



Annual Report Mach-Gaensslen Foundation of Canada

9 October, 2012

Peer Support Accreditation and Certification (Canada), (PSACC), is committed to the elevation of the practice of mental health peer support to a formally recognized and nationally accepted method of mental health care that is complementary to clinical care methods and established employee assistance programs. Key determinants in achieving this include the development of national standards of practice (that will become the basis for certification of peer supporters) and the building of the scientific evidence base for peer support.

PSACC programs that are based on the core values and principles of practice and PSACC National Standards of Practice for peer support are currently in draft form and are expected to be completed within the next 6 months.

In May 2012, PSACC applied for a 3 year Grant from the Mach-Gaensslen Foundation of Canada. In late June 2012, the grant was approved in the amount of \$30K per year for a period of 3 years.

Since receiving this grant, PSACC has initiated development of the computerised web based research platform required to enable peer support sites, regardless of where they are, to enter program evaluation data for later analysis.

While the development of this platform is a process that could take up to a year, a development strategy was created to phase in various functionalities over time to meet some key implementation timelines of one of the first large workplaces implementing peer support. The development of the platform is being overseen by a team at the Centre for Research on Employment and Workplace Health in Toronto and the work is being done by a Development company in Columbia, South America, named Okorum technologies (<http://www.okorum.com>).

To date, 3 of the 6 developmental phases of the platform have been completed. These phases were designed to allow the platform to capture organisation-wide mental health baseline surveys as well as to allow for the creation of peer supporter “users” to enter peer support evaluation data. The remaining phases will focus the data search functionalities required by researchers. A total of \$15K from the Grant has been used to date for the purpose of developing the platform.

As of mid October 2012, the first Evaluation Site (a national organization with close to 5,000 employees spread across Canada) has started to use the platform. The platform has already been used to capture baseline survey data and is also currently being used by 45 trained peer supporters accessing the research platform from all corners of Canada. We expect to allow access to additional sites over the next 12 to 24 months including a regional police force, a federal government department, and a provincial physicians' health program..

PSACC Directors would like to reiterate their appreciation to the Mach-Gaensslen Foundation of Canada grant. Without this grant, PSACC would not have been able to begin the data capture process from the very onset at our first demonstration site and key data would have.

We look forward to sharing our further progress with you in our next report.

Stephane Grenier
President
PSAC (Canada)