2019 POST CONFERENCE REPORT

MAY 13-15, 2019
HOLIDAY INN HOTEL & CONFERENCE CENTRE
BARRIE, ONTARIO

Hosted by the Waypoint Research Institute
Penetanguishene, Ontario

Conference funded by

Canadian Institutes of Health Research (CIHR)
Support

SPONSORS AND GRANT FUNDER

Quite simply, we could not do it without the generosity of our sponsors and the Canadian Institutes of Health Research. We sincerely appreciate the support. We also thank the Holiday Inn Barrie for the excellent venue, as well as catering very tasty breakfasts, coffee breaks, and lunches throughout the conference. Last but not least, Waypoint staff and students kindly volunteered their time to ensure the conference ran smoothly. A heartfelt thanks goes to each and every one of our supporters.
Practitioners and researchers who work in mental health in small towns and non-urban communities often find that networking, discussing issues, and sharing ideas can be a challenge. Being geographically separate with long travel times can make building collaborations difficult. As well, for patients who live in small-town Canada, access to mental health services and care can be less comprehensive, available, and accessible than in large urban areas. Waypoint Centre for Mental Health Care itself is located in small-town Penetanguishene ON. We have a deep understanding of these challenges…but also know that these challenges are not insurmountable.

The theme we focused on for the 2019 Momentum Research Realized Conference was Partner–Network–Collaborate.

The Waypoint Research Institute 7th Annual Conference, held in Barrie ON May 13–15, 2019, sought to break through the obstacles and provide a venue for attendees to energize productive partnerships and discussions. By working together as teams, researchers can exponentially expand outputs in creative ways not possible by individuals and organizations working alone.

Embracing the philosophy of “the whole is greater than the sum of its parts”, we sought to:

1) Develop and expand partnerships, collaborations, and networks to broaden knowledge translation or mobilization and research alignments.

2) Expand knowledge of and access to multi-disciplinary research to improve practice and policies in mental health and addictions services.

3) Improve communications across different sectors and among individuals to better translate knowledge across various population groups and particularly for non-urban communities.

The momentum of the Waypoint Research Institute Conference is driven by both new and ongoing partnerships among many researchers and institutions that represent diverse disciplines and varied interests. With this momentum, we know that research can be realized and transformed into improved mental health care.

“Change is possible, but change is difficult”
WORKSHOPS

Two pre-conference workshops set the bar for excellence at the conference. #StigmaEndsWithMe, a half-day workshop, was supported and presented by the Canadian Centre on Substance Use and Addiction (CCSA), and the Community Addictions Peer Support Association (CAPSA). Presenters Gord Garner, Dr. Kim Hellemans, Dr. Kim Corace - moderated by Dr. John Weekes highlighted the impact that words and phrases can have on individuals. The workshop made attendees truly aware of the stigmatizing attitudes towards substance use, the harm of stigma, and how personal changes in language, attitudes, and behaviours can be made for positive results. Energized participants left the workshop with the goal of increasing actions to confront and end stigma.

Brilliant Idea? Let it Shine! This one-day workshop navigated the challenges of communication across sectors and disciplines where multiple perspectives may be expressed. The workshop focused on how to tailor key messages to specific audiences, how to ensure clarity in communications so your writing is understood; and, how to take advantage of social media and disseminate ideas to the right audiences. With Waypoint’s Knowledge Translation and Implementation Coordinator, Laura Ball, and Scientific Writer, Dr. Della Saunders, participants identified barriers that can cloud our understanding of one another’s goals and can lead to miscommunication. Attendees explored best ways to ensure everyone is on the same page and targeting the right audience at the right time.

Important to have both the human element and the science connect in order to be able to genuinely move information forward. Science without the story or story without the science is significantly less effective. Great mix of information to put science into practice at a human level!

Catalyze
Respectful Research for Navigating Different Worldviews in a Multi-Cultural Team demonstrated the value of recognizing Indigenous research methods in a colonial research world, and navigating institutional barriers that can develop between the two. Aptly set up in a traditional semi-circle, this unique workshop grew from the CIHR funded VOICE research project being jointly conducted by the Barrie Area Native Advisory Circle, Waypoint Centre for Mental Health Care, and Western University.

