



North
Shore
Schizophrenia
Society

The Notepad

The NSSS Newsletter

ATTENTION MEMBERS: THIS IS YOUR OFFICIAL NOTICE OF THE ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING OF THE NORTH SHORE SCHIZOPHRENIA SOCIETY

Annual General Meeting

With special guest speaker

Shaun Stewart A Personal Story of Recovery

Date: Thursday, May 26, 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

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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Exhibits are an important part of our awareness activities. See page 4.

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.

Mental Illness and Physical Health

Registered Dietitian and Community Nutritionist Gerry Kasten discussed a number of strategies for staying physically healthy while on psychiatric medications at our latest Sea to Sky public education evening on April 14.



Gerry Kasten

He discussed several important health determinants such as the negative effects of living on disability income, lack of affordable quality housing and the inability to afford nutritious food.

Gerry provided practical tips for creating nutritious meals with visual appeal, such as serving multi-coloured vegetables in clear bowls; and detailed the risks of weight gain, diabetes and heart disease for those on antipsychotic medications. He was also able to give personalized tips in response to participant questions. He advised us all to be mindful and set small realistic goals to move towards better health - good advice for everyone.

**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: _____

NSSS presenter Amanda Schell recipient of prestigious award

Squamish NSSS presenter Amanda Schell is this year's recipient of the Courage to Come Back Award, mental health category.

It's one of six Courage awards handed out every year by Coast Mental Health, honouring British Columbians who have overcome seemingly insurmountable challenges and reached out to help others.

The other award categories are addiction, medical, physical rehabilitation, social adversity and youth.

Amanda, 41, a mother of two, was diagnosed with schizophrenia in her mid-twenties, but her symptoms went back to her childhood. As she gradually recovered, she began talking about her illness in order to help others.

For the last couple of years she has been doing NSSS Partnership Presentations – our schools program – in high schools in the Sea to Sky, including Whistler and Pemberton as well as Squamish.

The Partnership program features someone with an illness and a family member talking about their personal experiences with serious mental illness.

Amanda also does the Class 10 presentation to the NSSS Family-to-Family classes in Squamish. Class 10, as those of you who have taken the course will remember, is on rehabilitation. Hearing a story of recovery from someone with a serious mental illness helps inspire and give hope to family members whose ill loved ones are still struggling.

The presentations, though, are just part of the many things Amanda does. She is a consumer initiatives support worker for Vancouver Coastal Health in Squamish. She works part-time as a head cashier for a chain store. She sings karaoke, organizes karaoke events, and does freelance DJ work.

At NSSS, we know her best for her enthusiasm and energy.

Nobody could be more deserving of the award!

Substance Abuse: A Concurrent Disorders Perspective

Effective treatment of concurrent disorders—severe mental illness and addiction together—is a matter of life and death. People with concurrent disorders die an average of 30 years earlier than the general population, says Dr.

Michael Krausz, but with treatment and supports that recognize the two conditions must be treated together, recovery is possible.

Dr. Krausz, UBC Providence Leadership Chair for Addiction Research, Professor of Psychiatry, Medical Director of the Burnaby Treatment Centre for Mental Health and Addiction and the regional program for concurrent disorders—to name just a few of his qualifications—was our featured speaker at the April NSSS public education evening at Lions Gate Hospital.



Dr. Michael Krausz

Under our current system of care, most people with concurrent disorders do not receive integrated services. Dr. Krausz offered several examples, including housing applications that are rejected for people with suicidal ideation and addiction programs that will not accept people whose mental illnesses are not stabilized. People who go to hospital with injuries must be able to access detox programs immediately, he said, but they are treated only for their physical injuries and told to return for an appointment a week or more in the future. This is not an effective way to help people stop using harmful substances.

