

The Canadian Mental Health Association of New Brunswick



Peer Support Pair aidant

here for you • ici pour vous

2019 Certified Peer Support Conference



The New Brunswick Department of Health, in cooperation with the Association Québécoise pour la réadaptation psychosociale (AQRP), the Canadian Mental Health Association of New Brunswick, the Université de Moncton, the Horizon and Vitalité Health Networks and many other partners, have worked on introducing a peer support program in New Brunswick that promotes the hiring and integration of peer support staff by addictions and mental health services.

Definition of the Peer

Support Worker's Role:

“Peer support workers are members of staff who, in the course of their work, openly acknowledge that they currently live, or have previously lived, with a mental illness. The purpose of using their recovery journey is to inspire hope, act as a role model and a source of motivation and inspiration, and support and educate those living in situations similar to the ones being shared”

In this issue:

- *Survey Results*
- *Certified Peer Support Testimonies*
- *A message from the Provincial Peer Support Consultant*
- *Program Outline*

Training : The training is intended for persons in recovery after being diagnosed with a mental health and/or addiction issues and are interested in peer support training in order to work for addiction and mental health services. The training will offer participants courses designed to help them acquire the knowledge and skills they need to carry out their specific role as peer supports in a professional manner. The 119-hours training program is recognized by the Continued Education Branch of Université de Moncton.

A message from the Provincial Peer Support Consultant, Tina Leblanc

What a great year we have had in the Peer Support Program!

There have been many changes. Some made us happy, some made us sad, as wonderful coworkers left to enjoy great opportunities.

Here is a brief review of what has happened in the last year. On July 6 and 7, 2018, we had a Peer Support Conference at the Villa Madonna in Rothesay. This brought together Certified Peer Supports from all throughout the province. The camaraderie shared during this event was certainly memorable.

In July 2018, I began my transition from Certified Peer Support FACT-Richibucto to a new position as Peer Support Consultant for CMHA-NB.

September saw people return to their regular schedules after a wonderful summer. We were busy preparing for a training in Bathurst during September 24- October 5.

As Certified Peer Support Training was approaching, Lori Young, our Provincial Peer Support Consultant, took a leave of absence for a year to fill the position Peer Support Consultant for CMHA- National. Although it was bittersweet for us, we were happy for Lori and her new endeavor and wished her well.

Our fourth Certified Peer Support Training began at the end of September in Bathurst. They were an awesome group and a great new addition to our Peer Support Family. Shortly after graduation, five of the certified peers found employment in FACT teams, which leaves 4.5 position left in FACT teams for Peer support throughout the province.

In Lori's absence, I am currently filling the position for Provincial Peer Support Consultant. As a result, Lauren White was hired in January 2019, as the new Peer Support Consultant. She is a wonderful addition to our team/ family.

March brought all the Certified Peer Supports currently working on FACT Teams together in Fredericton. This also proved to be a successful conference. The camaraderie shared by the group was again memorable. New friendships were formed and old ones renewed. This conference shared information that was specific for Peers working on FACT teams

The month of April brought us a logo for the Peer Support Program. We are very proud of our program and its partnerships. We thought it fitting to celebrate that combination by having a logo to represent it. I must admit, the excitement of the new logo certainly helped lift my spirits during our challenging weather in April.

We are certainly all looking forward to better weather, summer vacations and beach days. With the beautiful weather coming, the peers have planned a special outing together this summer. Canoeing down the Restigouche River! I very much look forward to spending time with this wonderful group.

We will be having our 5th Certified Peer Support Training class in the Fall. This training will take place at the Villa Madonna in Rothesay on September 9 to September 23, 2019.

The last year has been a wonderful adventure for me within the Peer Support Program and I expect the next year to be just as spectacular for me as well as everyone involved in this amazing program

Honk! Honk!

Tina LeBlanc

Provincial Peer Support Consultant

Quelle est la partie la plus importante de ce service?