Using an e-Platform and Mobile Application to Engage Youth with First Psychosis recruited attendees to play the roles of an anxious young person who presented with psychosis, his family doctor, psychiatrist, social worker, and other specialists. The engaging attendees-as-actors format demonstrated that an e-platform (Technology-Enabled Collaborative Care for Youth) could integrate specialists to better work together for patient care. This lively workshop was presented by a Centre for Addiction and Mental Health team.

During the next two days of the conference itself, attendees took advantage of learning opportunities from several one-hour workshops, including Now is the “Write” Time, an interactive session for students and early career professionals, focusing on strategies for successful publication; Applying Collaborative Approaches to Improving Community Service Navigation, providing clarity in what can be a confusing health care system; and, Integrating Self-Management Support into Practice, providing ideas for clients and providers to learn together in partnership for each other’s benefit.

Our two conference keynote speakers truly inspired and enthused conference participants. Dr. Ian Manion started Day 1 with an emotional and sincere talk on the Ten Hot Topics in Youth Mental Health. As a clinical psychologist, scientist-practitioner, and Director of Youth Mental Health Research at The Royal’s Institute of Mental Health, he is deeply involved with children, youth, and families. With passion, clarity, and even humor, Dr. Manion conveyed the urgent need for change by step-by-step spelling out the key mental health issues for youth and how we all must work together towards change.

Never has youth mental health been of such high profile in Canada.

On Day 2, attendees were riveted to the talk by Dr. Leslie-Anne Keown. Dr. Keown is Senior Research Manager for Special Projects and Data Management at the Correctional Service Canada. She spoke to how we conceive risk, especially around criminal or deviant behaviour, and our presumed “understandings” of probability and statistical significance... which actually are more “misunderstandings” that result from the lack of integration of concepts of risk between disciplines. Through often humorous narratives about her own experiences working in corrections and academia, she engaged the audience in exploring how competing notions of risk can affect both client and professional behaviours. Integrating concepts of risk may be a challenge but the first step is to discuss the issues so we stop talking past each other and, instead, move forward together.

Keynotes were amazing...both were thought-provoking and insightful!
Several presentations that focused on youth mental health were especially well attended and received. The Responsible Gambling Council presented on Understanding and Reducing Gambling Harm among Young Adults in Ontario with a key message that students prefer “fun” visual ways to learn about gambling rather than being scared about potential harm. New Path Youth and Family Services discussed Counsellor and Client Perspectives of the Walk-in Clinic Experience and noting that walk-in services are a significant component of care. A highlight of this presentation was the dual perspectives of clinician and person with lived experience. Thanks to New Path, access to children’s mental health services has greatly improved in Simcoe County. In their talk, From Languishing to Flourishing along the Mental Health Continuum in Post-Secondary Students, a student from the University of Guelph emphasized that although mental health resources are critical, we all need a bit of stress in our lives to achieve flourishing mental health! With Youth Mental Health Resource Toolkit - Development and Sustainability, a team from the Rural Ontario Medical Program and McMaster University shared that the toolkit was greatly enhanced by getting feedback while it was being developed… “the best way to fix something is to enable others to tell you what’s broken”.

Mobilize

PRESENTATIONS

Two full days of conference featured presentations on a range of topics that included:

- navigating health care systems
- restraint and seclusion
- gender differences in care
- severe mental health disorders
- person-centred care
- mental health rights for involuntary patients
- cognitive behaviour therapy
- implementing evidence-based care models
- knowledge to action
- substance use and behavioural addictions
- improving access to services and reducing wait times
- workplace mental health.
Discover

EXHIBITORS

Attendees enjoyed the opportunity to visit and chat with many diverse exhibitors, who reflected the conference vision of partnerships, networking, and collaborating. Attendees were uniformly positive about the scope of exhibitors and their interactions with them. The only problem was that there simply was not enough time to engage in indepth conversations with each of them! For their contributions to our conference, we thank:
With the focus on the importance of collaborations in research for this year’s conference, we set aside an hour at the end of the day for attendees to meet, mingle, network, and share ideas towards building collaborations. To ensure we hit the mark with conversation sessions, topics were crowd-sourced during the conference. These included knowledge translation, youth mental health, person-centred care, and trauma in the workplace.

