

network news...

connecting canada's substance abuse and allied professionals

June 2008

Welcome to network news, an electronic quarterly newsletter designed to connect substance abuse and allied professionals to the latest workforce development initiatives, newly released evidence-informed resources, upcoming events, and much more!

Models of Professionalism—Taking a Deeper Look at Professional Colleges and Associations

In 2004, the Canadian Centre on Substance Abuse (CCSA) conducted a comprehensive survey of the addiction workforce in Canada. One outcome of this survey was the indication of significant support for the formation of a national professional body that would represent, support and advocate on behalf of the substance abuse field.

CCSA recently conducted a telephone survey of 15 professional colleges and associations across Canada to gain a better understanding of the structure, functions and operations of professional health and human service organizations in Canada. More importantly, the interviewees were asked about the implications of forming a professional body for the substance abuse field in Canada, both positive and negative.

A central finding of the survey concerned the viability of forming a professional organization, either in the form of a college or association. There was strong consensus that forming a college is a long and arduous process requiring incorporation in each province and territory. The prospect of forming an association for the substance abuse field was viewed more positively. A national association could serve, without regulation or legislation, the interests of substance abuse providers across the country.

Overall, several options were explored in this study and pointed to considerable challenges and opportunities inherent in formalizing a professional organization specific to Canada's substance abuse field.

[Click here](#) to review the Models of Professionalism report or visit the new [Professional Organization](#) section on the Canadian Network.

Core Competencies—Education and Training Experts Consultation Report

As part of the consultative process leading to the release of the Core Competencies, CCSA initiated the formation of two "expert" groups, one representing post-secondary education and the other, professional development training. The Centre hosted a meeting of each group to evaluate the competencies report and to map out "next steps" for implementation.

Both groups conveyed a clear appreciation of the importance of adopting competencies in the substance abuse field. The Education Experts emphasized the importance of embedding core knowledge and skills in academic curricula. They cautioned, however, that the process of integrating competencies into the academic community is a long-term strategy, and emphasized that a high level of consultation and approval would be required.

The Training Experts indicated a long-standing relationship between professional development and competencies, reporting on a variety of competency-based initiatives already underway in the field. They also emphasized that competencies must move beyond knowledge and skills to incorporate behavioural measures (personal characteristics) as these were seen to be equally, if not more important to the work of the field.

Both groups agreed that the adoption of Core Competencies has the potential to enhance professionalism in the field, improve client outcomes, and create consistent standards across provincial and territorial jurisdictions. This adoption would require the engagement of a wide range of key stakeholders, including all levels of government, professional colleges and associations, accrediting bodies, colleges and universities, employers, and the substance abuse field as a whole. To this end, CCSA was identified as playing the lead role in engaging all key stakeholders in the adoption of the Core Competencies across the field.

[Click here](#) to review the full Education and Training Experts Consultation report or visit the [Core Competencies](#) section of the Canadian Network.

Health Canada Focuses on Parents First

As part of the federal government's new National Anti-Drug Strategy, announced in October 2007, Health Canada is leading the development and implementation of a five-year, \$30 million, national youth drug prevention mass media campaign to increase awareness among young people and their parents about the dangers of experimenting with illicit drugs.

The first component targeting parents of youth aged 13–15 is designed to raise parents' awareness of the dangers of experimenting with illicit drugs. It provides messages to parents reinforcing awareness of their influence on their teenagers and empowering them to talk with their teens about illicit drugs. The first phase of the campaign was launched in early March and featured radio, print and online advertising. A new section of the National Anti-Drug Strategy website was developed specifically for parents (www.drugprevention.gc.ca), as well as a parent booklet, "[Talking with Your Teens about Drugs](#)". The booklet provides parents with information about drugs and their effects on the body, as well as tips on how to broach the subject with their teens.

The television component of the campaign was launched on April 28 and ran through to May 25. It further promoted the website (www.drugprevention.gc.ca) and the parent booklet.

The second component of the campaign will target youth and will be launched later this year.

For more information on the campaign or how to obtain copies of the parent booklet, call 1 800 O Canada (1-800-622-6232) or visit www.drugprevention.gc.ca.

