, Vancouver. Contact Sally @ Tel: (604)270 7841 ext 2126

**SPH Family Support Group**- Support for families who have a loved one living with mental illness. Last Thursday of each month, 6-7:30pm. St Paul’s Hospital, 1081 Burrard Street, Room 2B-169, 2nd floor, Burrard Building. To register, call Kaye 604-682-2344 local 68964

**VCH Eating Disorder Program (VCHED)– Family Support Group** – for friends and family members of individuals living with an eating disorder. 1st Wednesday of each month, 6 – 7:30 p.m., 3rd Floor, 2750 East Hastings, Vancouver. Contact Hella at 604-675-2531 ext 20689.

**Parents Forever** – Support group for families of adult children living with addiction. Group meets every 2<sup>nd</sup> Friday at St. Mary’s Kerrisdale, 2490 W 37<sup>th</sup> Ave., Vancouver. Contact Frances Kenny, 604-524-4230 or [fkenny@uniserve.com](mailto:fkenny@uniserve.com)

**Pathways Clubhouse Chinese Family Support Group** – Education sessions for Chinese families who have a loved one living with mental illness. 2<sup>nd</sup> Saturday of each month. , 1 – 4:00 p.m., Room 345/50, 7000 Minoru Blvd, Richmond. Contact Bessie.wang@pathwaysclubhouse.com or 604-276-8834, ext 12.

**GRASP Support Group** – GRASP offers peer-led mutual support groups for families or individuals who have had a loved one die as a result of substance abuse or addiction. 2<sup>nd</sup> Thursday of each month, 7-9 p.m. at Gilmore Community School 50 South Gilmore Ave, Rm 207. Please email [graspvancouver@gmail.com](mailto:graspvancouver@gmail.com) to register.

**SMART, Family and Friends** - Support group for family and friends to learn and implement self care, boundary setting, and compassionate communication tools. Every Tuesday 6:30-7:30PM. Every other Friday 6:30-7:30 at Three Bridges Addictions 1290 Hornby Street, Rm 310. Call Oona @ 604-714-3480. Thursday 6:00-7:00PM at Raven Song 2450 Ontario Street, 1st floor. 604-872-8441.

**Family Connections Support Group (FCSP)**—Every first Thursday and third Monday of the month in the CIBC Center for Patients and Families at the Jim Pattison Pavilion, Vancouver General Hospital, 899 W. 12th Ave (behind the Information Center) For questions or more information please contact: [isabella.mori@vch.ca](mailto:isabella.mori@vch.ca), 604 290-3817 or [becky.hynes@vch.ca](mailto:becky.hynes@vch.ca) , 604 313-1918



# Family Support Groups



Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
					1 SMART	2
3	4	5 SMART	6 VCHED	7 FCSP	8 Parents Forever	9 Pathways
10	11	12 SMART MDABC	13 Raven Song	14 GRASP	15 SMART	16
17	18 FCSP	19 SMART	20	21	22 Parents Forever	23
24	25	26 MDABC	27	28 SPH	29 SMART	30