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New Family Involvement Policy at VCH!

In July 2013, the new Family Involvement Policy for Mental Health and Addictions services at Vancouver Coastal Health (VCH) was officially launched! This new family policy recognizes that family involvement is a vital component of the framework of recovery, the model that guides all mental health and addictions programs and services at VCH. Consumers, service providers and families benefit greatly when family members are involved as full partners in the care and support of their loved ones. For the purpose of the policy, the term “family” is defined broadly, and includes significant others who support and/or care for a loved one a daily basis.

The purpose of this policy is:

- To achieve better outcomes for clients through collaboration among clients, family members and care providers;
- To guide care providers to support, educate and involve family members

What kinds of recommendations are included in the new policy?

- Information on how to foster collaborative working relationships with family members who provide support and/or care for a loved one living with mental illness;
- Recognition of family members as part of the care team;
- Guidance and recommendations for staff regarding information sharing with families in accordance with provincial and federal legislation.

We are very excited about the launch of this new policy. The Vancouver Family Advisory Committee provided guidance and support to the development of these guidelines. Many thanks to all of the family members, consumers, and service providers who worked tirelessly to ensure its development and completion!

New This Fall! Tertiary Mental Health & Addictions Family Education Evening

As a family member, you play an important role in supporting the recovery of your loved one living with a serious mental illness and/or addiction. We understand that when families have access to information about mental illness and addiction, treatment and supports they are better able to identify symptoms, recognize warning signs of relapse, support treatment goals and promote recovery. The education evenings planned for the coming fall will feature a variety of speakers specializing in different subject areas related to mental health and addiction. All family members and friends of individuals accessing a VCH Tertiary Mental Health & Addiction program are welcome to attend the education evenings.

Sessions will include a Q&A followed by an opportunity to connect informally with other family members. Stay tuned for a listing of upcoming speakers in the September newsletter.

This group will be open and ongoing (2nd Wednesday of every month), no pre-registration is required.



Start Date: October 9th, 2013, 6-8PM
Location: Willow Pavilion, 1st floor Multipurpose Room
805 West 12th Ave., Vancouver

For more information, please contact:
Sharon Marmion, Coordinator for Consumer & Family Involvement
(604) 313 1918 or sharon.marmion@vch.ca

Save the Date for Sumac Days

Join us for a BBQ and other fun summer activities

Families and neighbours of Sumac Place are welcome

Date: Friday Sept 13th (afternoon/early evening)

Location: Sumac Place front lawn



For more information about the event, please contact Joyce Wiebe at 604-886-1860 ext 2280 or by email at joyce.wiebe@vch.ca

Willow Pavilion Summer BBQs!

This summer, staff at Willow Pavilion welcomes the opportunity to connect with current consumers and their families in a relaxing atmosphere at our monthly summer BBQs. Come out and enjoy some delicious food, recreational activities, and good company in the Heather Green Space. All Willow Pavilion family members are welcome.

BBQs scheduled for the following dates:

- **August 15th, 2013**
- **September 12th, 2013**

Time: Beginning at 11:30am

Location: Heather Green space (Corner of Willow and 10th Avenue)

We look forward to seeing you there!

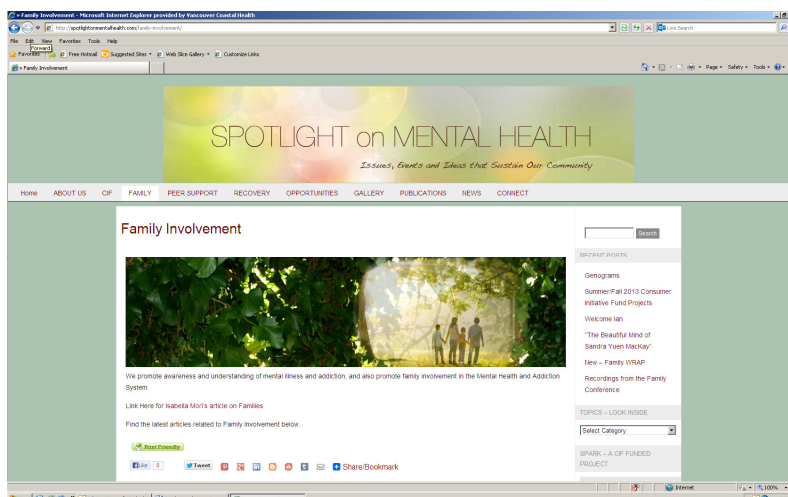


Check Out the Spotlight on Mental Health Website!

