



Health and Mental Health Working Group

Meeting Minutes

October 18th, 2021

10 am – 11:30 am

Zoom

Attendance: Craig Carter-Edwards- LACC and Welcome Home TO, Shasanji Lingaratnam- Madison Community Services, Teresa Dremetsikas -CCVT, Cathy Kurelek- Access Alliance, Corina Carvallo - Skills for Change, Rosa Ribeiro- Parkdale Community Health Centre, Rania Younes- Welcome Home TO, Eliana- LACC, Surranna Sandy- Skills for Change, Barbora Gomezova -Culturelink, Bronwyn Underhill- Parkdale Community Health Centre, Lili Krowiak- Culturelink, Fataneh Naghavi- Skills for Change, Lidia Monaco -TNG, Domine Rutayisire- CCVT

TSLIP: Nadia Umadat, Lauren McCauley, Rozeta Aleksov, Jassi Ranauta and Paulina Wyrzykowski

AGENDA

1. Land Acknowledgement
2. Welcome & Introductions
3. Collaboration Award: Mental Health First Aid for Language Instructors
Congratulatory Remarks: Lidia Monaco, VP of Strategic Initiatives, TNG, Paulina Wyrzykowski, Director of TSLIP, TNG
Project Overview: Mental Health First Aid for Language Instructors
4. Frontline staff support network and mental health first aid for language instructor fall cohorts
5. Strategic Plan Update: Thinking About Projects
6. Organization and Program Updates
7. Closing and next meeting

1. Land Acknowledgement

Craig Carter-Edwards shared a personalized Land Acknowledgement

2. Welcome and introductions

Each member was welcomed by LIP staff, members were thanked for attending the meeting. Invited guests for the Collaboration Award also provided introductions

3. Collaboration Award 2020

- Previously, Executive Committee awarded Mental Health First Aid for Language Instructors as the most outstanding TSLIP project of the year
- Congratulatory remarks were made Lidia Monaco, VP of Strategic Initiatives, TNG and Paulina Wyrzykowski, Director of TSLIP, TNG both discussed the evolution of the project and thanked the award winners for their time and dedication in the development and design of the project.
- Organization Award winners are *Welcome Home TO, Language Access Coalition of Canada, Cecil Community Centre, Madison Community Services, Culturelink, Skills for Change, Canadian Centre for Victims of Torture, Parkdale Queen West Community Health Centre and Access Alliance Multicultural Health and Community Services*

Project Overview: Mental Health First Aid for Language Instructors

- Mental Health First Aid for Language Instructors was facilitated by the Canadian International Scientific Exchange Program (CISEPO) who initiated the first session of what is envisioned as a series of workshops on May 25th for 4 hours for LINC teachers.
- There were 22 participants who attended the first session free of charge
- Evaluation only got to participants in August, but excellent feedback and many participants requested a second session to further their skills
- A needs assessment was conducted in late 2020 to determine some ongoing pandemic related challenges
- A contact was sourced at Canadian International Scientific Exchange Program (CISEPO) who adapted existing program specific to the sector
- Format is a 4 hour session capped at 25 participants or less w/ two instructors

Discussion/Comments

- Possibility to have a report or outline shared with the group on the summary and/or outcomes of the project
- The need for wellness to be included in the programs for newcomers, particularly on employment which is the focus on newcomer integration in Canada. People not connected to LINC are falling through the cracks
- The collaborative spirit of the project with a number of organizations coming together to execute is inspiring for future work
- It is important that we spread the word on the outcomes and a wider audience to scale up the merits of the project.

4. Frontline Staff Support Network and Mental Health First Aid for Language Instructors Updates

- Frontline Staff Support Network will meet on Fri. October 29th from 1 pm to 3 pm
- Currently there are 29 registrants, group members encouraged to invite interested individuals from agencies.
- Facilitator will be a social worker from Flemingdon Community Health Centre
- Mental Health First Aid for Language Instructors will run on Mon. October 25th 1 pm to 5 pm
- Currently 21 registrants and the session will be capped at 25 participants.
- CISEPO continues to be the facilitator
- Interest from organizations to have the mental health first aid training for the frontline staff

5. Strategic Planning

- TSLIP has been able to identify strategic directions, purposely kept at high level to allow for flexibility.
- Overall, entire plan will focus on a just Covid recovery for newcomers by working to overcome social inequalities such as racism and poverty
- Three strategic directions will be developed: policy and research, supporting newcomer success and strengthening the newcomer-serving sector
- Health and Mental Health Group will fall under second direction of supporting newcomer success
- The council will meet at the end of the month to ratify the plan and we will be able to present the sub-points afterwards
- Advised group to start with brainstorming on specific projects that we might think about rolling out after the details are ratified

Brainstorming Ideas

- Mental health support needed for new arrivals
- Trauma informed training, for communities/journalists, anyone with direct interaction, services providers, direct staff at hotels where Afghan refugees are currently placed are being visited by individuals who don't have the knowledge or skills on how to talk to traumatized people
- Implementing well-being in employment programs for employee/employers
- Conduct needs assessment, focus groups within teams, identify lessons learned, and opportunities within sector and perform a temperature check to be shared widely
- Cultural competency/humility training for employees/employers or those working in the sector ie. Parkdale has a cultural competency training developed and implemented upon request

- Holding general information sessions for newcomers that include all services, not just those specific to 1 agency
- Use of pre-recorded video clip which are translated, descriptors, will be able to engage wider audience
- Anti-black racism recognizing the intersection of mental health and anti-black racism for newcomers who may have experienced trauma in a previous country or trauma of experiencing racism for the first time upon arriving in Canada
- Frontline staff stress/ mental health survey/ discovering strategy for gaps in services and best practices
- In a previous meeting, group has mentioned a potential partnership with CAMH for a training of webinar- Madison Community Services has a contact, if we pursue that idea.

6. Agency or Program Updates

- *CCVT* has a trauma informed certificate course, start has been delayed and they will wait until more registrants come forward <http://ccvt.org/what-we-do/education/workshops-and-courses/>
- *Access Alliance* would like to remind group of the Early ON services at their Victoria Park and Danforth location <https://accessalliance.ca/programs-services/community-programs/families-with-young-children/>
- *Parkdale Queen West Community Health* will start a youth male cooking program for 13-18 demographic, with supplies delivered to the interested participants, begin later in the month.

7. Closing

Next meeting will be Monday November 8th at 10 am