

THE WAIT-LIST
CLINIC AT CMHA-LM

**BACK-
GROUND:**

The Wait-List Clinic at the Canadian Mental Health Association—London Middlesex (WLC at CMHA – LM) hopes to provide much needed services to individuals waiting for services through CMHA-LM.

This issue of the Wait-List Times provides an update on our progress and some information about how you can get involved and support us. We've got some exciting news to share.

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The Wait-list Times

VOLUME 2 ISSUE 1

May 2011

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Stand-Up For Mental Health

Raising Awareness (and funds) Through Laughter

On March 5, 2011, the UWO chapter of Active Minds hosted a comedy night in support of mental health awareness. Active Minds is a student run mental health awareness, education, and advocacy group with chapters at university and college campuses across North America. Their mission is to use student voices to raise awareness, reduce stigma, and to improve access to resources and services for students experiencing mental health difficulties.



The event featured comedians from Stand Up For Mental Health, a program in which people with mental illness perform stand-up comedy to address the stigma, discrimination, and prejudice surrounding mental health problems. Comedians explored the lighter side of seeing a therapist, being diagnosed, taking medication, and navigating the mental health system.

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Pepsi Refresh: VOTE TODAY

Pepsi is giving away over a million dollars to great ideas that will improve communities across Canada. We think the WLC is a pretty great idea and deserves some of this funding. So in addition to traditional community and

academic grants (more about this later), we've recently submitted a proposal to the Pepsi Refresh Everything—Canada Campaign. The proposal is to fund a 6-month pilot program to provide counseling services through

the WLC model for one night a week. This pilot program would provide service to approximately 60 clients currently wait-listed for service.

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Voting begins on May 1, 2011 and will close at midnight on May 31, 2011. Please Vote Daily

The Current Status of Wait Lists

The status of wait-lists for community mental health services in London are in a state of crisis. Currently, 33 individuals who have been diagnosed with a serious mental illness and require community support services through CMHA LM are waiting. Practically, this reflects a wait of up to 9 months to receive clinical services. Similar wait-lists exist at other community mental health agencies throughout the London-Middlesex area. The impact of waiting is significant. Wait-lists result in individuals being turned away when they are most open to receiving treatment. Being told to wait can be demoralizing to someone in need, and often leads to increased distress, declines in functioning, and attrition from service.

The WLC can help. By providing immediate supportive counseling to those waiting for services, the WLC hopes to reduce suffering and improve functioning. Furthermore, receiving services through the WLC will not make individuals ineligible for the services they are waiting for. In fact, by working in partnership, the ongoing assessment provided by the WLC should facilitate transitions between WLC services and other CMHA LM services, improving the efficiency of the system.

**“How much
of human
life is lost in
waiting.”**

-Ralph

Waldo

Emerson



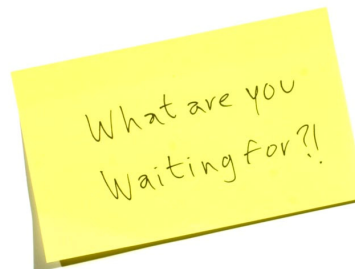
Pepsi Refresh . . .

The successful implementation of such a pilot program would also permit the much needed collection of process and outcome data, which will be invaluable in securing further funding for continuation and expansion of the WLC.

How Does the Competition Work?

Once approved, our proposal will go live on the Pepsi Refresh website (www.refresheverything.ca). Anyone can view the proposals and vote daily for their favorite idea. Proposals with the greatest number of votes win and receive funding for their idea from Pepsi. This is where we need your help. Spread the word . . . Get people looking at our proposal and voting EVERY DAY.

Voting begins on May 1, 2011 and will close at midnight on May 31, 2011.



**THE
WAIT-LIST
TIMES**

Where We Are Now.....

Through the London Clinical Psychology Residency Consortium, CMHA LM provided financial, administrative, and supervisory support for a Clinical Psychology Resident, Ms. Patricia Jordan, 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 to program development and evaluation of CMHA LM services, including the WLC.

Through the generous donation of the proceeds from the Stand Up for Mental Health event made by Active Minds at the University of Western Ontario, and through funds being raised through the sale of WLC merchandise, we are becoming increasingly closer to being able to begin the pilot. Significant funds, however remain to be raised to fund the project. In addition to the Pepsi Refresh Campaign, we have recently submitted grant proposals the Green Shield Community Giving Program and the Canada Post Foundation for Mental Health grant competitions. We are working on an application for an Ontario Trillium Foundation grant. We are optimistic that our efforts will be successful and will keep you posted on funding news.

Interested in Donating to the WLC?
WLC Merchandise is still available for purchase, including lollipops, air fresheners, water bottles, and ceramic travel mugs. Please contact Dr. Felicia Otchet to order yours today!
(fotchet@rogers.com)
Members of the London community can also provide financial support for the WLC by donating funds to CMHA LM earmarked for the WLC.

Stand Up for Mental Health

Hilariously entertaining, the event brought together students with members of the larger London community, and created a much needed buzz about mental health. Proceeds from the event (just over \$1,500) were graciously donated by Active Minds at the

University of Western Ontario in support of the WLC. There was an official ceremony commemorating the donation held at CMHA LM on April 19th. We would like to thank Active Minds at the University of Western Ontario for their hard-work in organizing a wonderful

evening, and their generous support of the WLC. This donation will go a long way in helping to make our plans for the WLC a reality. We look forward to continuing to partner with Active Minds to raise awareness about the need for mental health services in our community.





For more information, please contact:

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What Needs to Be Done

While much of the focus has been on securing financial support for the WLC, we are also beginning to focus on development. In addition to providing immediate counselling to individuals wait-listed for CMHA LM service, we plan to provide high quality training in community mental health to trainees in various mental health and health-related disciplines. One of our next steps, therefore, will be the development of an interdisciplinary curriculum that will provide trainees with the core competencies to work in the clinic and meet their discipline-specific training needs. We will also need to develop an official set of WLC policies and procedures for clinic operation that will ensure high standards of care, while ensuring that practices are consistent with CMHA LM procedures and the training policies of partnering institutions.

To make this project a success we need:

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

-Steering committee members from a variety of 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).

-Fundraisers, connectors, and champions.

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

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 interested in helping.

Thank you very much for your interest and support! We hope to hear from you soon, until then.....*we'll be waiting!!*

“How wonderful it is that nobody need wait a single moment before starting to improve the world.” ~Anne Frank