

Nova Scotia
Andrea Currie
April 2019

Connections and Communications

- Provided support to the CCPA Indigenous Director on a number of occasions.
- Provided support to the Indigenous Circle Chapter Leadership Team.
- Coordinated several Truth and Reconciliation Committee teleconference meetings.
- Participated in NS Chapter teleconference meetings.
- Coordinated and chaired several meetings of the Inuit Issues Working Group, a working group made up of Indigenous Circle Chapter members and other CCPA members working in or interested in Inuit mental health.
- Read background materials in preparation for discussions about Inuit mental health in the Inuit Issues Working Group.
- Participated in Indigenous Circle Chapter Executive meetings.
- Participated in monthly CCPA Board meetings.
- Provided input into the Global Partnerships Committee Terms of Reference.
- Served as a liaison between CCPA members in Nova Scotia and the Member Services staff in our National Office, to assist in the promotion of professional development opportunities for NS members.
- Wrote periodic letters to the NS members, promoting the Moncton conference and keeping them informed about the work of CCPA.
- Responded to communication from two Indigenous students in the M.Ed. Counselling Program at Acadia, who were feeling disconnected and concerned about the lack of understanding about and course content relevant to their cultural context; provided support.

Contributions and Celebrations

- Spent a significant amount of time drafting and revising the Truth and Reconciliation Committee Terms of Reference.
- Presented/recorded two webinars: Land and Water and Mental Health of Indigenous Peoples, and The Sixties Scoop: Mental Health Implications for Indigenous Peoples.

- Spoke at an International Women's Week event on the Missing and Murdered Indigenous Women and Girls.

Concerns and Challenges

- During my four years on the National Board of CCPA, there have always been two Indigenous Board members, the Indigenous Director and myself. In keeping with Indigenous ways of working, we partnered on many initiatives and supported each other in close working relationships. I am concerned about there being only one Indigenous voice on the Board, and encourage all Board members to consider the possibility of creating a second Indigenous Director position. It can be extremely difficult and isolating to try to bring an Indigenous perspective into regular meetings and committee work within an organization whose structure and ways of working reflect the values and norms of the dominant culture. Having one person in the role of representing an Indigenous perspective is not in keeping with our ways of working, puts undue pressure on that one person, and can perpetuate tokenism.
- As CCPA moves forward in its commitment to respond to the Truth and Reconciliation Commission's Calls To Action with meaningful action at the organizational level, there will need to be a deepening of the Board's collective understanding about how colonial practices (i.e. ways of working that replicate and perpetuate the dominance of Eurocentric ways of knowing and doing things), will be reconsidered as space is made to acknowledge the equal value of Indigenous ways of knowing and doing things. This is a core principle in the process of reconciliation.
- The leadership of the Indigenous Circle Chapter can be helpful in this process. Specifically, the ICC can suggest resource materials for settler allies who acknowledge their need to deepen their understanding and are willing and ready to do this work, as a necessary part of their contribution to reconciliation.
- The CACEP Standards Review is timely as Indigenous mental health content in Masters in Counselling programs as well as cultural safety for Indigenous students in these programs needs to be addressed.

TRC Calls to Action Update

- Most of my work in the past six months has been about reconciliation, in different committees and contexts.

Conclusion

I am grateful for the opportunity to serve our CCPA members in Nova Scotia as their Regional Director on the CCPA Board for the past four years. I am also grateful for the opportunity to work with and support the work of the two people who served as Indigenous Directors on the CCPA Board during my two terms. It has been an honour and a privilege to serve in this capacity, and I wish all the best to my successor and to the Board as a whole as the work of CCPA moves forward.