Some of the challenges Dr. Krausz identified for people struggling with concurrent disorders include sub-standard housing, a generic approach to treatment, lack of community supports, not having clinical pathways established in Mental Health and Addiction services, and inadequate capacity in tertiary care. He showed a photograph of one person's home: a Single Room Occupancy hotel room with no space for his belongings, which were stacked almost to the ceiling, or for him to move around. What kind of recovery, Dr. Krausz asked, can we expect in those conditions?

Concurrent addiction disorders for those with the most severe mental illnesses are not the exception. In acute psychiatric care, about 60-70 percent of patients have harmful levels of substance use. The risk of addiction is six to ten times higher for people with schizophrenia than for the general population.

People misuse legal and illegal drugs, including alcohol and tobacco, for a variety of reasons. Understanding the draw of these substances and why people take them is the first step in finding a way to compete with those harmful coping styles, to help people cope without abusing drugs and alcohol.

Dr. Krausz listed several important elements required to really address the problem:

- Provide appropriate funding for treatment of concurrent disorders;
- End stigma and discrimination around mental illness and addiction, particularly blaming people for their addictions;
- Reorganize the system along clinical pathways based on best practices and better governance;
- Regionalize care;
- Create a B.C. Centre of Excellence for Addiction and Concurrent Disorders;
- Make detox and methadone treatment available on the North Shore.

The secondary costs of not providing adequate care—enforcement, emergency response and treatment, acute care, court costs, and so on—are far beyond what it would cost to provide the care and early intervention that are so desperately needed. We can't expect people struggling with severe mental illness and addiction to be able to navigate a complicated system that often doesn't seem to want to treat them at all. "The sicker you are," Dr. Krausz said, "the less likely you are to have help."

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; Lynn Valley Legion; North Shore Credit Union; and our many other generous donors.

Community Outreach and Celebration

Summer is a great time to get outside with family and friends, enjoy the sunshine and help us reach out to the community. Join us at one or more of our summer Awareness events and bring your friends and family along - dogs are also welcome at Walk the World. RSVP by calling 604-926-0856 or email us at info@northshoreschizophrenia.org, and don't forget to give us your T-shirt size (we have M, L or XL).

Watch for a classic 1961 Pontiac Star Chief leading our entry on Canada Day and a shiny new vehicle on loan from North Shore Kia at the West Vancouver Community Day Parade on June 4.

Saturday, June 4, 10 a.m. West Vancouver Community Day Parade



The parade begins in Ambleside Park, travels right past the Family Support Centre and ends at the Community Centre at 22nd St. Join us for a celebration of community spirit and volunteer involvement.

Sunday, June 26, 10 a.m. Walk the World for Schizophrenia



Don't miss the 20th anniversary of our very own awareness event! Meet at John Lawson Park, then walk to Dunderave Pier and back along the West Vancouver Memorial Seawalk. Enjoy some fresh air and hopefully plenty of sunshine with us!

Friday, July 1, 10 a.m. North Shore Canada Day Parade



It may be Canada's birthday, but this party is all about the North Shore. The parade starts on Grand Blvd (after the usual pancake breakfast) and ends at Mahon park, a few blocks west of Lonsdale.

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 a presentation by NSSS Partnership Program speaker Shaun Stewart on his personal story of recovery and advocacy.

NB: Only members in good standing (dues paid by May 19) will be able to vote. If you would like to pay your dues by credit card, please call the Family Support Centre at 604-926-0856 during business hours, or drop by in person to make a cash, cheque or credit card payment. If you are not sure if your membership is up to date, please contact us.

Family-to-Family Fall Session Registration

The next North Shore session of the Family-to-Family education course runs Tuesday evenings from September 20 to December 6. If you are interested in the course or know someone who could benefit from an intensive program on serious mental illness and what families need to know, please contact Marguerite at the Family Support Centre.

Family Support Centre Summer Hours

The Family Support Centre will be open regular hours - 9 to 5, Monday to Friday - throughout the summer, except statutory holidays: July 1 for Canada Day, August 1 for B.C. Day, and September 5 for Labour Day.