

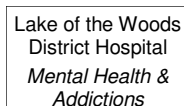
Building Bridges V Northwestern Ontario Concurrent Disorders Conference

Building on Our Strengths Conference Program

March 4 - 5, 2010

Valhalla Inn
Thunder Bay

Organized by:



Children's Centre
THUNDER BAY



Welcome to the Fifth Annual Northwestern Ontario Building Bridges Conference!

For the fifth year in a row, we are pleased to offer the Building Bridges mental health and addictions conference. The theme for this year's conference is "Building on our Strengths". As a result of evaluation feedback from last year's conference, the planning committee has worked diligently to plan a conference that will provide practical, functional skills that delegates can implement in their practice. We have developed an agenda that reflects the diversity of our region and focuses on programs that have a strength based approach.

Thanks to the collaboration and the commitment from over a dozen agencies that make this conference possible. We are also very fortunate to have Dr. Kenneth Hardy as an eminent leader in his field committing himself to this conference by agreeing to speak about his area of special interest and expertise. The second day we have presentations from Best and Promising Practices right here in Northwestern Ontario as per your request in previous conference evaluations. We hope that each participant will benefit from what the presenters have to share and will take away new skills and knowledge to use in their everyday working lives.

Yours truly,

Alice Bellavance

Chair,

Building Bridges V Planning Committee

COMMITTEE MEMBERS

Alice Bellavance	Brain Injury Services of Northern Ontario
Patti Dryden-Holmstrom	Lake of the Woods District Hospital
Angela Hill	Thunder Bay Regional Health Sciences Centre
Yvonne Harris	Thunder Bay Regional Health Sciences Centre
Brook Latimer	St. Joseph's Care Group
Leanna Marshall	Children's Centre Thunder Bay
Michelle Martin	People Advocating for Change Through Empowerment
Kim Gross	Thunder Bay Regional Health Sciences Centre
David Engberg	St. Joseph's Care Group
Marsha Reader	Canadian Mental Health Association
Brandy Brake	Dilico Anishinabek Family Care
Jennifer LaVoie	Alpha Court
Patricia Hadju	Thunder Bay District Health Unit
Susan Girard	Atikokan Community Counselling
Michelle Legacy	Dilico Anishinabek Family Care
Dave Veneruzzo	Thunder Bay Counselling Centre
Connie Gate	Changes Recovery Home

Conference Coordination provided by:

Kari Chiappetta Consulting (807) 621-6225 kcconsulting@shaw.ca

THE PARTNERS

Alpha Court promotes improving the quality of life of persons experiencing or recovering from Mental Health problems through the provision of psycho-social rehabilitation services and supported housing.



alphacourt.ca

Values

Inclusion of people with a serious mental illness as fully participating citizens in their community.

Hope is essential to recovery.

Respect of the individual's needs, rights and choices.

Empowering through partnerships with those we serve.

The mandate of Alpha Court is to provide intensive case management to those with a serious mental illness, defined by diagnosis, duration and (degree of) disability. We accept referrals readily from any source with the expressed approval of the applicant.

In the spirit of collaboration, community, innovation and responsiveness, **Brain Injury Services of Northern Ontario** will provide opportunities to enhance quality of life for those living with the effects of acquired brain injury in our region.



bisno.org

Mission To assist individuals, living with the effects of an acquired brain injury, in attaining their maximum potential as they continue living, loving, and doing.

Brain Injury Services of Northern Ontario (BISNO) is a non-profit charitable organization which provides rehabilitation and support services within the community to individuals living with the effects of an Acquired Brain Injury. BISNO affiliates itself with other agencies and professionals in developing and providing a wide range of services in Northern Ontario.

**Children's Centre
Thunder Bay New
Experiences Program
(NEP)**



www.childrenscentre.ca

This is a community-based program for youth ages 12-18 who have difficulties with both substance use and mental health. Youth involved with New Experiences are generally high-risk, often having serious behavioural and emotional struggles. The program provides assessment, individual and family counselling, group work and parent consultations. The New Experiences team includes staff from Social Work, Psychology and Psychiatry as well as a Native Cultural Coordinator.

New Experiences also works together with the Sister Margaret Smith Centre and the Thunder Bay Counselling Centre. This is part of the community's combined Youth Addiction Service to better meet the needs of our youth. The Anishnawbe Programming is an important part of the New Experiences Program. Group activities give Native youth support based on Aboriginal spirituality, traditions and ceremonies. Recreation is also an important part of this program.

