



# Peer Support South East Ontario

## Newsletter—Spring 2015

### Changing Times

Spring is known as a time to anticipate newness. New life, new experiences, all grown out of existing elements and life giving organisms. So it is somewhat fitting that Mental Health Support Network South East Ontario is able to formally announce that we are NOW officially and legally known as:

#### ***Peer Support South East Ontario***

Throughout the strategic planning process and again during the community engagement sessions that MHSN held over the past few years, the peers from across the South East region have repeatedly said that they would suggest changing the name to better reflect what it is we do and the area that we do it. In September 2014 the Board of Directors for Mental Health Support Network South East Ontario formally began the process to change the name from MHSNSEO to ***Peer Support South East Ontario***. While the timing of the official announcement coincides with the changes to the Addictions and Mental Health system here in the South East, the request to change MHSNSEO's name has not only been part of the current 5 year strategic plan but also respects the voices of the people who access Peer Support or want to access Peer Support however were not certain that they can or should since the name was specific to Mental Health.

Our new logo represents the geographical area in which we offer Peer Support and our newly refreshed website was launched on April 1<sup>st</sup>, 2015. We have received a new domain name and therefore all of our email addresses will shift over to @psseo.ca.

### Kingston General Hospital

#### Intensive Treatment Therapy Program

PSSEO has been providing Peer Support upon discharge from Providence Care as part of the Transitional Discharge Model. Kingston General Hospital is also interested in something similar. Since September Michelle Way, Community Peer Support Manager, has been working with the Clinical Team at KGH to assist and support them with Peer Support in a new Intensive Treatment Therapy Program for patients who were recently discharged from hospital and will return for a 4 week program that includes access to Peer Support, WRAP, etc. This is a pilot project and still in the infancy stage. It is very encouraging that hospitals are indeed seeing and seeking the value of Peer Support in the treatment, therapy and recovery process.

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# BELLEVILLE FREEDOM SUPPORT CENTRE

## RE-LOCATION

PSSEO's Board is extremely happy to announce that they have secured a new, larger, accessible location in downtown Belleville to accommodate Peer Support needs. The current lease of our 350 Front Street location expired in September and we have been working with a month to month lease until we could secure another location as well as leasehold improvement funding. All of the back office work has now been completed and we have begun the leasehold improvement stage of the process.

The new location is actually not far from the current one. It has been known as "Jerry's Market" located at 391 Front Street, for the past 50 years or so. As with so many of our new locations, it will be an open concept design with all AODA legislative requirements such as two accessible washrooms. The new location has great natural light and a patio in the back.

We anticipate moving the Centre to the new location during Mental Health Week—May 4th —May 8th.

*May you be well on your journey, have support when you require it  
and find peace in knowing you don't travel it alone.*

## Staff Appreciation—Message from the President

The most important asset of any organization is its staff. However well-governed or rich in other resources, the best intentions and planning accomplish little until they are put in action by the managers and front-line staff who do the work.

From its very beginning this organization has been staffed by individuals who have been the embodiment of our Core Purpose: "to be with people who are living with addiction and/or mental health challenges and to support them in being as well as they can be." This purpose is accomplished for those we serve by a staff which is diligent in work, willing to learn and generous in sharing their own lived experience.

We celebrate the women and men whose compassion and commitment prove again and again the value of Intentional Peer Support.

Ed Bentley, President, Board of Directors

## Addiction and Mental Health Redesign Update

Amalgamation plans from the Boards of the organizations in each of the Counties: Addictions Centre HPE and Mental Health Services HPE; Lennox and Addington Community Addictions and Mental Health Services and Frontenac Community Mental Health and Addiction Services; Leeds and Grenville Mental Health Services; Brock Cottage, and TRI CAS (Addiction) were all submitted to the South East Local Health Integration Network and have been approved. Effective April 1<sup>st</sup> there are now 3 new non-profit organizations, replacing those previously mentioned. The 3 new organizations, Providence Care and Peer Support South East Ontario will all work together in a formal Alliance that will be known as a Strategic Alliance. Their role will be to ensure that the Addiction and Mental Health system works strategically and collaboratively together to ensure that those who access the Addiction and Mental Health system will enjoy an ideal experience.

For Peer Support South East Ontario, this means that we will be expected to work within the new organizations providing Intentional Peer Support as well as continuing to provide the current Centre-based Peer Support.

