



North
Shore
Schizophrenia
Society

The Notepad

The NSSS Newsletter

PUBLIC EDUCATION EVENING

Addiction and Severe Mental Illness: What Do We Need?

Speaker:

Dr. Michael Krausz

*UBC Providence Leadership Chair for Addiction Research
UBC Professor of Psychiatry, Medical Director Burnaby Treatment
Centre for Mental Health and Addiction and the regional program for
concurrent disorders*

Date: Wednesday, April 27, 2011

**Location: Lions Gate Hospital
Auditorium
13th Street entrance**

Time: 7:30 p.m. . . . sharp

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 604-898-9372
www.northshoreschizophrenia.org
email: info@northshoreschizophrenia.org

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Marguerite Hardin takes care of the NSSS information table at Walk the World. This year marks the 20th anniversary of the Walk. See page 4 for details.

Support Groups

Come share your questions, concerns, and experiences with members of the North Shore Schizophrenia Society. Support Group meetings are held each month at the Family Support Centre and in Squamish, for family members and close friends of those afflicted with any serious mental illness.

Please call 604-926-0856 for more information, upcoming dates, or to register.

In Memoriam

Joanne Wesley, NSSS member, Family-to-Family grad and advocate for her son with schizophrenia, passed away March 23 with cancer.

Walk the World for Schizophrenia was a favourite event for Joanne; she never missed it when she was in town. She also enjoyed the Family-to-Family Club. What most of us will think about, however, when we remember her, is how she fought to help her son David survive his schizophrenia, which was complicated by periodic drug use, not unusual for those with the illness.

Tragically, the system failed her, by effectively abandoning David to his illness, which escalated again and led him to suicide. She somehow found the strength to bring the case up with Mental Health Services and to try to get answers, spelling out in detail what had happened and why. She was a courageous woman.

Sometime after David's death, Joanne began writing a memoir, starting with her childhood in Britain during the war. It makes fascinating reading, but sadly she was unable to continue because of her illness.

She will be missed.

Addictions and Severe Mental Illness: What do we need?

Dr. Michael Krausz is our featured speaker at the next NSSS Public Education Evening on Wednesday, April 27 at 7:30 p.m. in the auditorium at Lions Gate Hospital.



Michael Krausz

Among his many roles, Dr. Krausz is a professor of psychiatry at UBC and Medical Director at the Burnaby Treatment Centre for Mental Health and Addiction and the regional program for concurrent disorders.

The presentation will cover addictions in mental illness and the need to integrate services to treat both together as concurrent disorders rather than as two separate, unrelated conditions.

Up to half of those diagnosed with schizophrenia will abuse alcohol, drugs or both at some point in their lives. For bipolar disorder, the number is even higher.

Mental Illness and Physical Health

Our spring Sea to Sky public education evening will be on Thursday, April 14 at 7 p.m. at the Capilano University Squamish Campus, featuring Gerry Kasten, Registered Dietitian and Community Nutritionist for the Sea to Sky corridor.



Gerry Kasten

Gerry will discuss strategies for staying physically healthy while on psychiatric medications such as anti-depressants and anti-psychotics. Some of these medications have side effects such as lethargy and increased appetite, which can lead to weight gain and an increased risk of diabetes, stroke, and heart disease.

Call Christine at 604-849-2252 for more information.

I would like to help the NORTH SHORE SCHIZOPHRENIA SOCIETY

205 - 1865 Marine Drive West Vancouver, BC V7V 1J7

- with a donation to help keep the Family Support Centre operating
 - Cheque enclosed
- I prefer to donate by monthly direct deposit, please send me the form.
- by making a contribution to the NSSS endowment fund, a gift that goes on forever
- by making a bequest to the North Shore Schizophrenia Society in my will; please contact me

Name: _____

Address: _____

Postal Code: _____ Tel: _____

Homelessness and Mental Illness

It was standing room only at our latest public education evening February 23 at Lions Gate Hospital. Our featured speaker, Dr. Michelle Patterson, discussed the complexities of homelessness and several projects she has been involved in.

Dr. Patterson is a scientist at Simon Fraser University and co-investigator on the Vancouver site of the At Home/Chez Soi project. Her work focuses on the intersection of housing, mental illness and substance abuse.



Michelle Patterson

Research into the Vancouver area homeless population shows that about 30% of the estimated 3-4,000 people without shelter have severe mental illnesses such as schizophrenia or bipolar disorder. This figure does not include illnesses such as anxiety disorders and depression, which would put the figure much higher.

For these people, there is a revolving door that takes them from the street to shelters to jail to hospitals and back on the street. Without a comprehensive housing plan and more proactive treatment of people with severe mental illnesses, this problem will continue.

