



## Public Education Lecture Series

### The Future of Mental Health on the North Shore



**An informal Q&A panel with:**

**Dr. Apu T. Chakraborty**  
Adult Community Mental Health,  
Lions Gate Hospital

**Dr. Allan Burgmann**  
Acute Psychiatric Services,  
Lions Gate Hospital

**Wednesday, September 24, 2014**  
**Lions Gate Hospital Auditorium**  
**7:30 p.m.**

Supported by:



## What are the Next Steps for Mental Health Care on the North Shore?

Whether you are a family member or individual coping with serious mental illness, a general practitioner or other healthcare service provider, or an interested member of the public, you won't want to miss this opportunity to hear from two leading experts in the field of mental health in our community.

Please join NSSS at the first Public Education Lecture Series of the season, Wednesday, September 24, at 7:30 p.m., in the Lions Gate Hospital Auditorium, for an informal question-and-answer session, *The Future of Mental Health on the North Shore*.

NSSS is pleased to welcome speakers Dr. Apu Chakraborty, Adult Community Mental Health, and Dr. Allan Burgmann, Acute Psychiatric Services, at Lions Gate Hospital. This fall is certainly an exciting time on the North Shore, with renewed attention being paid to mental illness – that which sometimes gets so little public support, yet has such a major impact on the community-at-large.

This will provide a wonderful opportunity to find out what is new and innovative in mental healthcare, including details on how the forthcoming HOpe Centre, replacing the aging 80-year-old psychiatric unit at Lions Gate Hospital, will operate and function as part of our community.

This event is free to attend, no registration required.



## Letter from the NSSS President, Cheryl Zipper

September is a hectic time of year for many organizations and particularly schools, and the North Shore Schizophrenia Society is no exception. We are gearing up for a busy fall, which this year includes something very special—the expansion of our flagship education course, Family-to-Family. We have taught this course for many years on the North Shore, and in recent years in Squamish and on the Sunshine Coast. Since we are the official affiliate for NAMI (National Alliance for Mental Illness) in British Columbia, we also oversee the training and administration of the course anywhere in BC.

This year we were very fortunate to receive a generous grant from the Vancouver Foundation to expand the Family-to-Family course into the Tri-Cities and Vancouver. This is significant for two reasons. As we all know, this is a wonderfully empowering course for family members, and the more families that we can reach, the better. Also, it is indicative of the benefits that can come from building relationships and collaborating with other agencies.

In order to successfully offer this course in these areas, we have partnered with the New View Society in the Tri-Cities, and Rain City Housing in Vancouver. These partners will provide the location for the course as well as advertising, outreach, information, and participants from the local community. In this first year, we will provide the teachers from our core group of teacher-volunteers to lead the first courses. Then, we aim to find family members from these first courses, in the partnering communities, to volunteer to be trained by NSSS teacher-trainers as future Family-to-Family teachers. The following round of courses in 2015 would ideally be taught in each case by a senior NSSS teacher together with a new teacher from the community. Our objective is that by the end of 2016, we will have built up enough local trained volunteer teachers to sustain the delivery of the course in these communities for years to come. NSSS, as the NAMI affiliate, would carry on administering the courses and training future teachers.

The long-term goal for this project is to build capacity in other communities that would allow the Family-to-



**North Shore Schizophrenia Society & RainCity Housing offers Vancouver Family-to-Family Education**

**AN INTENSIVE 12-SESSION EDUCATION COURSE FOR FAMILIES DEALING WITH SERIOUS MENTAL ILLNESS**

September 23—December 9, 2014  
Tuesday Evenings, 7 - 9:30 p.m.

TOPICS COVERED INCLUDE:

- Symptoms of all major illnesses
- Medications
- Problem solving and how to cope
- Advice on working with the system
- Looking after yourself as a caregiver

OFFERED WITHOUT CHARGE!

Taught by trained families

For information and to register, please call:  
604-926-0856 | Course details:  
[www.northshoreschizophrenia.org/education.htm](http://www.northshoreschizophrenia.org/education.htm)

vancouver foundation

Family course to be offered on an ongoing basis year after year in those communities. Newly empowered graduates from these courses would not only be better equipped to support their loved one, but they could also become active in outreach, education, and advocacy, and ultimately contribute to better outcomes for those with mental illness.

