



North
Shore
Schizophrenia
Society

The Notepad

The NSSS Newsletter

Supporting families dealing with all serious mental illnesses



*You are cordially
invited to the
NSSS Christmas
Banquet*

Saturday, December 3

*St. David's United Church, 1525 Taylor Way,
West Vancouver*

Doors open 5:30

Dinner 6:00

*Please call 604-926-0856
to register or email us at
info@northshoreschizophrenia.org*

Family Support Centre

**Personal Support and Information on
Major Mental Illnesses—Schizophrenia,
Bipolar Disorder, Depression, and Anxiety Disorders**

205 - 1865 Marine Drive, West Vancouver, BC, V7V 1J7
Open 9 a.m. to 5 p.m. Monday to Friday, or by appointment.

Tel/Fax 604-926-0856; Sea to Sky 604-849-2252

www.northshoreschizophrenia.org

email: info@northshoreschizophrenia.org Twitter: @NSSSoc

The North Shore Schizophrenia Society is a
CRA Registered Charity: BN 89422 6935 RR0001

*Your generosity is appreciated.
Receipts will be issued for income tax purposes.*

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We know where Santa will be on December 3...

Don't miss our annual Christmas party! There is no charge to attend and the whole family is welcome (kids too!).

More details on page 4.

Making Your Bequest Count

If you've arranged for a bequest to NSSF in your will, to help sustain the work of the Family Support Centre, please check that the provision is properly made out to the North Shore Schizophrenia Society, 205 – 1865 Marine Drive, West Vancouver BC V7V 1J7. This is especially important if you made the provision before 2008 when we adopted our new name.

Bequests are a key way of ensuring NSSF and our Family Support Centre can continue to help when we, individually, are no longer here to look after our loved ones. As an example: The Family Support Centre and its programs will provide support and education to the siblings of someone who is ill after the parents have passed away, in the same way the parents were helped when they were the primary caregivers. NSSF and its many programs make a difference. Bequests are also a way of helping new families who come to the Centre, as we ourselves were helped in the past – a gift to strangers which, in its way, is the finest gift of all.

If you would like to discuss how to make such a provision in your will, please don't hesitate to call Cheryl at the Family Support Centre at 604-926-0856, or contact her by email at cheryl@northshoreschizophrenia.org.

We can provide you with a simple codicil to attach to an existing will, which doesn't require a lawyer and can be looked after quickly.

New Membership Renewal Date

As of January 1, 2012, NSSF will be changing our fiscal year to match the calendar year. Current memberships are valid through March 31, 2012 and renewal notices will go out with the February *Notepad* as usual. Our AGM, which has been held in May or June, will now be in March or April.

The North Shore Schizophrenia Society gratefully acknowledges the support of the Province of British Columbia; City of North Vancouver; District of North Vancouver; District of West Vancouver; Lynn Valley, Ambleside Tiddlycove, Mt. Seymour, and Capilano Lions Clubs; Soroptimist International of North and West Vancouver; West Vancouver Community Foundation; Community Foundation of Whistler; Squamish Community Foundation; HYDRECS, Lynn Valley Legion; North Shore Credit Union; Alka Pool Construction; and our many other generous donors.

NSSF Gets the Word Out

More and more people are catching what we have to say at NSSF. After the distribution of a news release on the *Bulletin's* September issue dealing with the Mental Health Commission of Canada, page visits to the *Bulletin* spiked on our website. NSSF President Herschel Hardin was subsequently interviewed by the *National Post*, through which his comments were distributed to newspaper readers across the country. Marvin Ross, a commentator on mental illness and mental health services for *Huffington Post Canada*, the online news site, cited the *Bulletin* as well in a critique of the commission.

Having our voice heard doesn't change anything overnight, but little by little it does help the public understand what is happening and contributes to change.

We also managed to get coverage for Howard Sapers, the Correctional Investigator for Canada and our November speaker, with an appearance on *The Early Edition* on CBC Radio One. The Sapers lecture was video-recorded by volunteer Sean Stewart and will be available soon on the NSSF website, together with Sapers' PowerPoint presentation. This will be the first time we've posted a video on the website.

We hope to do the same with the lectures of all our speakers in the future, where they grant permission. This would be in addition to PowerPoint notes and related material. The online videos will make the lectures available to a wider audience – indeed, to people anywhere in the world who know of our website or who find the items through a web search.

In other areas, we have begun training a new Family Support Team. The new team will gradually take over NSSF's one-on-one support and crisis counselling from veteran Marguerite Hardin, who will continue for at least a few more years as support coordinator and mentor.

Advocacy Team training is also taking place, with instruction, readings and monthly discussion sessions that will continue over the next year.

The training of these new groups of volunteers is part of NSSF's succession planning, to pass on the experience and knowledge base of the original generation of volunteers to the next generation, sustaining the work of the Family Support Centre into the future.

The Mentally Ill In Our Prisons

In a special presentation on November 7, the Correctional Investigator for Canada, Howard Sapers, spoke to an enthusiastic crowd of 80 people at the West Vancouver Library, on the role his office plays in the Canadian correctional system and how our prisons are failing those living with serious mental illness behind bars.



