

PCHS

HEALTH

MAGAZINE



14

22ND INTERNATIONAL WOMENS DAY GALA

*Cover featuring PCHS ARAO Committee

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Amandeep Kaur CEO, PCHS
Message from CEO

Moving Beyond English to Ethnic Language Translations: Advancing Health Equity for All

It is time to delve deeper into the critical importance of addressing health equity in Ontario, Canada, particularly within culturally diverse communities, is essential. As we strive to uphold our mission of advancing health and wellness across Ontario, it's imperative to recognize and tackle the persistent disparities in health outcomes among various demographic groups. These inequities underscore the urgent need for combined action at all government levels and within communities.

While translating health information from English into French and the top three or more ethnic languages has been a commendable approach, it's increasingly evident that this alone is insufficient. Merely disseminating translated materials through ethnic agencies overlooks these diverse communities' nuanced cultural contexts and communication preferences.

To truly bridge the health literacy and access gap, it's time to complement language translations with personalized, community-centric approaches. This involves implementing initiatives such as Community Health Ambassadors (CHAs), which have demonstrated effectiveness in engaging and empowering individuals within their cultural spheres.

CHAs serve as trusted liaisons between health-care providers and community members, adept at navigating cultural sensitivities, beliefs, and linguistic nuances. By leveraging their cultural competence and rapport within their respective communities, CHAs play a pivotal role in disseminating health information, facilitating access to services, and advocating for the specific needs of marginalized populations.

Furthermore, CHAs embody a holistic approach to health promotion, going beyond mere dissemination of information to fostering genuine understanding and behavioural change. Through interactive workshops, one-on-one consultations, and grassroots outreach efforts, CHAs empower individuals to make informed decisions about their health and well-being.

In essence, while language translations remain a foundational aspect of health communication, they must be complemented by community-driven strategies like the CHA model. By prioritizing culturally sensitive approaches and leveraging the strengths of community networks, we can move closer to achieving health equity for all residents of Ontario, regardless of their background or linguistic proficiency.

ENHANCING ADDICTION TREATMENT THROUGH EVIDENCE-BASED TECHNIQUES: A FOCUS ON COGNITIVE RESTRUCTURING

Zahra Masood, Case Manager, Addictions



Addiction is a complex and chronic condition that affects millions worldwide, with detrimental consequences for individuals, families, and societies. While various treatment approaches exist, evidence-based techniques like cognitive restructuring offer promising possibilities for improving outcomes in addiction therapy. This article explores the integration of evidence-based practices, specifically cognitive restructuring, to enhance addiction treatment efficacy.

Understanding Addiction: Addiction is characterized by compulsive substance use or behavior despite harmful consequences. It profoundly impacts brain function, leading to changes in cognition, behavior, and emotional regulation. Traditional models of addiction treatment often focused on symptom management without addressing underlying cognitive and emotional processes.

The Role of Evidence-Based Techniques:

Evidence-based techniques in addiction treatment emphasize interventions supported by thorough scientific research. These techniques aim to target cognitive distortions, maladaptive behaviors, and emotional dysregulation associated with addiction. Among these approaches, cognitive restructuring stands out as a powerful tool for challenging and modifying dysfunctional thought patterns.

Cognitive Restructuring: Cognitive restructuring, a core component of cognitive-behavioral therapy (CBT), helps individuals identify and challenge irrational or negative thoughts. By examining the evidence for and against these thoughts, clients learn to replace them with more rational and adaptive alternatives. In the context of addiction, cognitive restructuring targets distorted beliefs related to substance use, triggers, cravings, and self-efficacy.

Application in Addiction Treatment:

Integrating cognitive restructuring into addiction treatment involves several key steps:

Assessment: Therapists assess clients' cognitive distortions, identifying patterns of thinking that contribute to addictive behaviors.

Psychoeducation: Clients learn about the connection between thoughts, emotions, and behaviors, gaining insight into how cognitive restructuring can facilitate change.

Identifying Triggers: Clients identify triggers and situations that provoke cravings or maladaptive thoughts related to substance use.

Challenging Beliefs: Using evidence-based techniques, clients challenge and refute irrational beliefs, such as the belief that they cannot cope with stress without substances.

Skill Building: Clients develop coping skills, including problem-solving, relaxation techniques, and assertiveness training, to manage triggers and cravings effectively.