Canadian Mental Health Association (CMHA), Thunder Bay, is committed to supporting individual recovery and promoting mental wellness within families and communities.



The mission is accomplished through participation of individuals living with mental illness, clinical and rehabilitation services, public education, social change and advocacy and community collaboration. CMHA provides the following services:

- C.M.H.A. Central Intake
- New Foundations Clubhouse
- Early Intervention in Psychosis (EIP)
- The Rehabilitation Action Program (RAP)
- Mental Health Court Outreach Program
- Homelessness Initiative Program (HIP-II)
- Housing Outreach Program (HOP)
- Thunder Bay & District Crisis Response Service
- Education and Training Program
- Mental Health Works North

www.cmha-tb.on.ca

THE PARTNERS

Dilico Anishinabek Family Care

provides a wide range of responsive individual, family and community programs and services for the complete life journey of all Anishinabek people.

Dilico cares for the physical and mental health and the health of

communities where Anishinabek people live, by providing diagnosis, treatment and rehabilitation. Dilico's Mental Health and Addictions Services provide strong support and treatment services, equitable access and responsive options for all Anishinabek children, adults, families and communities.

Children's and Adult Services include:

- Counselling and Clinical Support Services
- Assessment and Brief Treatment Residential Services
- Family Preservation Services
- Day Treatment School-Based Services
- Infant/Child Development Services
- Youth Outreach Services
- Health Services
- Adult Residential Treatment Centre
- District Services and Aftercare Program delivered through District offices in Armstrong, Longlac, Marathon and Nipigon



www.dilico.com

People Advocating for Change through Empowerment (PACE) is a mental health consumer/survivor organization that provides advocacy, education, reduction of social isolation, employment information, and improvement of quality of life.



Being a member of PACE will give you:

- Workshops and seminars
- Newsletter
- Committee involvement
- Support and self help
- Volunteer opportunities
- General membership meetings
- Focus groups and panels
- Recreation
- Use of drop in facilities including computer room with internet access, movie and book library, daily newspapers, and laundry facilities

www.pace-tbay.net

St. Joseph's Care Group is

a Catholic Organization committed to provide compassionate and holistic care and services to the people of Northwestern Ontario. Our mental health and addiction services are delivered at Lakehead

Psychiatric Hospital, the Balmoral Withdrawal Management Centre and the Sister Margaret Smith Centre in Thunder Bay. Our programs cover a range of service care:

- Adult Services
- Eating Disorder Program
- Gambling Program
- Lakehead Psychiatric Hospital (Inpatient, outpatient and community based services are provided for people with serious mental illnesses and addiction problems. Specialized programs include Geriatric Psychiatry, Concurrent Disorders, and Methadone Maintenance.)
- Outreach Teams
- Personal Development
- Geriatric Psychiatry
- Youth Services



www.sjcg.net

Thunder Bay Regional Health Sciences Centre's (a Schedule 1 facility) mental health services consist of:

- Inpatient beds (30)
- Outpatient services and medication clinics
- Mental Health Assessment Team
- Community Mental Health Program
- Community Treatment Order Team
- Two Assertive Community Treatment Teams (289 Munro St.)
- Shared Mental Health Care Service (Fort William Clinic)
- Forensic Mental Health Services (a 20 bed inpatient unit, outpatient services such as court support, case management as well as the Northwestern Ontario Sexual Behaviours Program). This service conducts time limited court ordered specialized assessments to individuals with possible mental health disorders who have come into conflict with the Criminal Justice System.



www.tbrhcs.net

THE PARTNERS

The Thunder Bay Counselling Centre is a

non-profit organization that supports individuals, couples, families and workplaces to make positive life changes through a variety of counselling, advocacy, outreach, and support solutions. The Centre offers services for addictions, concurrent disorders, family violence, abuse, anger, depression and anxiety, grief, relationships, stress, trauma, budgeting and debt management, court support and alternative dispute resolution. Programs and Services include:

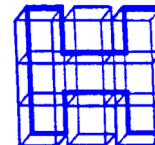


- Alcohol & Other Drugs Program (youth & adult)
- Concurrent Disorder Case Management Program
- Addiction Services Initiative
- Pregnancy & Health Program
- Violence Against Women Program
- Walk-in Counselling Clinic
- Child Victim Witness Program
- ADR – Family Group Decision Making
- Credit Counselling Program
- Corporate Services Division

www.tbaycounselling.com

The Lake of the Woods District Hospital

meets the immediate healthcare needs of residents of the City of Kenora, as well as a large surrounding area, including several First Nations Communities.