New on the Canadian Network

[New section on Professional Organizations](#)

A new section under "Developing the Workforce" on professional organizations was launched in early May, featuring the *Models of Professionalism* report and a brief survey on the possible development of a national association for substance abuse professionals. The survey closed at the end of May and a final report will be compiled in June.

[New professional toolkit on Manual-Driven Treatment](#)

This new toolkit provides information and resources on manual-driven treatment, a structured form of program delivery whereby a clinician uses a written document to guide the delivery of substance abuse treatment services in an individual or group setting.

Year-One Evaluation

In April, an online survey was launched on the home page of the Canadian Network to help us complete an evaluation of our first year online! Thanks to all of you who participated in the survey. Initial reviews of the feedback collected are overwhelmingly positive. Findings from the survey as well as a detailed review of website statistics (e.g., number of visitors, most popular pages, most popular downloads) will inform the continued development and maintenance of the Canadian Network site.

The Canadian Network website is being upgraded

While our website address (www.cnsaap.ca) will remain unchanged, your bookmarks will change. To ensure continued access to the kind of high-quality resources and information for which CNSAAP is quickly becoming known, we'll remind you again when we're moving the site, so that you can change your bookmarks.

Coming soon:

- Professional toolkit on Pharmacology
- Professional toolkit on Ethics and Professionalism

Education Spotlight

Canadore College, located in North Bay, Ontario, offers two programs specific to the field of addictions: the Indigenous Wellness and Addictions Prevention (IWAP) program and the Mental Health and Addictions (MHA) Worker program.

The IWAP program focuses on the development of skills and knowledge necessary for employment in urban and Aboriginal settings and emphasizes the promotion of personal and spiritual growth within the healing process. Students will learn about traditional methods of healing, including Sacred Circles, Teaching Circles, and the use of the four sacred medicines—tobacco, cedar, sage and sweetgrass—to develop an understanding of the physical, mental, social, cultural and spiritual elements of addiction, and aspects of recovery, assessment and intervention techniques, and to ultimately gain a greater respect and understanding of Aboriginal culture. A certificate can be achieved after one year of study in the program while a diploma requires two years of study.

The two-year MHA program is designed to help students find meaningful employment in the diverse field of counselling and emphasizes the concurrent nature of mental health and addiction issues. Students will learn the knowledge, skills and attitude required to be an effective counsellor in a variety of addiction-specific settings and in the broad spectrum of social or mental health services. The program has a strong partnership with the Nipissing Detoxification and Substance Abuse Programs sponsored by the North Bay General Hospital, and the Northeast Mental Health Centre in North Bay, as well as collaborative linkages to numerous mental health and addictions agencies throughout the province. Graduates are securing entry-level positions in addiction recovery homes, withdrawal management and addiction treatment centres, youth facilities, housing, recreational, and socialization programs, as well as positions within the Canadian Mental Health Association.

[Click here](#) to learn more about what Canadore College has to offer.

[Click here](#) to search for other post-secondary addiction education programs.

Upcoming Events

[World Forum Against Drugs](#)

September 8–10, 2008
Stockholm, Sweden

[9th Annual Fetal Alcohol Canadian Expertise \(FACE\) Research Roundtable](#)

Presented by the Motherisk Program in cooperation with the Public Health Agency of Canada
September 9, 2008
Montréal, QC

[EDGEWOOD's New Perspectives Conference on Addiction](#)

September 11–13, 2008
Nanaimo, BC

[Les multiples facettes de la dépendance](#)

L'Association des intervenants en toxicomanie du Québec
October 26–29, 2008
Trois-Rivières, QC

[Building Equitable Partnerships Symposium 2008](#)

Centre for Addiction and Mental Health
November 5–7, 2008
Toronto, ON

[Click here](#) to view all events listed on the Canadian Network.

Voices from the Field

Myrtle in Richmond County, NS—“Addictions” Education

We offered a two-day educational workshop for outside agencies and other hospital departments (e.g., transition house, correctional services, vocational schools). The planning involved team work, finding a venue, and identifying speakers from within the organization to deliver the workshop. We received very positive feedback...[click here](#) to read on and see what other clients and workers are saying about those who work in the field of substance abuse.

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Questions or comments? Email us at CanadianNetwork@ccsa.ca or call 613-235-4048, ext.249

