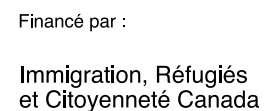




MENTAL HEALTH PROMOTION IN IMMIGRANT AND REFUGEE SERVING ORGANIZATIONS

KNOWLEDGE EXCHANGE REPORT

FEBRUARY 13, 2024



BACKGROUND

The Mental Health Promotion in Immigrant and Refugee Serving Organizations Project (MHP) is funded by Immigration Refugee Citizenship Canada (IRCC). The project's overall goal is to build the capacity of immigrant and refugee services to promote mental health and newcomer wellbeing and respond to mental health issues within organizations. As a cross-sectoral initiative, OCASI aims to strengthen collaboration and partnerships between newcomer and refugee serving organizations, primary care, and community mental health sectors through the development and implementation of the Mental Health Promotion Integrated Service Model.

Additionally, OCASI provides ongoing capacity building opportunities and resources to the immigrant and refugee serving sector on mental health promotion.

Since 2018, OCASI has partnered with two immigrant and refugee serving organizations annually to implement and evaluate the Mental Health Promotion Integrated Service Model. Implementation activities include training on peer support, capacity building opportunities for service providers, supporting staff wellness initiatives, and providing ongoing consultation and resources for the development of trauma and violence informed policies and practices.



Funded by:

Immigration, Refugees
and Citizenship Canada

Financé par :

Immigration, Réfugiés
et Citoyenneté Canada

PROJECT PARTNERS

Access Alliance Multicultural Health and Community Services

Canadian Centre for Victims of Torture (CCVT)

Catholic Crosscultural Services (CCS)

Community Development Council Durham (CDCD)

COSTI Immigrant Services

Hong Fook Mental Health Association

Immigrants Working Centre (IWC)

Mennonite New Life Centre of Toronto (MNLCT)

Punjabi Community Health Services (PCHS)

Rexdale Women's Centre (RWC)

The Neighbourhood Organization (TNO)

Women's Enterprise Skills Training of Windsor Inc. (WEST)

YWCA Hamilton

YMCA of Southwestern Ontario

YWCA Toronto

OVERVIEW

On February 13th, 2024 OCASI - Ontario Council of Agencies Serving Immigrants hosted the annual Mental Health Promotion Knowledge Exchange Event. Over the past six years, OCASI has been working closely with partner organizations to develop, implement, and evaluate the Mental Health Promotion Integrated Service Model, in addition to providing ongoing mental health capacity building training, and developing guidelines and a self-directed course on Trauma and Violence Informed Approaches (TVIA).

The focus of this one-day in-person event was to provide an overview of the Mental Health Promotion Project journey, sharing accomplishments, challenges, and lessons learned. The event also provided a platform for organizational leaders and service providers from across immigrant and refugee serving organizations, primary care, and mental health sectors to engage in discussions on how to enhance organizational capacity to meet the evolving mental health needs of both clients and staff within shifting socio-political and organizational contexts.

The key objectives were:

1. **Explore** lessons learned from the OCASI Mental Health Promotion Integrated Service Model.
2. **Collaborate** on strategies to enhance organizational capacity to be responsive to mental health needs.
3. **Promote** cross-sectoral collaboration between settlement, health, and mental health sectors.
4. **Engage** in discussions and plan for the future of mental health promotion within the immigrant and refugee serving sector.

We achieved these objectives by hosting **4 sessions** throughout the day which included presentations, panel discussions, and an interactive workshop, representing the voices of **12 unique speakers** from across the immigrant and refugee serving sector and beyond.

This event was also documented by a graphic notetaker, the visual summaries are included under Session Summaries in this report. Presentations made by speakers and panelists have also been included and can be found under Resources.

WHAT PARTICIPANTS HAD TO SAY...

“ Learning about what different organizations are doing to promote staff mental health was very valuable.”

“ Valuable event, amazing food, wonderful artwork, and an energy of hope, positivity, and aid to the service sector workers!”

“ The presentations were very enlightening.”

“ All parts of the event were informative and great.”

“ Excellent event, we need more in person activities like this.”

“ Great opportunity for collaborative brainstorming!”

“ It was valuable to hear best practices from implementation sites.”

“ Learning about the synergies between different organizations was very interesting.”

