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## Family Connections Marks 1 Year!

July marks the 1 year anniversary of our *Family Connections* newsletter. The *Family Connections* newsletter was developed with the purpose of providing information to family members about mental health and addiction programs and services available through Vancouver Coastal Health and the Vancouver community. Over the past year we have featured programs and services across the Vancouver community that may be of interest to families supporting someone who lives with a mental illness or addiction.

Photo credit: Tova Mori



Family Support and Involvement, from left: Gloria, Jessica, Isabella & Sharon

We would like to take the opportunity to remind you that we value your feedback with regards to the content of our newsletter. If there are particular programs or services that you would like to hear more about, please feel free to let us know!

You can be in touch with any the family support and involvement coordinators to provide you feedback:

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## Concurrent Disorders Program at VGH Outpatient Psychiatry

Vancouver General Hospital (VGH) Outpatient Psychiatry Team (OPT) provides interdisciplinary and comprehensive psychiatric assessment, consultation and time limited group therapy treatment to adults dealing with depression, adjustment and personality issues, generalized anxiety, social anxiety, obsessive compulsive disorder, post-traumatic stress disorder and panic disorders. Beginning this spring, the Outpatient Psychiatry Team is offering an additional stream of service to individuals who are living with a concurrent disorder. This stream is available to individuals who are interested in addressing their use of substances in addition to symptoms of mental illness. Individuals in the concurrent disorder stream have the opportunity to participate in time limited group therapy treatment as well as a comprehensive psychiatric assessment and consultation.

All referrals for the concurrent disorder stream at VGH Outpatient Psychiatry Team (OPT) go through Vancouver Adult Mental Health Intake (VAMHI). VAMHI accepts referrals from physicians, self-referrals, as well as referrals from friends and family members. If you would like to learn more about the program, or to make a referral, contact VAMHI at 604-675-3997.



## MDA Psychiatric Urgent Care Program

The Mood Disorders Association of BC (MDABC), in conjunction with Drs. Ron Remick, Chris Gorman, Judy Allen and Birgitta Donahue, operate a Psychiatric Urgent Care Program. Patients are seen for an initial individual assessment, and follow up is offered in a Group Medical Visit.

**A physician referral is required to access this program.** Physicians may refer patients to our clinic using their own referral form, or by sending a generic fax to 604.873.3095. Once a referral is received at the clinic, the patient will be contacted to book an individual appointment. No patients will be seen without a referral and a pre-booked appointment. Referrals should include:

**If you do not have a current family physician, you may go to First Care Medical Centre at 2590 Commercial Drive (corner of East 10th Avenue), Vancouver, to request a referral.**

**For more information, contact MDABC directly at 604-873-0103**



## VCH Addiction Education Series

The Education Series, a community service of Vancouver Coastal Health, includes videos, lectures and discussions dealing with alcohol and other drugs.

Presented by Donna Barker - donna.barker@vch.ca - 604-873-6733.

All are welcome including clients, potential clients, concerned family members and friends, students, community members, and professionals.

### Jul 6<sup>th</sup> 2014 : THE DEVELOPMENT OF PROBLEM SUBSTANCE USE

- Understanding problematic substance use

### Jul 11<sup>th</sup> 2014 : CHEMICALS AND THE BODY

- How the brain & central nervous system are affected by alcohol and other drugs

### Jul 18<sup>th</sup> 2014 : THE RECOVERY PROCESS

- Lifestyle change and relapse prevention

### Jul 25<sup>th</sup> 2014: THE FAMILY CONTEXT

- Childhood risk factors where substance use is a problem

### Aug 1<sup>st</sup> 2014: SUPPORTING SOMEONE WITH SUBSTANCE PROBLEMS

- How to support your child, partner, friend or any loved one who has a problem with substance use

### Aug 8<sup>th</sup> 2014: HEALING OUR SOCIETY

- A public health approach to drug use

All sessions are held 9:30 a.m. - 11:30 a.m. at Pacific Spirit Community Health Centre.  
2110 West 43rd Ave (at West Boulevard)

**No registration required, all sessions are free to attend.**

## Parents Forever Support Group Continues Through Summer

For the past 14 years, Parents Forever, a mutual support group for parents and family members of loved ones struggling with substance abuse, has provided group meetings throughout the summer months. This year is no exception!