“Voir les clients, faire renaître l'espoir d'une vie, meilleure, l'écoute, le non-judgment, les supporter, leur refléter leurs forces et le beau qu'il y a en eux; être simplement présent à eux.”

– Yvonne Godin, Peer Support from Caraquet

**“AN EMPTY
LANTERN
PROVIDES
NO LIGHT.
SELF-CARE IS
THE FUEL
THAT ALLOWS
YOUR LIGHT TO
SHINE BRIGHTLY.”**

A few words from CMHA NB Director of Operations, Kristen Barnes

CMHA of NB is so proud and excited about the Provincial Peer Support Program. It has been a year of change, growth, and development. Since adopting the Peer Support Program through CMHA of NB, it has been the goal to collaborate with the Department of Health, the Regional Health Authorities of NB, as well as community agencies/committees in order to accomplish several important goals.

- *Delivery of the Certified Peer Support Training*
- *Integrating Certified Peer Supports onto the FACT teams across the province through the Community Mental Health and Addictions Clinics*
- *Providing on-going support and professional development to Certified Peer Supports*
- *Developing community peer support training and learning opportunities*
- *Developing community based peer support for family members/ caregivers as well as first responders*

To date the Provincial Peer Support Program has delivered the Certified Peer Support Training on several occasions, including both in English and French. Since the trainings we have seen Certified Peer Supports hired not only on the clinical FACT teams throughout the province, but we have also seen other Certified Peer Supports pursue other opportunities where they can also share and integrate their skills to promote recovery and hope for others related to mental health, mental illness, and addictions. These trainings and Peer Support Roles that have been made possible throughout NB have given a new voice and a new light of hope to so many who are experiencing mental health concerns.

We have continued to work towards our goal of enhancing communication, professional development, support and knowledge exchange within the network of Certified Peer Supports through hosting conferences, check-ins, site visits, as well as regular conference calls. Our Peer Support Consultants have been working hard to find new ways to promote and engage community and professionals in new ways, as well as enhance overall awareness about the Peer Support Program in NB.

This past spring, CMHA of NB launched a pilot of our new program called Engaging Families in Recovery, which based on the recovery model, is designed to support family members and caregivers of those experiencing mental illness or addictions. Upon completion of the program, participants will be welcomed to enter into a peer related network of other family members and caregivers who have also completed the program. Our Peer Support Consultant is working towards establishing a transition session to best support and promote this initiative.

Throughout the fall we will continue to work towards our on-going goals, while also enhancing and developing our current practices. We will be working with First Responders to establish peer support training as well as continue to expand our services for peer support for families and caregivers. CMHA of NB additionally looks forward to working with the community to best support community peer support initiatives and trainings. On behalf of CMHA of NB, I thank everyone who is part of our Provincial Peer Support Program, and our Peer Support Family,. You are inspiring hope, encouraging many through their recovery journeys, as well as helping to break down the myths and barriers related to seeking help.



**Canadian Mental
Health Association**
New Brunswick
Mental health for all

**Association canadienne
pour la santé mentale**
Nouveau-Brunswick
La santé mentale pour tous

*Sarah Brennan
Clinician for
F.A.C.T. Team
Saint John*

“Our F.A.C.T program would not be effective without our peer support. She is an integral part of the program.”