AGENDA

8:30-9:00	Registration & Light Breakfast	1:00-2:30	Panel & Discussion: Promoting Staff and Leadership Mental Health in the Workplace
9:00-9:15	Land Acknowledgement & Opening Remarks		The work we do can be challenging and result in burnout and empathic strain. Expert panelists will discuss organizational level approaches to promote mental health and well-being of their staff and leadership. Moderated by Sajedeh Zahraei (OCASI).
9:15-10:15	OCASI Mental Health Promotion Project Journey		Speakers: Leticia Esquivel (MNLCT), Saadia Akram-Pall (RWC), Mulugeta Aba (CCVT)
	Historical and current overview of the project, sharing key findings from the needs assessments, implementation challenges, successes, and lessons learned. The external evaluator will also present feedback and recommendations.		Moderator: Sajedeh Zahraei (OCASI)
10:15-10:30	Wellness Break	2:30-2:45	Wellness Break
10:30-12:00	Panel & Discussion: Implementing the Mental Health Promotion Integrated Service Model	2:45-4:15	The Playful Warrior: Grounding & Movement Workshop
	Partner organizations who implemented the service model will share their experiences, challenges, and successes. Small group discussions will focus on gathering feedback on the project and planning for the future of mental health promotion in the sector.		This workshop aims to combine elements of moving playfully, body weight movements, and partner energy work to allow participants to ground and centre themselves, embracing more creative motion in their bodies.
	Speakers: Alison Baxter, Fariza Syed (CDCD), Rose Anguiano Hurst (WEST), Anni Kelly (IWC), Tehreem Zafar (YWCA Hamilton)	4:15-4:30	Facilitator: Jazz Kamal (Inferno Movement)
	Moderator: Caley Cross (OCASI)		Closing Remarks
12:00-1:00	Lunch		

BIOS



Sajedeh Zahraei, PhD, MSW, RSW

Senior Manager, Professional Development and Training, OCASI

Dr. Sajedeh Zahraei, PhD, MSW, RSW, has over 27 years of professional practice experience in a variety of mental health settings, including 20 years of work experience at the Centre for Addiction and Mental Health. She is the founder of Saleemeh Wellness Centre for Women, providing individual and group counselling services to immigrant, refugee, and racialized women. She holds an MSW and PhD in Social Work from the University of Toronto. Her research interests include social determinants of immigrant and refugee mental health, women, war, structural violence and trauma.

Over the past 6 years, she has been working as the Senior Manager, Professional Development and Training at OCASI – Ontario Council of Agencies Serving Immigrants. In this capacity, she has led OCASI's Mental Health Promotion in Immigrant and Refugee Serving Organizations Project. This project involves a cross-sectoral collaboration with several project partners and the development and implementation of an Integrated Service Delivery Model for Mental Health Promotion and Trauma and Violence Informed Guidelines for the Sector.



Caley Cross, MSW

Mental Health Promotion Project Coordinator, OCASI

Caley Cross (she/her) is the Community Education Coordinator at OCASI - Ontario Council of Agencies Serving Immigrants, for the Mental Health

Promotion Project. She completed her bachelor's in Sociology and Human Rights at Bard College, and her Master of Social Work at University of Toronto. Over the past ten years, Caley has worked in community-based research, international community development, adult education, child welfare, and the immigrant and refugee serving sector. She is currently working on her PhD in Social Work at York University. Her research and practice interests in social work centre around promoting anti-oppressive practice and organizational change.



Salina Abji, PhD

Evaluation Consultant

Salina is a sociologist and consultant specializing in social justice research, education and evaluation. She has a PhD from the University of Toronto and has published over ten research articles on citizenship, gender justice, and migrant rights activism in Canada. As an evaluation consultant, Salina supports feminist and migrant rights organizations to integrate evaluation using trauma-informed, intersectional, and participatory approaches.

Alison Baxter

Manager Social Planning and Research, Community Development Council Durham

Alison is a Community Psychologist and the Manager of Social Planning and Research at Community Development Council Durham. With close to twenty years of experience in program evaluation and research in community based and hospital settings, Alison has extensive knowledge of program evaluation and research methods, data collection and analysis and performance measurement. In her role at CDCD, she is involved in overseeing the research, social planning and community development activities in her department.

In addition to possessing a Master of Arts in Community Psychology from Wilfrid Laurier University, Alison has a Bachelor of Social Work from York University and a Bachelor of Arts in Social Development Studies from the University of Waterloo.