Our goal is to provide high quality patient care within the limits of their resources. Our healthcare team is made up of a wide range of dedicated, expert individuals who work along with your physician to provide you or your loved one with the best possible treatment. We are a fully accredited hospital under the national standards of the Canadian Council on Health Services Accreditation.

www.lwdh.on.ca

Mission: The Canadian Hearing Society is the

leading provider of services, products, and information that: remove barriers to communication; advance hearing health; promote equity for people who are culturally Deaf, oral deaf, deafened and hard of hearing. **Services:** are offered directly in Thunder Bay, Kenora and Fort Frances and remotely via video-conferencing by qualified professionals in two languages (spoken English and American Sign Language) and two cultures (Hearing and Deaf):



- Counselling (individual and group)
- Hearing health care
- ASL-English interpreting services
- Mental health & wellness program
- ASL & Literacy Consultation (Infant Hearing Program)
- Communication and Language development for children
- Public education & outreach
- Hearing loss prevention & Hearing screenings
- Hearing prescription and dispensing services
- Literacy and lifeskills program for Deaf Adults Communication device consultation & sales
- Accessibility consulting services (services & facility)
- Bi-lingual/Bi-cultural education and training

Financial Sponsor

Thunder Bay District Health Unit

The Thunder Bay District Health Unit is one of 36 Public Health Units operating in the Province of Ontario, Canada. We are a non-profit agency funded jointly by the provincial government and the municipalities we serve.



In response to the health needs of the community, we:

- provide health information and prevention-related clinical services to people of all ages;
- advocate for healthy public policy;
- protect you by investigating reportable diseases; uphold regulations that apply to public health

www.tbdhu.com

Conference at a Glance

Thursday, March 4th

Registration / Continental Breakfast / Networking from 8:00 AM to 8:30 AM

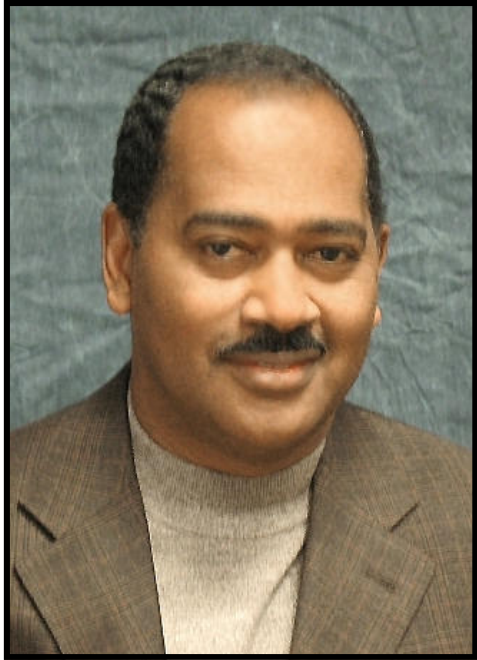
Welcome & Opening Remarks		8:30 AM - 9:00 AM
Children & Families at the Crossroads: Substance Abuse, Violence, and Treatment	Dr. Kenneth Hardy	9:00 AM - 10:30 AM
Break & Networking		10:30 AM- 11:00 AM
Children & Families at the Crossroads (Continued)	Dr. Kenneth Hardy	11:00 AM - 12:30 PM
Lunch and Networking	Provided	12:30 PM - 1:30 PM
Children & Families at the Crossroads (Continued)	Dr. Kenneth Hardy	1:30 PM - 2:45 PM
Break and Networking		2:45 PM- 3:15 PM
Children & Families at the Crossroads (Continued)	Dr. Kenneth Hardy	3:15 PM- 4:30 PM

