

October 31, 2013

Mach-Gaensslen Foundation of Canada
435 Piccadilly Avenue
Ottawa, ON
K1Y 0H5

RE: "Examining the effectiveness of an online parent psychoeducation intervention for the management of child and adolescent eating disorders: An Ontario multi-site initiative."

Dear Representatives of the Mach-Gaensslen Foundation,

The Regional Eating Disorder Program at the Children's Hospital of Eastern Ontario is pleased to provide a brief update on our progress to date of this research project. Thanks to your generous support, we have been able to accomplish the following tasks since our last update in October 2012:

- We were able to hire an undergraduate student over the summer to conduct key-informant interviews with parents who participated in our pilot project "Examining the effectiveness of a waitlist intervention for the management of adolescent eating disorders: a randomized controlled trial". The aim of the key-informant interviews was twofold: (1) we wanted to gather qualitative feedback from parents who attended the 'waitlist workshop' that was part of our pilot study; and (2) to discuss and brainstorm content that could be included in the online psycho-educational platform. The summer student reached out to the 23 parents who attended the workshop, and asked if they would be willing to participate in a telephone interview. Six parents replied and agreed to participate. The summer student recorded all interviews, transcribed them, and analyzed the content by looking for common themes. Overall, parents expressed very positive feedback about the workshop they attended, and generated many useful ideas that could potentially be incorporated into the online learning tool. Not only was this summer project helpful for the design of the online learning platform, but it was also beneficial to the student. The student participated in research meetings, helped to prepare a research ethics board application and consent forms, conducted the interviews and analyzed them, and presented the findings at a student conference here at the Children's Hospital of Eastern Ontario.
- This past summer, we also hired two students, one a paid research assistant and one a volunteer medical student, to research currently available online eating disorder websites, in order to get a sense of what resources are currently available. This research project served a number of purposes: a) it helped to teach valuable research skills to the medical student. The student and the research assistant worked together to compile a list of the available eating disorder online resources, and then to devise a rating scale which was used to rate these websites for their usefulness. They then used this information to create a poster for presentation at a national psychiatry conference to be held in November in Vancouver, B.C. ; b) this list of online eating disorder resources will then be made available to other clinicians and on other Eating Disorder websites, and will be very valuable for those seeking information on eating disorders, or wanting to recommend sites for families, patients or other practitioners; and c) the content from these websites will then be used to inform

the content for our own website, including links on our website to these other helpful online resources.

- We interviewed several web-development/e-learning companies and hired a local company by the name of “Creatrix” to build the online platform. To date, Creatrix has been a pleasure to work with. They are very skilled and professional. Creatrix has created 5 different design concepts of the online platform, and we are in the process of choosing the final design.
- We have purchased a domain name: “canped.ca” to house the online platform.
- Thus far, we have created 7 learning modules: (1) What is an eating disorder; (2) Why worry? What are the risks?; (3) Understanding eating disorders; (4) Treatment options; (5) Supporting your loved one; (6) Meal support 101; and (7) Practical tips and tricks. The content for these modules is almost complete. We are currently creating story-boards of how we would like this information disseminated to participants (ie parents of a child with an eating disorder), including a video of medical professionals talking, powerpoint-type slides with voiceover, animations, etc. This takes careful planning to balance between knowledge translation and creating visual interest to hold parents’ attention.
- We have made a few minor changes to our recruitment plan. Initially our plan was to recruit from waitlists in several tertiary care hospitals in Ontario, but we have since decided to expand our reach, and recruit from all across Canada. This way, we will be able to reach more families in need.

Thank you again for your generous support of this project that will improve the lives of children, youth, and families suffering from the devastating effects of eating disorders. We look forward to keeping you apprised of our progress throughout this project.

Sincerely,

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