I love the diversity and breadth of the speakers from so many sectors. Allows a lot of opportunity for cross-pollination.

To build and run a successful conference, we rely on a collaborative group of experts and professionals. The commitment of individuals and organizations, together with exceptional teamwork and camaraderie, allows the Waypoint Research Institute Conference to grow and expand year-after-year. The conference truly reflects MOMENTUM → RESEARCH REALIZED!

Thanks to a newly formed Conference External Advisory Committee, exciting novel ideas emerged for this year’s conference. Committee members represent many organizations including:

- Community Addictions Peer Support Association
- Royal College of Physicians and Surgeons
- Carleton University
- Centre for Addiction and Mental Health
- St. Michael’s Hospital
- Waypoint Centre for Mental Health Care

Collaborate
Engage

ATTENDEES BY THE NUMBERS

Where are attendees from?

- Ontario: 98.5%
- Outside Ontario: 1.5%

What brings you to the WRI Conference?

- It's local: 75%
- The atmosphere: 50%
- Content/Speakers/Learning: 50%
- The food: 25%
- Networking/Collaboration: 25%
- The pricing: 0%
- Other: 0%

Conference Role

- Presenter: 45%
- Attendee: 41.7%
- Student Presenter: 4.2%
- Exhibitor: 9.2%

"Great to see all that is being done in the field of mental health - able to get a wholesome, interdisciplinary picture of all being done to support/enhance MH in Canada."
Participate

CONFERENCE EXPERIENCES
"Mental health goes beyond health care services. No major public health threat has ever been reversed by treating people one-on-one after it has already taken hold."
- Rob Santos

When we’re mired in statistics of risk, we end up losing sight of the person and their unique situation.

Communication is key in mental health care. Not only is communication with clients important but maintaining relationships with other mental health professionals can make your clients wellness journey more efficient and effective.

"If I went to the hospital with any other health condition and I didn’t get better, they’d increase the level of care."
- @GordGarner1 on the #stigma of substance use disorders compared to other health conditions

"First you want to design the right thing, then you want to design the thing right."

"I have this naive belief that policy making should be evidence informed."

"We don’t think of it as "collaboration"—it is a *partnership*. Using values and language that are important and meaningful to the community.

"People don’t tend to think of themselves in terms of risk. Nobody gets up in the morning and says, "How risky am I today?"

"Takeaways:
• there are different ways to do things
• consultation, consultation, consultation
• connections and relationships
• learning is never over"
- Iva Cheung

Need to listen to the blank spaces—where something may not be being said. Why is that silence happening? May not be the reason you think.

Transform

WISDOM WALL

Transform
Build Momentum for Youth Mental Health

COMMUNITY INFORMATION SESSION

The room was packed for a vibrant evening session where youth, parents, educators, and mental health professionals were invited to an information session to hear about treatment options for depression, substance use, and suicide among young people. The interactive session had the audience asking many hard-hitting questions and sharing personal concerns about mental health challenges for young people and how lives could be improved. Dr. Ian Manion gave the keynote talk, which bared open the difficulties that too many young people in our communities endure each and every day. Representatives from New Path Family & Youth Services, Royal Victoria Regional Health Centre, Barrie Area Native Advisory Circle, and the Gilbert Centre added to the conversation about mental health concerns and how to improve young peoples lives. Youth with lived experience brought home the challenges faced in the system, by sharing their own personal stories - published in the book *Brainstorm Revolution* - with the audience.
We have received thought-provoking feedback from conference attendees and the Conference External Advisory Committee. We aim to incorporate many of these ideas into the conference format in future years.

Social & networking night
Patient art show
Programming devoted to students
Grow conversation sessions & workshops
Spotlight on Indigenous research
Self-care stations
Connect

CONTACT INFORMATION

We welcome all inquiries, suggestions, and comments about the conference. Please contact the Waypoint Research Institute Conference Committee at:

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