**CCPA – A NATIONAL ASSOCIATION AND LEADER FOR OUR PROFESSION**

PRESIDENT’S MESSAGE

As an Association, CCPA supports our members with low cost professional practice insurance and other insurance products, with professional development opportunities, advocacy for the profession, our Journal, and collegial opportunities for shared interests and projects. These are just a few examples of benefits and services for members.

One of the unique features of CCPA is that it functions as both an association and as a self-regulating organization for its members. I mention these two distinct functions, as I believe it is valuable to understand the workings of our Association and what it means to be a professional member.

Attributes of self-governing include, but are not limited to: determining the skills and knowledge necessary to practice the profession, developing a registration system to determine applicant qualifications, establishing and maintaining levels of competency/professional development/quality assurance, establishing and maintaining a *Code of Ethics* and *Standards of Practice*, and developing a complaints
process.

**BEGINNINGS**

That we have a self-regulation function has a historical context. In our beginnings, most members were Guidance Counsellors and, also usually, teachers who had their own *Code of Ethics*, most often as members of a Teachers Union. Their own process for managing complaints fell under an Education Act. As the profession grew, and more counsellors and psychotherapists began to work in other areas such as private practice, non-profits, clinics, and governmental organizations, there was a greater need to develop a distinct and more inclusive *Code of Ethics* and *Standards of Practice* for members across the country. CCPA’s introduction of self-regulation fulfilled that need for its members.

From our beginnings in 1965 as the Canadian Guidance and Counselling Association to today as the Canadian Counselling and Psychotherapy Association (with more than 7,000 members), CCPA has taken steps to ensure we meet and maintain professional standards as both an association and a self-regulating body. The introduction of the Canadian Certified Counsellor credential in 1986 and its subsequent growth in numbers is an attestation that the public, government and employers recognize the CCC as a standard for the profession. Today, CCC aligns with the competency standard that regulatory bodies in provinces are required to meet. In 1970, the CGCA Executive approved the printing and dissemination to all members, the Guidelines for Ethical Behaviours, in 1981 the CGCA Guidelines for Ethical Behaviour and in 1988 an Ethical Standards Casebook. The subsequent development of a *Code of Ethics* in 1999 (revised, 2007) and *Standards of Practice* in 2002 (revised, 2015) are also now resources for some of our provincial Colleges.

We are now in a period of transition where we see provinces regulating the profession through legislation and forming statutory regulation in the form of professional Colleges under Provincial Ministries of Health and Wellness. Self-regulation, through statute, for the profession of counselling and psychotherapy is still at a primary stage, in that there are regulatory bodies and colleges in just four, and soon to be five, provinces.

Having said this, it would seem that this self-regulating function CCPA performs for our members and the public will be with us for a time, as it will take more time for the remaining provinces to attain regulation. When they do, most will function as protectors of a title and not as protection of a full scope of practice. In unregulated provinces, any person can put out a shingle and can call themselves a counsellor or psychotherapist. Sadly, there is no protection for the public, nor for the profession, when people represent themselves as professional counsellors or psychotherapists without assurance of adherence to a *Code of Ethics* and *Standards of Practice*. And so, even with regulation, our commitment to self-regulation may still be a function for CCPA.

**CURRENT UPDATES**

Currently we are updating our *Code of Ethics*.
Dr. Lorna Martin, as Chair and, along with other committee members, have been working together since last May. Current *Code of Ethics* and *Standards of Practice* are essential to assist our members and the public in understanding how the work of counsellors and psychotherapists is related to and impacted by ongoing changes to our laws and new social mores that directly connect with the practice of the profession.

Ethics Task Group Members:

Lorna Martin, Chair
Jean Blackler
Louise Blanchard
Jonas Breuhan
Corrine Hendricken-Eldershaw
Tina Nash
Simon Nuttgens
Glenn Sheppard
Shelley Skelton
Kathy Offet-Gartner

Our Ethics Complaints Committee Chaired by
Dr. Michael Sorsdahl is working to update our CCPA *Procedures for Processing Complaints of an Ethical Nature*. In speaking with Michael and others involved in this consultative process, a focus includes the importance of recognizing the educative part of the complaints process. We recently decided to train two staff members on investigations relating to the complaints process. This was done to further professionalize our service and to assure maximum protection to all those involved in this process and ethical concerns.

Ethics Committee—Complaints Division members include:

Michael Sorsdahl (Chair)
Meg Kapil
Breanna Lawrence
Erin McKenney
Laurie Ponsford-Hill
Claire Charbonneau
Mary Hernandez
Pat Wentzell

As many of you know, CCPA offers support for members who have inquiries about our *Code of Ethics* and *Standards of Practice* through our Ethics Committee—Queries/Education Division. Additionally, this committee offers advice to the Board in matters of our *Code of Ethics* and *Standards of Practice*.