Relapse Prevention: Cognitive restructuring helps clients anticipate and address potential relapse triggers, empowering them to maintain long-term sobriety.

Evidence Base: Numerous studies support the efficacy of cognitive restructuring in addiction treatment. For example, a meta-analysis by Magill and Ray (2009) found that CBT, including cognitive restructuring, was associated with significant reductions in substance use and relapse rates. Furthermore, research suggests that cognitive restructuring can lead to enduring changes in cognitive processes, reducing the likelihood of relapse over time (Witkiewitz & Marlatt, 2004).

Incorporating evidence-based techniques like cognitive restructuring into addiction treatment holds immense promise for improving outcomes and promoting long-term recovery. By addressing underlying cognitive processes and empowering clients to challenge maladaptive beliefs, counsellors can facilitate meaningful change and support individuals on their journey to sobriety.

References available upon request.

MARCH BREAK 2024

Rabia Bhatti, Youth Worker

Punjabi Community Health Services Hosted an event/activity for newcomer youth during their spring break. The event spanned over three days, from March 11th until March 15th, each day consisted of the following activities; Spring Tie Dye, Gratitude Bracelets, and the last day was Paint & Chat. Each day allowed the newcomer youth to express themselves through art and creativity. They were able to use their imagination and make some unique, eye catching designs through different tie-dye techniques, creating stunning patterns and effects. Youth also had the opportunity to create their own unique bracelets while being able to embrace the spirit of gratitude towards individuals that inspire them and motivate them in their day-to-day life. This allowed youth to gain a deeper understanding of gratitude, and build healthy relationships. On the last day PCHS provided an avenue for newcomer youth to feel empowered by letting them express their experience through exploring their memories, feelings and cultural shift into Canada while participating in 'paint & chat'. These conversations among their peers during a painting session allowed them to express, share, and build a positive relationship, while contributing to their sense of belonging and integration into the community.

March Break



HIGH PRIORITY COMMUNITY STRATEGIES (HPCS) PROJECT

Navdeep and Ramanpreet Kaur, Community Health Ambassadors

High Priority Community Strategies (HPCS) emerged as a pillar of support and empowerment, consistently tackling various challenges through its comprehensive approach to community well-being. With a core focus on health education, naloxone training, and aiding families in need, HPCS played an essential role in fostering resilience and solidarity within the community.

Through targeted diabetes education initiatives, HPCS empowered individuals with the knowledge and resources needed to effectively manage their health, enabling informed decision-making and healthier lifestyles. Concurrently, the provision of naloxone training to over 200 individuals underscored HPCS's unwavering commitment to confronting the opioid crisis, equipping community members with life-saving skills to respond to emergencies and prevent tragedies.

Beyond its health-centered efforts, HPCS extended compassionate support to families struggling with economic hardship, offering financial assistance and essential groceries to aide communities. By addressing both health and socioeconomic challenges, HPCS strengthened social bonds and cultivated a sense of unity within the community. Furthermore, to enhance our initiatives, we prioritized community outreach and recognized the essential role of Community Health Ambassadors (CHAs). Community outreach established trust and fostered connections with the people we served, as CHAs served as essential bridges for community members, offering crucial care and health education. Their presence improved access to resources and empowered individuals to manage their well-being, making them invaluable in promoting community health.

The ripple effects of HPCS's initiatives extended far beyond those directly served, enriching the entire community fabric. By promoting health, preventing disease, and offering vital support to those in need, HPCS exemplified the transformative power of community-driven initiatives in nurturing healthier, more resilient communities. Through its holistic approach and unwavering dedication, HPCS inspired hope and empowered individuals to surmount challenges and thrive together.



High Priority Community Strategies (HPCS) Project



DIVERSITY, EQUITY, AND INCLUSION (DEI) TRAINING

Sachi Patel, Office Assistant, Operations

The Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion (DEI) training session was organized by the Senior Director of Operations and Clinical Programs for the Newcomer Settlement Program team. The training was focused on the importance and effectiveness of prioritizing DEI initiatives in organizational settings.

The training was crafted to address various facets of diversity, equity, and inclusion, and resonated with attendees from diverse backgrounds. Through interactive workshops, enlightening discussions, and thought-provoking activities, participants gained a deeper understanding of the significance of embracing diversity and promoting equity in the workplace.

One of the key highlights of the training was its emphasis on fostering an inclusive environment where every individual feels valued and respected. Participants learned practical strategies to recognize unconscious biases, challenge stereotypes, and cultivate empathy towards colleagues and clients from different and diverse backgrounds.