Friday, March 5th

Continental Breakfast / Networking from 8:00 - 8:30 AM

Welcome & Announcements		8:30 AM - 8:45 AM
Whatever is 'Right' with You is more Important than What is 'Wrong' with You	Barbara Spenser & Darryl MacNeil	8:45 AM - 10:15 AM
Concurrent Sessions I		
A. Healthy Lifestyles: The Evolution of an Addictions Treatment Program with Individuals with Acquired Brain Injury Scandia 1	Peter Gravelle & Heather LeBlanc	10:45 AM - 12:15 PM
B. The Development of the Thunder Bay Youth Suicide Prevention Task Force Scandia 3	Angela Hill & Tina Bennett	
C. Sioux Lookout's Community Counselling and Addictions Service: A Promising Practice Viking Room	Bruce Siciliano	
Lunch and Update on Drug Strategy	Provided	12:15 PM - 1:15 PM
Concurrent Sessions II		
A. Ontario Works Addiction Services Initiative in Partnership with Thunder Bay Counselling Centre Scandia 1	Cathy Gordon, Deanna Robinson, Abi Sprakes & Cynthia Olsen	1:15 PM - 2:45 PM
B. Assessment & Treatment Planning for Concurrent Disorders utilizing a Strength Based Approach Scandia 3	Melissa Pudas & Kirsten Sacino	
C. N'Pindjigossan (My Medicine Bag) Strength Based Perspective Viking Room	Ron Kanutski	
Viewing of Cottonland Video and Panel Discussion	Brenda L Jeannine Black	3:00 PM - 4:30PM

Keynote Speaker



Kenneth V. Hardy, Ph.D.

Dr. Kenneth Hardy is a Professor of Family Therapy at Drexel University in Philadelphia, Pennsylvania. Prior to joining the faculty at Drexel, Dr. Hardy was a Professor of Marriage and Family Therapy at Syracuse University in New York where he also held administrative positions as the Director of Clinical Training and Research and the Chair of the Department of Child and Family Studies.

In addition to his academic appointment, Dr. Hardy is also Director of the Eikenberg Institute for Relationships in New York, New York where he maintains a private practice specializing in working with at-risk children and families. His work in this area has earned him considerable public

acclaim including appearances on the Oprah Winfrey Show and Dateline NBC. His work has also been featured in USA Today, the LA Times, The Chicago Sun Times, and numerous popular magazines.

Dr. Hardy provides training and consultation to a host of organizations, agencies, and Institutions devoted to working with at-risk children and their families. Some of his former clients include the Children's Defense Fund, the New York State Office of Mental Health, the Washington, D.C. Superior Court, the Syracuse City School District, the Menninger Clinic, Rockland Children's Psychiatric Center, Philadelphia Department of Human Services, the South Carolina Department of Mental Health, and Family and Children's Services of Washington, D.C., Nashville, Louisville, and Minneapolis. He is also a much sought after and frequent presenter at conferences devoted to understanding the needs of at-risk children and their families.

Dr. Hardy is the recipient of several distinguished awards from the *American Association for Marriage and Family Therapy (AAMFT)*, the *International Association for Marriage and Family Counselors (IAMFC)*, the *American Family Therapy Academy (AFTA)*, as well as *Hofstra*, *St. John's*, and *Syracuse* Universities, respectively. He has published a variety of articles and book chapters and is the co-author of a book by Guilford Publications, entitled, "Teens Who Hurt: Clinical Interventions for Breaking the Cycle of Youth Violence."

Day One Workshop
Thursday, March 4, 2010
8:30 AM - 4:30 PM

Children and Families at the Crossroads: Substance Abuse, Violence, and Treatment
Ballroom
Dr. Kenneth Hardy

There is often an inextricable and unrecognized connection between substance abuse, violence, and troubled youth. Often the emotional, psychological, and social factors that underpin violence are also true for substance abuse in many instances. While the abuse of substances is more often than not a strategy for coping, it also masks core underlying issues such as shame, devaluation, loss, and relational disconnectedness. To say the least, the relationship between substance abuse, violence, and the behavior of troubled youth is a complex systemic one.

Substances are often the lubricant that makes egregious acts of violence possible, while the dehumanizing effects of perpetrating acts of violence are often anesthetized by the reliance and over-reliance on substances. To make significant inroads in incidences of violence and substance abuse among disconnected youth, treatment and prevention strategies must focus on the critical intersection of the two. This workshop will be devoted to examining the complex intersection that exists between substance abuse and family violence and how they are ravaging the lives of our youth. Specific strategies for prevention and treatment will be provided.

Objectives:

- To provide an overview of the critical overlapping aggravating factors that underpin substance abuse and violence;
- To provide strategies for the prevention and treatment of substance abuse and violence;
- To provide clinicians and other human service providers with strategies for making effective differential diagnoses between anger and rage as it relates to substance abuse and violence.
- To examine critical Self of the Therapist issues that may facilitate and/or impede the effective engagement and treatment of families where substance abuse and violence are indicated.