Members:

Cristelle Audet (Chair)
George Dunne
Serge Hall
Mark Kelly
Derrick Klassen
Kiraz Johannsen

 As you can also see, it takes a lot of dedicated volunteers who offer their time, training and expertise, as well as a willingness to learn, so that we function with a high degree of professional integrity. Many thanks to all of our members who so generously volunteer their time for our Association.

**THE MOST IMPORTANT SOURCE FOR ETHICAL & PROFESSIONAL BEHAVIOUR**

In the beginning of this note, my purpose was to provide information on two distinct functions of our Association and the work that was, and is, being done to meet the requirements of self-regulation and responsibilities of a professional association. On a personal side, in our day to day practice, what might this mean? What might be our response and what is our Association’s response? First and foremost is the general professional responsibility and accountability we have as professionals to be familiar with the code and standards. In our *Code of Ethics*, Section 6, we read, *“Counsellors invest time and effort in understanding the CCPA Code of Ethics and Standards of Practice, and avoid agreements, work environments, and other circumstances in which they would knowingly have to violate these ethical standards.”* So, of course our *Code of Ethics* and *Standards of Practice* are the first and most important source for ethical and professional behaviour.

In addition, we know that reaching out to colleges or other professionals that have a code and standards similar to ours can be valuable when dealing with difficult situations or decisions. For those of us who have supervisors, consulting with her or him is an invaluable source of support and helpful advice. We can refer clients when their needs go beyond our boundary of competence or the problem or concern, goals and treatment plan require a team approach.

CCPA publications including our Ethics Casebook, Notebook on Ethics authored by Dr. Glenn Sheppard, Handbook of Counselling and Psychotherapy in Canada and Clinical Supervision of the Canadian Counselling and Psychotherapy Professional Handbook are tools and resources to assist us in this
area. Our Canadian Journal of Counselling and Psychotherapy also offers recent research in the area of ethics and professional practice. In this publication, we have the regular contribution by Dr. Glenn Sheppard, Notebook on Ethics, Legal Issues and Standards for Counsellors and Psychotherapists. One final but very important unique free service we offer our certified members is unlimited access to telephone legal advice, 24/7 and 7 days a week.

Our world is complex as is the work we do. It also involves risk. Supporting and helping those in need, those who have challenges, those who are hurt, put down, at the margins of our society, and/or discriminated against, can be a difficult task, so it is important to know that our Association supports our work in real and tangible ways when we provide an ethical and professional service.

My term as President of CCPA is over and I would like to thank our team and fellow Board Members, our Staff and CEO, Barbara MacCallum, the many members who service in Chapters, committees,
student representatives and so many other volunteers for being so wonderful to work with. We truly have a strong and vibrant Association. My best wishes to our new CCPA President, Jenny L. Rowett and the new Board of which I will serve as Past-President. I know that Jen’s leadership will see our Association continue to grow and support you, our members, and the profession in the next two years.

Wishing you all the best in your work of service.

John Driscoll
President, CCPA

**STUDENT MEMBERS: THE FUTURE OF CCPA**

PRESIDENT-ELECT’S MESSAGE

As I settle in at my desk, most of my projects require writing in one form or another (big sigh). Counselling and supervision notes need to be completed from yesterday; the last chapter of my dissertation beckons for my attention, and this COGNICA contribution is due! For this issue, I am drawing inspiration from our student members who may relate to working through periods of writing “slowdown” and who often wear many personal and professional hats, all the while juggling multiple deadlines for many projects.

Currently, we have 929 truly inspiring student members within our Association. A few weeks ago, I had the honour of accompanying a local CCPA Student Representative, Nancy Harn, for her presentation to counselling students at the University of New Brunswick (Fredericton). Nancy is a Mi’kmaw mother and grandmother; the Wellness Coordinator of Ntulsonawt (Wolastoqey word meaning Personal Path to One’s Strength) Wellness Centre; and a counselling student who will soon graduate, to name only a few. As we shared the space with fellow students, I was moved by the level of knowledge, expertise, experience, and unique interests and strengths that existed within these individuals. I walked away from Nancy’s brilliant presentation and this amazing group of students feeling energized, and excited for the future of our profession.