Peer Support Testimony by Amanda Craig

I had hopes of being accepted into the PEER SUPPORT program from the moment I began filling out my application. Using my story to help others is something I am passionate about and being able to use it for the benefit of others is essentially; a dream come true. So, I set out to apply for the program, and much to my excitement I was accepted into it. I shuffled around trying to obtain funding to pay for this much desired course, and to my delight, I found it. I met amazing people who were taking the course, sharing similar experiences to ones I had been through. It was and continues to be an incredible journey to say the least. Every time I see individuals, I have taken this course with, or other Certified Peer's there seems to be this unspoken bond, it's plain to see that we can relate to one another on so many levels. The work that we do for other's for example, and the experience's we share from our own lives. There have been happy tears of relatability shed, hugs of "see you again next time," and plenty of laughter. Can you imagine being surrounded by people who understand you, and know what it is like to be through similar things? All of these individuals are people who genuinely care about others and their hearts are in the right place. That is what being taking this course allowed me to participate in. While I appreciate everything, I have gained from this course and working with FACT, I believe a sense of community has been established within the group of PEER'S. From story sharing, to the text book, two-week class room work, to studying with my study partner, and doing the 40 hours practicum (in community work), it has been a wonderful experience. Now it seems that panic over the exam only lasted a moment, in comparison to the amazing time spent learning. I took the course and learned many things including; but not limited to the 5 stages of recovery. I find with these, often times, I see myself recognizing where individuals are on the 5 stages and trying to meet them where they are at. I'm glad the interview process is over, and I obtained work with FACT, as it truly is an incredible opportunity to use my story to help other's process their own. I work with an amazing team of people, from many different disciplines. They have been more than open to my suggestions and are always looking for my feedback during many circumstances. Co-workers are often eager to have me work with a consumer that we feel as a team, my services would benefit them. Clients really appear to enjoy outings with me, as we often find conversations easiest to be had in the most amazing settings, such as the nature park, or even just the car, providing a more comfortable setting for these individuals. I enjoy them too! They also enjoy the group activities that I facilitate with help of other co-workers on different occasions, playing basketball, doing crafts, going to the museum, photography group outing, etc... These groups include helping individuals get out of the house, which may or may not be isolated, meeting new friends, and learning new skills. It's been a true honor and pleasure to be blessed with such an amazing privilege, to meet the individuals I work with, and to see the incredible ways in which they have grown since meeting with these wonderful people. I love the opportunities provided to me during my work time, and the openness and willingness of my co-workers to allow for my idea's to be brought to life.

In closing, I would like to say once again I am thankful for the opportunity to have been given to take this course, to work for FACT, to engage with co-workers, consumers, and of course other PEER'S! HONK HONK!!



Témoignage de Client

J'ai la chance d'avoir l'aide d'une pair aidante depuis quelques mois. Cetter personne est très précieuse pour moi et je suis énormément reconnaissante que ce poste a été créer. Il vient combler un besoin que l'on a de se faire comprendre sans jugement et souvent sans avoir à donner des explications. C'est quelqu'un qui peut nous guider et nous soutenir sans nous mettre de pression, quelqu'un avec qui on peut totalement être soi-même.

C'est aussi quelqu'un qui nous sers de modèle. Un Espoir qu'on va s'en sortir un jour. Mes recontres avec ma pair aidante me gradient motive et focusée sur ma guérison. Elles aident à developper mon coté sociale et à me dépasser pour pouvoir surmonter l'anxiété.

Témoignages de Jean-Michel

Je suis une personne qui a eu à vivre beaucoup de défis et d'obstacles lorsque mon diagnostic est tombé. Le diagnostic en soi était tellement tabou que je n'osais en parler à personne et je croyais que j'allais vivre malade le restant de mes jours. Mon parcours a été relevé d'embuche et par la force des choses j'ai dû apprendre à me connaître et à me redécouvrir des parti de moi qui existait encore malgré la maladie, et j'en remercie sincèrement toutes mon entourage, ma famille et principalement le centre de santé mentale de Kedgwick.

Le centre de santé mentale de Kedgwick et ma famille ont tellement été posé et attentionné envers mes problèmes avec beaucoup d'écoute, d'empathie et me conseillant plein de méthode d'adaptation que je n'avais nul le choix de m'investir en tant que personne pour devenir une meilleure personne jour après jours malgré ma maladie.

Un jour, un employé du centre de santé mentale de Kedgwick m'a suggéré d'aller prendre un cours pour devenir pairs aidant, parce que probablement elle voyait en moi un potentiel. J'avais aucune idée en quoi consistait devenir un pairs aidant, mais j'ai accepté sans savoir où cela allait m'apporter...