Are you looking for information and resources regarding mental health? “Spotlight on Mental Health” is a consumer-led mental health awareness and education website at Vancouver Coastal Health. It includes mental health articles, educational resources, and information about the consumer initiative fund.

For family-centred information and resources, visit:

<http://spotlightonmentalhealth.com/family-involvement/>

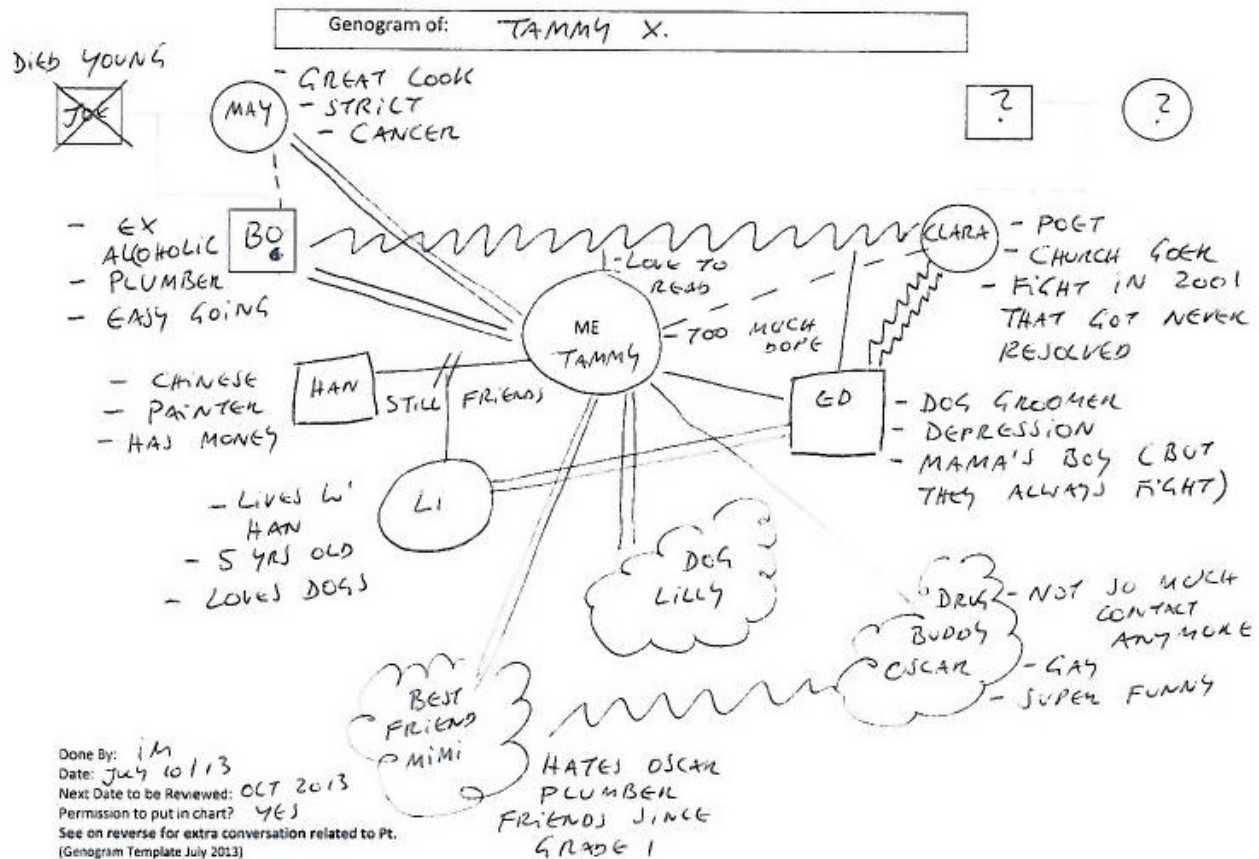


Genogram Project at Burnaby Centre for Mental Health & Addiction

From May to July, I had the good fortune to supervise a nursing student from Kwantlen College. Her major project was to try out the use of genograms at the Burnaby Center for Mental Health and Addiction. Genograms are a type of family tree. The one we've come up with can look like the one below (of course Tammy is a fictional client.) There's not enough room to go into all the details (for that, go to <http://spotlightonmentalhealth.com>, click on "Families" and read the genogram article). Just a few interesting tidbits for now:

This genogram contains information about the type of relationships between people. A strong, good relationship shows two lines. A conflicted relationship shows a jagged line. It also adds information about people. For example the client's brother is a dog groomer! As well, we have what we've dubbed "cloud people" - people who are not related by blood or marriage but are nevertheless important in the client's life. This can even be a pet, as you can see! It takes only 15 minutes or less to do such a genogram. The process is driven by the client, e.g. we will not direct them to give us information about their grandparents if it is obvious that they want to discuss their next-door neighbor. Clearly, that person is important to them, so let's hear it! We will also put a process in place to debrief with clients if it turns out that having this genogram conversation brings up traumatic memories, or is triggering in any way.

-Isabella Mori




Mental Health Commission Launches New Family Caregiver Support Guidelines

Family members provide daily supportive care to ill family members and are vital parts of any treatment and support team. Last month, The Mental Health Commission of Canada (MHCC) launched its *National Guidelines for a Comprehensive Service System to Support Family Caregivers of Adults with Mental Health Problems and Illnesses*. These guidelines for policy makers and service providers attempt to recognize and support the unique needs of family members providing care to a loved one who is living with mental illness, including recommendations regarding services and supports that family members find useful.

According to the Mental Health Commission of Canada, the new guidelines and recommendations are designed to help increase a family caregiver's ability to provide support to their loved one while also maintaining their own well-being. They were developed in partnership with 6 family focus groups across Canada, as well as the commission's Family Caregivers Advisory Committee.

These recommendations include (but are not limited to):

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- At each contact in the mental health system, require service providers to assess needs of family caregivers and encourage them to become appropriately engaged in their relative's care;
 - Make evidence-based family psycho-education programs that are delivered by skilled facilitators widely available. Inform family caregivers about these programs and encourage them to participate;
 - Require service providers to include family caregivers in treatment planning where appropriate;
 - At the time of initial diagnosis by a mental health service provider, provide timely information relevant to each stage of the mental illness to caregivers and include information about the illness trajectory, evidence-based treatment options, privacy laws, services available and guidance on supporting recovery. Emphasize self-care for the caregivers;
 - Assist and train mental health service providers in becoming knowledgeable about and sensitive to the range of relationships and associated challenges, roles and support needs of all family caregivers;
 - Invite family caregivers to participate in reviewing existing mental health services, identifying gaps and designing plans to address these gaps with policy designers and mental health service administrators.

If you would like to find out more information on these new guidelines, or to read the document in its entirety, please visit:

www.mentalhealthcommission.ca/English/family-caregivers-guidelines?routetoken=07ce93625843e3838beff0fbdfe4e382&terminial=91

Get Set & Connect! Program at CMHA

The Canadian Mental Health Association (CMHA) offers the Get Set & Connect program to individuals living with mental illness. This program offers the opportunity for individuals living with mental illness to build relationships and connect socially with their peers in the community. The program offers one-on-one coaching, small group activities with peers, and programming designed to support individuals to make connections with their community.

We will provide information on different community-based mental health programs each month!

What are the criteria to participate?

- Be a person with lived experience in mental health concerns
- Have community inclusion as a goal
- 19 years of age or older
- Living in Vancouver

Are you interested in learning more about this exciting program?

Potential participants are asked to attend an orientation session to learn more about the program.

Next session is Tuesday August 20th at 4pm.

Location: Firehall Public Library (in the Meeting Room), 1455 West 10th Avenue



Sharing Stories Workshop – Fall 2013

The **Sharing Stories** (of Mental Illness and Recovery) 8-week workshop has been selected by the Consumer Initiative Fund and will be running for the third time this fall!

Workshops run eight weeks will take place Monday afternoons, **Sept 9 - November 4, 2013** (participants agree to attend all 8 sessions).