Fariza Syed

Mental Health Promotion Coordinator, Community Development Council Durham

Fariza Syed is the Mental Health Promotion Coordinator at Community Development Council Durham (CDCD). She completed her bachelor's in Psychology and Health Studies at the University of Toronto and her graduate certificate in Workplace Wellness and Health Promotion at Centennial College.

Fariza has several years of experience as an administrative assistant working in a psychological clinic and had the opportunity to do an internship at SE Health as a health and wellness promotion assistant for staff. She also had the opportunity to volunteer at the Alzheimer's Society at the University of Toronto, where she helped raise awareness for Alzheimer's disease and Dementia. Throughout her education and experience, Fariza has grown to have a passion for health and wellness and has always wanted to help promote and improve mental health and wellness in people.



Rose Anguiano Hurst

Executive Director, Women's Enterprise Skills Training of Windsor Inc. (WEST)

Rose Anguiano Hurst is the Executive Director of Women's Enterprise Skills Training of Windsor Inc. (WEST) where she leads a team of more than 60 staff. During her time in this role, the organization has grown to serve more than 3000 women annually. Rose possesses more than 30 years extensive professional knowledge and background in all aspects of non-profit program management and administration which she strengthened at WEST and previously in similar organizations.

Her greatest satisfaction at work is witnessing participants' confidence flourish as they attain skills and find jobs where they can make enhanced contributions in society for themselves and their families. Rose is grateful to have the support of a committed board of directors and professional staff who work together to ensure the goals of the organization and the employment needs of women in our community are being addressed.

In addition to her role as a member of the St. Clair College Board of Governors, Rose uses her knowledge and skills on various other local, regional and provincial committees. Rose has a Bachelor of Arts from Michigan State University.



Anni Kelly

Assistant Executive Director, Immigrants Working Centre

Anni Kelly is the Assistant Executive Director at the Immigrants Working Centre. She has been with the organization since January 2021. With nearly a decade of experience in Human Resources, she holds a Certified Human Resources Leader (CHRL) designation from the Human Resources Professionals Association. Throughout her career, Anni has been driven by a passion for empowering individuals and organizations to reach their potential. Anni resides in Hamilton alongside her husband, son, and dog. Anni volunteers with the Canadian Centre for Housing Rights as a Director on the Board of Directors.



Tehreem Zafar

Manager of Immigration and Settlement Services, YWCA Hamilton

Tehreem Zafar serves as the Manager of Immigration and Settlement Services at YWCA

Hamilton, where she oversees a broad range of newcomer programs, including Settlement, Employment, Violence Against Women (GBV&VAW), Community Connections, and 2SLGBTQ+ initiatives. Drawing from her personal journey as an immigrant, Tehreem is dedicated to eliminating the obstacles that immigrants encounter during their settlement and integration process. Her goal is to ensure that their transition is viewed as a pleasant life experience leading to a successful settlement rather than mere survival.

Tehreem's extensive experience spans various roles, from direct service provision to management and advocacy at both local and national levels holding Newcomer Language and Settlement Portfolios in Saskatchewan and Ontario. She currently holds several leadership positions, including Co-Chair of the Hamilton Wentworth Human Rights and Equity Advisory Committee, Co-Chair of the Hamilton Ukrainian Crisis Response Settlement, Resettlement, Employment, Language & Skills Development Working Group, and Board Director of the Centre of Canadian Language Benchmarks (CCLB). Additionally, she is a member of the OCASI Mental Health Advisory Committee, the Hamilton Immigration Partnership Council's Social Inclusion and Community Engagement Committee, the Afghan Settlement Task Force, and the Hamilton Newcomer Asylum Seekers and Refugee Serving Agencies' Committee.



Leticia Esquivel, RP.

Community Mental Health Manager & LIGHTS Manager, Mennonite New Life Centre of Toronto

Leticia Esquivel is a registered Psychotherapist in Ontario (CRPO) and Member of Ontario Association of Mental Health Professionals (OAMH). Leticia graduated as a Clinical Psychologist from Havana University, Cuba, and received a master's degree in Psychotherapy from Valencia University in Spain. She is also a member of the Compassion Focus Therapy Network in Toronto. She has more than 20 years of experience working as a psychotherapist with individuals and families,

and developing psychoeducational workshops for children, youth, and adults using a cognitive-behavioral and compassionate focus approach. Leticia has 15 years of experience in the settlement sector as a Community Mental Health Program Manager at the Mennonite New Life Centre of Toronto (MNLCT). Leticia supervises internationally trained professionals in the mental health field and promotes holistic initiatives to foster wellbeing, social inclusion, and support for newcomers to thrive in Canadian culture.