Let's think about mental health & addictions... with an

www.withanopenmind.com

OPEN
m i n d

A Northwestern Ontario initiative.

Day Two Plenary Presentation
Friday, March 5, 2010
8:45 AM - 10:15 AM

Whatever is “right” with you is more important than what is “wrong” with you
Ballroom

Barbara Spencer MSW., RSW and Darryl MacNeil H.B.A., M.A

Barbara Spencer and Darryl MacNeil are case managers at the Sister Margaret Smith Center in Thunder Bay. The Sister Margaret Smith Center, Youth Addiction Programs is a client-centered provincial resource providing a variety of services to children, adolescents and their families. One of the resources is a 5 week co-ed residential drug and alcohol treatment program for youth aged 12 up to 18.

The Youth Addiction Programs have been working in partnership with Lakehead University and the Centre of Excellence (Dr. Rawana Ph.D Psych, and graduate students of the Department of Psychology and other faculty members) for the past three years developing their Strength Based Programs. The research and outcome measurements are ongoing. Barbara and Darryl will be sharing some of their challenges, strategies, experiences, and resources in implementing a Strength Based Program.

This fun filled, interactive 90 minute session will explore the different aspects of the program beginning with Intake (youth questionnaires, matching youth to case manager) to Programming (strengths group, art work, collages) including strength based strategies to understanding and managing behaviors that are impacting on the youth’s treatment (graffiti wall; conversation box).

Barbara A. Spencer MSW., RSW.

Barbara has been a social worker in Thunder Bay for the past 25 years. She has worked in a variety of organizations in the capacity of manager and clinical social worker. Barbara received her social work training at Lakehead University. She has also received a certificate in Family & Couple Therapy through the University of Guelph, and her Clinical Traumatology certification through the Traumatology Institute in Toronto. She has been working as a family therapist/addiction counselor with the Sister Margaret Smith Center Youth Addiction Programs for the past 5 years.

Darryl MacNeil

Darryl has worked in the social service field in some capacity for the past 10 years. He originally began as a Youth Worker in Southern Ontario while completing his Masters in Psychology. Once completed, Darryl worked as a school counselor in Toronto before returning to Thunder Bay. He has been working as an addiction counselor with “Youth in Transition” at the Sister Margaret Smith Center Youth Addiction Programs for the past 2 years. He is also a part time musician, writing and producing hip hop music.

Day Two Concurrent Workshops
Friday, March 5, 2010 - 10:45 AM – 12:15 PM

Delegates are able to attend one workshop in each Concurrent Series

**Concurrent Session 1A: Healthy Lifestyles: The Evolution of an Addictions Treatment Program with
Individuals with Acquired Brain Injury**

Room: Scandia 1

Peter Gravelle; BSW, MSW & Heather LeBlanc, B.A. H.B.S.W.

This session will demonstrate the evolution of Brain Injury Services of Northern Ontario's (BISNO) Addictions Group from pilot project through to its current state as a fully operational Addictions Treatment Program. The presentation will focus on three main subjects: the history and development of the pilot program, the evolution of the program since the formation of the treatment team in 2007, and a more detailed explanation of the treatment provided, with emphasis on the Belief System Model and practical experiences of frontline staff and individuals in service.

Concurrent Session 1B: The Development of the Thunder Bay Youth Suicide Prevention Task Force

Room: Scandia 3

Angela Hill & Tina Bennett

In April 2009, 20 Thunder Bay service providers came together to sign a Memorandum of Agreement. The focus was on collaboration and increasing our community's capacities to respond to youth suicide. The first goal was the acute response protocol for use in the school systems. The focus of work has shifted to prevention. Partner agencies are committed to the ongoing development of a collaborative approach in the prevention of youth suicide in our community.

Learning objectives:

- To appreciate how a community successfully mobilized to respond to a youth suicide and the development of community prevention strategies
- To understand how an agency can assume a leadership role in the development of community mobilization project and work effectively with community service providers

**Concurrent Session 1C: Sioux Lookout's Community Counselling and Addictions Service: A Promising
Practice**

Room: Viking Room

Bruce Siciliano

CCAS primarily serves people with serious mental illness, addictions challenges, those at risk of committing suicide, and the homeless. Services include counseling, a needle exchange program, community outreach, assessment, treatment referral, case management and follow-up. With a small staff of twelve, including eight clinicians, two support staff, a clinical supervisor, a director, and an annual budget of \$1.5 million, CCAS uses innovative strategies to increase the reach and effectiveness of its work. The CCAS bases its work on three key principles:

1. Offer services in the community
2. Build collaborative partnerships and pool resources
3. Provide culturally appropriate services

In collaboration with some of the First Nations staff at CCAS and elders from different First Nations communities, the CCAS has worked hard to create culturally appropriate services.