Some of the barriers to services faced by the homeless include strict program requirements such as substance abuse programs that require complete sobriety before joining and housing that requires six months of prior sobriety. Without the stability of a home and support to get clean, as one homeless man said, "It feels impossible."

The homeless also face barriers to basic healthcare, including not having a G.P. or access to counselling. In fact, the primary healthcare provider to the homeless is the hospital Emergency Department, with an average of five visits per person per year. The complexities of getting access to services can also be a barrier as programs have their own different admissions procedures and requirements. Free services are often only

available during limited hours and are often crisis-oriented rather than focused on keeping people healthy.

Dr. Patterson said that the stereotype of the homeless mid-40's male is no longer the case and the fastest growing segment of the homeless population is women and children. Homeless youth are often not counted in the annual homeless count as there is no way to reach those who are "couch-surfing" but don't have their own place to live. Because of this, she said the 3-4,000 figure is likely an underestimate. Others represented in the homeless population include seniors, aboriginals, immigrants and refugees.

She also noted that Canada and the United States are the only developed countries without a national housing plan and without a national mental health strategy. Providing supported housing for those who cannot afford it would, according to research, save money as it would prevent many expensive trips to the emergency ward, jail and the courtroom. This would move us from a crisis-response model to an upstream prevention model.

Dr. Patterson reported on the Mental Health Commission of Canada's At Home/Chez Soi project, which is providing housing and supports for homeless people with mental illnesses and addictions. Of the 500 people to be included in the study in Vancouver, a control group of 200 will continue to receive existing services, 200 will be housed in market housing and given information on support services and 100 will live in the recently renovated Bosman Hotel in downtown Vancouver with on-site support. This "housing first" approach has not been attempted in Canada before, but has been quite successful in New York. The traditional approach is to house homeless people together in groups and provide opportunities for better housing only after they have "proven themselves."

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, Mt. Seymour, and Capilano Lions Clubs; Soroptimist International of North and West Vancouver; West Vancouver Community Foundation; Community Foundation of Whistler, Squamish Community Foundation, Lynn Valley Legion; North Shore Credit Union, and our many other generous donors.

Celebrating 20 years of Walk the World for Schizophrenia

Walk the World for Schizophrenia is one of our most important awareness events of the year. This year's Walk is particularly special as it marks the 20th anniversary of the event. We are inviting everyone to join us to make this the biggest and best Walk we've ever had, so lace up your walking shoes, grab the whole family - children and pets too, as long as they are moderately well-behaved - and get ready to celebrate.

The Walk will open with a special guest speaker and the always entertaining West Vancouver Adult Pops Band at 10 a.m. on Sunday,



June 26 in John Lawson Park. Then we'll all stretch our legs with a walk to Dundarave Pier and back along the West Vancouver Seawalk, giving out information on schizophrenia and the Family Support Centre as we go.

If you can't do the walk itself, you can still help out at the information table in John Lawson Park, talking to members of the public, raising awareness and helping to defeat harmful myths about mental illness. Call us at 604-926-0856 for more information.



North Shore Schizophrenia Society Annual General Meeting

The 2011 Annual General Meeting will be held Thursday, May 26 at 7:30 p.m. in the auditorium at Lions Gate Hospital. A report on the year's activities will be followed by an election of new directors, and entertainment. NB: Only members in good standing (dues paid by May 19) will be able to vote. Official notice and more information on the festivities to follow the business meeting will be in the May edition of *The Notepad*.



Our third annual Circle of Strength luncheon fundraiser is coming up on May 14 at the Holiday Inn in North Vancouver. In just one hour, the luncheon provides a forum to raise

awareness about serious mental illness and the importance of getting people into treatment as soon as possible. Seating is limited and pre-registration is required. Call the Family Support Centre at 604-926-0856 for details.

2011 Family Conference

The 6th Annual Family Conference, Working Together for Mental Health, will take place on Saturday, April 30 in the Paetzold Theatre at Vancouver General Hospital from 8:30 a.m. to 4:30 p.m. Workshops include mental health care: past, present, future; financial planning; and a screening of the film *Family Matters*.

This year's keynote speaker is Globe and Mail public health reporter Andre Picard, who will be speaking about Stigma, Mental Illness and the Media. Picard has written many articles on the different issues around mental illness, including criminalization, discrimination, and treatment.

On Friday evening, April 29, there will be a welcome reception and discussion on mental illness and human rights between David Eby, Executive Director of the B.C. Civil Liberties Association and keynote speaker Andre Picard. Tickets for this event are \$15.

To register for the conference or the reception, call the Mood Disorders Association at 604-873-0103 or email familyconference2011@gmail.com. Admission is \$35 for individuals, \$50 for families, and \$10 for low income.