

**BACK-
GROUND:**

As early as 2008, you may have heard about a unique community/academic partnership: The Interdisciplinary Student Counselling Clinic (now "The Wait-List Counselling and Training Clinic at CMHA LM"; WLC).

Today, we are writing to you to provide an update on this project and enquire about your interest in becoming involved with the WLC in the near future.

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The Wait-list Times

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The Story So Far.....

Through the London Clinical Psychology Residency Consortium, the Canadian Mental Health Association London Middlesex provided financial, administrative, and supervisory support for a Clinical Psychology Resident, Ms. Aimée Coulombe, co-supervised by Ms. Dawn White (Director of Clinical Services, CMHA LM) and Dr. Felicia Otchet (Clinical Psychologist and Coordinating Psychologist for the WLC), to dedicate one day per week over a six month period (March 01, 2010 to August 31, 2010) to WLC planning and development.



The first WLC task to be completed was refining the WLC service delivery model. Since its inception, the WLC mandate was to address

two broad goals: a) to increase access to mental health services for members of the London, Ontario community who could not otherwise access these services, and b) to provide interdisciplinary training in counselling skills to students from a wide range of health and mental health disciplines. It was also established from the outset that the WLC would neither duplicate, nor compete with, existing mental health services or training opportunities.

In an ideal model, the WLC would be integrated within the local mental health and academic/ training landscapes, complementing and supporting established institutions and agencies.

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Where We Are Now.....

In brainstorming about how to underscore the need for the WLC to the broader community, the theme of "waiting" emerged time and time again. To some extent, "waiting" is exactly what we're doing now. Unfortunately, we re-

cently received word that two of our grant applications was not funded. We expect to hear the results of one other application in the next few months. As the WLC cannot move forward without a certain level of external financial

support, the "wait" for funding is the most significant barrier we face. "Waiting" is definitely not all we're doing, however.

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The Story So Far....continued

Around the same time that the WLC model was being examined, CMHA LM and other community mental health agencies in the area were reporting wait-lists for mental health services (e.g., case management) between 6-9 months long.

Refining the WLC mandate to support clients while wait-listed for service at community mental health agencies was a natural solution; the WLC would not duplicate existing services, but would provide short-term client-centered counselling until existing services could be accessed. Clients' readiness for existing services could also be examined and supported under this model, providing a unique training opportunity for WLC trainees.

Under the supervision of a clinical psychologist experienced in community mental health, trainees would be responsible for: a) maintaining face-to-face contact with wait-list clients, b) monitoring wait-list client functioning and service needs, and c) providing supportive, client-centered counselling until existing services could be accessed.

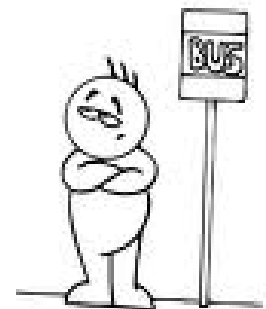
A program logic model was developed, project approval was provided by CMHA LM, a partnership with the clinical psychology area of the University of Western Ontario was established, and a series of grants were submitted to pilot and evaluate the WLC with additional letters of support provided from Canvoice, WOTCH Family Programme, and the London Regional Psychological Association.

THE WAIT
-LIST
TIMES

Where We Are Now...continued

CMHA L/M has agreed to provide their space, which would be well-suited for the clinic. Fundraising efforts are beginning as well, including the availability of some fabulous items offered in exchange for various levels of donation.

Planning and project development efforts are in full swing. A training curriculum must be developed, as do WLC policies and procedures and mechanisms for evaluation (both of the trainees and of the program as a whole). Most immediately, a steering committee must be assembled and a list of interested and committed partners identified.



What We Could Do.....



A pilot group of 8 students (from a variety of health and mental health disciplines) and 1-2 supervising psychologists could see approximately 12 CMHA wait-list clients

per night, 2 night per week, over a 9 month period (the duration of the pilot project, as proposed in current funding applications).

Prior to seeing their first clients, students will participate in a weekend training orientation that includes an overview of the WLC policies and procedures; review and assessment of baseline counselling and intake skills; and instruction in best practices, issues and ethics in community mental health, and models of interdisciplinary/transdisciplinary research and care.

Further, trainees will take turns leading weekly ½ hr discussions, focussing on community mental health topics of their choice. They will also take the lead in providing information about their chosen discipline to other trainees, including a description of their chosen profession’s potential role in client care.

“How much of human life is lost in waiting.”
-Ralph Waldo Emerson

Who We Could Help.....

As not all clients will require weekly sessions and not all clients will require counselling for the full 9 month pilot period, we estimate that between 50-60 clients who would otherwise be wait-listed for service will receive counselling from the WLC during the pilot period.

If successful, future iterations of the WLC may include: increasing the number of nights per week that WLC services are offered, providing WLC services on weekends, and serving a wider variety of clients (e.g., clients on wait-lists for services from other agencies; clients’ families).



How We Will Grow....

On clinic nights, supervisors and students not providing direct service will be together in a large room.

They will be able to simultaneously observe sessions via live video feeds from the counselling rooms. Sessions will be observed by the group for clinical

and educational purposes, and discussion among trainees will be promoted with emphasis on each student’s/discipline’s possible contribution to the client. This will provide vicarious learning experiences for students in addition to insuring a high degree of quality assurance.

Evaluation of the clinic will be on-going and involve multiple methods and stakeholder perspectives. Input from clients, trainees, training institutions, and CMHA LM is essential.



For more information, please contact:

Dr. Felicia Otchet, C.Psych
Coordinating Psychologist
The Wait-List Counselling and Training
Clinic at the Canadian Mental Health
Association London-Middlesex
Phone: 519-630-1863
E-mail: fotchet@rogers.com

Dawn White, MHS, BScN, RegN
Director of Clinical Services
Canadian Mental Health Association
London-Middlesex Branch
Phone: 519-434-9191 ext.250
E-mail: dawnwhite@crisislondon.on.ca



This Brings Us To You.....

To make this project a success we need:

-The involvement and input from training directors and coordinators from variety of health and mental health disciplines whose students would be interested in developing counselling skills in an adult, community mental health, and interdisciplinary setting.

-Trainees willing to participate in the development, implementation, and evaluation of this project.

-Steering committee members from a variety stakeholder groups to oversee the development and governance of the WLC pilot and its evaluation. Creativity and a dedication to building a working and sustainable mental health

system are essential.

-Committee chairs and members able to assist with the “hands-on” activities that will make the WLC a success (e.g., preparing and contributing to curriculum material, assisting with on-going program evaluation).

“There are many persons ready to do what is right because in their hearts they know it is right. But they hesitate, waiting for the other fellow to make the first move - and he, in turn, waits for you.”
-Marian Anderson

-Fundraisers, connectors, and champions.

-Individuals (consumers, providers, families) willing to share their stories and experiences about waiting for mental health services.

We will be following up with some of you individually in the next few weeks.

Please feel free to forward this newsletter to parties you believe may have an interest in our clinic. We would especially love to hear back from anyone who fits any of these descriptions.

Thank you very much for your interest and support!

We hope to hear from you soon, until then.....***we'll be waiting!!***