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### Your Family Involvement & Support Team

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## Registration is Open!



**Registration is now open for the 10<sup>th</sup> Annual Family Conference on held May 23, 2015!** The Family Conference is designed to promote awareness and understanding of mental illness and addiction and to promote family involvement in Mental Health and Addiction services. It is sponsored by Vancouver Coastal Health, Vancouver Family Advisory Committee, BC Schizophrenia Society and Mood Disorders Association of BC. Everyone is invited to receive current and hopeful information from families and health professionals, to hear stories of recovery and to obtain support to navigate the path of recovery.

This year, we are excited to welcome two keynote speakers who will be providing information on mental health and addiction recovery. Angela Louie, Rehabilitation and Recovery Coordinator for Fraser Health Authority will speak about *Recovery: Beyond Illness to Growth*. In the afternoon, Dr. Debbie Thompson, Clinical Pharmacy Specialist at Fraser Health Authority will speak about *Medications & Recovery: The Journey from Onset, Stabilization and Maintenance*.

Breakout sessions over the course of the day include information about accessing mental health services in Vancouver, support for families who have a loved one struggling with mental illness and substance use, the Early Psychosis Intervention Program at VCH and cognitive behavioural therapy.


**When:** May 23, 2015 9:00am - 4:40 p.m.

**Where:** Paetzold Auditorium, Vancouver General Hospital

**Cost:** \$50 per person, \$150 for a family of 4

To register, visit: [www.annualfamilyconference.com](http://www.annualfamilyconference.com)

*Limited financial assistance for admission cost is available on a first come first served basis. Please contact [jessica.wilkins@vch.ca](mailto:jessica.wilkins@vch.ca) for more info.*

**Mental Health Wellness and Your Medications Workshop**

**Burnaby Mental Health &  
Substance Use Advisory Committee  
Presents**

**MENTAL HEALTH WELLNESS  
AND YOUR MEDICATIONS**

**Tuesday**      **&**      **Wednesday**  
**April 28, 2015**      **May 13, 2015**  
**6:00 pm to 8:50 pm**      **6:00 pm to 8:50 pm**

**Bob Prittie Metrotown Library**  
6100 Willingdon Ave, Burnaby  
Free parking off Kingsborough Street


Guest speakers:  
**Dr. Debbie Thompson**  
BScPharm., PharmD, BCPP  
Clinical Pharmacy Specialist

**Dr Vivian Yih**  
BSc.Pharm., PharmD  
Clinical Pharmacy Technician

- Confidentially and openly discuss your medications
- Small discussion groups
- Mental Health/Substance Use and your physical well-being
- Self medicating?

**Registration required – Attendance Limited**  
Contact Catherine: [mcleod.c@telus.net](mailto:mcleod.c@telus.net)

**Refreshments provided**

**Support Mental Health Awareness and Recovery** 

## MDABC Spring Cognitive Behavioural Therapy Courses

Cognitive Behavioural Therapy (CBT) is recognized as one of the most effective treatments for the majority of people suffering mood disorders and many other mental health problems. The Mood Disorder Association of BC (MDABC) offer structured group therapy courses which are led by a certified therapist.

This spring, MDABC is offering a number of CBT courses, including:

- Mindfulness-Based Cognitive Therapy (MBCT) for Depression
- Building Emotional Resilience: CBT for Depression Relapse Prevention
- CBT Youth Group for Depression (ages 12 to 17)
- CBT for Generalized Anxiety Disorder (GAD)
- CBT for Social Anxiety



For a full list of their spring course calendar, please visit: <http://www.mdabc.net/cognitive-behavioral-groups>

MDABC accepts self-referrals to their cognitive behavioural therapy courses using the referral form on their website.

[http://www.mdabc.net/sites/default/files/pdf/self%20ref%20form%20Spring%202015\\_1.pdf](http://www.mdabc.net/sites/default/files/pdf/self%20ref%20form%20Spring%202015_1.pdf)

Once this form is received, MDABC will contact you directly for registration.

A non-refundable fee of \$300 must be paid at the time of registration.

For all other enquiries, please contact Polly at [polly.guetta@mdabc.net](mailto:polly.guetta@mdabc.net) or phone 604-873-0103

## New! ACT Family Group

VCH Assertive Community Treatment (ACT) Teams provide flexible, comprehensive services to individuals with mental illness and addiction and who have multiple complex needs. Individuals served by ACT teams include those who are homeless, those that come to the attention of the criminal justice system and individuals who frequently use emergency services.