We could not begin to take on this project without the dedicated core group of teachers who volunteer to teach this class every year. They give their time and energy, and perhaps most importantly, share a part of their own personal story. It is often quite a humbling and rewarding experience, and most teachers will tell you that they learn something new every time they teach the course. A very heartfelt thank you goes out to all of our teachers.

It is an ambitious undertaking, but we are certainly ready for the challenge—and immensely looking forward to reaching out to many more families.



## Meet the Family-to-Family Teachers



North Shore Family-to-Family teachers for the 2014-15 courses in North Vancouver, Vancouver, and Tri-Cities are, from left to right: Nancy Ford, Janice Lilley, Cheryl Zipper, Rosemary Wagner, Lisa Stringle, Crystal Collison, Herschel Hardin, and Connie Chung. Not pictured: Halina Haboosheh.

### We Couldn't Do It Without You!

*"Without the NSSS support from their help line to the knowledge I gained from their 12 week Family to Family course I could not have maneuvered the challenges that came our way these last 3 years".*

-Crystal Collison, Family to Family Teacher

The Family-to-Family education course connects, empowers, and liberates family members who have been traumatized by their situation, and marginalized and isolated by the fear of stigma.

With the help of the Vancouver Foundation NSSS has the opportunity to share this dynamic model of peer-to-peer support. Our goal is that over 150 families will have attended the Family-to-Family course by the end of this three-year project. Upward of 20 Family educators will have been trained to voluntarily deliver the course in their home communities, and two partnership agencies will have experienced the positive outcomes of building capacity in families through education and awareness as partners. Our hope is that partnering organizations will take on the role of coordinators, and the development of their trained family base will sustain the model of volunteer family-to-family peer support.

Since early August a team of North Shore volunteer teachers have been receiving calls from across the Lower Mainland, referring families to our support team when needed and registering families and friends for the course. One Family-to-Family teacher, Lisa

Stringle, mentioned the relief she hears in the voices of families when they realize there are resources and supports to help them cope with their seriously ill relative.

A very special thank you to all our volunteers, we could not do without you!

### Training to Be a Family-to-Family Teacher

In January 2015 we will be hosting a Family-to-Family Teacher Training, not only for our North Shore families, but for families throughout the Lower Mainland. *Find yourself in a new, great and wonderful world*, as the quote says below, and please consider joining us for a weekend teacher-training session.

*"When you are inspired by some great purpose, some extraordinary project, all of your thoughts break their bonds: Your mind transcends limitations, your consciousness expands in every direction, and you find yourself in a new, great and wonderful world. Dormant forces, faculties and talents become alive, and you discover yourself to be a greater person than you even dreamed yourself to be."*

-Patamkali, Indian Philosopher, from *Chicken Soup for the Volunteer's Soul*

## **“It Takes a Team:” NSSS Public Education Series Looks at Multidisciplinary Care**

Dr. Dean Brown, GP and Chair of the North Shore Division of Family Practice, has a vision—a more integrated healthcare system, where physical health and mental health are treated equally.

“Health is health, and care is care,” he says.

Dr. Brown, joined by Dr. Betty Tang, a child psychiatrist also working on the North Shore, spoke at the NSSS Public Education Lecture Series, on Wednesday, May 28, at the Lions Gate Hospital Auditorium.

According to Drs. Brown and Tang, the system is slowly moving in the direction of multidisciplinary care—where it not only takes a team, but a village or “community of support,” to care for those with complex needs, including serious mental illness.

Finding a permanent GP, rather than relying on a walk-in clinic, is essential for ensuring continuity of care. Not only do GPs act as a first contact, they coordinate specialized services, develop a relationship with a patient and family over time, and may also rely on family to receive crucial information about the patient.

For Dr. Tang, shared care means “a breakdown of silos, of fragmented care,” that results in seriously ill people slipping too easily through cracks in the system. Within Dr. Tang’s framework, psychiatrists must increase their communication with GPs, and provide more detailed consultation reports regarding their recommendations. This enables GPs to have more detailed guidance, rather than clients waiting for follow-up with the psychiatrist. The psychiatrist is then able to see more consultations, reducing the waitlist, while GPs have improved direct access to the psychiatrist.

Ideally, this could help improve the ill person’s quality of life and ensure fewer trips to Emergency.

