

Nova Scotia Director Report
Andrea Currie
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Abstract

I am continuing to support the work of the NS Chapter of CCPA, as well as the work of the Nova Scotia College of Counselling Therapists. Meeting many of our members here in the province and hearing their concerns has helped strengthen these working relationships. Cultural Safety training for our staff and members continues through a staff training day to be held this August, and a webinar series to be recorded and launched later this year. I continue to participate as much as I can in CCPA's Indigenous mental health advocacy efforts on a national level. I look forward to my second term as the representative for Nova Scotia on the national Board of CCPA, to continue this important work and perhaps become involved in some new initiatives.

Résumé

Je continue d'appuyer le travail de la Section ACCP de la N.-É., ainsi que celui du Nova Scotia College of Counselling Therapists. Ces relations de travail se sont d'ailleurs trouvées renforcées par mes rencontres avec de nombreux membres ici, dans la province, afin d'entendre leurs préoccupations. La formation sur la sécurisation culturelle auprès de notre personnel et de nos membres se poursuit, notamment par la tenue d'une journée de formation du personnel qui devrait se tenir en août et une série de webinaires qui seront enregistrés et diffusés plus tard au cours de l'année. Je continue de participer autant que je le peux aux efforts de l'ACCP de promotion et de défense des droits en matière de la santé mentale chez les Autochtones à l'échelle nationale. J'ai bien hâte d'entreprendre mon second mandat à titre de représentante de la Nouvelle-Écosse auprès du CA national de l'ACCP, ainsi que de poursuivre ce travail important et peut-être m'engager dans de nouvelles initiatives.

Connections and Communications

- I sent a letter to CCPA members in Nova Scotia in January promoting the St. John's conference, as well as five other professional development opportunities taking place this spring in Nova Scotia.
- I continue to attend the NS Chapter Executive teleconference meetings, sharing information about CCPA initiatives, and hearing about their concerns and activities. I will be attending the NS Chapter AGM in Wolfville, NS, at the end of April and also participating in the professional development workshop the Chapter is offering on the same day, Trauma-Informed Practice, Level 2. (This is a follow-up to the Level 1 workshop the Chapter sponsored for its members last year.)
- I will be helping with a networking event that the NS Chapter is planning for this fall. This is being planned in response to the overwhelmingly positive feedback from our NS CCPA members about how useful and enjoyable the five networking events were, which were co-sponsored by the Chapter and myself, and held over the past two years.
- In my capacity as the Past President of the Indigenous Circle Chapter, I co-presented along with ICC President, Jamie Warren, at a meeting of the Liberal Mental Health

Caucus in Ottawa on January 30th, on the topic of the need for increased and improved Indigenous mental health services.

- I am currently coordinating the writing of a follow-up letter to the Liberal Mental Health Caucus, which will provide more detailed information about some of the ideas we discussed during the meeting.
- Also in my role on the Executive of the Indigenous Circle Chapter, I am liaising with the Executive Director of the St. John's Native Friendship Centre where we hope to hold our ICC AGM while there for the annual CCPA Conference.
- I have attended a meeting of a committee of the Nova Scotia College of Counselling Therapists whose objective is advancing the recognition of and employment opportunities for Registered Counselling Therapists (RCTs) here in our province. I also had a phone meeting with an NSCCT member to brief me on NSCCT's history and current activities in this area.

Contributions and Celebrations

I am contributing to the work of CCPA in a number of areas:

- I am continuing in my role as the Board liaison with both the NS Chapter and the Indigenous Circle Chapter. The NS Chapter's main objective, as per the stated needs of their membership, is to provide affordable and accessible professional development workshops on current developments in mental health practice. The Indigenous Circle Chapter is busy with efforts to reach out to our members from coast to coast to coast and contribute to building partnerships in difference regions of the country with the dual purpose of improving mental health services for Indigenous peoples and creating more opportunities for our practitioners in these areas.
- In my capacity on the Executive of the ICC, and in collaboration with other ICC members and Kim Hollihan at our national office, I am developing a process for researching and writing an Issues Paper on Inuit mental health, a need identified through a meeting with the mental health policy advisor to the Inuit Tapiriit Kanatami (ITK).
- Together with our Indigenous Director, Bill Thomas, and other members of the ICC Executive, we are preparing and recording a series of webinars on topics in Indigenous mental health that will launched sometime in the coming year as a resource for all CCPA members and staff.
- Bill and Jamie and I have begun the planning of a Cultural Safety Training Day for our CCPA national staff which we will offer in Ottawa in August.
- I am continuing my work as a member of the Quality Assurance Committee.
- I receive and respond to requests from CCPA members in Nova Scotia to promote professional development opportunities and to provide support and advocacy on issues of concern to them.

Accomplishments we can celebrate are:

- Our professional community of Counselling Therapists in Nova Scotia is strong, vibrant and engaged. It was delightful to experience this through the regional gatherings and the relationship-building and mutual support continues.
- The Indigenous Circle Chapter is growing in membership, finding ways to support each other in our work contexts, and in the level of our engagement locally, regionally, and nationally in advocating for better Indigenous mental health services.
- Our CCPA Executive, Board, national staff, and Indigenous Circle Chapter members continue to honour our commitment to becoming more culturally safe as an organization and providing leadership in Indigenous mental health advocacy, building partnerships with national Indigenous organizations and cultivating relationships with federal politicians.

Concerns and Challenges

- Our incoming CCPA President, John Driscoll, and I are continuing to reach out and find ways to support the ongoing work of NSCCT in expanding the number of employers which will hire Registered Counselling Therapists, and insurance companies that will pay for our services here in Nova Scotia. This is challenging work that requires careful planning and consistency over the long-term and I am exploring ways to offer support to these efforts.

Coming Attractions:

- I still plan to meet with my MP to help promote CCPA; last summer our schedules could not be reconciled to enable a meeting to happen, hopefully we will more successful when the Hon. Rodger Cuzner is home in Cape Breton on his summer break. However, I have met Rodger many times, and he has visited We'koqma'q where I work, so when we have seen each other on Parliament Hill this past October and January, he has greeted me and I have had the chance to briefly inform him about our objectives on those visits. I look forward to a face-to-face meeting to explore ways this relationship can help our CCPA membership.
- The Cultural Safety training that will be taking place this summer with our national staff will increase our credibility as a professional association of mental health practitioners who are 'walking our talk' in the area of understanding the unique context and mental health needs of Indigenous peoples in Canada.
- Working on an Issues Paper on Inuit mental health over the next year will address a huge gap in understanding the needs of our most isolated and vulnerable communities, another issue on which CCPA is taking a lead.

I am grateful for the opportunity to continue for another term of serving on the CCPA Board of Directors as the representative for Nova Scotia. I hope what I have learned in my first term will result in me being increasingly effective in representing our CCPA members in Nova Scotia, and participating in the work of supporting our 6000 members across the country.

Respectfully submitted,

Andrea Currie

NS Director, Canadian Counselling and Psychotherapy Association