Dr. Saadia Akram-Pall

Director of Programming, Rexdale Women's Centre

Dr. Saadia Akram-Pall, is the Director of Programming at the Rexdale Women's Centre. She has been engaged in the non-profit sector for more than 30 years. Saadia has worked for various community development initiatives for the betterment of community members particularly women. Dr. Saadia Akram-Pall has two Masters' degrees, post graduate specialization in Clinical Psychology and a doctorate Degree from the University of Toronto. She is member of the Ontario College of Psychologists, and she has over 30 years of experience in helping individuals for a variety of psychological and psychosocial issues. She has a deep understanding of diversity and multicultural dynamics and gained experience in working with immigrant populations.

She has participated in various research projects, and her articles have also been published in professional journals. Her book *Abnormal Psychology* has been recommended for master's degree studies. Dr. Saadia Akram-Pall's recently edited a book titled "Asian Families in Canada and the United States: Implication for Mental Health and Well-Being" which closely analyzes Asian Canadian and Asian American immigrant families in an integrated yet nuanced way. This book is also recommended for post-graduate academic studies and for enhancing knowledge and understanding for immigration and mental health inter-relationships. Dr. Saadia Akram-Pall delivers

workshops, seminars and professional development trainings and is a strong voice for women's rights, empowerment, and engagement in society.

Mulugeta Abai

Executive Director, Canadian Centre for Victims of Torture

The Executive Director of CCVT since 1994 is a leader in the Mental Health and settlement sector, designing and developing innovative programs that support survivors of torture, victims of war, genocide, and crimes against humanity. With over 30 years of community involvement in the areas of community development, advocacy, and anti-racism.

Mulugeta is currently a member of the Canadian National Network for the Health of Survivors of Torture and Organized Violence, a Member of the Health Advisory Committee with the International Rehabilitation Centre for Torture, and a Canadian representative at the Council. Mulugeta has served as a board member with Culture Link, OCASI, African Canadian Solidarity Network, and Canadian Council for Refugees, and Toronto South Immigration Partnership. He has written several and co-authored several articles and book chapters on CCVT and Trauma Informed Care. He has also participated in facilitating workshops and making presentations locally, nationally, and Internationally. Mulugeta holds a B.Ed. from Addis Ababa University, a BA in Political Science (York University), and a Postgraduate Diploma in Non-Profit Management from Schlitz School of Business and May tree Foundation.



