

MISSION

Our mission is accomplished through participation of individuals living with mental illness, clinical and rehabilitation services, public education, social change and advocacy, and community collaboration.

VISION

Our vision is of an inclusive community that promotes emotional well being, human dignity and social justice, where people are valued and opportunities in all aspects of life are available to everyone.

VALUES

- We value a recovery-centred approach
- We value a person-centred approach to services
- We value respect for individual rights
- We value the leadership role of individuals and families living with mental illness
- We value a holistic approach to the individual
- We value collaborative, multi-disciplinary approach to care
- We value quality services that are founded on evidence-based practice
- We value the contribution of staff and volunteers
- We value leadership and creativity

Accreditation Canada Assesses the Canadian Mental Health Association, Thunder Bay Branch

The Canadian Mental Health Association, (CMHA) Thunder Bay Branch is committed toward excellence, supporting individual recovery and promoting mental wellness within families and communities. While there are opportunities for improvement, there is also cause for celebrating and acknowledging our achievements. CMHA can justifiably be proud of the quality of care it provides, which has been validated through the recent Accreditation Canada process.



From October 2008 – 2010, CMHA teams experienced the new accreditation process as a means to embed quality improvement and client safety into our ongoing strategic planning and operations. In following the new accreditation process, teams:

- completed on-line assessments comparing their performance to national standards;
- identified priorities for improvement and initiated action plans;
- held a survey visit by Accreditation Canada in October 2010 as an independent validation of their performance; and
- will continue to conduct self-assessments, report key indicators and implement improvements as part of the ongoing three-year cycle of accreditation

CMHA teams met 367 of the applicable 383 criteria (overall 96%). In addition, the organization met all applicable Required Organizational Practices (ROPS).

In addition, Accreditation Canada recommended *Photo Voice: Exposing our Path to Wellness* as a leading practice carried out by a health care organization, demonstrating innovation and creativity. Photovoice is a multi-media presentation using photographs and narratives to describe the experience of mental illness and recovery.

Based on this assessment, CMHA has received “Accreditation with Condition” (report). This reflects that an Accreditation status has been achieved with one report required at a specified time outlining how CMHA is meeting certain high priority criteria. CMHA must report its progress by March 2011 in the following criteria:

- Development and implementation of an ethics framework which includes formal processes for managing ethics related issues/concerns including reviewing the ethical implications of research.
- The development of a formal quality improvement plan including the measurement of long term goals and objectives and the ongoing monitoring of progress and achievements of the plan.

The implementation of processes to obtain informed consent as well as processes to use advanced directives or substitute decision makers in situations where clients are incapable of providing informed consent.

CMHA, Thunder Bay Branch would like to express a sincere thank you to all employees, Board members, volunteers, community partners, and all individuals who have accessed services from the organization, for their participation and contributions over these past few years.

For further information about CMHA’s survey report, please contact Maurice Fortin, Executive Director at 345-5564.

Canadian Mental Health Association
200 Van Norman Street
Thunder Bay, ON P7A 4B8

Phone: 807-345-5564
Fax: 807-345-4458
E-mail: cmhatb@cmha-tb.on.ca

We're on the Web
www.cmha-tb.on.ca

Ontario Common Assessment of Need (OCAN)

In June, CMHA implemented the full OCAN. "OCAN" or the "Ontario Common Assessment of Need" is a standardized, consumer led decision making tool that allows key information to be electronically gathered in a secure and efficient manner", (CCIM – Community Care Information Management – Access to Information, March 2010). CMHA, Thunder Bay Branch, is the first of three organizations in this NWLHIN to move forward with this important project. Implementation included training more than forty front line service staff in the use of this assessment tool and in the software solution developed to support implementation.

The full OCAN will be implemented in the following service areas: Skills Development (New Foundations and RAP), Intensive Case Management, HIPII, Court Housing Support, First Place Clinic and Crisis Residence. The organization officially went "Live" on November 2, 1010 when the first OCAN was documented electronically into our software solution. While this project is still a work in progress, we look forward to working with our partners in the NW – LHIN to facilitate the successful implementation of OCAN in our region anticipating that through our joint efforts we can "further facilitate inter-agency communication" to support our consumers in their recovery process. For further information contact Sharon Pitawanakwat at 345-5564.

Recovery Outside the Box Integrating Arts Programming in Health Care

Some basic principals threaded in the recovery vision include a focus on strengths, helping individuals find purpose and meaning and assisting them to move beyond their label of mental illness. As mental health providers, we strive to find practices that reflect and promote these principals.

In April 2010, the Ontario Arts Council provided funding for CMHA to integrate arts education into their programming. This project, a partnership between Education and Training program and Skills Development, introduced 24 weeks of arts workshops to 18 members of New Foundations Clubhouse. We collaborated with three professional artists in the community; Eleanor Albanese, Claudia Otto and Derek Khani. They shared their artistic skills in a variety of art mediums including storytelling, creative writing, dance, and visual arts. In this project we discovered that arts programming is a practice that naturally promotes recovery principals, helping people as they strive towards wellness.

"Unfortunately there are many of us (ill or not) who don't believe we have worthy gifts to share. I know I spent a lifetime denying many compliments. What (OAC) art programming has offered me is an open door to the recognition and acceptance of the gifts I already have as well as those to come, and the courage to share them with others." 2010 O.A.C. Arts programming participant

Whether it involved writing a poem, creating a dance or making a sculpture, participants were able to focus on their strengths. "The artists helped us bring out what was in us, what makes us thrive". The artists were successful in encouraging and supporting participants to take risks and explore their creative sides. It was so exciting to see participants identifying ways to take these new skills and apply them to other areas of their lives; "I learned that if I can challenge myself in these art classes, I can challenge myself in other areas of my life".

Each artist recognized and worked with the participants as fellow artists, not as patients or clients of mental health services. It was a valuable reminder that when we recognize the whole person, it is easier for them to move beyond an identity that ties them to mental illness:

"We discovered our creative selves and tapped into our intuition and imagination. We learned to trust each other and take risks. We walked away with more confidence and self esteem. The artists helped us to focus on the positive aspects of our lives. This project is confirmation of what I believe to be meaningful. Thank you for opening the door in my mind to the creative side and shedding light on the dark abyss."

Joanne Books, Manager, Education and Training