Parents Forever meets every 2<sup>nd</sup> Friday from 7:00 - 9:30 p.m.

Location: St. Mary's Kerrisdale (2490 W 37<sup>th</sup> Ave, Vancouver)

**The following meeting dates are confirmed through the end of summer:**

June 13

June 27

July 11

July 25

August 8

August 22



**For more information, please contact the group facilitator, Frances, at 604-524-4230.**

## Consumer Initiative Fund Accepting Applications Fall 2014

The Vancouver Coastal Health (VCH) Consumer Initiative Fund (CIF) Education & Leisure Fund will be accepting applications starting on Monday, June 16, 2014 through to Monday, July 14, 2014 for autumn courses. This fund offers the opportunity for mental health consumers living in Vancouver to receive a bursary to assist with taking an educational course/activity of their choosing.



### Eligibility Criteria:

- Must be a consumer of mental health services in Vancouver.
- Must be a resident of Vancouver.
- Monies paid to educational institute only. Reimbursements are not issued.
- Applicants can only receive funding every two (2) years.
- Applicants can register for courses up to or exceeding \$400.00, however, applicants are responsible for all costs exceeding \$400.00.
- Applicants must include a brief letter of intent indicating their interest in taking and completing the course/activity. Case Managers are welcome to assist with this process and provide a letter of support.
- Applicant must have own phone number and be able to return a message within 48 hours.
- Registration for courses must be completed by fiscal year end (March 31, 2015).
- Course Registration is the applicant's responsibility.
- Completed applications are randomly selected. Successful applicants may be asked to complete a short survey regarding the bursary process.

**The deadline for applications is Monday, July 14, 2014.**

A random draw for 10 successful applications will take place on Tuesday, July 15, 2014. The application form and criteria will also be made available online at: [www.spotlightonmentalhealth.com](http://www.spotlightonmentalhealth.com) and at the reception desk at #200-520 West 6th Avenue.

## CMHA's Living Life to the Full Course

The Canadian Mental Health Association (CMHA) is offering *Living Life to the Full*, an eight week group CBT course over the summer at the Vancouver Branch, starting on July 3<sup>rd</sup>. There are some spaces available on partial subsidy. This course is ideal for clients or family members wanting to learn strategies to cope with low mood or anxiety, or who would like to make change in their lives and learn life skills. They will also offer the course again in September.

### Info:

July 3<sup>rd</sup> to August 21<sup>st</sup>, Thursday evenings, 6:30 to 8:00 pm

### Cost:

\$185/participant (plus gst), including all course booklets & worksheets.

A limited number of bursaries are available for individuals with a lower in-comes at the reduced rate of \$100/person (plus gst)

**If you'd like to learn more, call 604-872-4902 ext 233 or visit [www.vb.cmha.bc.ca](http://www.vb.cmha.bc.ca).**



## Re-empowering family members disempowered by addiction

*Submitted by Isabella Mori*

The following contains material from an interesting article by Dr. Jim Orford of the University of Birmingham about supporting families affected by addiction.

Just under one hundred million is a conservative estimate of the number of adults whose lives are adversely affected by the alcohol or drug addiction of close relatives. The particular qualities of the experience of having to cope with excessive drinking or drug taking in the family can make it a unique and highly stressful and disempowering experience. Dr. Orford's research has explored this experience and developed and evaluated a method for helping them, using a 5-step approach:

1. Listen non-judgmentally and carefully to the family's story
2. Provide information
3. Discuss ways of coping, including any dilemmas posed in the efforts to cope
4. Explore support options
5. Arrange further help as needed (including the involvement of the addicted relative)

Family members' symptoms of ill-health tend to reduce following receipt of the 5-Step Method, and changes of these types are often seen:

1. An increase in independence or distance from the relative's problem drinking or drug taking, with more focus on oneself and one's own needs.
2. Family members speak of being more assertive with their relatives, by communicating more directly with the relative than previously, being more directive in arranging alternative activities, or being firmer in maintaining a course of action.
3. Family members explain how sessions have helped them become less emotionally involved in their interactions with their relatives; finding a different way of dealing with the anger and frustration caused by the drug misuse, acting more calmly, and seeing the positive effects of this change on the drug user's behaviour.
4. Achieving a better understanding of the problem and seeing the links with one's own health - gaining an understanding about their relatives' drinking or drug taking, or a realisation of the links between the drinking or drug problem and their own physical or mental health. Self blame is lessened (e.g. thinking they had been a cause of the drug problem, thinking they should have dealt with it, etc.)