Clients receiving services from an ACT team are supported through intensive outreach. Using a recovery-oriented and client-directed approach, the team provides treatment and supports the client to maintain stable housing, build self-management skills and engage in substance use treatment.

Beginning in March 2015, a new support group launched for family members of individuals currently connected to an ACT team. The ACT family group meets once every three months from 6:30pm-8:00 pm on a Thursday. The support group offers education on various topics related to mental health and addictions tailored to family members connected to an ACT team as well as the opportunity for support.

For more information, please contact [lisa.jiwa@vch.ca](mailto:lisa.jiwa@vch.ca) or [tracy.adams@vch.ca](mailto:tracy.adams@vch.ca)

## A Journey Through Mental Health Services in Vancouver

Submitted by Isabella Mori

When their loved one first encounters a mental health crisis, families often wonder, “what happens next?” Let’s imagine Neela, a fictional client, moving in and through mental health and addiction services in Vancouver. Services in other areas (Surrey, Richmond, etc.) may be slightly different but overall, the general shape of the journey is similar.

### Primary Care - Family physicians, counsellors, etc.

Neela has always struggled with depression. When she lost her job, she started drinking heavily again. Her *family doctor* refers her to an Addiction Counsellor at Evergreen, one of the community health clinics. With that counsellor’s help, Neela decreased her drinking.

### “Acute” - Emergency, Psychiatric Assessment Unit, in-patient

Unfortunately, a month later her father died. The grief intensified her depression to the point where she tried to take her life.

Her spouse, Mary, found her before it was too late, and brought her to VGH Emergency. There, it was established that Neela would be at a high risk of attempting suicide again.

Neela was then admitted to the Psychiatric Assessment Unit in order to stabilize her and to assess what course of treatment

would be best to decrease suicide risks and alleviate her depression. PAU is a locked unit where patients typically don’t spend more than five days. Discussing Neela’s history with herself, Mary, and her brother, it turned out that her depression was not only complicated by a long-standing drinking problem but that she also might fit the profile for Bipolar Disorder. PAU usually focuses on an initial (often tentative) diagnosis, on pharmaceutical treatment, and on stabilizing patients so that they are not a threat to themselves or others.

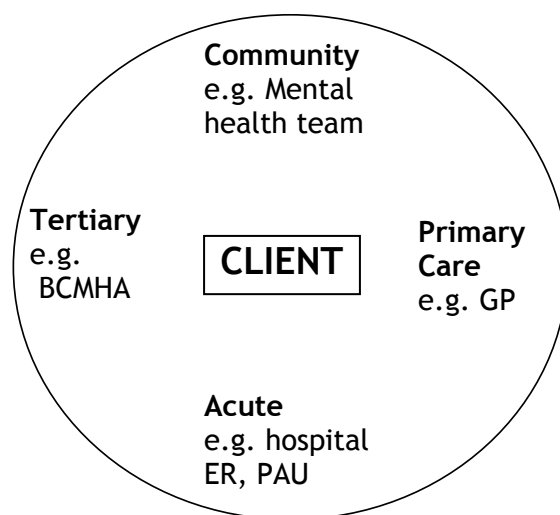
After three days at PAU, Neela is sent to West One, one of the four Inpatient units. West One also has beds for people with concurrent disorders (i.e. a mental illness combined with addiction). Inpatient units employ nurses, psychiatrists, psychologists, occupational therapists, etc. Inpatient units are not locked. People typically stay for one to four weeks. Neela found it easy to trust the psychologist, and more issues came up, such as PTSD due to sexual assault, a medication addiction, and earlier suicide attempts.

### “Tertiary” - Longer-Term Residential

Because of the complicated nature of Neela’s mental health and addiction issues, she was referred to the provincial Burnaby Center For Mental Health and Addiction. She lived at BCMHA for six months, working with a fully interdisciplinary team, including art and recreation therapists, mental health workers, nurse practitioners, acupuncturists, etc. BCMHA is a longer-term residential facility; we usually refer to them as “tertiary.” As Neela got better, she spent more and more time outside of BCMHA, visiting with friends, staying at home overnight, etc.

