



# Ontario Peer Development Initiative

November 24<sup>th</sup>, 2010

## **An update summary of OPDI Peer Support Core Essentials™ Training Project**

OPDI is currently in the process of wrapping up and reporting out on a two-year project that was funded by the Ontario Trillium Foundation, to create Peer Support Core Essentials™ Training Program and accompanying Train the Trainer program.

This training is made-in-Ontario, for consumers by consumers, through a fully consultative process undertaken with the assistance of project consultants Christine Gayler and Associates (now Christine Grace and Community). All OPDI member organizations were invited to participate in identifying training needs and contributing to content through a number of consultative processes including

- Survey of the membership
- Key informant interviews
- Individual telephone interviews offered to every member organization
- A separate peer support stream at OPDI's Annual Conference & AGM, June 2009 with each member organization invited to send one extra delegate
- Pilot presentations of one of eight draft modules at regional consultations in each of eight sites across the province
- Member teleconferences and webinars
- 28 initial member trainees across province received eight day training using revised drafts in Toronto in two four-day sessions, January & February 2010
- Ten selected to return March 2010 for 3-day training of trainers using draft trainer manual.
- Redrafting of content based on participant and trainer feedback – Beta 2 version
- 8 day training offered by Trainer Interns to member and non member participants using BETA 2 version of manuals, in 10 sites across province
  - Assisted by 5 Training Supporters (also selected from the 28)
- Independent evaluation process by consultant Deborah Wise Harris

### **Project Outcomes**

Our membership has created an eight day (50 hour) face-to-face training process (Level 1) that is followed up by a 50 hour internship for those that are recommended by the trainer as ready for internship (Level 1R). Upon successful completion of internship folks earn (Level 2) OPDI Certified Peer Supporter.

The Trainer Training is another 25 hour face-to-face process followed by an internship which entails delivering the 50 hour Core Essentials training course to CSI members in 10 cities across province. By having successfully done so, ten individuals are now ready to earn their Trainer Licenses.

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Several of them were assisted by Training Supporters, who were recruited from among the original group of 28 trained, and we have learned from evaluation that these supporters are a necessity except where classes are very small.

Approximately 183 people across Ontario received classroom training in the Core Essentials. Approximately 155 of them successfully completed and many are currently working on their internships. To date, a dozen have earned OPDI Certified Peer Supporter status. Several interns have been hired into permanent paid peer support positions, some of them in programs that had never incorporated peer support services before.

We are creating a workforce of peer supporters with strong grounding in recovery values and in the basic connecting and supporting skills essential to peer workers.

### **The Product:**

The Beta 2 Version of manuals that was used in the provincial rollout is currently being revised for final version, based on participant, trainer, and steering committee feedback. Content size will likely increase, but before editing, the content included

- Participant manual Beta 2 = 126 pages
  - + DVD “From Madhouse to Our House”
  - + CD of research and position papers on peer support and CSI’s
- Trainer guide Beta 2 = 123 pages
  - + 7 slide decks

The content of the training covers the following topics

- Beginnings
- Module 01: Peer Support
- Module 02: Role of the Peer Supporter
- Module 03: Exemplifying Peer Support
- Module 04: Recovery Inspired Peer Support
- Module 05: Trauma Informed Peer Support
- Module 06: Community Minded Peer Support
- Module 07: Core Practice Skills
- Module 08: Peer/Peer Supporter Relationship
- Internship

It must be noted that the content is focused on Core Essential skills for all peer supporters. It is not clinically based training. People stepping into specific roles outside of the CSI realm may need further training such as WRAP, ASIST, or other available training depending on what roles they will take on, and anyone stepping into a clinical setting will need training and orientation to the practices of those settings.

## **Internships**

OPDI currently has a Social Work student on placement to support and monitor progress of those who are serving internships. This student is available only to those who have received the Level 1R, in other words those recommended by their trainer to do an internship. The placement is for 402 hours between now and March.

Interns from the current “batch” of trainees have until October 31<sup>st</sup> 2011 to complete their 50 hours. Internship opportunities and prospective sites must be sought and negotiated locally by prospective interns themselves. Internship plans must be submitted to and approved by the internship supporter, who will then provide the necessary paperwork to both the intern and the site supervisor.

Internship hours must be hours spent in giving direct support to individuals. The individuals supported must be aware of the fact that their time with the supporter is being counted, as they are asked to give non identifying survey feedback of how they feel the supporter has served them. For this reason, it is not appropriate for support hours to be counted in walk-in or phone-in crisis situations. However, peer supporters who already work for pay may count any work-related hours that are spend giving direct one on one support to an individual or individuals.

## **Next steps**

OPDI hopes to offer more training opportunities in collaboration with our member organizations, our trained trainers, and interested organizations. However the funding for this project is ended and we need to find or make capacity to do so. The options are to

- offer the training for a fee,
- find sustainable ongoing core funding to permit us to offer it on an ongoing basis
- apply for one time funding from time to time in different areas where there is desire for training in collaboration with member or other organizations
- a combination of the above

However, before we can explore these possibilities, OPDI needs to wrap up the project by

- posting information to OPDI website
- finalizing statistics, and reporting out to OTF
- incorporate independent evaluation and trainer feedback as well as internship sites feedback into a final version of training manuals

Also outside the scope of the current project, but in order to present future training, we need to

- finalize a licensing agreement between trainers and OPDI
- analyze all costs of delivering training and arrive at a cost per person
- negotiate with trainers around per person fee to provide training

- negotiate with member orgs re interest/ability/their fee or percentage to host training sessions
- analyze FTE amount needed for OPDI staff position of Training Coordinator, and source funding or identify a percentage of training fees to support position
- explore expressed wish of participants to form an association of peer supporters
- create position papers and standards around secondment or contract placement of peer workers from CSI's into more traditional settings
- explore needs and funding opportunities for additional training modules.

### **Future growth**

It is our intention, through partnering with other organizations, other funders, perhaps various government ministries, to create specialized training modules to add to the Core Essentials – modules which would prepare people with more specific skills for more specific settings. For example,

- currently we are partnered with CMHA to create diabetes competencies for peer supporters.
- Several member organizations have been independently piloting peer support in emergency departments – a study/pilot for training on this would be helpful
- Where are some other potential roles for peer support workers, such as Family Health Teams, Corrections and Parole Services, Income Support service offices, etc... the possibilities are endless....



*The Ontario Trillium Foundation is an agency of the Government of Ontario. For 25 years, the Foundation has supported the growth and vitality of communities across the province. OTF continues to strengthen the capacity of the volunteer sector through investments in community-based initiatives. For more information, please visit [www.trilliumfoundation.org](http://www.trilliumfoundation.org)*