Jazz Kamal

Holistic Movement Coach, Inferno Movement

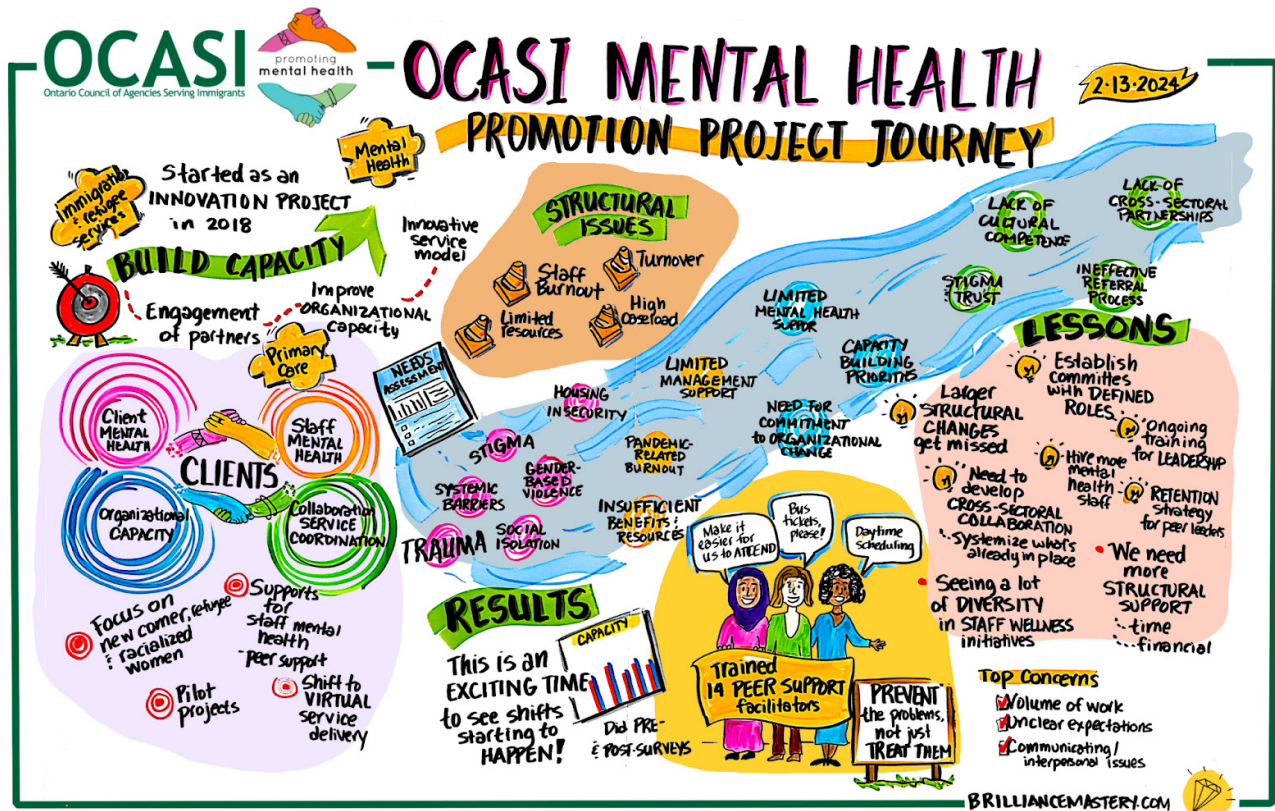
Jazz Kamal is a Holistic movement coach based in Toronto and is the owner of Inferno Movement. The practice integrates her education in breath work and restoration, manual soft tissue techniques, anatomy, combat sports and athletic training,

energy work, and trauma informed coaching through the lens of exploration. She works outside the parameters and structures of the status quo built into the fitness industry.

Jazz's training style looks at the person as a whole human, not just a body to be trained. This is her commitment to the body's evolution through holistic movement. Inferno Movement embodies the primal, sophisticated and creative expressions of human physical ability. It is the celebration of our uniqueness and the unification of mind, body and spirit. It ignites the fire that propels personal evolution and helps lift perceived boundaries. It is an honest commitment to being a better version of oneself daily. It aims to return "birthright" able bodied movements such as running, jumping and throwing, while enjoying more physical literacy and movement options.

The Inferno Movement Tribe is an ever growing community of all ages, bodies and life experiences, and each one of them are Warriors in their own right. Together, we are becoming stronger, smarter, and better than yesterday.

SESSION SUMMARIES



OCASI MENTAL HEALTH PROMOTION PROJECT JOURNEY

This presentation provided a historical and current overview of the OCASI Mental Health Promotion in Immigrant and Refugee Serving Organizations Project. The project coordinator, Caley Cross, shared key findings from the needs assessments conducted at partner agencies who had implemented the model over the past two years, in addition to highlighting key challenges, successes, and lessons learned. The project evaluation consultant, Dr. Salina Abji, presented preliminary results, feedback and recommendations.

- The project originated as an innovation project (2018 - 2021) funded by IRCC through the Service Delivery Improvements (SDI) Funding Stream. During this phase, the advisory committee was established, and the integrated service model was developed and piloted at four immigrant and refugee serving organizations. The model aims

to enhance client mental health, staff mental health, organizational capacity, and cross-sectoral collaboration.

- The project continues to disseminate the model, implementing the service model at a total of six agencies from 2022 - 2024. Needs assessment findings indicate a number of structural issues impacting both client and staff mental health. Clients are facing systemic barriers, social isolation, and stigma, exacerbating experiences of trauma and grief. Service providers are experiencing heightened burnout, with limited resources and support from management, impacting high turnover within the sector. Recent model implementation activities focused on training client and staff peer support facilitators, initiating staff wellness committees and activities, providing ongoing capacity building opportunities, and utilizing the advisory committee as a platform for collaboration and knowledge sharing among project partners.