**MENTORSHIP PILOT PROGRAM**

One new project that I’m certain our student members will be eager to learn about is the Mentorship Pilot Program that is being led by Ben Szaplonczay, our Administrative Assistant at head office. This program will have significant value for both members (CCPA members with 5+ years of post-graduate experience) and mentees (CCPA members with less than 5 years of post-graduate experience). There will be growth opportunities for both parties such as shared professional development, networking, and potential collaboration on mutual interests and goals. Please stay tuned for an official announcement of the launch of the Mentorship Pilot Program! In the meantime, if you have any questions, please contact Ben at:
adminasst@ccpa-accp.ca.

I’d like to acknowledge and honour the journey of each of our student members. Your brilliance, courage, curiosity, and endurance is inspiring. Being a student is such a privilege and a gift, and it naturally seems to include a balancing act as many personal and professional roles are managed throughout the process. As you steadily move toward your goals, please know that we can hardly wait to welcome you into our National Association as professional, certified members!

Until next time, may our collective papers and projects be completed with joy, and may your Spring season be filled with a sense of renewal and transformation… in its many forms!

With Gratitude, merci beaucoup, Wela’lin,
Woliwon!



Jenny L. Rowett,
PhD Candidate, LCT, CCC-S
President-Elect, CCPA

**NOTEBOOK ON ETHICS, LEGAL ISSUES AND STANDARDS FOR COUNSELLORS & PSYCHOTHERAPISTS: “…NAMES WILL NEVER HURT YOU…” A DECISION FROM THE SUPREME COURT OF CANADA**

BY DR. GLENN SHEPPARD

When I was growing up, I sometimes heard my parents and others say, “Sticks and stones may break your bones but words will never hurt you.” Maybe this was said to help us as children deal with the emotional sting of being called a bad name. Of course, such parental reassurance is mostly ineffective because being called a name can hurt and when it is nasty and persistent, it can be a form of bullying or even harassment.

What happens when professional practitioners engage in name calling each other? Can such behaviours even be viewed as professional misconduct; and if so, can it ever warrant an ethical sanction? Well, we do have an answer from the case *Doré v. Barreau* that went all the way to the Supreme Court of Canada (SCC).

Mr. Doré, a lawyer, represented a client before Judge Boilard of the Superior Court of Québec. The Judge criticized him while he was making his arguments in Court. Also, when he later delivered his written reason for rejection of Mr. Doré’s application on behalf of his client, he expressed additional criticism of the lawyer. The Judge accused Mr. Doré of:

“*...bombastic rhetoric and hyperbole” and said that the court must “put aside” Mr. Doré’s “impudence.” Justice Boilard characterized Mr. Doré’s request for a stay as “totally ridiculous” and one of his arguments as “idle quibbling.” Finally, he said [Mr. Doré] “fixated on or obsessed with his narrow vision of reality which is not consistent with the facts, Mr. Doré has done nothing to help his client discharge his burden.”*

Mr. Doré later complained about Judge Boilard’s conduct to the Canadian Judicial Council. After its review of his complaint, it issued a reprimand to Judge Boilard. This decision was apparently informed, in part, by evidence from another occasion when he made a personal attack on another lawyer. The Council Panel stated:

*The panel finds that the impatience you showed and the immoderate comments you made to an officer of the court, Mr. Doré, are unacceptable and merit an expression of the panel’s disapproval under subsection 55(2) of the Canadian Judicial Council By-Laws.*

However, before lodging his complaint to the council, and immediately following his appearance before the Judge, Mr. Doré wrote a private letter to him in which he expressed the following criticisms:

*The judge was called “loathsome”, “arrogant” and “fundamentally unjust” and was accused by Mr. Doré of “hiding behind [his] status like a coward”; having a “chronic inability to master any social skills”; being “pedantic, aggressive and petty in [his] daily life”; having “obliterated any humanity from [his] judicial position”; having “non-existent listening skills”; having a “propensity to use [his] court—where [he] lacks the courage to hear opinions contrary to [his] own—to launch ugly, vulgar, and mean personal attacks”, which “not only confirms that [he is] as loathsome as suspected, but also casts shame on [him] as a judge”; and being “[un]able to face [his] detractors without hiding behind [his] judicial position.”*

Based on this letter, a complaint against Mr. Doré was made to the Barreau du Québec, the body responsible for the regulation of the profession of lawyers in Québec. Its Disciplinary Council found him to be in violation of the **Code of Ethics** for lawyers, which states that the conduct of lawyers “must bear the stamp of objectivity, moderation and dignity.” It rejected Mr. Doré’s argument that the finding was an unreasonable limitation on his freedom of expression and suspended him from practicing law for 21 days.

Mr. Doré appealed the decision against him and the associated sanctions to the *Québec Tribunal des Professionals*. It rejected his appeal, and a subsequent appeal to the Québec Court of Appeal was also dismissed. He then appealed to the Supreme Court of Canada (SCC).