Day Two Concurrent Workshops
Friday, March 5, 2010 - 1:15 PM – 2:45 PM
Delegates are able to attend one workshop in each Concurrent Series

**Concurrent Session 2A: Ontario Works Addiction Services Initiative in Partnership with Thunder Bay
Counselling Centre: Establishment of Community Outreach Intensive Case Management Team**
Room: Scandia 1
Cathy Gordon & Deanna Robinson

Ontario Works is mandated to provide a voluntary addiction treatment initiative to participants who identify addiction as a barrier to employment. The initiative aims to provide appropriate treatment options and supports to assist participants with their unique path of recovery.

Collaboration between Ontario Works delivery agents and addiction treatment providers in order to maximize capacity in their communities, develop creative service delivery options and support innovation, resulted in the creation of a Community Addiction Outreach Team with intensive case management of Ontario Works participants to support them to economic self-sufficiency.

**Concurrent Session 2B: Assessment & Treatment Planning for Concurrent Disorders Utilizing a
Strength Based Approach**
Room: Scandia 3
Melissa Pudas & Kirsten Sacino

The utilization of an integrated Strength-Based Approach in the screening, assessment and treatment planning for individuals living with a concurrent disorder is a relatively new phenomenon. This approach understands individuals based on their strengths, resources, survival skills, abilities and knowledge. Through this lens both internal and external strengths are focused on for growth and change.

Still today, when individuals with both substance use and mental health concerns seek assistance from an addiction or mental health provider they are often identified as having one “problem” and are subsequently treated for that singular issue. An integrated strength-based approach allows us to utilize a holistic approach to the individual and their care through stage-specific and symptom/diagnosis-specific intervention.

Participants in this workshop will develop and understand how to utilize a strength-based approach in screening, assessment and treatment planning when with individuals who have a concurrent disorder. This workshop will provide skills and strategies through discussion and group exercises that focus on identifying the individuals’ personal and environmental strengths, goals and uniqueness.

Concurrent Session 2C: N’Pindjigossan (My Medicine Bag) Strength-Based Perspective
Room: Viking Room
Mushkiki-Gizhibausens-Kwaa, Bear Clan, Ron Kanutski, Lake Helen 1st Nation (Red Rock Band)

This session is of cross-cultural benefit and the content may be used for working with children, teens and adults, in a traditional and/or contemporary setting. We will discuss the various parts of a medicine bag and how does it provides strength to individuals.

The seminar’s purpose is to discuss the creation, contents, implementation and importance of a medicine bag. The connection between the medicine bag and its connection to strength-based healing will be examined. This seminar will be delivered in a sharing circle format with allotted time for reflection, questions and/or discussion. The presenter’s personal experiences will be shared with the participants. This is a valuable tool for individuals to reconnect/connect with one’s personal values & life.

Day Two Plenary Presentations
Friday, March 5, 2010 - 3:00 - 4:30 PM

Viewing of Cottonland and Panel Discussion
Ballroom

When the last of Cape Breton's coalmines shut down in the late 1990s, the community of Glace Bay fell into economic despair, followed by social depression. Celebrated photographer and filmmaker Nance Ackerman describes the human cost and the lure of opiates that followed.

Cottonland reveals how easy it is for a social dependency on the state to carry over into a personal dependence on a potent little pill. If a combination of social and economic factors increases the likelihood of dependency, a strong and cohesive social network can help people to resist. The film highlights the Mi'kmaq community of Membertou, where the economy is flourishing and culture of hope thrives after generations of despair. Cottonland emphasizes the importance of a collective approach to the problems of addiction and dependency.

A panel discussion will follow immediately after the film. Presenters TBA

Update on Drug Strategy
Ballroom

Thunder Bay has embarked on a very exciting journey of creating a community-developed strategy to more cohesively address the issue of substance misuse. The Steering Committee, chaired by Rebecca Johnson has recently concluded the community focus groups and will be utilizing the results to begin planning how best to move forward. The Drug Strategy Coordinator will share the results of the community focus groups and provide an update on the progress of the Strategy Development.