Both doctors reinforce that family plays a critical role within these support networks, functioning as “another important set of eyes.” But they emphasize that caregivers must also look after themselves because they’re vital to the team, probably the biggest resource in maintaining and supporting the ill person.

For more, please view the PowerPoint presentation at [www.northshoreschizophrenia.org/lecture.htm](http://www.northshoreschizophrenia.org/lecture.htm). To read about the North Shore Division of Family Practice and the Health Connection Clinic (see right), visit the website, [www.divisionsbc.ca/northshore](http://www.divisionsbc.ca/northshore).



## **Support for Families on Bowen Island — A Saturday Workshop**

If you’re a family member living on Bowen Island and coping with a loved one’s serious mental illness, family representatives of NSSS are delivering an afternoon workshop, *Support for Families*.

**Location:** Caring Circle Health and Wellness Society, 432 Cardena Drive, Bowen Island

**Date:** Saturday, October 4, 2014

**Time:** 10:30 p.m.—2:30 p.m.

**Topics covered will include:**

- Symptoms of all major mental illness
- Dealing with crisis situations
- Understanding the brain
- Stages of emotional response
- Empathy and communications skills.

The workshop is free of charge, but class size is limited and registration is required. To register or for more information, contact Caring Circle at 604-947-9100 or [info@caringcircle.ca](mailto:info@caringcircle.ca)



**HEALTH  
CONNECTION**  
PROVIDING PRIMARY CARE

## **North Shore High-Needs Clinic**

**Hours of Operation:** 9:00 a.m. – 12:00 p.m., Monday to Friday

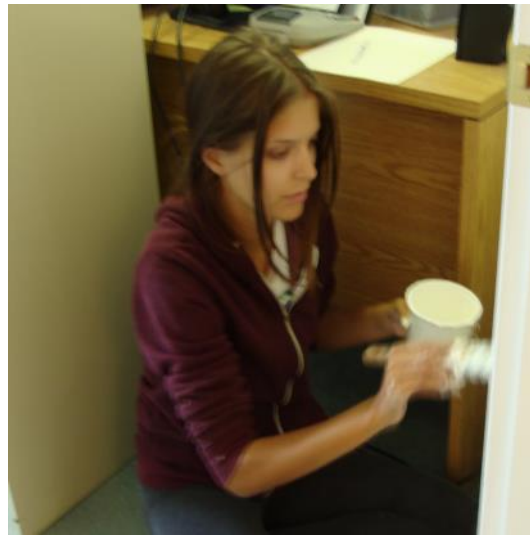
**Location:** 148 East 15th Street, North Vancouver, BC

**Tel:** 604 984-3777

Health Connection provides healthcare services to those who have mental health and other medical challenges, face socio-economic barriers, and have no regular access to a family physician. People can self-refer or be referred by doctors within Vancouver Coastal Health, including Lions Gate Hospital.

The clinic team includes a family physician, a nurse practitioner, a chronic disease nurse coordinator and a medical office assistant. The clinic also partners with community agencies to support clients who require assistance with non-medical issues such as housing, income, and access to food.

## A Bright New Look for the Family Support Centre



To gear up for the fall season, NSSS President Cheryl Zipper (left), Danielle Gordon (right), Executive Director Nancy Ford (bottom right), and Melanie Scott (behind the camera) grabbed their paint brushes and set to work freshening up the walls of the Family Support Centre, on Friday, August 15.

Please drop by during our office hours, Monday to Friday, from 9 a.m. to 5 p.m., if you have any questions or concerns about serious mental illness, or would like more information on our programs—or if you'd just like to say hi and check out the new paint job.

### 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.  
or by appointment

North Shore/Lower Mainland: 604-926-0856  
Sea to Sky: 604-849-2252

[www.northshoreschizophrenia.org](http://www.northshoreschizophrenia.org)

[info@northshoreschizophrenia.org](mailto:info@northshoreschizophrenia.org)

Facebook: [northshore.schizophrenia](https://www.facebook.com/northshore.schizophrenia)

Twitter: @NSSSoc

### Monthly Support Meetings

Come share your questions, concerns, and experiences with family members.

Support group meetings are held each month in West Vancouver, Whistler, and Squamish for family members and close friends of people who have serious mental illnesses.