The positive feedback from attendees emphasizes the significance of annual DEI training for the PCHS staff in fostering a culture of respect, empathy, and collaboration. PCHS is committed to building on the momentum generated by the training session and implementing tangible actions to advance diversity, equity, and inclusion in all aspects of its operations.



PROMOTING NUTRITIONAL WELLNESS: HEALTHY EATING HABITS FOR SENIORS

Riddhi Mehta, IST Case Manager, Geriatrics

Nutrition plays a pivotal role in supporting physical health, cognitive function, and resilience against chronic diseases among seniors. Seniors' nutritional needs undergo significant changes, including decreased metabolism, alterations in taste and appetite, and the presence of chronic conditions, all of which can impact nutrient requirements. Seniors require a diet rich in essential nutrients to support healthy aging, encompassing vitamins, minerals, protein, fiber, and healthy fats.

Common Nutritional Challenges:

Despite the importance of nutrition, many seniors encounter obstacles to maintaining a healthy diet. Limited access to affordable and nutritious foods, dental issues affecting chewing and swallowing, and social isolation can contribute to malnutrition, dehydration, and nutrient deficiencies among older adults.

Healthy Eating Tips for Seniors:

In alignment with Canadian health guidelines, seniors are encouraged to prioritize a balanced and varied diet to meet their nutritional needs and promote overall health and well-being. The following are key considerations for seniors' healthy eating in accordance with Canadian health recommendations:

High-fiber foods, such as fruits, vegetables, and whole grains, are beneficial for maintaining digestive health and preventing constipation, a common issue among seniors. Adequate hydration, paired with a fiber-rich diet, can help seniors maintain regular bowel movements and support gastrointestinal function.

Incorporate lean protein sources, such as fish, poultry, beans, and tofu, to support muscle health and repair. Choose healthy fats from sources like nuts, seeds, avocados, and olive oil to protect heart health and cognitive function.

Stay hydrated by drinking water throughout the day and limiting consumption of sugary beverages and alcohol. Limit intake of processed foods, salty snacks, and sugary treats to reduce the risk of chronic diseases such as diabetes, hypertension, and heart disease.

Calcium and vitamin D are essential nutrients for maintaining bone health and preventing osteoporosis, a condition characterized by weakened bones. Seniors who consume enough calcium and vitamin D through dairy products, fortified foods, and sunlight exposure can reduce their risk of fractures and maintain strong, healthy bones well into old age. (consult physician before taking any medication).

Certain nutrients found in healthy foods, such as omega-3 fatty acids, antioxidants, and vitamins B6 and B12, have been linked to improved cognitive function and reduced risk of cognitive decline in seniors. (consult physician before taking any medication). By consuming a diet abundant in these nutrients, seniors can support brain health and potentially lower the risk of conditions like Alzheimer's disease and dementia.

Monitor portion sizes to prevent overeating and maintain a healthy weight. Healthy eating habits can have a positive impact on mental health and emotional well-being in seniors.

A balanced diet that includes omega-3 fatty acids, found in fish and nuts, has been associated with a reduced risk of depression and improved mood regulation. Additionally, enjoying nutritious meals with friends and family can enhance social connections and provide a sense of joy and fulfillment. (consult dietician before taking any new intake of food or check with the physician).

Seniors should be mindful of food safety practices to reduce the risk of foodborne illness, which can have more severe consequences in older adults. Canadian health guidelines recommend proper food storage, thorough cooking of meats and seafood,

and regular handwashing when handling food to prevent contamination.

Overall, adopting and maintaining healthy eating habits can significantly benefit seniors by supporting their physical health, cognitive function, energy levels, digestive health, bone health, and emotional well-being, ultimately contributing to a higher quality of life in their later years.



FAMILY VIOLENCE EVENT AND PHOTO EXHIBIT

Manpreet Panag, Community Support Worker, Family Enhancement

PCHS was invited to a Family Violence Event and Photo Exhibit on March 6, 2024 facilitated by Family and Child Health Initiative: Trillium Health Partners. The primary aim of the event was to gather experiences and mobilize knowledge through photo voice to understand the extent and impact of family violence during the pandemic. People came together to discuss preventing family violence during pandemic recovery. During the discussion, we shared implementation strategies, individuals shared their feelings and ideas openly. It was a deeply informative experience highlighting the collective effort to address this issue. The expressive mediums of poems and photographs showcased the resilience and determination of attendees to work through the challenges of family violence. These touching poems and pictures beautifully captured how people feel when they are going through tough times and the joy of recovery. It was a powerful reminder of the importance of unity and support in creating a safer environment for all.