In its consideration of the appeal, the SCC stated that the decision to suspend Mr. Doré for 21 days was not before Court. Rather, it had to decide whether or not the Disciplinary Council’s decision to discipline him represented an appropriate balance of his right to freedom of expression under the *Charter of Rights and Freedom* and the statutory responsibility of the Barreau du Québec to ensure that lawyers behave with “objectivity, moderation and dignity” consistent with Article 203 of their **Code of Ethics**. The Court decided that, in this case, there was an appropriate balance struck between these competing interests and determined that, therefore, the decision was a reasonable one.

Although this case was about the conduct of a lawyer, the central issue of balancing the competing rights of freedom of expression and the ethical obligation to adhere to a professional code of conduct can apply to many professions, including counselling and psychotherapy. For this reason, observations from the SCC decision are included here:

*Lawyers potentially face criticisms and pressures on a daily basis. They are expected by the public, on whose behalf they serve, to endure them with civility and dignity. This is not always easy where the lawyer feels he or she has been unfairly provoked, as in this case. But, it is precisely when a lawyer’s equilibrium is unduly tested that he or she is particularly called upon to behave with transcended civility. On the other hand, lawyers should not be expected to behave like verbal eunuchs. They not only have a right to speak their minds freely, they arguably have a duty to do so. But, they are constrained by their profession to do so with dignified restraint.*

*A reprimand for a lawyer does not automatically flow from criticizing a judge or the judicial system. As discussed, such criticism, even when it is expressed robustly, can be constructive. However, in the context of disciplinary hearings, such criticism will be measured against the public’s reasonable expectations of a lawyer’s professionalism. As the Disciplinary Council found, Mr. Doré’s letter was outside those expectations. His displeasure with Justice Boilard was justifiable, but the extent of the response was not.*

In its decision, the SCC once again (see Fall Notebook) gave deference to administrative law and to the authority it grants to regulatory bodies to judge the conduct of its members. In this instance, it also accepted the Disciplinary Council’s exercise of its discretion with respect to the lawyer’s right to free expression under the *Charter of Rights and Freedoms*. It also gave primacy to the principle of reasonableness in rending its decision.

For more information on the SCC case, please refer to [The Canadian Legal Information Institute (CanLII)](https://www.canlii.org/en/ca/scc/doc/2012/2012scc12/2012scc12.html?searchUrlHash=AAAAAQAFZG9yw6kAAAAAAQ&resultIndex=1).

On a personal note, I could not resist sharing this more balanced version of the consequences of name calling:

**Sticks and stones may break my bones,
but words can also hurt me.
Sticks and stones break only skin,
while words are ghosts that haunt me.

Pain from words has left its scar,
on mind and heart that’s tender.
Cuts and bruises now have healed,
it’s words that I remember.**

**CCPA 2019 AGM NOTICE**

**ATTENTION TO ALL CCPA MEMBERS**

The Canadian Counselling and Psychotherapy Association will hold its Annual General Meeting on May 15, 2019, from 12:00 p.m. to 1:15 p.m. at the Delta Beauséjour Hotel in Moncton, New Brunswick at 750 Main Street, Moncton, NB E1C 1E6. Every member is invited.

**AGENDA**

Welcome

I. Acceptance of Agenda **Motion Required:** To accept the agenda

II. Minutes of May 2019 AGM
**Motion Required:** To accept the minutes of the May 2019 AGM as
presented (as amended).

III. President’s Report
**Motion Required:** To receive the President’s report as presented

IV. Board of Directors 2019-2021
**Motion Required:** To accept the slate of Directors and Officers as presented
**Motion Required:** To destroy the 2019 election results

V. Financial Report 2018-2019
**Motion Required:** To receive the 2018-2019 audited financial statement as
presented

VI. Approval of 2019-2020 Auditors
**Motion Required:** That van Berkom & Ritz LLP be selected as the Financial
Auditors for 2019-2020

VII. Good Faith Motion
**Motion Required:** That all actions taken by the Executive and Board of Directors since last Annual General Meeting were carried out in good faith

VIII. Adjournment
**Motion Required:** To adjourn the meeting

**JOINING THE DISCUSSION (PART I): The Interplay Between Ethics, Social Justice, Religious Freedom, Human Rights, and Legal Systems Within the Current and Emerging Canadian Counselling and Psychotherapy Landscape**

CO-WRITTEN BY NATASHA CAVERLEY (PhD, CCC), JOHN DRISCOLL (RCT, CCC), CARRIE FOSTER (CFT, PST, RDT, CCC, M.Sc, M.A.) AND KATHY OFFET-GARTNER (PhD, RPsych)