Day Two

Speaker Biographies

Peter Gravelle; BSW, MSW

Peter Gravelle is the Program Director at BISNO and brings 28 years of clinical experience to the team. He developed the Lakehead Sex-Offenders Treatment Program and revised and oversaw the Youth and Adult Addictions Programs at the Sister Margaret Smith Centre. Peter's clinical work is varied and includes work in child and adult mental health, child welfare, organization health as well as extensive work overseeing group therapy.

Heather LeBlanc, B.A. H.B.S.W.

Heather is a Team Leader with Brain Injury Services of Northern Ontario Community Services and a group facilitator in the Healthy Lifestyles Group (Addictions Group). She has worked with survivors of acquired brain injury and their families for the past 18 years. This experience includes Thunder Bay and the districts of Kenora and Rainy River

Angela Hill; MSW

Angela is the coordinator of the Child and Adolescent Mental Health Unit at Thunder Bay Regional Health Sciences Centre. She has worked in children's mental health for the past 30 years. She has worked as a child and youth worker, clinical social worker and manager.

Tina Bennett

Tina is a graduate of Lakehead University in Thunder Bay. She has worked in the mental health field for over 17 years in various capacities. Most recently as the Residential Services Manager at Dilico Anishinabek Care within the Mental Health and Addictions Services. She has been a member of the Thunder Bay Suicide Task Force since 2008.

Bruce Siciliano

Bruce is the Director with Sioux Lookout Meno Ya Win Community Counselling & Addictions Services. He has had previous role with the Kenora/Rainy River Community Care Access Centre and serves on the Board of Directors of the Dryden Association for Community Living. He was a Program Consultant with the Ministry of Community and Social Services. He also coaches his son's hockey team.

Cathy Gordon

As a supervisor with Ontario Works – District of Thunder Bay Social Services Administration Board since 1986. Cathy has worked in the social services field for 24 years. She has been managing the ongoing operation of the initiative since its implementation in 2002. She is a graduate of Lakehead University HBSW Program.

Deanna Robinson

Ontario Works Addiction Counsellor with the Addiction Services Initiative program since 2003. Previously worked at the North Bay Recovery Home in different capacities. Sat on different committees for local North Bay agencies and Canadore College for the Drug and Alcohol Counsellor program. Has worked in the area of substance use for over 15 years.

Day Two Speaker Biographies Continued

Abi Sprakes

As the Manager of Programs and Services with the Thunder Bay Counselling Centre, Abi has worked in the area of substance use, mental health and psychosocial issues for the past 10 years. She was involved with implementation of ASI in 2002 and its ongoing evaluation to ensure it is a viable and effective service delivery model.

Cynthia Olsen

Concurrent Disorders Counsellor providing outreach and case management to Ontario Works participants with ASI since 2006. Graduated from Carleton University with a BA Psychology. Also, as a graduate of Child & Youth Work in 2000, has a history with children's mental health.

Melissa Pudas

Melissa is a counsellor with Substance Use & Mental Health Programs at the Thunder Bay Counselling Centre. She has 10 years experience providing Assessment, Treatment recommendations, facilitating referrals and community treatment counselling. Currently, Melissa is a Youth In Transition Case Manager (Youth between 18-24 who are living with Substance Use and Mental Health concerns). She practices from a strength-based, client centered perspective. Special area of interest includes stages of Change and Motivational Interviewing, where she has been invited to provide numerous training and workshops to a wide variety of agencies. Melissa also provides and facilitates Work and Wellness Workshops exploring the internal process of change.

Kirsten Sacino

Kirsten is also a counsellor with Substance Use & Mental Health Programs at Thunder Bay Counselling Centre. She has 10 plus experience counselling and case management in the area of Concurrent Disorders. Currently, she provides Assessments, Treatment recommendations, facilitates referrals and community treatment counselling. Kirsten also is a Forensics Case Manager (18-99, where individuals are living with Substance Use, Mental Health and experience ongoing conflict with the criminal justice system). With other community partners, she participated in the development and currently co-facilitates the Concurrent Disorders Treatment Community Base Treatment Group.

