

19 November 2014

Dr. Gordon Watt
President
Mach-Gaensslen Foundation of Canada
435 Piccadilly Avenue
Ottawa, On K1Y 0H5

Dear Dr Watt,

The purpose of this letter is to acknowledge receipt and thank the Mach-Gaensslen Foundation of Canada for the third year of our three year 30,000.00 research grant and to provide you with our annual report for last year's key developments.

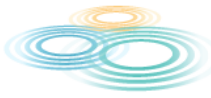
It is our pleasure to submit the attached report to you and we remain deeply appreciative of your foundation's support, which has been a true catalyst in moving this important piece of our mandate forward.

A key milestone for PSACC has been our newly formed partnership with Jill Grant PhD., a respected Canadian Peer Support Researcher from the University of Windsor. As we move forward, our research team will explore avenues for additional funding to support research in the area of peer support. Any suggestions that you might offer in that regard would be appreciated.

Research funding from the Mach-Gaensslen Foundation has provided crucial support for enhancing the evidence-base for peer support in Canada. The PSACC Board is very grateful for this funding and we would be appreciative for any information you can provide regarding future possibilities of funding from your Foundation in this regard.

Sincerely,

Stephane Grenier
President
PSAC Canada



Report on PSACC Research Activities

Date: November 19, 2014

Background

The purpose of PSACC is to promote the recognition, growth, and accessibility of peer support in the mental health field through education and awareness, certification of qualified peer support workers, accrediting peer support training programs **and by using recognized research methodologies to expand the evidence base related to peer support and disseminate the findings.** Through these efforts we hope to see peer support recognized and highly valued as an integral component of the mental health system in Canada, accessible to all individuals and family members affected by mental health challenges and illnesses.

In the spring of 2012, PSACC applied for and was granted funding of \$30K/year for three years, to support its research agenda, from the Mach-Gaensslen Foundation of Canada.

Phase I

The first step towards realizing our vision of expanding the evidence-base related to peer support was development of a tool to easily collect and compile data from PSACC evaluation sites initiating peer support within the workplace. To accomplish that, a computerized web-based research platform was developed to enable each site, regardless of where they are located, to enter program evaluation data for later analysis. This complex process received input from several experts in the area of evaluation. Okorum technologies (<http://www.okorum.com>) did the actual platform development.

The platform has the capacity to capture organization-wide mental health baseline data, individual data from peer support providers and individual data from those receiving peer support. The platform also includes a range of data search functions to facilitate data analysis.

In October 2012, the first Evaluation Site (a national organization with close to 5,000 employees spread across Canada) started using the platform to capture baseline survey data as outlined above. Organizations currently using the platform include a regional police force and a provincial government health ministry. Other organisations will soon begin using the platform once their programs are fully implemented.

Phase II

Once the data collection platform was operational four data collection tools were designed to provide reliable and valid pre and post implementation data on the peer support programs and ongoing monitoring of the mental health status of the individuals involved in the peer support program – both those providing the peer support and those receiving the peer support. The data collection tools include:

1. An Organizational Survey to provide a baseline of the workers' mental health within each specific work site;
2. A Peer Survey that captures the mental health status of an individual at the early stages of participation in the workplace peer support program, regular intervals and again when they leave the program;
3. A Peer Supporter Survey that captures the mental health status of the person providing the peer support services both before they begin their peer support work and on an ongoing basis; and
4. Interaction Notes written by the peer supporter after each interaction with the peer receiving the peer support, to track the usage of the program and to better understand the types of issues being discussed and the observed outcomes resulting from peer support interactions.

Phase III

The past few months have been exciting ones for PSACC as we have formed a partnership with Jill Grant PhD., a respected Canadian Peer Support Researcher from the University of Windsor. Jill is leading our research program including:

1. Continued enhancement and refinement of our peer support data collection tools;
2. Modification of our data collection tools to better meet the needs of specific worksites such as health care settings, industry/business, and community-based peer-run organizations;
3. Analysis of data collected from the various PSACC pilot sites;
4. Development and implementation of a specific research strategy assessing the impact of peer support on Nova Scotia health care settings;
5. Preparation of Evaluation Reports for PSACC Pilot Site organizations; and
6. Provision of a report on the development of PSACC as an organization and including assessment of the impact and value accrued (or not) from ensuring wide stakeholder impact; and

For additional information, don't hesitate to contact us if you require anything further.

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