For information on any of the group meetings, please call 604-926-0856.

### Families Helping Families

Thank you to our many friends and supporters. Your donations and membership are appreciated. Tax receipts will be issued for all contributions.

## Notes from the Family Support Centre and Sea to Sky

### NSSS welcomes two new Sea-to-Sky outreach coordinators:

We are delighted to introduce you to Martina Page and Chris Dickenson, who have joined our team this month as Sea to Sky outreach coordinators. Martina will be providing local support in Squamish, and Chris in Whistler. Both bring a wealth of energy, experience and passion to the table.

In the coming months, they will raise awareness and promote education in order to help families build capacity in the Sea to Sky corridor. They will do this through public education and awareness events focusing on serious mental illness, and provide referrals to our one-on-one support team. Chris and Martina will also refer families to our monthly support groups in Squamish and Whistler and help spread the word about Family-to-Family education. NSSS President Cheryl Zipper will also work closely with them as they provide onsite support for our Partnership Presentations in the schools.



Martina Page, outreach coordinator in Squamish, has extensive experience working in private and public sectors, in both for-profit and not-for-profit organizations. Her resourcefulness and problem-solving skills should help make a positive impact in the Sea to Sky. Martina has already started connecting with the people of Squamish through social media efforts

and looks forward to connecting with local families and creating awareness about serious mental illness to community members.



Chris Dickenson, outreach coordinator in Whistler, is presently a support worker and behavioral interventionist at the Whistler Waldorf School, where he provides guidance and assistance to youth with cognitive disabilities and mental illness. Originally from Ontario, Chris completed his Bachelor's degree at McMaster University in 2008 and a Master's in Urban Planning at Ryerson University.

### NSSS welcomes Family-to-Family administrative support assistant:

Joining us at the Family Support Centre one day a week is Danielle Gordon. Danielle is in a contract position to help us prepare materials for our Family-to-Family courses, as part of the Vancouver project.



Danielle is a girl of many talents and jumped right in to help us paint the office. She is a second-year Langara student working towards finishing an Associate of Arts Degree by this December. After Langara, Danielle wants to spend a semester working and travelling, and later continuing

her education in either England or Canada, eventually earning a law degree. Besides working (she has two jobs), and being at school or doing homework, Danielle spends her time discovering new restaurants, working out, and relaxing with her boyfriend and friends.

### New to the NSSS library:

Two new books are available for loan in the NSSS library: *Shot in the Head: A Sister's Memoir*, *A Brother's Struggle*, by Katherine Flannery Dering, a powerful true story of a family coping with schizophrenia, and *High Clear Bell of Morning*, a novel by B.C. author Ann Eriksson. For more on Eriksson's book, please see Janet Blue's review in the May 2014 issue of the *Notepad*.

North Shore Schizophrenia Society

 **Whistler Family Support Group**

Sea to Sky families supporting families dealing with serious mental illness

**For family and friends of those with serious mental illnesses including: Schizophrenia, Depression, Bipolar Disorder, Anxiety Disorder and others.**

**TOPICS COVERED INCLUDE:**

- problem solving and how to cope
- communication with someone who is ill
- advice on working with the system
- looking after yourself as a caregiver
- access to a family support coordinator for personal support

**Third Wednesday of every month, 7:30pm—9:30pm**

**Offered without charge—As space is limited, please register a.s.a.p.**

**For more information or to register please call:**

**604-926-0856**

The North Shore Schizophrenia Society gratefully acknowledges the support of the Jill Ackhurst Foundation and Community Foundations of Whistler.

 Community Foundations of Whistler

## Submission to the B.C. “Standing Committee on Children and Youth”

You may have noticed over the summer, in the *North Shore News*, a request by MLA Jane Thornthwaite for public submissions to the Legislative “Standing Committee on Children and Youth.” What follows is the submission made by NSSS, written by Herschel Hardin, NSSS vice president and advocacy coordinator:

July 8, 2014

The North Shore Schizophrenia Society operates a Family Support Centre for the North Shore and Sea to Sky, with its programs open to anyone in the Lower Mainland. The Centre covers all serious mental illness – bipolar disorder, major depression, anxiety disorders, and borderline personality disorder as well as schizophrenia.