- Project evaluation results indicate that key concerns impacting staff mental health are 1) volume of work 2) unclear expectations 3) communication/ interpersonal issues with coworkers. Staff would like to see more structural responses to staff wellness as opposed to 'band-aid' solutions, such as a reduction in workload and higher compensation.
- Recommendations for OCASI include: developing a retention strategy for peer support facilitators,

involving early implementation sites in the project to help understand the long-term impacts, and bringing renewed attention to building cross-sectoral collaboration with primary health and mental health sectors. Additionally, project partners recommend the development of a short-term mental health assessment tool to build sector capacity and responsiveness to client mental health concerns, and to expand knowledge sharing networks and resources.



IMPLEMENTING THE MENTAL HEALTH PROMOTION INTEGRATED SERVICE MODEL

This session consisted of panel presentations from the four partner organizations who recently implemented the Mental Health Promotion Integrated Service Model. Partner organizations shared their experiences implementing the model.

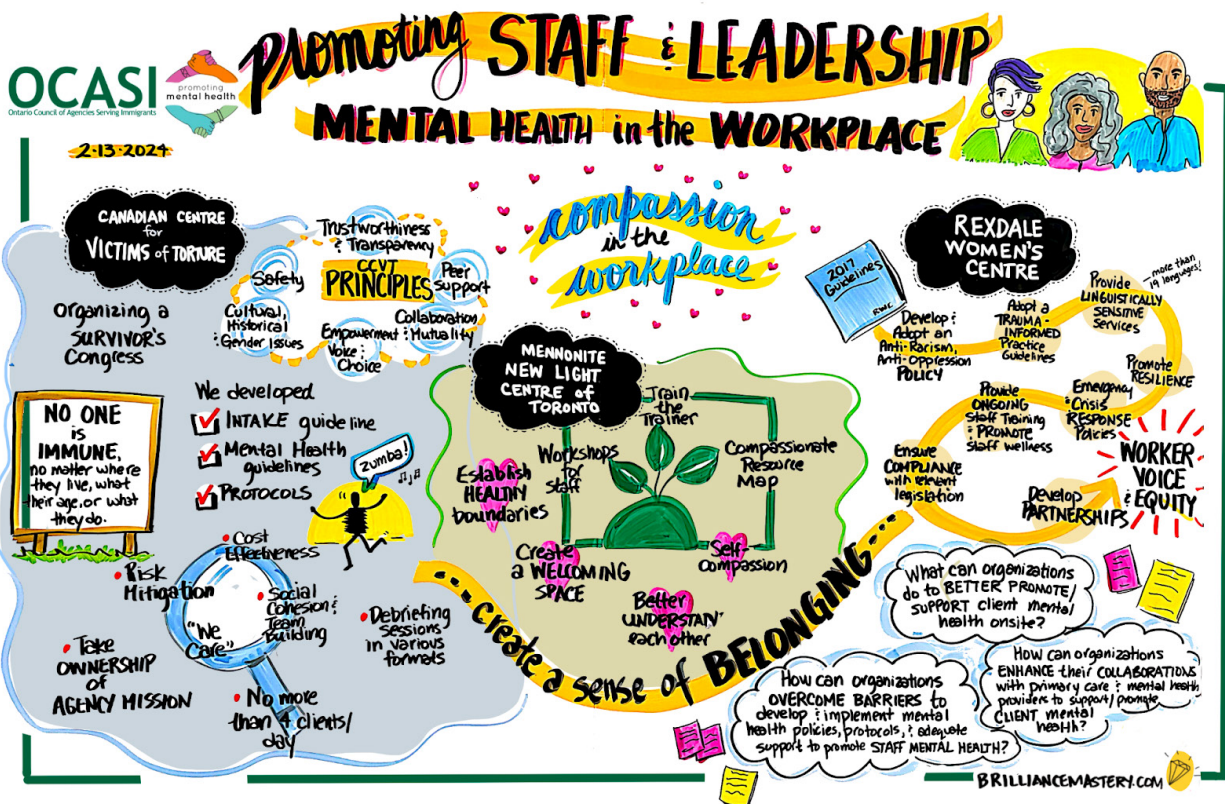
- YWCA Hamilton implemented the client peer support group with Somali women, who were experiencing language barriers, culture shock, family challenges, mental health stigma, and systemic discrimination. Participant feedback highlighted that the group provided a space for participants to feel heard, validated and understood. Additionally, they learned about vital community resources to support their wellbeing. The Healthy Minds at Work Committee and the leadership team are working to revamp staff support systems to contribute to a healthier work environment, this includes: improving working conditions, hosting ongoing wellness initiatives, and enhanced leadership training. YWCA Hamilton plans to expand peer support groups,

enhance mental health navigation services, invest in continuous staff development, and refine protocols for crisis intervention.