In 2014, a series of informal discussions arose regarding the ***interplay amongst counselling ethics and standards of practice, social justice, religious freedom, human rights and the Canadian and provincial/territorial legal systems when they are not aligned in the context of counselling and psychotherapy.*** From 2014 to present, the Canadian Counselling and Psychotherapy Association (CCPA) National Board of Directors has embarked on a shared learning journey in exploring this interplay discussion topic—seeking guidance from various CCPA leaders, subject matter experts, and Chapters about how this discussion topic impacts and influences the counselling and psychotherapy profession in Canada.

A CCPA Research Task Group was assembled to explore the above “interplay” question. The collective expertise and findings from the Research Task Group, additional reviewers, and the CCPA Board-led Research Task Group Sub-Committee has informed the CCPA National Board of Directors about the complex “interplay” question in terms of wise practices, lessons learned, and sustainability in addressing various dimensions of this multi-faceted topic within the context of the current and emerging counselling and psychotherapy landscape in Canada. A synthesis of the findings formed a quality assurance audit of current standards and practices within CCPA’s vision and mission statements, and our [*Code of Ethics*](https://www.ccpa-accp.ca/wp-content/uploads/2014/10/CodeofEthics_en.pdf) and [*Standards of Practice*](https://www.ccpa-accp.ca/wp-content/uploads/2015/07/StandardsOfPractice_en_June2015.pdf).

During the [May 2019 CCPA/IAC Conference](https://www.ccpa-accp.ca/general-continuing-education/annual-conference/) in Moncton, New Brunswick, an interactive presentation will be hosted to deconstruct the “interplay” topic by informing, articulating and presenting CCPA’s work to date on same and how this discussion topic acknowledges CCPA’s mandate, and shapes current and future emerging CCPA strategic and operational priorities. Furthermore, the “interplay” question will be reflected upon from three key perspectives:

* ***As individual counsellors and psychotherapists—***supporting professional and ethical practice with our clients, our continued lifelong learning as practitioners in counselling and psychotherapy, and within our respective workplaces;
* ***As counsellor educators/training programs—***supporting, developing and modelling professional ethical practice in the training of counsellors and psychotherapists at the program and institutional levels of post-secondary institutions in Canada which includes, but is not limited to, counsellor competency development; social justice, inclusion and diversity principles; and counsellor educator professional development; and
* ***As CCPA—***supporting competency development and social justice/inclusion/diversity principles at the micro (practitioner) and macro (organizational) levels of the counselling and psychotherapy profession in Canada—in relation to CCPA’s mandate and its “interplay” with current case law, ethics, accreditation

As such, CCPA member interaction on the “interplay” question is highly encouraged, and anecdotal examples regarding the above are most welcome. This is an opportunity for all of us to mutually explore, share, and problem-solve to guide our Association now and in the future.

Some areas of discussion during the interactive presentation at the May 2019 CCPA/IAC Conference that relate to counselling and psychotherapy practitioners and the profession (as a whole) within the context of CCPA’s mandate will include:

* **Social justice, dignity, and basic human rights for all;**
* **Addressing systemic barriers and marginalization, and how we advocate for change;**
* **Competency to ensure safety and efficacy in areas that relate to difference; and**
* **Openly discuss power and privilege and their role in how we advocate for change.**

We would like to invite all CCPA members who are attending the May 2019 CCPA/IAC Conference to consider joining us for this important discussion. We know many CCPA members have ideas, solutions, questions, and anecdotal information in reference to some or all of the points raised within the interplay between culture, spirituality, oppression, marginalization, advocacy, and education. Therefore, we would like to hear from you!

***For CCPA members who are not attending the May 2019 CCPA/IAC Conference***, we know that you equally hold a wealth of information. In order to receive your queries and wisdom, we invite you to send your comments to us by email at: info@ccpa-accp.ca with the Subject Line: “Research Task Group”-so that we can consider your commentary in the forthcoming May 2019 discussion on the “interplay” question.

In a future edition of COGNICA later this year, we will update you in the form of a “Part 2” article on this complex and interesting topic based on the discussion and reflections at the May 2019 CCPA/IAC Conference presentation and the commentaries offered by members who were not in attendance—fully acknowledging the need to take an inclusive approach in the counselling and psychotherapy profession—respecting all diversities in a Canadian context.

We hope that you will take part in this important discussion—the future of our profession and association will be enlightened by your participation.