La formation a été TOUTE une révélation de soi et beaucoup plus encore parce qu'elle m'a donné la liberté d'exprimer toute mon histoire que je retenais en dedans qui dans le fond de mon âme qui me ruinait l'existence. À défaut de trop penser, j'oubliais de vivre et quand j'oubliais de vivre ma santé mentale se détériorait.

Cette liberté que je peux maintenant exprimer haut et fort pour démystifier la maladie avec d'autres personne du même type que moi et leur susciter l'espoir est une chose très importante pour moi, parce que les personnes qui vivent avec la maladie mentale sont très importante au sein de la communauté et disons-les Ce n'est plus un TABOU d'en parler avec un thérapeute pour établir votre propre plan de rétablissement. Demander de l'aide, ce n'est pas une faiblesse, c'est une richesse de votre force intérieure.

Jean-Michel Roy

Pairs Aidant Certifié



Special Dates Coming Up:

September 9th– 23rd: 5th Certified Peer Support Training taking place in Rothesay NB— Course offered in English

October 10th: World Mental Health Day

November 27th: CMHA of NB's Anniversary

The mandate of the NB Peer Support Program is as follows:

1. Promote the hiring and integration of peer support by addiction and mental health services
2. Offer training tools:
 - Training for peer support candidates
 - Training for hiring environments
3. Provide support for peer support staff and hiring environments

Contact us!

Provincial Peer Support Consultant: Tina Leblanc

Phone: (506) 859-8114 Ext. 6

Email: tina.leblanc@cmhanb.ca

Peer Support Consultant: Lauren White

Phone: (506) 455-5231 Ext.109

Email: lauren.white@cmhanb.ca

Clinician from
Fredericton
FACT Team

"All clients like the peer support and appreciate her involvement"

Survey Results from Clients, Clinicians and Peer Supports

Clients are positively impacted by services received from Certified Peer Supports? *“Absolutely, 100% beneficial.”* - Clinician from Woodstock

What is the most valuable part of this service?

“Being free to share my personal story with clients. The look of relief I have seen on a clients face when they realize you understand them and will be honest with them”

– Ebony Wade Certified Peer Support from Woodstock

What is the most valuable part of this service? *“Lived experience. Hope.*

Clients believe they have someone ‘who just gets it’.” –

Clinician from Fredericton

“C’est un service très bénéfique pour les clients et pour nous de percevoir autrement le rétablissement du client”

– Clinician from Shippiagan

How useful is this service?

“You guys are amazing to me, more than you know”

– Service User

In general, how do you feel about this service?

“We appreciate and respect this role. Erin is an integral part of my team.”

- Clinician in Fredericton

“Utiliser mon histoire de rétablissement pour briser le sentiment d’isolement et susciter la réflexion de la personne sure ou elle est sur son propre parcours de réablissement”

– Jacinthe Breau Certified Peer Support from Moncton

“Very helpful to help me get ideas off my mind, I enjoy her sharing her experience”

– Service User

“Great to be able to get out of the house and talk to someone”

– Service User

In general, how do you feel about the Peer Support Services? *“I really believe in the program after working with clients. It does really help clients to speak to a peer. It helps disarm them and provide hope”* – Tina Leblanc Former Peer Support from Richibucto

“Très utile parce que souvent difficile de partager information avec conjoint, amis et famille”

– Service User

In general, how do you feel about the Peer Support Services? *“I love my job!”* - Amanda Craig, Peer Support from Saint John

What did we do well? *“Professional attitude and have personal experience to relate to”* – Service User

Thank you, to all our
fabulous partners who
have made the New
Brunswick Certified Peer
Support program such a
collaborative success



Peer Support Pair aidant

here for you • ici pour vous



**Canadian Mental
Health Association**
New Brunswick
Mental health for all

**Association canadienne
pour la santé mentale**
Nouveau-Brunswick
La santé mentale pour tous



UNIVERSITÉ DE MONCTON
EDMUNDSTON MONCTON SHIPPAGAN

Formation continue