

supporting RECOVERY



Canadian Mental
Health Association
Thunder Bay

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February 28th is the 4th annual *Styles & Smiles: A Tribute to the Society of Excellent Men*. Tickets are available at CMHA, Children's Centre, and the Valhalla Inn.

Styling & Smiling

Children's Centre Foundation and CMHA are working together with the Society of Excellent Men to build a generation of healthy individuals. Now in its fourth year, *Styles & Smiles* is an event that promotes awareness of mental health issues and raises funds to support public education and prevention initiatives for both children and adults. Recruited from all walks of life, the Excellent Men share a common cause: a commitment to helping the less fortunate in our community.

This year's theme is Mardi Gras. It promises to bring fun and excitement in fashion, illusion, gourmet dining, and luxury raffles. Raffle prizes include fine dining, Porter flights, handmade jewelry, and much more. Mackinley Steinhoff will entertain us with his "delusions" of magic, and let's not forget the opportunity to have 40 *Excellent Men*—decked out in tuxedos—at the beck and call of all attending!

We invite all our friends and supporters to join us in this year's event, held on February 28, 2013. Tickets are available at CMHA, Children's Centre and Valhalla Inn.

CMHA Goes Social!

We are proud to announce that we have joined the world of social media. As of January 2013, our branch is actively sharing all of our latest news, events and activity on Facebook and Twitter. Integrating these tools will help us keep the promise we made in our strategic directions to communicate in an open and transparent way within our communities. Please help welcome us to social media by following/liking us via the links to the right. See you online!

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MISSION, VISION, & VALUES

OUR MISSION

We are committed to supporting individual recovery and promoting mental wellness with families and communities.

OUR VISION

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.

OUR VALUES

A person centered approach to recovery. • Open and transparent communication. • Respect for individual rights. • The important role of individuals and families living with mental illness. • A holistic approach to the individual. • A collaborative, multi disciplinary approach. • Quality services that are founded on evidence based practices. • The contributions of staff and volunteers. • Innovation and creativity.



facebook.com/cmha.tbay



twitter.com/cmhatbay



Sharon Pitawanakwat moves forward as the Director of Program Services.

Improving our Structure

Over the past years the management needs of CMHA have changed. At the program level, accountability demands have risen, as has the need for integration between services. With expansion, we are experiencing greater human resource management needs. Externally there are growing demands to participate in system initiatives, and to expand community partnerships.

The recent vacancy at the Director level within the Crisis Program created an opportunity to improve our management structure to meet those changing needs.

Within our branch, each major service area (e.g. Case Management, First Place, New Foundations) is supervised by a Program Manager. These positions—including a new Program Manager for Crisis Response Services—will now report to a *Director of Program Services*.

CMHA is pleased to introduce Sharon Pitawanakwat as the new Director of Program Services. Sharon brings a wealth of skills and experience to her expanded role, having served in senior management positions within other health sector organizations, including several years with CMHA.

The change will consolidate responsibility for service planning, design, coordination and integration under a single Director. The change in structure will allow the Executive Director to focus on organizational development, board support, partner and sector relations, and strategic planning.

New “Housing First” Service

CMHA is proud to implement the *Housing First* Model as part of its service continuum. Housing First seeks to transform individual lives by reducing the incidence of homelessness and supporting recovery for individuals with serious mental health and substance use/abuse issues. The model emphasizes housing is a basic human right and aspires to change the practice of homeless services by providing individuals with immediate access to permanent independent housing without a precondition for psychiatric treatment, mental health intervention, or treatment for addictions.

The Housing First model is specifically designed for individuals living with concurrent mental illness, addiction, and other challenges. It offers a minimal barrier, high tolerance, and supportive environment that follows a harm-reduction/health promotion and recovery based philosophy. The service screens individuals in rather than out and offers support regardless of the complexities of the individuals’ needs, histories and behaviours. The service is flexible, non-judgmental, and responsive to the unique challenges faced by homeless individuals of Thunder Bay.

We will be partnering with *GAPPS*—a partnership between CMHA, St. Joseph’s Care Group and Norwest Community Health Centre. Through *GAPPS*, Housing First will be able to access services ranging from nursing to psychiatric support to occupational therapy. The Housing First team consists of Michelle Hopkins and Patrick Reader, who will be assisting clients in securing and sustaining stable residency. For further details, contact Michelle or Patrick at 683-4951.

2012 Education Bursaries Announced

CMHA’s Board of Directors is pleased to announce Kaitlyn Harris and Sue McLean as the 2012 *Fanny Rajala Education Fund* bursary recipients. The successful recipients were chosen from many applications within CMHA programs and services by a Review Committee.

The bursary is intended to assist people with lived experience of mental illness in the pursuit of educational goals at an Ontario college, university, or trade school.

RESEARCH CORNER

We are pleased to have participated in a research study led by Dr. Amanda Maranzan of Lakehead University’s Department of Psychology. The research topic was “Factors influencing choice of mental health treatment for First Nations people”. The research purpose was to gain insight on what mental health resources are available—including cultural supports, traditional elders, and healing ceremonies—and to determine where, how and when Aboriginal people decide to access these services.

We invited our clients to participate in a focus group led by Dr. Maranzan and Alice Sabourin, held at New Foundations on December 7, 2012. CMHA staff were involved in informing clients of the focus group and its purpose. As well, we provided a comfortable and private space for the researchers to meet and discuss these issues with participants. We will be receiving a summary based on all of the focus groups they held. The knowledge gained from this research will help improve continuity of care and services available, reduce service gaps, and further integrate mental health services for First Nations people.