



Canada's Counsellors and Psychotherapists Celebrate National Aboriginal Day

OTTAWA (June 20, 2014) The Canadian Counselling and Psychotherapy Association (CCPA) is proud to acknowledge and celebrate National Aboriginal Day. Celebrated on June 21st, this special day recognizes the unique heritage, cultural diversity and achievements of First Nations, Inuit and Métis peoples in Canada.

"As part of our collective body of work, CCPA has an Indigenous Circle Chapter that provides a dedicated voice for First Nations, Inuit, and Métis persons in the Association," said CCPA President, Blythe Shepard. "We are proud to celebrate this special day and encourage all Canadians to join in the celebrations and special events taking place from coast to coast to coast."

The CCPA began consultations with Indigenous leaders in the Association membership in 2012 to determine preferred methodologies for enhancing representation of Indigenous Members on the Board of Directors. These consultations resulted in a dedicated professional on the Board of Directors who was of direct self-disclosed Status or Non-Status First Nation, Métis or Inuit ancestry. CCPA's Indigenous Director provides essential stewardship for and consideration of diverse Indigenous perspectives that inform the decision-making of the National Board of Directors.

CCPA remains committed to raising awareness and creating a network for Indigenous and non-Indigenous counsellors to work together on issues that affect Indigenous clients, families, and communities. In fact, CCPA's Northern Initiative project, conducted over the past 3 years, has focused on outreach, consultation, collaboration and professional development for counselling and psychotherapy professionals working with people in northern and remote communities. Most recently, free webinars were provided in response to requests for professional development regarding ethical issues in remote communities, and regarding cultural competence related to colonialism and counselling people living with Historic Trauma and Residential School Syndrome. Outcomes from this project include ongoing professional development opportunities that focus on northern and remote counselling issues, as well as, provision of tools to facilitate communication and networking amongst counselling and psychotherapy professionals serving this vast region of Canada.

Qualified counsellors and psychotherapists are part of the continuum of care in primary health care and make vital contributions to the mental health and well-being of all Canadians. CCPA believes that the most critical factor in providing effective counselling is to ensure that all Canadians have access to timely, qualified, and effective support.

"As counsellors and psychotherapists, we collaborate with other mental health professionals and associations to advocate for appropriateness of care - access to the right care, provided by the right provider(s), to the right person, at the right time," said Shepard.

"We recognize past and present hardships experienced by Indigenous peoples in Canada," concluded Shepard. "We also know that Indigenous peoples have had significant achievements and have made incredibly rich contributions to Canada. Today, we are proud to celebrate and recognize these wonderful accomplishments."

The Canadian Counselling and Psychotherapy Association (CCPA) is a national bilingual association providing professional counsellors and psychotherapists with access to exclusive educational programs, certification, professional development and direct contact with professional peers and specialty groups. CCPA promotes the profession and its contribution to the mental health and well-being of all Canadians. For more information on the counselling and psychotherapy profession, please visit www.ccpa-accp.ca or www.talkingcanhelp.ca.

For further information, please contact:

Alana Baker
(613) 299-4017
ccpa@impactcanada.com