

I'm Good Today

Program Plan

Background

Community Matters has provided settlement services for new comers in St. James Town since 2003. Services and programs are many, broad in nature and can be categorized under headings of settlement, employment, health, education and community support. Community Matters is an organization of Neighbours Helping Neighbours and as such engages newcomer neighbours (Community Assistants) to assist the community in the many aspects of settlement providing their own personal experiences and skills to support others experiencing similar challenges.

As Community Assistants create safe, positive space within the neighbourhood residents increasingly confide in them. These connections identify the depth of the emotional strain and challenges newcomers face not only in establishing themselves in a new country and new culture but also through the loss of the extensive support structures in place back home. This emotional stress increases the risk of unsatisfactory life experiences in Canada which may be represented by, poor physical and mental health, and unfulfilled career and personal expectations.

Best Practices Research

Best Research

Relevant Article	Findings	Implications for Program (good evaluation, design etc)
<p>Common mental health problems in immigrants and refugees: general approach in primary care L J Kirmayer, L Narasiah, M Munoz... - Canadian Medical ..., 2011 - Can Med Assoc</p>	<p>Among immigrants, the prevalence of common mental health problems is initially lower than in the general population, but over time, it increases to become similar to that in the general population.</p>	
	<p>Assessment of risk for mental health problems includes consideration of premigration exposures, stresses and uncertainty during migration, and postmigration resettlement experiences that influence adaptation and health outcomes</p>	<p>Discussion groups will be structured to allow for the opportunity to discuss premigration and post migration settlement experiences</p>
	<p>Clinical assessment and treatment effectiveness can be improved with the use of trained interpreters and culture brokers when linguistic and cultural differences impede communication and mutual understanding</p>	<p>Project will provide training to all Community Assistants and volunteers</p>
<p>Mental health of Canada's immigrants [Canadian Community Health Survey-2002 Annual Report] J Ali - Health reports, 2002 -</p>	<p>Immigrants from Asia had the lowest rates of depression, and those from Africa had the lowest rates of alcohol dependence</p>	
	<p>After adjustment for time since arrival, age, sex, marital status, income, and education, all immigrants except those who had arrived at least 30 years ago had lower rates of alcohol dependence than the Canadian-born population. Similarly, adjustment for social factors did not affect the patterns for</p>	

	depression. These demographic and socio-economic factors do not explain the "healthy immigrant effect".	
<p>The cultural relevance of community support programs C Barrio - Psychiatric Services, 2000 - Am Psychiatric Assoc</p>	Ethnic minority cultures are typically centered on the family, whereas Western European cultures are characterized as more individualistic and as valuing independence	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Replicate family centre through structure of Community Matters <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ availability
	Rehabilitation approaches based on Western models may produce adverse effects when used with patients from ethnic minority groups.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Develop networks which include professional support with an understanding and approach which reflects this issue
	Interventions that incorporate family networks and use group modalities are considered culturally congruent.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Encourage participants existing networks and families to participate in CMT and other community programs • Develop broad "loose" networks including neighbours and established Canadians
	Clients from sociocentric cultures may have strong support networks and display prosocial behaviors that can be tapped in the rehabilitation process.	
	Community support programs should incorporate cultural factors into psychosocial assessments, train staff to conduct ethnographic interviews, and use focus groups to gain an understanding of the cultures of clients they serve.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Develop specific training for CA Level I • Offer drop in work-shops and events in response to newcomers expressed needs
Networking Book		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Focus on loose networks as an element of maintaining emotional health

B. Program Objective/Hypothesis:

A loose network of friends, neighbours, community assistants, like minded community agencies and volunteers supporting newcomers combined with participation in a variety of community programs will sustain their emotional health as they settle in Canada

C. Target Population:

Newcomer Adults in St. James Town and the surrounding neighbourhoods
Long Term residents of St James Town

D. Program Outcomes:

Short Term: Access - St. James Town residents will get opportunity to speak in a friendly atmosphere and the opportunity to broaden their networks beyond the immediate community

Medium Term: Knowledge - St. James Town residents will demonstrate their knowledge of factors which lead to strong emotional health and the local support resources which are available.

Support - St. James Town residents receive the support through programs, services and follow up within the community to address the risk factors to emotional health.

Long Term: St. James Town residents will consistently demonstrate knowledge and activities which maintain positive emotional health.

E. Program Outputs:

- Training Manual Module covering support for the emotional health of newcomers
- Data Base of pertinent data gathered from Participants
- Program Plan for I'm Good Today work shop series
- Listing of local support resources
- Network of committed neighbours, community assistants, like minded community agencies and volunteers
- Guidelines to refer to community based agencies and services

F. Potential Network Participants:

1. Toronto Public Health
2. Regent Park Health Centre
3. Community Matters Community Assistants
4. St James Town residents

Item	Description	Lead	Date Done	Comments
Human Resources				
	Revise all CA Contracts to include job description which focuses on newcomer support and mandatory training			
	Revise training manual and set up regular staff training sessions throughout the year (2X / month to start and then 1X)			
Networks				
1.	Develop information package/presentation to present to networks			
2.	Community Engagement (Connect with network to inform and get information about project from community) <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • School social worker • Actual Participants • Self Support Group • Adult Group • Regent Park • TPH 			
3.	Engage networks and gain commitment to support participants			
Programs and services				
2.	Review existing program and service plans and create new plans for: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • I'm Good Today • Yoga • Meditation • Nutrition • Zumba • Bollywood • Stress management 			
Media				
	Create FB Pages to inform the discussion			
	Create 3 videos informing this discussion and offer support			

**Session I: Preparation
Training Outline**

Purpose						
Outcomes						
Item	Time	Activity	Leader	Outcome	Materials	
1						
2						
3						
4						
5						
6						
7						
8						
9.						
10.						

Work-shop content notes

- Settlement experiences
- Pre-immigration experiences
- Developing loose networks
 - Speakers
 - Topics defined by group

- Homesickness is the distress and functional impairment caused by an actual or anticipated separation from home and attachment objects such as parents. It is characterized by acute longing and preoccupying thoughts of home. Almost all children, adolescents, and adults experience some degree of homesickness when they are apart from familiar people and environments. Pediatricians and other health care professionals are in a unique position to assist families in understanding the etiology, prevention, and treatment of homesickness.
- - **Pilot study July – August**

July

- **Homesickness-**
- **Deeply feeling, Painful, people are back home were so attached. Huge cultural gap.**
- **Left children back home, Spent lots of money, sold all the jewellery for the settlement, No money for the food. CMT helped us a lot.**
- **Its hard to survive here . we have a good life in the back home.**
- **Took monthly pass to explore the city.**
- **Daughter left back home ..came with all the emotion.**
- **First phase was very hard to survive.**
- **2015 Diagnosed a breast cancer**
- **First live in the basement and its hard to survive with small kid. Then we moved in this area and went to the parenting center to make a friend.**
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