### “Community” - Mental Health Teams and other community resources

Neela participated in treatment in acute and tertiary environments which helped her bring her mental illness to a level that can be managed at home, and which also helped her start on a solid path to recovery from her addictions. Neela and her team accomplished this to a great part because they activated her own strengths, skills and resources, as well as that of her natural support systems. Neela is now living at home again and is supported by a Mental Health Team. She has a Case Manager there who coordinates assistance for Neela - among others, a psychiatrist and a vocational rehabilitation counselor. Neela is also taking advantage of services in the community, for example a weekly group at the Mood Disorders Association. In the community, Neela also sees her family doctor and addictions counselor again.



## Open Door Group – THRIVE Program

*Submitted by Maya Alonso, Coordinator THRIVE Program . . .*

The THRIVE program is a stepping stone for individuals living with a mental health condition offering one-to-one coaching and group programs focused on skill development for healthy living and meaningful community engagement.

Together with a Recreation Therapist, participants develop a goal-oriented wellness plan, customized to their specific needs and interests. From nutrition, communication skills and stress-management to fitness, recreation and art, we help participants develop a plan that's right for them, providing support along the way. Our ultimate goal is to help people build the skills and develop the confidence they need to live a healthy lifestyle and connect meaningfully in their community.

### **Eligibility:**

The program is available to Vancouver & Richmond residents, aged 17 years or older living with a mental health condition.

### **How to get started:**

Come to an intake session on the 1<sup>st</sup> or 3<sup>rd</sup> Tuesday of the month from 1-2pm or call/email to inquire about 1:1 intake appointments.

### **THRIVE Participant story:**

"I see the light at the end of the tunnel, I don't want to hide from my mental illness anymore. I plan to continue to do the activities I learned, they have been life changing, helping with my mental and physical health. I open the curtains now to let the light in, I am no longer sleeping on the couch with the tv on but rather getting better rest in bed, I am eating healthy. I have been able to help others here at Open Door by motivating them in their goals, and help to push them out of their comfort zone. I have good laughs and actually smile now. The skills I learned, the support I received and the confidence I built helped me to connect with people, feel comfortable and safe. I don't feel scared."

### **For more information on the THRIVE program:**

Website: <http://www.opendoorgroup.org/leisureeducationservices.php>

Email: [thrive@opendoorgroup.org](mailto:thrive@opendoorgroup.org)

Phone: 604-876-0773

Address: #300-30 East 6th Ave, Vancouver BC



## Conquering Waves Dragon Boat Team

Submitted by Maya Alonso, Coordinator THRIVE program . . .

The Conquering Waves Dragon Boat Team challenges the stigma of mental illness by bringing together individuals living with mental illness, their friends, families or anyone interested in mental health promotion to train weekly for 12 weeks leading up to the annual Rio Tinto Alcan Dragon Boat Festival. Come join us for this upcoming 2015 season and experience the fun of this fantastic team sport. Whether you're a veteran paddler or a curious newcomer, come along to try it out!



The team trains weekly on Saturdays from 1-3pm in False Creek near Science World.

Please contact the THRIVE program at 604-876-0773 for more information.

## Mental Health Peer Support Group in Richmond and Vancouver



the kaleidoscope  
mental health support group

confidential

all welcome

Tuesdays at UBC

Thursdays at Cambie Community Centre in Richmond.

See our website for exact times and locations.  
Light food and beverage provided.

www.the-kaleidoscope.com  
info@the-kaleidoscope.com | Twitter @empowrchange

with financial support from:



For more information about this group:  
visit [www.the-kaleidoscope.com](http://www.the-kaleidoscope.com) or  
email [info@the-kaleidoscope.com](mailto:info@the-kaleidoscope.com)

## Calendar of Events

April 2015

Sun	Mon	Tues	Wed	Thurs	Fri	Sat
			1	2	3	4
5	6	7 VCH Eating Disorder Family Support Group	8 Raven Song Family Support Group	9 New! GRASP Support Group	10 Parents Forever Support Group	11 Richmond Chinese Family Support
12	13 MDA Family Support Group (Evergreen CHC)	14 MDA Family Support Group (Evergreen)	15	16	17	18
19	20	21 VCH Eating Disorder Family Support Group	22	23	24 Parents Forever Support Group	25
26	27	28 MDA Family Support Group	29	30 SPH Family Support Group		

## 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. NEW! 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 604-290-3817 or isabella.mori@vch.ca

**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 – 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. 2<sup>nd</sup> Saturday of each month. , 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.

**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.