- Women's Enterprise Skills Training of Windsor Inc. (WEST) implemented a newcomer women peer support group, while also providing a number of capacity-building trainings for staff, such as suicide prevention and verbal de-escalation training. They also formed a wellness committee and organized various staff wellness activities, including gardening, cooking, art therapy, internal healing, and yoga sessions. WEST recognized that leadership commitment, as well as engagement with all organizational stakeholders, is crucial for the sustained success of this initiative. Currently, WEST is developing long-term plans and goals for mental health promotion, which include the development of Trauma and Violence Informed Approach (TVIA) policies, procedures, and guidelines.
- Immigrants Working Centre (IWC) decided to partner with the OCASI MHP project after recognizing increased staff burnout and client

mental health concerns. IWC established a wellness committee, built the capacity of staff around mental health promotion, and identified organizational-wide gaps and needs. Some of the key challenges in model implementation were time, availability, peer support group participation, and changes in leadership. IWC recognized the need for more funding to support these efforts, and identified that staff want to see organizational-wide systemic changes that go beyond wellness activities. IWC plans to continue the work of their wellness committee, develop mental health policies, seek additional funding for health and wellness roles, and foster collaborations with community partners to enhance mental health promotion.

- Community Development Council Durham (CDCD) established two language-specific groups, one conducted in English and the other in Dari. CDCD encountered challenges due to a shortage of peer support facilitators and an increasing number of participants. In the future, they want to maintain a closed group structure, while also ensuring the group's purpose is clearly communicated to participants. CDCD also initiated a staff wellness committee to plan ongoing wellness activities. Looking ahead, CDCD plans to continue implementing health promotion initiatives and wellness activities for staff, including mindfulness meditation sessions and a staff peer support group. They also plan to implement more mental health promotion activities for clients, and develop mental health and wellness policies.



PROMOTING STAFF AND LEADERSHIP MENTAL HEALTH IN THE WORKPLACE

The work we do can be challenging and result in burnout and empathic strain. In this session, expert panelists from project partner organizations presented on organizational-level approaches they have implemented to promote mental health and well-being of their staff and leadership.

- Mulugeta Abai, Executive Director, Canadian Centre for Victims of Torture (CCVT) presented on the organizational change steps taken to support staff mental health, including the development of mental health policies and protocols. To enhance employee wellbeing, CCVT has implemented staff breakfasts, annual retreats, zumba and yoga for staff, flexible working-hour accommodations, and recommends that service providers see no more than four clients per day. Additionally, CCVT prioritizes debriefing with management and staff. Workplaces with positive approaches to mental health and psychological safety will have improved employee engagement, creativity and innovation, and be able to take ownership over their agency's mission.
- Leticia Esquivel, RP., Community Mental Health Manager & LIGHTS Manager, Menonite New Life Centre of Toronto (MNLCT) discussed some of the ongoing challenges impacting staff mental

health, including sector dynamics, funding, and ongoing exposure to stress and secondary trauma resulting in staff burnout. MNLCT has implemented a number of strategies to promote staff wellbeing, including workshops on burnout and self-care, as well as compassion-focused therapy interventions. Compassion in the workplace training helped to establish a social network of care. Staff learned how to take responsibility in establishing healthy boundaries and how to collaborate more. Staff now feel more valued, contributing to a system that promotes a collective culture of care.

- Dr. Saadia Akram-Pall, Director of Programming, Rexdale Women's Centre (RWC) spoke of her involvement in developing the Mental Health Promotion Guidelines at OCASI, which were used to inform the development of mental health, trauma-informed care, and emergency & crisis response policies and procedures at RWC. The pandemic has prompted organizations to reevaluate the relationship between employees and their work, offering an opportunity to reimagine approaches to work, and transform organizational workplaces to promote mental health and well-being. Organizations need to consider how to protect employees' from harm, how to cultivate a sense of community, affirm employees' value, accommodate work-life balance, and support ongoing professional development.

