



Meeting Minutes - Canadian Community Mental Health Network

DATE: MONDAY, December 18th, 2023

TIME: 12:30 P.M. ET

LOCATION: TEAMS

Attendees

1. Dave Gallson
2. Sharla Robertson
3. Kristina Braun
4. Alison O'Handley
5. Gary Thandi
6. Martin Boucher
7. Brad Glynn

Welcome and Quick Personal Update

- The meeting commenced with welcome and quick personal updates from the attendees, providing an opportunity for participants to catch up and share recent developments in their personal and professional capacities.

CCMHN Future

- Funding submissions are in progress, and irrespective of the Pre-Budget ask outcome, the network is poised to continue growing and developing.

Advocacy

- An update on the MDSC/CCMHN Parliament Hill Day, which occurred on November 27th, was presented. The day included strategic planning, an Annual General Meeting (AGM), and engaging meetings with multiple Members of Parliament (MPs) and Ministry Officials.
- The network's business plan was successfully presented to the Minister of Mental Health and Addiction, with subsequent meetings arranged with MPs and policy staffers to further the network's objectives.



- Discussions acknowledged the need for the active submission of letters to MPs by CCMHN members and the wider community, aiming for 15-20 letters per region. A campaign is in place to prompt Canadians to participate in this letter submission drive from December to February.

Communication

- Plans for updating the website and laying out a social media strategy were discussed (advocacy campaign), to enhance outreach and engagement on these platforms.

CCMHN Resource/Program Sharing/Capacity Building

- Discussion on potential intranet (or portal) content for the members' section, considering what resources or programs members would find valuable to share.
- Dave Gallson discussed the importance of collaboration among member organizations to enhance their capacity to serve communities across Canada. He emphasized the challenges organizations face, such as staff recruitment, financial management, and service delivery. Sharing resources would be more efficient than operating in isolation.
- Dave Gallson explained that Mood Disorders Society of Canada (MDSC) has comprehensive training programs available, including volunteer training, as an example.
- Several participants, including Sharla Robertson, Kristina Hennessey Braun, Martin Boucher, Brad Glynn, and Gary Thandi, shared their experiences with volunteer management and the training utilized for them.
- Martin Boucher described having distinct types of volunteers, some for events and others as long-term participants in-service programs. He noted that NISA focuses on providing paid opportunities rather than unpaid volunteer work.
- Brad Glynn shared that his organization intentionally didn't have volunteers for a while but now has a small, active group mainly involved in community events and supporting paid peer support workers.
- Gary Thandi highlighted their program with 125 students across the country working as interns to fulfill their practicum hours, aiding in their commitment and engagement.
- Dave Gallson then reinforced the vision for CCMHN to include a repository of shared resources, such as volunteer training programs and privacy training materials, which could greatly assist smaller organizations. He also mentioned a partnership with universities for a lived experience research training program that MDSC has digitized and made available. Sharing resources within the network could significantly enhance the capabilities of all member organizations.



Political Update

- There was a conversation regarding the political landscape and its implications for the network's activities and advocacy – we remain apolitical and work with everyone, mental health knows no parties.

Membership

- The meeting included updates on outreach efforts, with strategies to reinforce the network's presence and membership in additional provinces and territories highlighted.

Open Discussion/Parking Lot

- The floor was opened for an inclusive discussion, allowing attendees to address any additional topics or concerns not covered on the agenda. Holiday well-wishes were exchanged.

Action Items

1. Members to actively participate in the letter submission campaign targeting MPs.
 - a. MDSC (Kristina) to send an example letter providing information and the link.
Done
2. Increase advocacy efforts through planned social media promotion and campaigns. *Ongoing*
3. Facilitate open discussions on resource sharing to bolster capacity building within the network.
Ongoing