If you or someone you know would like to explore the journey through mental illness and beyond, this workshop is a great opportunity! During the workshop, the concept of 'Recovery' will be explored, participants will write their personal story, and learn to present it for an audience.

Graduates from the program have many opportunities, including joining a speakers' bureau, have articles published in newsletters, plus increased confidence and self-awareness!

An orientation on August 12th is open to all who would like to learn more about the workshop, please RSVP.

For more information, please visit spotlightonmentalhealth.com Pre-registration is required and space is limited to six participants. Those interested will meet with facilitator in advance to ensure it's a good fit.

To register for the upcoming orientation session on August 12th, please contact: Seia Roots. Program Coordinator at sharinastoriesofrecovery@gmail.com

The flyer for the Sharing Stories Mental Illness and Recovery workshop includes the following information:

- 8-Week Workshop**: All levels welcome! Mondays 1:00-4:00, Sept 9th - Nov 4th 2013. Space limited. *PRE-REGISTRATION REQUIRED!
- Participants will:**
 - Attend all 8 sessions
 - Explore your personal experience of Recovery
 - Write your story
 - Learn to present your story
 - Get a certificate
 - Present your story at the graduation event
 - Pay no fee
- Workshop Location:** Canadian Mental Health Association, Vancouver-Burnaby Branch (Cedar Hill & Burnaby)
- Organized in part by:** Vancouver Coastal Health, The Consumer Initiative Fund Presents
- Website:** www.spotlightonmentalhealth.com
- Contact:** To register, contact Seia Roots at sharinastoriesofrecovery@gmail.com

Calendar of Events

August 2013

Sun	Mon	Tues	Wed	Thurs	Fri	Sat
				1	2	3
4	5 Statutory Holiday	6	7	8	9 Parents Forever Support Group 7-9:30pm	10 CMHA Chinese Family Support Group 1:30-4pm
11	12	13 MDA Family Support Group, 7-9pm	14	15 WP Older Adult Caregiver Group WP Summer BBQ! MDA Education	16	17
18	19	20 CMHA Get Set Connect Orientation Session	21	22 Kits/Fairview Family Support Group 530-730pm	23 Parents Forever Support Group 7-9:30pm	24
25	26	27 MDA Family Support Group, 7-9pm	28	29	30	31

Upcoming Events!

Save the Date! RDSP Workshop - 23 September, 2-4 p.m.

Mark your calendars! The Special Advisory Committee to the Mental Health Teams at Vancouver Coastal Health is hosting an RDSP workshop in September. A representative from the Planned Lifetime Advocacy Network (PLAN) will be presenting a session to provide information about the RDSP, the Grant and the Bond, as well as the Disability Tax Credit (DTC).

Registration is mandatory.

Contact PLAN to register: inquiries@plan.ca or 604-439-9566 www.planinstitute.ca

Parents Forever Support Group - August 9 & 23, 7-9:30 p.m.

Parents Forever is a professionally supported, mutual support group for parents and family members of adult addicted children (18 years of age and up). **Location:** 2490 West 37th Avenue, Kerrisdale
Please call Frances at 604-524-4230 or email fkenny@uniserve.com

MDA Education Evening “Physical Activity, Mindfulness & Mental Health” - August 15, 7 - 9 p.m.

MDABC and UBC are collaborating on an innovative series of classes designed to support you becoming more physically active. Research has found that regular walking can reduce anxiety and depression and improve overall well-being. Mindfulness practices can help relieve stress, lower blood pressure, reduce chronic pain, and improve sleep. Come learn about this new program designed to increase wellness.

Location: Sunrise Hall, 1950 Windermere St, Vancouver. Contact: 604-873-0103 info@mdabc.net

CMHA Chinese Family Support Group and Education Session - Saturday August 10, 1:30-4:00 p.m.

Attend 1:30 - 2:30pm for a volunteer-led, mutual support group for families with a loved one living with mental illness. Beginning at 2:30pm, join for an education session, “Where Do I Start? Navigating the Mental Health System” facilitated by Dr. Matthew Chow, BC Children’s Hospital. For more information, or to register, please contact Bessie Wang at 604-276-8834 ext. 12. **Location:** 7000 Minoru Blvd, Richmond