**Did you know?**Ccpa vision and mission statement

*The Canadian Counselling and Psychotherapy Association (CCPA) is a national and bilingual organization dedicated to the enhancement of the counselling/psychotherapy profession in Canada.*

 *In fulfilling its mandate, the Association promotes research, education, policies, and appropriate standards of practice for the provision of accessible, competent and accountable counselling services throughout the human lifespan in a manner sensitive to and inclusive of the pluralistic nature of society.*

**LENDING A HELPING HAND IN TIMES OF NEED: DISASTER PSYCHOSOCIAL SERVICES IN BRITISH COLUMBIA**

CO-WRITTEN BY NATASHA CAVERLEY (PhD, CCC), MADELEINE LELIEVRE (CCC), AND
BARBARA MACCALLUM

*Note: This is an update to a 2015 COGNICA article on the Disaster Psychosocial program (DPS) in British Columbia (BC). Based on recent natural disasters and related emergencies in BC in 2017 and 2018, there is a current need for DPS volunteers in BC. As such, we would like to provide readers with an overview of the DPS program and how you can lend a helping hand.*

In recent years, increasingly catastrophic events in British Columbia (BC), such as the 2017 and 2018 flood and wildfire seasons are stark realities of the disasters and emergencies, which have a significant impact on individuals, families, communities, and emergency responders. It is during the initial hours and days following a disaster where it is critical for people who are affected by those emergencies to access psychological and sociological support in safeguarding their emotional health and fostering community resiliency.

**BC DISASTER PSYCHOSOCIAL SERVICES PROGRAM**

According to the World Health Organization (2011), psychological support is *“a humane, supportive response to a fellow human being who is suffering and who may need support”* (p. 53). Since 2001, the BC Disaster Psychosocial Services (DPS) Program has been responsible for the development and provision of psychosocial strategies that offer a continuum of services to support individuals (both the general public and responders) who are affected by an emergency or disaster.

The BC DPS Program provides communities in BC with timely and accessible services from trained volunteers who offer psychological first aid (includes one-on-one support, general assessment of immediate need, crisis counselling), psychoeducational/stress managements interventions, group presentations (e.g., group sessions and town hall meetings), spiritual care, advocacy and consultation to emergency management staff and volunteers, and community assessment of needs.

The DPS Council, comprised of partner organizations and professional associations, provides guidance and support to the DPS Program. Professional associations with members throughout the province, aid the DPS Program in building capacity for local, community-based volunteers when the need arises.

From 2014 to present, the Canadian Counselling and Psychotherapy Association (CCPA) has been a member of the BC DPS Council. At the Council table, CCPA facilitates and encourages CCPA members in BC to learn more about volunteering with the BC DPS Program. Madeleine Lelievre (2017-2019 CCPA BC/Yukon Director) and Barbara MacCallum (CCPA Chief Executive Officer) are the CCPA representatives on the BC DPS Council.

**BC DPS VOLUNTEER NETWORK**

BC DPS volunteers utilize their skills in supporting evacuees affected by wildland fires, flooding, apartment fires or other events that create challenges in coping for people, such as high anxiety, distress, loss and grief.

The BC DPS volunteer network is comprised of counsellors, registered psychologists, registered social workers, police victim services and spiritual care professionals who volunteer their time to aid in supportive activities that help build individual and community capacity and foster resilience in the longer term. By working with practitioners who are already members of their respective professional associations, the BC DPS Program is assured that its volunteers have the requisite knowledge and experience required to undertake this work as well as being accountable to their associations’ professional codes of ethics and standards of practice.

Disaster response differs greatly from clinical practice, although many of the same skills and interventions are required, such as:

* The ability to function in the midst of chaos and stress;
* Knowledge of emergency social services;
* Cognizance and respect for cultural norms and difference;
* Cognizance and respect for evacuee participation in the rescue effort and subsequent rebuilding;
* The ability to handle disaster assignments while demonstrating good self-care;
* The ability to work within a diverse team of people (e.g., first responders, emergency social services, volunteers, municipal groups, government ministries);
* A strong ability to be flexible and respond to a high-demand, rapidly changing environment;
* The ability to work outside the office setting;
* An understanding of worker care in the context of disaster;
* The ability to adapt special knowledge to the disaster situation; and
* A sense of humour and a warm demeanour

In addition to the above-mentioned recommended competencies, to become a DPS volunteer in BC, you need to…