Mushkiki-Gizhibausens-Kwaa, Bear Clan

Ron Kanutski

Lake Helen 1st Nation (Red Rock Band)

Ron, who best describes himself as a cultural teacher and facilitator, has been working in the human services field for 20 years. He has worked extensively throughout northern Ontario, Manitoba, Wisconsin, Michigan, Minnesota and Illinois. As a consultant, group facilitator and counsellor, Ron delivers a wide variety of mental health, addictions, and culturally sensitive seminars, workshops and services to Aboriginal children, youth and adults residing in urban, rural and remote communities. Ron's gift is his natural ability to blend traditional Ojibway healing methods and ceremonies shared by the elders with mainstream healing modalities to provide unique learning experiences and opportunities for all participants who attend.

Ron currently works at the New Experiences Program as the Native Cultural Coordinator/Counsellor in Thunder Bay, Ontario at the Children's Centre Thunder Bay.

Building Bridges Conference History

The concept of a regional Concurrent Disorders conference stemmed from an interagency addictions working group at Thunder Bay Regional Health Sciences Centre (TBRHSC) that was created in 2004 to develop strategies to support the growing number of clients with concurrent disorders. Education in concurrent disorders was identified as a key need by the agencies represented on the working group. To determine how broadly the need was felt and what the particular learning needs were, a regional survey was conducted in December 2004. The need for education in concurrent disorders was strongly endorsed throughout the region as this is a specialty population whose numbers are growing as is the complexity of their care needs.

This ultimately led to the first Building Bridges: Northwestern Ontario Concurrent Disorders Conference in May 2006. Based on the results of the survey, the conference featured Dr. Ken Minkoff as well as concurrent sessions from a variety of professionals from Northwestern Ontario. All costs related to the conference were funded by surplus health accord salary dollars within St. Joseph's Care Group (approximately \$35,000). Approximately 250 clinicians throughout the region attended the 2½-day event. The funding allowed for travel subsidies to people in the region to support their attendance, since travel costs for education are a major barrier to attendance. Feedback from the conference indicated that it was such an overwhelming success that the planning group endeavored to host a second conference in order to make "Building Bridges" an annual concurrent disorders conference for Northwestern Ontario.

By this point, the addictions working group at TBRHSC had disbanded as it had accomplished its objectives. Planning for the conference was subsumed by the Conference Planning Committee of the Thunder Bay District Mental Health and Addictions Network. Further to this was the Network's intent to adopt the model of integrated care for concurrently disordered clients as articulated by Dr. Minkoff. To that end, the group obtained and completed the COFIT to assess the extent to which services were already integrated. As a result, the second Building Bridges conference again featured Dr. Ken Minkoff and Dr. Christie Cline who delivered more in-depth information to participants and it was held in March 2007. The speakers/consultants met with the membership of the Network prior to the actual conference in support of the work with the COFIT and plans for completion of the COMPASS.

The second conference was funded by several agencies, many of which had already dedicated surplus health accord funding to the conference by indicating their intent to do so to the Ministry of Health and Long Term Care through their Health Accord Implementation Plans. The entire cost for the second conference, including regional travel subsidies, was also approximately \$35,000. The Network hired a conference planner for the event as the workload generated from such a large undertaking in such a short time span was monumental.

Feedback from the conference once again indicated that participants found it very useful in their practices. They wanted this educational opportunity to be an annual event but they wanted to have some different keynote speakers. The Conference Planning Committee once again hosted the third Building Bridges conference, this time with a focus on concurrent disorders in youth in general and Aboriginal youth in particular. Contributions or surplus health accord funds from member agencies, again was able to deliver a 2 day sold out conference (280 people plus 30 on a wait list), March 30 & 31, 2008.

In 2009 with the generous combined contribution from St. Joseph's Care Group and Thunder Bay Regional Health Science Centre, which the North West Local Health Integration Network (NWLHIN) endorsed; 150 individuals attended for the hospitals and provided registration and travel subsidy for many in the region and small agencies with little to no training budget. We had the largest attendance to date with 400 persons present over two days.

The Conference Planning Committee was extremely grateful for prompt endorsement of utilizing surplus funds, as there was a pressing need to continue to deliver this kind of education.

The Conference Planning Committee of the North West Regional Mental Health and Addictions Network (a joining of the Thunder Bay District Mental Health and Addictions Network and the Kenora Rainy River Districts Mental Health and Addictions Network) set out to organize the Building Bridges V in June of 2009. The Conference Planning Committee is pleased to be hosting "Building on Our Strengths" as identified on the evaluations from last year. They are aware that not all of the groups are included, however with ongoing input from attendees we will strive to make future conferences relevant and current to our ever-changing environment.