Sahara Overnight Respite Program (SORP)

This program is developed to prevent caregiver burnout, avoidable hospital emergency department visits, and unnecessary hospital admissions amongst older adults. Our Overnight Respite Workers (OSW) provide support by staying with the client at their home from 9:00 pm to 5:00 am to provide short-term relief to the caregiver.

Eligibility Criteria:

- Age 55 +
- Reside in Brampton and Malton region
- Maple score of clients: 3 and above
- Recent discharge from hospital (within 1 week to two months)
- Older Adults diagnosed with Alzheimer's disease or mental illness requiring emotional support
- Older Adults with caregivers who are experiencing caregiver burnout

Note: This program is not equipped to support bedridden and clients on palliative care

If you are eligible for this program, please contact below.



Funded by Ontario Health Central

Teen Book Review

Starlight

Author: Richard Wagamese

Reviewed by: Sophia Narayan, Brampton Library Youth Volunteer

Pages: 208 pages

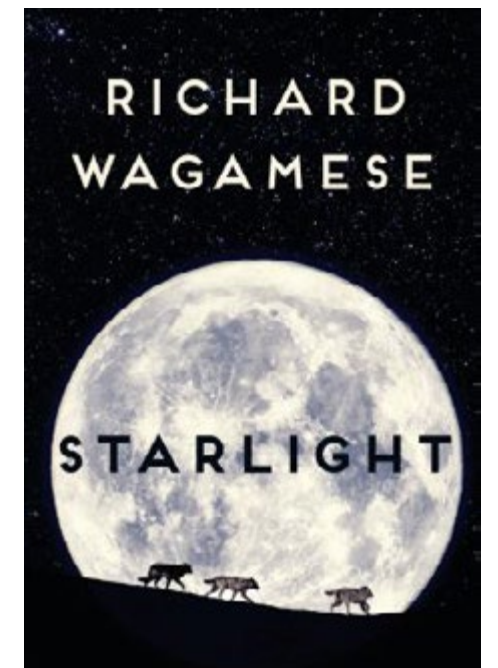
Content Warning: Rape, Abuse, Racism

Starlight, written by Richard Wagamese, is an unfinished novel, resultant of the author's death. Often, the outcome is unexpected when dealing with the cycle of abuse and trying to escape it. Ending the novel at a point where either a positive or negative outcome is uncertain adds depth to the realism.

The novel, a sequel to Medicine Walk, focuses on Frank Starlight, an indigenous man who found his connection to his heritage through the land and the beauty of nature. Emmy and her daughter meet Frank after running away from the violence of Jeff Cabot, and through his connections with nature, he helps them find their own home.

Wagamese verbalizes the pain and raw agony of rape, homelessness, domestic abuse, and racism. He does not sugarcoat the brutal reality; the words of his pages embed themselves into your mind. When Cabott is closing in on his search for Emmy, sheer terror emits from the page.

Richard Wagamese is a talented writer whose works forever articulate the pains of Indigenous communities and capture the beauty in healing.



The book is also available at Brampton Library

[Click here to read.](#)

22ND INTERNATIONAL WOMENS DAY GALA

The 22nd International Women's Day Gala hosted by PCHS on Friday, March 22, 2024, witnessed a remarkable turnout with over 450 attendees. We extend our gratitude to all who graced us with their presence. The highlight of the evening was an inspiring Keynote address delivered by Justice of the Peace, Sapna Butany-Goyal, sharing her personal journey to #InspireInclusion, aligning with the theme of IWD 2024. Additionally, we celebrated the contributions of five exceptional women from the community. None of this would have been achievable without the invaluable support of our sponsors, vendors, performers, and the dedicated efforts of our volunteers and organizing committee.



22ND ANNUAL INTERNATIONAL WOMEN'S DAY GALA

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WELCOME NEW PCHS STAFF!



