

## Sharing What We're Doing

### From Innovative Research to Innovative Solutions: Bringing Diversity in Mental Health from the Margins to the Core

#### *A Roundtable for Action*

On April 15<sup>th</sup> 2009, CURA Partners co-hosted with Wellesley Institute ([wellesleyinstitute.com](http://wellesleyinstitute.com)) a roundtable discussion with policy makers, planners and funders. The purpose of this meeting was to exchange ideas and collectively identify strategies about two key concepts:

- a) How do we move culturally responsive services from the periphery to the core of our mental health system?
- b) How do we ensure that innovative solutions are tried and tested in practice?

The roundtable was a unique opportunity in that it brought together many funders and policy makers, along with representatives of agencies, researchers and community members. More information including a summary report about this event is available at [takingcultureseriouslycura.ca/Roundtable](http://takingcultureseriouslycura.ca/Roundtable).

### Six CURA Demonstration Projects

CURA partners are working together to implement and evaluate six demonstration projects. These projects were developed based on CURA research findings. Four projects began in 2008, and two additional projects have begun in the spring of 2009. This issue of CURA News highlights these projects. They all seek to demonstrate examples of how community-based mental health supports can be effective within multicultural Canada.

### A Mental Health Case Management, Outreach, and Support Services Program for the Punjabi Community

Punjabi Community Health Services (PCHS) provides culturally appropriate mental health and addictions case management, outreach, and support services to the Peel Region Punjabi community. PCHS takes a holistic approach to mental health and addictions health care; they strive to foster positive professional relationships with clients, families, and local main-stream health organizations.



Baldev Mutta, Executive Director of PCHS and Jocelyn Booton, CURA team member at CCBR.

PCHS continues to outreach to the

community in Punjabi with weekly radio and television programs. A psychiatrist has started working biweekly at the centre as a strategy to decrease wait times. This CURA demonstration project is larger in scope than any other. Until recently, PCHS was volunteer-run, and it has significantly expanded services with funding from Central West LHIN. More info:

[takingcultureseriouslycura.ca/pchs](http://takingcultureseriouslycura.ca/pchs)

### Newcomer Youth Theatre

Kitchener-Waterloo Cambridge YMCA collaborates with MT (Multicultural Theatre) Space on this project to offer

## CURA CONFERENCE INVITATION

### Taking Culture Seriously in Community Mental Health: Research-Inspired Mental Health Innovation in Canada December 4<sup>th</sup>, 2009 Wilfrid Laurier University, Waterloo ON

Join over 45 CURA Partners as we celebrate and reflect on the learnings of this five year study.

**Purpose:** To create opportunities to deepen our shared understanding of how to develop more culturally effective mental health policy and practice in Canada.

- Explore revised CURA framework for diversity in mental health policy and practice
- 'Unpack' the concept of reciprocal collaboration
- Discuss promising practices showcased in panel presentations
- Plan future actions that improve mental health policy and practice
- View premiere of professional theatre presentation

Space will be limited.  
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**Registration:** Contact Sarah Marsh at 519-741-1318 ext. 227 or [sarah@communitybasedresearch.ca](mailto:sarah@communitybasedresearch.ca)

newcomer youth opportunities to express their experiences and challenges through theatre. The project aims to build an atmosphere of support and openness to diversity within the high school community. This project focuses on awareness of settlement stress, with a goal to develop increased mutual understanding between students and teachers.

In 2009, 11 Waterloo Collegiate Institute (WCI) students (from six different countries of origin) performed a theatre piece to hundreds of staff and students at their school, three other high schools, one primary school, and the school board. Funded by Citizenship and Immigration Canada, this project will be offered in a local high school again next year. More info: [takingcultureseriouslycura.ca/youth](http://takingcultureseriouslycura.ca/youth)

### **Supporting K-W Immigrant Seniors**

Kitchener-Waterloo Cambridge YMCA leads this project. They hold monthly dialogues about mental health within conversation circles for newcomer and Canadian older adults. This project offers mental health promotion through informal supports, with a goal to create increased awareness about mental health issues and services available in Waterloo Region.

In 2009, mental health service providers from the Canadian Mental Health Association (CMHA), Kitchener Downtown Community Health Centre (KDCHC) and other agencies have shared about services available and received feedback for improving services for older adult newcomers. Citizenship and Immigration Canada funds this project. More info: [takingcultureseriouslycura.ca/seniors](http://takingcultureseriouslycura.ca/seniors)

### **Strengthening Mental Health in Cultural-Linguistic Communities**

Kitchener Downtown Community Health Centre is hosting this project to provide mental health education and leadership training for cultural linguistic minority communities in the Waterloo Region. The project aims to provide mental health promotion through informal supports and to increase mutual understanding between

cultural communities and service providers.

In 2009, twenty-eight individuals completed 30 hours of Leadership Training, and in May, seven *navigators* were hired to be the link between mental health services and their cultural communities. Ontario Trillium Foundation and Lyle S. Hallman fund this two year project. More info: [takingcultureseriouslycura.ca/kdchc](http://takingcultureseriouslycura.ca/kdchc)

### **Women's and Men's Support Groups**

Planning meetings for Kitchener-Waterloo Multicultural Centre's CURA demonstration project have begun. They will offer eight gender-specific informal discussion groups in Mandarin, Polish, Arabic & Spanish to promote mental health and positive settlement for culturally diverse women and men in Waterloo Region. The project intends to increase mutual understanding between cultural communities and service providers.

Funded by Ontario Trillium Foundation, eight facilitators will be hired to offer women's & men's support groups beginning in fall of this year. More info: [takingcultureseriouslycura.ca/kwmc](http://takingcultureseriouslycura.ca/kwmc)

### **Province-wide Leadership Development Events**

Centre for Community Based Research has recently begun this project. They will hold Leadership and Theatre Events in all 14 Ontario Local Health Integration Network (LHIN) districts for individuals in mental health services, settlement services, and cultural communities. This 15 month project will seek to promote lasting mutual understanding between cultural communities and service providers in planning and implementation of formal and informal mental health supports.

Planning meetings have begun. Members of the CURA Waterloo Steering Committee, representatives of the Waterloo-Wellington LHIN and mental health organizations are participating in forming the first event. This event will be held in November 2009. The remaining 13 events will be held in February and March 2010. Citizenship and Immigration Canada funds this project. More info: [takingcultureseriouslycura.ca/leadership](http://takingcultureseriouslycura.ca/leadership)



**Strengthening Mental Health in Cultural--Linguistic Communities:**

Leadership training graduates celebrate with project staff at their graduation ceremony.