GROUP DISCUSSIONS

WHAT CAN ORGANIZATIONS DO TO PROMOTE/ SUPPORT CLIENT MENTAL HEALTH ON SITE?

- 

1 Establish a welcoming and safe environment for disclosure
- 

2 Provide peer support programs
- 

3 Offer culturally competent services
- 

4 Conduct mental health needs assessments
- 

5 Normalize mental health discussions with clients
- 

6 Provide information sessions on mental health and wellness
- 

7 Organize social activities and outings
- 

8 Compile comprehensive mental health resources
- 

9 Implement a strong referral process
- 

10 Ensure ongoing staff training and support
- 

11 Promote inclusivity and accessibility
- 

12 Foster meaningful partnerships with other service providers

HOW CAN ORGANIZATIONS OVERCOME BARRIERS TO DEVELOP AND IMPLEMENT MENTAL HEALTH POLICIES, PROTOCOLS, AND ADEQUATE SUPPORT TO PROMOTE STAFF MENTAL HEALTH?

1



Prioritize mental health in the strategic plan

2



Utilize surveys to assess staff mental health needs

3



Provide staff incentives such as team building and social activities

4



Implement flexible work schedules to maintain work-life balance

5



Involve all employees in development and implementation of mental health policies

6



Provide annual mental health retreats

7



Establish regular check-ins or forums for staff to openly discuss mental health concerns and suggestions for improvement

8



Implement a staff lounge, a relaxing space for staff members to unwind

9



Offer fully covered mental health benefits for staff

10



Ensure leadership buy-in and support for mental health policies and initiatives

11



Provide training on creating safe spaces and addressing staff biases and stigma

12



Advocate for greater funding and resources for staff mental health training and support

**HOW CAN ORGANIZATIONS ENHANCE THEIR COLLABORATIONS WITH
PRIMARY CARE AND MENTAL HEALTH PROVIDERS TO PROMOTE/ SUPPORT
CLIENT MENTAL HEALTH?**

1



Enhance community connections for direct referrals

2



Leverage religious or community spaces for mental health discussions

3



Facilitate knowledge exchanges between health and mental health sectors

4



Engage community partners through outreach and relationship-building

5



Improve referral processes for warm transfers

6



Establish centralized systems for information sharing and referrals

7



Bring primary care and mental health services onsite

8



Collaborate with diverse providers for culturally sensitive care

9



Encourage practitioners to work with cultural liaisons and community leaders

10



Invite guest speakers and practitioners to share expertise

11



Explore bridge programs for primary care access and integration

12



Facilitate networking opportunities and collaborative events

NEXT STEPS

We would like to thank and acknowledge the hard work and involvement of our partners throughout the process of the project. At this stage, OCASI has begun recruitment for new agencies to implement the model in 2024 - 2025. The lessons learned, resources and recommendations of this project will be shared widely in 2024.

Over the next year, OCASI will continue to refine and disseminate the integrated service model, work closely with new implementation sites and continue to offer capacity building mental health trainings for service providers and leaders in the sector. The project and our partners will continue to work closely across health and mental health sectors to form a systems response to improving cross-sectoral collaboration between settlement, health and mental health sectors.

STAYING CONNECTED

We want to stay connected with you. Resources and updates from the project will be shared on our webpage: ocasi.org/mental-health-promotion.

We will continue our learning, hosting discussions and sharing resources through SettleNet.org. You are invited to join the conversation at the [Mental Health Promotion Group](#) on SettleNet - a national online Community of Practice for the Settlement Sector where you can ask questions, engage in discussion, and search for resources that serve your professional development needs.

Interested in contacting us directly? Send us an email at mhpresearch@ocasi.org

RESOURCES

1. [OCASI Mental Health Promotion Project Journey](#)
 2. Panel & Discussion: Implementing the Mental Health Promotion Integrated Service Model
 - [YWCA Hamilton](#)
 - [Women's Enterprise Skills Training of Windsor Inc. \(WEST\)](#)
 - [Immigrants Working Centre \(IWC\)](#)
 - [Community Development Council Durham \(CDCD\)](#)
 3. Panel & Discussion: Promoting Staff and Leadership Mental Health in the Workplace
 - [Canadian Centre for Victims of Torture \(CCVT\)](#)
 - [Mennonite New Life Centre of Toronto \(MNLCT\)](#)
 - [Rexdale Women's Centre \(RWC\)](#)
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