Vaishnavi Koujalagi
Supervisor,
Newcomer Settlement Program

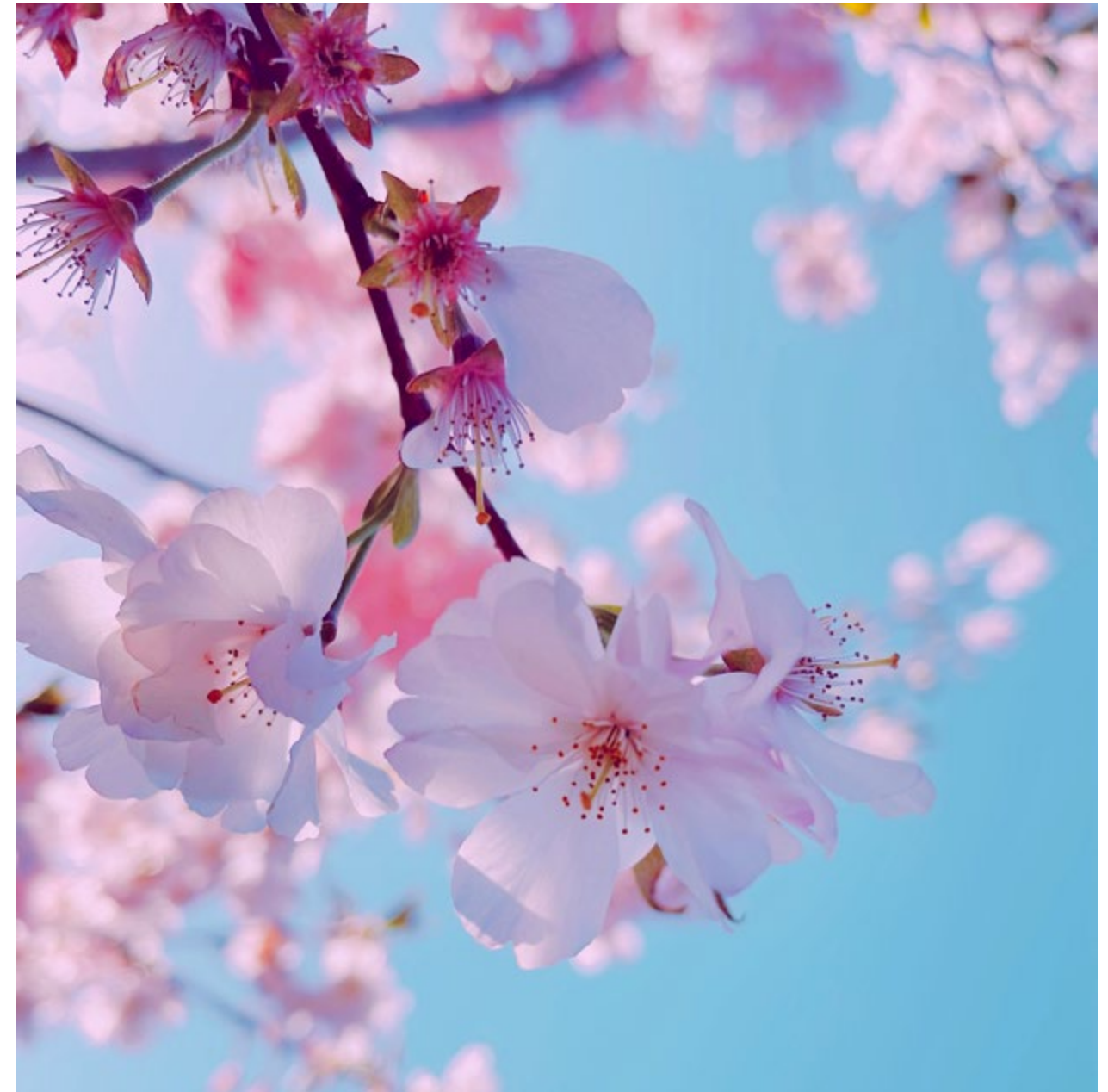


Gurjinder Kaur
Caregiver Support Worker,
FT Contract

CLIENT TESTIMONIAL

“Hello, I just want to thank you so much for your support. After the information sessions with you I started to see food and food labels in a different way. For example, yesterday I was wanting to buy yogurts, and I just find myself comparing between the saturated fats, carbs and sugar between two products! I felt great about it as a diabetic person. I can now be more careful of what to buy and what to chose to buy from the market. Also, when I discuss with you my previous day foods, it makes me feel better about my diet, and helps to focus on the missing / harmful food to avoid /increase regardless! Thank you so much!
All the best”!

-HPCS Dietician Client



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