



A Peer Support Organization

By : Connect for Mental Health, Inc. 2013

ABOUT US

Who we are:

Connect for Mental Health is a peer support organization run by and for individuals who have been affected by mental illness.

Members:

Individuals who has been affected by mental illness either personally, or through a family member or friend and participate in the activities that meet the mission and vision of CONNECT for mental health.

MEET OUR BOARD



Stephanie Morrow-Director of Fundraising and Grants



Bereketab Tekle-Director of Support Services



Michelle Solomon-Executive Director



Lauren Redman-Director of Marketing

ABOUT US

Vision

Our vision is to promote sustainable *systems of support* that enable individuals affected by mental illness to thrive and maintain wellness in the community

Mission

CONNECT's mission is three-fold

- To ***support*** individuals affected by mental illness.
- To ***educate*** a wide audience on relevant mental health topics.
- To provide ***outreach*** to the community to help decrease stigma and promote early intervention of mental health disorders.

CORE BELIEFS

We believe...

- in **acceptance**, **management**, and **recovery** of mental illness
- in the power of **mentorship** and peer support to promote health
- that **education** on mental illness can **empower** people to improve their health
- that outreach and **self-disclosure** gives permission for others to talk about mental illness and **seek help**.

PEER SUPPORT

Peer Support:

Support provided by peers, for peers; or any organized support provided by and for individuals who have been affected by mental illness. (Adapted from Making the Case for Peer Support-Mental Health Commission of Canada)

Peer support is based on the fact that people who have overcome adversity with mental illness can offer useful support, encouragement, hope and mentorship to others who are experiencing similar challenges (Davidson, Chinman, Sells & Rowe, 2006, p. 443).

RECOVERY

Recovery

“A deeply personal, unique process of changing one’s attitudes, values, feelings, goals, skills, and/or roles. It is a way of living a satisfying, hopeful, and contributing life even with limitations caused by illness. Recovery involves the development of new meaning and purpose in one’s life as one grows beyond the catastrophic effects of mental illness” (Scott & Wilson, 2011, p. 41).

SUPPORT

Socials

An opportunity for those affected by mental illness to gain emotional support from individuals who have “been there”, connect, socialize, and enjoy an evening out in the community. Every Tuesday at 7:00 pm at a designated coffee shop. Check our website for details!



Social facilitators: Jill Shi and Bereketab Tekle

SUPPORT

Recovery group

An eight week peer led program focused on recovery processes to help maintain wellness. Guided by the [“Your Recovery Journey”](#) program and Involves Wellness Recovery Action Planning ([WRAP](#)), developed by Mary Ellen Copeland where individuals develop and learn to use their own wellness tools, identify triggers and early warning signs, and develop a plan of action to maintain wellness.

To sign up, visit our website www.connectformh.ca and fill out the form. Details will be e-mailed back to you.



Stephanie Morrow: Recovery Group
Facilitator

SUPPORT

Transitional Support

In partnership with Lawson Health Research Institute, Council of Academic Hospitals of Ontario (CAHO), Ontario Peer Development Initiative (OPDI) and London Health Sciences Centre, CONNECT peer support volunteers are being matched with peers leaving the hospital to help them successfully transition back into the community. This is the Transitional Discharge Model (TDM). Connect's peer support volunteers are able to help their peers along the recovery journey through this model.

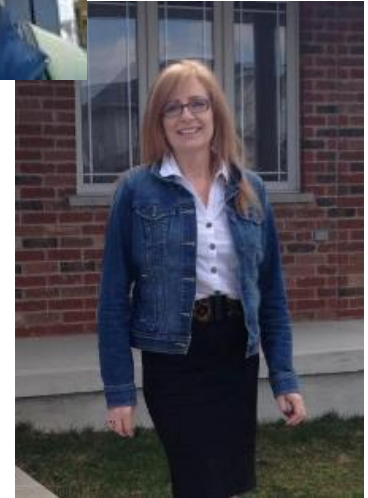
The Transitional Discharge Model also helps to reduce the rate of hospital stays and readmission rates.

SUPPORT

Transitional Support

Update:

- By the end of July we recruited 17 peer support volunteers and we have recruited another 15 volunteers to date.
- Excellent response from staff
- There are many people who have lived experience who want to share their recovery journey
- Great response from Western Students, from Kijiji, and from Pillar Not Profit



Bereketab Tekle and Angie Piccinin: Peer Support Coordinators

EDUCATION

Educational Workshops

CONNECT partners with individuals and organizations in the community to provide free education to the public on topics concerning mental health and recovery and to connect individuals with supportive resources.

Workshops include presentations by local health professionals and individuals who have been affected by mental illness.

Through knowledge we become more equipped to cope with mental illness in a healthy way.



EDUCATION

Topics in the past have included: Anxiety disorders, mood disorders, psychosis, schizophrenia, substance abuse, mental health and maternity, dissociative disorders, and personality disorders.

Contact us to request a workshop in your area!

Check our website for upcoming workshops.



OUTREACH

Outreach Team

Members of CONNECT provide outreach to students, professionals, and the public to share personal experiences about mental health and recovery. We promote the reduction of stigma; encourage the ongoing discussion of mental health topics; and encourage individuals to seek help early.

Established of people (approximately 18-30 years of age) who are open to sharing their personal experiences with mental health



Leanne King: Outreach Team
Leader

OUTREACH

Places of Outreach:

- The student body, in both secondary and post secondary schools
- Businesses and Organizations

Examples of Places of Outreach

- Prevention and Early Intervention Program for Psychoses (PEPP)
- St. Joseph's Hospital "Lunch and Learn"
- WOTCH Community Mental Health Services
- Western University and Fanshawe College

VOLUNTEER AT CONNECT!

Positions

- Facilitate social events.
- Facilitate the recovery group.
- Become a peer support volunteer.
- Organize educational workshops.
- Speak out! Join the outreach team.

The programs that are provided would not exist without the dedication, passion, and commitment of our volunteers.

VOLUNTEER APPLICATION & ORIENTATION

- All volunteers submit a volunteer **application**.
- Volunteers complete an **interview**, **references** are checked and each volunteer submits a vulnerable sector **screening** .
- Volunteers then attend CONNECT's **orientation** prior to starting their volunteer position and/or training for their position.

Our application process is to ensure that volunteers are appropriate, understand their role, and are prepared to start their volunteer position

Join Us!

Recovery is possible. You are not alone!

CONTACT US

WEB: www.connectformh.ca

FACEBOOK

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