Orford suggests that his model might even be more effective if there was a strong community aspect: A question that remains for me, therefore, is how our programme, which also embodies empowerment principles and has the potential to empower large numbers of women (and men) affected by alcohol and drug misuse, can move towards a more collective, community-oriented way of working.

The challenge, if this type of work is to move from individual to collective action, lies in the largely hidden nature of the problem. Although the numbers of individuals and families affected are in the tens of millions world-wide, the problems remain largely private ones, unspoken about in public; the mothers, wives, fathers and other family members affected by addiction problems rarely have an effective collective voice.

*If you are interested in learning more about addiction services with Vancouver Coastal Health (including detox and counselling services), call Access Central at 1-866-658-1221*

*Parents Forever is a support group for families who have a loved one living with addiction. They meet on a biweekly basis. Contact the group facilitator Frances (604-524-4230) or check out the calendar on the last page for more information.*

Source: Re-Empowering Family Members Disempowered by Addiction: Support for Individual or Collective Action? By Jim Orford

## Psychoeducation Group for Families

The Family Support and Involvement team at Vancouver Coastal Health is excited to offer a psychoeducational group for families beginning in September 2014. This 9-week group is designed to provide education to families who have a loved one living with mental illness.

### Topics Include:

- Information about mental illness;
- Understanding medication;
- Navigating mental health services in Vancouver;
- Communicating with your loved one;
- Family self care.

### Details:

Monday evenings for 9 weeks

September 8 - November 10, 2014

6:00 - 8:00 p.m.

Space is limited! If you would like more information, or to register, please contact:

Jessica Wilkins  
[Jessica.wilkins@vch.ca](mailto:Jessica.wilkins@vch.ca)  
604-736-2881

or

Sharon Marmion  
[sharon.marmion@vch.ca](mailto:sharon.marmion@vch.ca)

## Richmond Chinese Family Support Group

各位朋友，加拿大心理衛生會，列治文中文愛心小組每月一次活動將在下個周末舉行。

請參加下星期六下午的免費中文活動。

日期: **2014年7月12日**

地點: 列治文加愛中心3樓345/50會議室

7000 Minoru Blvd. (夾Granville)

**打開心窗**互助小組

時間: 下午1點至2點15分

免費**愛心小組**主題講座

主題: 舉杯可會愁更愁?

主講: **羅秋霖** 註冊社工

酒的好壞各參半。我們會說的“飲喜酒”、“去酒店”，似乎有酒的地方就是喜慶的地方。的確，一般的喜筵、聚會都少不了以酒助慶。人會如何飲酒上癮的呢？酗酒是什麼呢？這個講座裏，嘉賓講員會提供真正的減壓、消愁攻略，慎防舉杯愁更愁！

## Calendar of Events

July 2014

Sun	Mon	Tues	Wed	Thurs	Fri	Sat
		1 VCH Eating Disorder Group	2 Canada Day Statutory Holiday	3	4	5
6	7	8 Mood Disorder Association Support Group	9 Raven Song Support Group	10	11 Parents Forever Support Group	12 Chinese Family Support Group
13	14	15 VCH Eating Disorder Group	16	17	18	19
20	21	22 Mood Disorder Association Support Group	23	24	25 Parents Forever Support Group	26
27	28	29	30	31		

## Support Group Listing

**Mood Disorders Association of BC** – 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. 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 604-736-2881 or [jessica.wilkins@vch.ca](mailto:jessica.wilkins@vch.ca)

**VCH Eating Disorder Program – Family Support Group** – for friends and family members of individuals living with an eating disorder. 1st and 3rd Tuesday 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)

**CMHA Chinese Family Support Group** – Education sessions for Chinese families who have a loved one living with mental illness. Richmond Caring Place, 1 – 4:00 p.m., Room 345/50, 7000 Minoru Blvd, Richmond. Contact [bessie.wang@cmha.bc.ca](mailto:bessie.wang@cmha.bc.ca) or 604-276-8834, ext 12. Or check out their blog at <http://cmhachinese.wordpress.com>