

10th Canadian Conference on Collaborative Mental Health Care

Informing the National Agenda: Recommendations from the "Advancing the Consumer Voice" Discussion Groups

Preamble: Each of the discussion groups was asked to develop several recommendations related to their topic which would serve to inform the National Agenda on Collaborative Mental Health Care. The following is a list of these recommendations.

Topic: Countering Stigma and Discrimination

1. Electronic shared medical records be implemented only after adequate safeguards are in place to protect persons from stigma and discrimination, and all administrative and health care providers have been fully trained in these policies and procedures.
2. Peer Support Specialist positions be implemented in all areas of service delivery; Peer Support Specialists be recognized as a profession with standardized training and certification delivered by Peer Support Specialists; and access to training be supported through scholarships, followed by fair and equitable compensation.

Topic: Shared Decision-Making and Health Literacy

1. Working with consumers and providers, develop a common understanding of what constitutes "shared care" and have this understanding inform service structures and delivery.
2. Develop educational resources to provide people living with mental illness and service providers with the knowledge, skills and tools to engage in meaningful shared care which includes health literacy.
3. Recommendations #1 & #2 be considered at the systemic and practice levels as well as in the development and delivery of consumer and service provider education.

Topic: The Future - What Would a Consumer-/Patient-Driven System Look Like?

1. All Boards of Directors, Advisory Committees and Program Development Committees within service provider organizations include consumers as full participating members.
2. Create mechanisms for families, peer groups and peer support specialists to communicate and share data locally, provincially and nationally.
3. Embark on education and awareness campaigns focused on improving the understanding of "mainstream" helping professionals as to the value and efficacy of Peer Support Specialists as well as a consumer-driven system.

Topic: Youth Involvement

1. Services for youth be delivered in a flexible outreach model, connecting with youth where they are.
2. Develop flexible models of primary care for youth which improve access to family doctors and increase opportunities for relationship building, for example, family doctors' being available in youth shelters, youth friendly walk-in clinics, and opportunities to meet health care providers before signing up with them for service.

Thank you to the facilitators of these discussion groups and all those who participated!