* Be a member in good standing with a professional association such as the [Canadian Counselling and Psychotherapy Association](https://www.ccpa-accp.ca/) (CCPA);
* Be a Canadian Certified Counsellor (CCC);
* Complete two free online courses—[Introduction to Disaster Psychosocial Services](https://learninghub.phsa.ca/Courses/6697/introduction-to-disaster-psychosocial-services) and [Introduction to Emergency Social Services](https://catalogue.jibc.ca/Lists/Courses/CustomDispForm.aspx?ID=1438&InitialTabId=Ribbon.Read); and
* Complete the BC DPS general volunteer application form

Once those steps are completed, you will be screened by DPS Program staff to assess congruency and readiness to become an official BC DPS volunteer. As a BC DPS volunteer, there are no specific times/days/hours required to volunteer for the Program—it is based on your interest and availability for deployment at the time of a DPS alert. Depending on the location and type of disaster, BC DPS volunteers can provide services anywhere from four hours to one week in duration—with all expenses for travel and hotel/accommodations covered by the BC DPS Program. It should be noted that there are no per diems for services rendered under this Program.

**BENEFITS OF VOLUNTEERING WITH THE BC DPS PROGRAM**

Key benefits to volunteering with the BC DPS Program include:

* Access to tailored disaster psychosocial training and exercises (e.g., simulations/mock training exercises for reception centers). For example, free online training (approximately six hours in total) that can count towards your [CCPA Continuing Education Credits](https://www.ccpa-accp.ca/general-continuing-education/) (CECs);
* Learning about emergency management and emergency social services;
* Developing new skills in relation to disaster psychosocial services, emergency management and emergency social services;
* Providing essential volunteer support in your own community at times of need; and
* Access to a dedicated professional network in the areas of disaster psychosocial services, emergency management and emergency social services.

**Are you interested in learning more about the BC DPS Program?**

For more information, visit the [BC DPS Program website](http://www.phsa.ca/our-services/programs-services/health-emergency-management-bc/disaster-psychosocial-program). Also, check out this [video](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=xWG_io927kw&feature=youtu.be) that provides a brief overview of the BC DPS Program.

**References:**World Health Organization, War Trauma Foundation and World Vision International (2011). *Psychological first aid: Guide for field workers.* Geneva: World Health Organization.

**STORIES OF ADVOCACY & HEALING: REFLECTIONS ON AND BEYOND THE NATIONAL INQUIRY INTO MISSING AND MURDERED INDIGENOUS WOMEN AND GIRLS**

SUBMITTED BY THE INDIGENOUS CIRCLE CHAPTER EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE
WRITTEN BY CATHRINE CHAMBERS & JAMIE WARREN

In May 2017, the National Inquiry into Missing and Murdered Indigenous Women and Girls (MMIWG) presented a Call for Applications for Standing from interested parties. The Indigenous Circle Chapter (ICC) saw this as an opportunity for our members to share their experiences, stories, expertise, and recommendations in the areas of Indigenous mental health, as well as an opportunity to deepen the Commission’s understanding of the impacts of colonization and violence against Indigenous women and girls. In July 2017, our application was approved for Standing, as well as for funding support. However, we soon learned that it appeared these funds could only be used by external legal counsel for fees and disbursements. Despite several attempts to receive further clarification on proper use of these funds, we did not receive a response and were left wondering how to proceed with the Chapter’s accepted Standing. Throughout our discussions, the ICC Executive Committee reflected on some troubling aspects of the Inquiry and its implementation thus far: (1) including a lack of support for families before, during, and after their testimonies; (2) allocation of resources to legal professionals rather than to communities; (3) a lack of clear communication around process; (4) little to no consultation with Indigenous communities on the scope of the Inquiry; and (5) a lack of integration between Western and Indigenous ways of knowing. These practices did not resonate with us as culturally-appropriate, trauma-informed, or embedded within Indigenous ways of healing. Despite our sincere wish to engage with the Inquiry, we were not confident that the current structure of the Inquiry would allow us to share our knowledge in ways that aligned with Indigenous ways of knowing, speaking, relating, and helping. Based on these factors, we concluded that it was not ethically or culturally appropriate for the ICC to continue to seek Standing or accept funding from the Inquiry, and thus regretfully withdrew our Application for Standing.