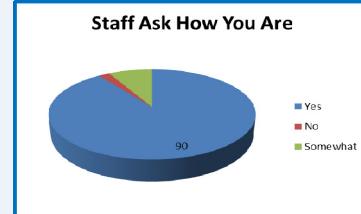
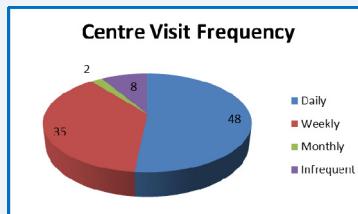
For much more in-depth information about the status of the Redesign of Addiction and Mental Health, visit the SELHIN website and click on the AMH logo.



# HOW ARE WE DOING?

## Participant's Survey 2014

The following is a sample of survey results from the Peers across the South East. The survey was anonymous and was open electronically from November 4<sup>th</sup>, 2014 until December 3rd, 2014. In total we received 48 completed electronic responses. The Peer Representatives facilitated the completion of the surveys within their Peer Support Centre using the tablets available to them as Peer Representatives. The information is extremely valuable in future deliberations and during our up and coming strategic planning exercise.

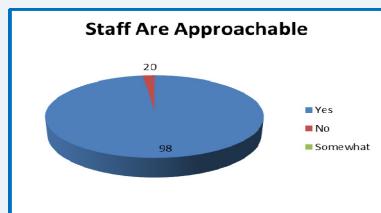


**What would bring you to the Centre more?**

"More/increased hours"  
"Dinners and more support topics"

**What do you like best about the Centre?**

"The friendly staff"  
"The sense of family and understanding  
that everyone has the right to be who  
they are"



**What do you feel is missing from our Centres?**

"Extended hours, evenings and weekends"

**What can we do better to enhance the experience in the Centre?**

"Keep on listening with an open mind to compliments and complaints, keep doing what you all do, it's working well!"

**When we are (or could be) open?**

"Every day"  
"Evenings and weekends"  
"Longer hours"

It is evident, and not a surprise that participants of the Support Centers would like the Centers to be open longer, later, earlier and more days. This has been a theme throughout the past 4 years echoed through suggestions in the Centre comment boxes and voiced in the monthly participant meetings at each Centre. These results also provided a solid barometer reading of how we truly 'are doing' in the eyes of the participants and what are some further areas of focus and enhancement that can enable us to provide the best experience for all who pass through the doors of our Centers.



## ENHANCING OUR PARTNERSHIPS

**Peer Support South East Ontario** (formally Mental Health Support Network) continues to grow throughout the South East. This means great new enhanced opportunities to Intentional Peer Support for all!!!

We have officially changed our name and logo as you can see; additionally we have completely redesigned our website, so please take a look for yourself at [www.psseo.ca](http://www.psseo.ca) to view Peer Support Centre group and activity calendars, virtual tours of the Centres, hours of operation and more.

As we move forward with integrating outside the walls of our Peer Support Centres and truly into the communities and newly formed entities throughout the South East offering Intentional Peer Support, we want to ensure everyone is aware that with this comes great new opportunities for accessing Intentional Peer Support not available in the past due to our limited capacity and staffing. We are now pleased to be able to offer Intentional Peer Support beyond the walls of our Peer Support Centres in the broader community at nearly any time of day with the ability of utilizing the space of partners such as yourself.

We are already rolling this out in the Brockville area with our partners there and to the remainder of South East Ontario through this information broadcast to ensure everyone gains the best scope and understanding of where we are all headed together.

What this means for you is that if you have individuals accessing your services that could value from or have expressed interest in Intentional Peer Support relationships, whether on an individual or group basis, we are now in a position to accommodate this. Currently we are looking to provide onsite facilitated groups centred on Intentional Peer Support and the Wellness Recovery Action Planning by June.

We continue to offer everything we have in the past in our Peer Support Centres across the South East. It is with the addition of the Community Support piece that we can now crash through our previous limitations in terms of time, availability and physical spaces and meet folks outside of these walls and in our partners spaces where participants may already be comfortable and have an established rapport.

To coordinate more information, a meeting or to jump right into setting up Intentional Peer Support in or with your organization please connect with either Michelle Way or Matt McDonald through our contact information below.

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