As Canada's independent, impartial ombudsman for federal offenders and monitor of human rights, Sapers and his staff receive and

investigate complaints from over 14,000 federal inmates in Canada's 57 penitentiaries, with the mandate to ensure prisons are managed lawfully and comply with human rights standards.

The demand for better, more effective mental health services in prisons is on the rise. Sapers cited statistics from Correctional Services of Canada that suggest 38% of male offenders admitted to federal penitentiaries, and 50% of women, are in need of further mental health assessments to determine their specific needs. These statistics, Sapers believes, are most likely under-represented because of inmates' fear of discrimination or due to lack of proper detection and diagnosis.

Despite the introduction of a new computerized mental health screening and assessment system at admission, and the training of front-line staff in mental health awareness, access to treatment or intervention services in prisons is quite inadequate. Sapers mentioned a psychiatrist on contract in Ontario with a caseload of 3,000 inmates. As well, segregation and sedation, often used as punishment rather than as medical treatment, are sometimes the only measures available for those suffering from acute symptoms.

Sapers' detailed recommendations to Parliament on accessing mental health services in prisons can be found online, in the 2010-2011 Annual Report of the Office of the Correctional Investigator, available at www.oci-bec.gc.ca/rpt/index-eng.aspx.

Mental Illness and HIV/AIDS

We launched this fall's public education series on September 28 with a topic very few people are comfortable discussing – the enormous challenges faced by individuals living with both a serious mental illness and HIV/AIDS.



NSSS President Herschel Hardin with speakers Eleanor Kelly and Maxine Davis

Our speakers were Maxine Davis, executive director of the Dr. Peter AIDS Foundation in Vancouver, and Eleanor Kelly, activist and mother of a daughter with schizophrenia and HIV/AIDS.

Ms. Davis spoke to the increased need for care of those with complex medical needs, especially when pre-existing mental health conditions can lead to risky behaviours such as unprotected sex and needle sharing, which can transmit HIV.

Ms. Kelly then shared the story of her mentally ill daughter, who, at 17, left home because she mistakenly believed she was a burden to her family. Because of her untreated illness, she was left vulnerable to many unscrupulous people, self-medicated with street drugs on the downtown eastside, and contracted HIV.

Diagnosed later with schizophrenia, Ms. Kelly's daughter currently lives at the Dr. Peter Centre, which houses Canada's only HIV/AIDS day health program and round-the-clock nursing care residence. Most of the 24 individuals who live in residence have multiple medical conditions and face social barriers – similar to the majority of the 350+ individuals attending the Centre's day health program seven days a week.

As the numbers of those seeking complex treatment continue to grow, capacity at the Centre is a major issue. Both speakers agree that more education on living with mental illness and HIV/AIDS is essential to changing attitudes, drawing much-needed funding, and encouraging acceptance and respect of those whose lives have been shattered by serious illness, addiction, poverty, and discrimination. To read more about the Dr. Peter Aids Foundation, visit www.drpeter.org.

Christmas is Coming Soon!

Don't miss our biggest event of the year, where friends and family come together to celebrate the best of the holiday season! The annual NSSS Christmas banquet will be on Saturday, December 3 at St. David's United Church, 1525 Taylor Way in West Vancouver. Doors open at 5:30 p.m., with the program and dinner starting at 6:00. Shuttle service will be available from the



Park Royal Shopping Centre on Marine Drive near Taylor Way. Please let us know when you RSVP if you will need a ride.

The party starts with music by the always boisterous and cheery West Vancouver Adult Pops Band. This is a great opportunity to meet other families, NSSS board members and staff, and enjoy the spirit of the season.



Dinner will feature roast beef and all the trimmings, followed by dessert and entertainment.

Soprano Amber Gauthier (see photo, left) will delight us with classics and Christmas favourites before Santa Claus rides in from the North Pole with gifts and a hearty Ho Ho Ho!



The banquet is free to attend for those with a mental illness and their families. Please register by November 28 for our most festive event of the year!

Family-to-Family Spring Sessions

NSSS is offering the outstanding education course Family-to-Family in both Squamish and West Vancouver in the new year. Classes run 12 consecutive Tuesday evenings starting January 24 in West Vancouver and January 31 in Squamish. Call 604-926-0856 to register for either class. For more information on the course, visit "Education Course" on our website.

If you know anyone with a mentally ill family member, please ask them to contact us right away.

Family-to-Family is a source of strength and empowerment for family members, providing the information and building the skills a family needs to provide the very best care for their ill loved ones and themselves. Classes cover the different illnesses, how medications work, tips to help with treatment compliance, as well as special workshops on problem-solving and effective communications.

Treasure Chest Gala

On November 5, Soroptimist International of North and West Vancouver hosted their annual Treasure Chest of Hope charity fundraiser, one of whose beneficiaries is NSSS.

This fun and exciting evening featured a silent auctions, plus a live auction skillfully handled by radio personality Fred Lee.



Thank you to the many donors who contributed auction items and made donations to support the event. Some of the highlights of the auction were a weekend at a luxury villa on Sakinaw Lake, donated by an NSSS member, and a hockey stick autographed by Canucks forward Alex Burrows.

A special thanks to all the volunteers who worked behind the scenes, and to the Soroptimists for their hard work and generosity.