**WHERE DO WE GO FROM HERE?**

At the same time, the ICC Executive expressed a strong desire to ramp up our efforts with regards to our involvement in the issue of MMIWG in whatever ways we could. Though we brainstormed about how we could become more meaningfully engaged, we ultimately decided to begin by exploring our own present-day involvement as a starting point, prior to creating an action plan. We discovered that many of our Executive members were involved in advocacy, education, research, ceremony, memorials, and direct support with people and communities affected by this issue. As we shared our experiences as an Executive, we became even more curious! What work was being done by the ICC as a whole, and how might our collective wisdom inform our next steps? We, the ICC Executive, surveyed our membership to further inquire on our members’ involvement and were asked to share their own stories in relation to the issue of MMIWG. What we discovered from the 68 responses we received, was that our ICC members are deeply involved in a wide variety of ways, that this issue has touched the personal and professional lives of our members in significant ways, and that the ICC was uniquely positioned to take a leadership role in various advocacy, education, and outreach initiatives. By sharing what we learned throughout this process with the CCPA membership as a whole, our hope is to raise awareness about how the issue of MMIWG affects our Indigenous colleagues, friends, families, and communities; share information about the important work our ICC membership is already doing in this area; present ideas that the ICC has on initiatives going forward; and engage the wider CCPA membership in reflecting on how they can become involved in this issue as a part of a broader commitment to reconciliation, both professionally and personally.

Not surprisingly, many respondents shared that they had a personal connection to the issue of MMIWG. 42% of participants shared that a family member, friend, or community member had gone missing or been murdered. Even those who hadn’t experienced a loss personally reflected on deeply held feelings of grief and sadness, as well as feelings of anger about the “indifference” expressed by many Canadians when it comes to valuing and protecting the lives of Indigenous peoples. Many respondents shared that they dealt with these impacts by engaging in traditional healing ceremonies including sweats and smudging, as well as the lifting of the pipe for Missing and Murdered Women and Girls, spoke with Elders in their communities, and also participated in Western-based methods of healing including psychotherapy. 54% of respondents shared that they had worked with a client who had been impacted by a loved one who had gone missing or been murdered. Respondents shared that this work was not just professional in nature, but engaged them on personal, emotional, and spiritual levels. Their work involved supporting family and community members in coping with their feelings about lost loved ones through individual and group counselling, providing support and after-care to participants in the National Inquiry, ensuring that therapy was conducted in culturally safe and sensitive ways, securing funds to support families with funeral and travel expenses, and facilitating traditional healing ceremonies for survivors, families, friends, and community members.

Many ICC members are also actively engaged in various education and advocacy efforts related to the issue of MMIWG. Specifically, they reported participating in the REDress Project, Red Shawl Campaign, White Ribbon Campaign, Commitment Stick Initiative, and Moose Hide Initiative, participating in Sisters in Spirit marches, vigils, and art memorials, helping communities to develop wellness plans and advocating for increased funding for both Indigenous and Western methods of healing for affected families. Other members shared that they have participated in community gatherings and traditional healing ceremonies including Sweat Lodges, song, drumming, and prayer as a way to not only honour Missing and Murdered loved ones, but also to advocate for greater awareness, engagement, and commitment from all Canadians to end violence against Indigenous women and girls. In terms of research and education initiatives, our members are also deeply engaged in this aspect of the issue. Examples of the important work our members are doing include teaching courses on Indigenous social work, educating child protection workers about violence against Indigenous women and girls, facilitating Indigenous-led workshops on violence prevention, and facilitating education workshops at Healing Lodges. Many of our members also shared that in addition to more formal involvement in advocacy, research and education initiatives, they were also engaged in important conversations and discussions within their own communities and professional circles about “what is difficult, and what has taken place” as well as how to become more involved on both the professional and personal levels. They shared that these conversations were transformational in their own process of understanding, feeling, remembering, and moving forward.

**MOVING FORWARD**

Our members shared such rich and thoughtful insight through their stories and experiences on how the ICC can continue to advocate for MMIWG, survivors of violence, and the communities and families so deeply affected. As a collective, our members suggested the following action items:

* Raising awareness of the impact of MMIWG on helpers and healers and providing resources to support counsellors, therapists, Elders, and others who support communities and families;
* Providing information and resources about MMIWG initiatives, projects, and events that are taking place across the country to our members that can be taken back to individual communities;
* Facilitating a sharing circle at the CCPA conference to support members in their work with families and survivors;
* Ensuring the ICC is engaging the broader community of helping professionals in conversations about colonialism, intergenerational
trauma, racism, violence, child welfare, policing, and other root causes of violence against Indigenous women and girls;
* Supporting the next generation of Indigenous helpers and healers by sharing information and resources about Indigenous mental health and healing; and
* Engaging our non-Indigenous colleagues in conversations and activities that support reconciliation.

We invite all CCPA members to reflect and look within on what roles they play as practitioners, students, educators, and Canadians in the awareness and advocacy on the issue of MMIWG. We encourage CCPA members to educate themselves on the issue, and make a commitment to remembering and honouring our Indigenous women and girls, as well as to act in the spirit of social justice and reconciliation.

Sincerely,

The Indigenous Circle Chapter Executive Committee
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