The main challenge around youth mental health in B.C. is ensuring that those whose health is most seriously affected or threatened – that is, those with signs of onset of serious mental illness – get the help and care they need.

A prefatory note about language: It’s important to be straightforward about the language used and refer to “mental illness” where that’s the case rather than “youth mental health issues,” which may mask and understate the difficulties that mental illness presents. Mild to moderate anxiety and depression in our youth, which might not qualify as illness, and issues like bullying shouldn’t be ignored, but it’s imperative at the same time that the early signs of the onset of a serious mental illness, such as schizophrenia, bipolar disorder, or clinical depression, be recognized – and recognized for what they are – with appropriate language. Clear and straightforward language is necessary in promoting understanding and establishing priorities.

The following are some recommended strategies:

1. A priority given to addressing serious mental illness and early signs of such illness.
2. Early intervention.
3. For service providers, involve parents (or equivalents), except in cases of abuse, as integral members of the treatment team. This includes sharing clinical information with them, and informally exchanging notes and getting feedback, even without permission of the patient, and doing so right through to age 19 (as one should also do with involved family members in the case of adult patients as well). For a discussion of this

issue, please see the November 2010 issue of the *NSSS Advocacy Bulletin*.

4. Provide intensive, detailed training for teachers, school counselors and Children and Youth staff on serious mental illness, psychosis, early signs indicating such problems might manifest themselves in the future, and prodromal symptoms. To ensure, thereby, that when such early signs appear they are not casually dismissed as “a stage” the child or youth is going through, but are understood as possible clinical matters and complemented with training on best response.

5. There continues to be a requirement for more psychiatrists in the field. A quick survey of Children and Youth psychiatrists, their caseloads, and what the psychiatrists might recommend in the way of added personnel, would be worthwhile.

6. Support efforts by Children and Youth psychiatrists to involve general practitioners more in cases, thereby freeing the psychiatrist to take on new patients more quickly. Dr. Betty Tang, a psychiatrist at North Shore Child and Youth Mental Health Services, has taken the initiative in liaising with general practitioners and would be a valuable resource.

7. Ensure GPs have sufficient training in recognizing and knowing how to respond effectively to the signs of early onset of mental illness.

8. Underwrite a pilot service-providers education program, in which a family peer organization, together with those with an illness, would educate Children and Youth personnel on:

- the trauma of mental illness and associated best practices for providers,
- adapting intervention strategies and communication accordingly,
- secondary traumas for families (when clinical interventions don’t quickly succeed),
- the psychological dimension of mental illness (this assumes providers, over and above psychiatrists and psychiatric nurses, are already fully trained on the “biological/physical” side, that is, the clinical side, of mental illness; see Recommendation 4, above),
- families involvement and supportive recovery strategies.

Please feel free to contact the Family Support Centre for more details on such a program.

*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; Resort Municipality of Whistler; Seymour Golf and Country Club; Lynn Valley, Ambleside Tiddlycove, Mt. Seymour, and Capilano Lions Clubs; Canada Post Foundation for Mental Illness and Mental Health; Vancouver Foundation; West Vancouver, Squamish, and Whistler Community Foundations; North Shore Rotary Clubs; Lynn Valley Legion; Fulmer Capital Partners; Margitta’s Flowers; and our many other generous donors.*

## Raising Awareness in the Sun - Our 2014 Summer Events Round-Up



Many thanks to all the volunteers, photographed and behind-the-scenes, who participated in our summer awareness events (clockwise):

- West Vancouver Community Day Parade
- 23rd Annual Walk the World for Schizophrenia
- North Vancouver Canada Day Parade

We appreciate your support in helping to raise awareness of serious mental illness. See you again next year!

## Volunteer with NSSS this Christmas!



It may only be September, but we're already preparing for our annual Christmas Banquet, to be held Saturday, December 6, at St. David's United Church, West Vancouver.

In October and November, we would appreciate help shopping for small gifts and wrapping presents. We will also need volunteers before, during, and after the party on December 6 to drive guests to and from the venue, set up, decorate, serve, clear tables, and clean up.

If you would like to get involved with our biggest gathering of the year, please contact Susanna at 604-926-0856 or [susanna@northshoreschizophrenia.org](mailto:susanna@northshoreschizophrenia.org).

More on the Christmas party, and your invitation, will appear in the November issue of the *Notepad*.