

The Notepad

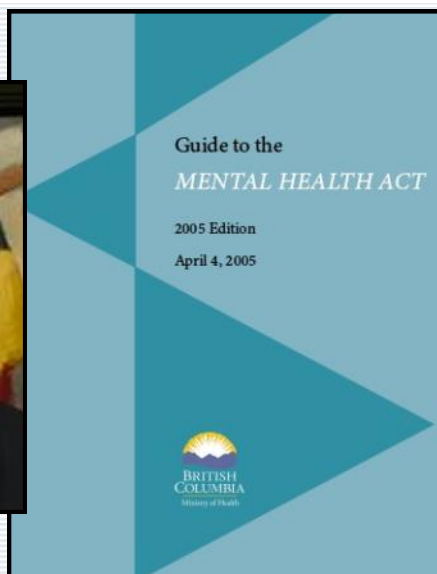


Supporting families dealing with serious mental illness

November 2015, No. 141

Public Education Lecture Series

Using the Law to Access Treatment



Guest speaker:
R. Kyle Friesen

**Counsel, RCMP Legal Advisory
Section, Department of
Justice Canada**

**Wednesday, November 25, 2015
Lions Gate Hospital Auditorium
7:30 p.m.**

Free to attend; no registration required.

Supported by 
WEST VANCOUVER
COMMUNITY FOUNDATION

Mental Health and Information-sharing: What Challenges Do Families Encounter?

Please join NSSS at the next Public Education Lecture Series, on Wednesday, November 25, at Lions Gate Hospital auditorium, for an informative discussion on using the law to access treatment. We are joined by Kyle Friesen, Counsel, RCMP Legal Advisory Section, Department of Justice Canada.

When seeking help for an ill relative, families may encounter challenges with interpretations of the Mental Health Act or information sharing. Mr. Friesen's presentation is designed to help families better navigate the system.

Since 1998, Mr. Friesen has provided "live" legal advice on all operational and administrative policing matters. He was Legal Counsel to the Vancouver 2010 Integrated Security Unit for the 2010 Winter Olympics.

Mr. Friesen was posted from 1994-1998 with the Office of the Information and Privacy Commissioner of British Columbia, dealing with police departments and law enforcement issues.

In 2012, he became a "Master Access and Privacy Professional" (MAPP), a new industry certification standard issued by the Privacy and Access Council of Canada. His M.A. thesis dealt with information-sharing challenges between the health care sector and law enforcement, including mental health issues. □



**It's almost time for our
annual Christmas Party,**

Saturday, November 28!

**See the back page for more details,
and register today.**



Hello to all,
Or should I say ho, ho, ho!? Christmas is coming early this year with the Society's annual Christmas Party scheduled for Saturday, November 28, at St. David's United Church in West Vancouver. We hope to see you there. As usual, we will need numerous volunteers, as we will be plating and serving meals rather than relying on a buffet-style service. It will be a good time for all. Looking forward to seeing you there.

In keeping up with our desire to serve those in need, we have a varied revenue stream that funds the Society through personal donations, fundraising events (e.g. Circle of Strength), existing endowment funds, service clubs and foundation grants, and gaming revenue. Collectively, this varies from year to year and continues to be a challenge as we pursue a more stable funding model. I would like to take this opportunity to thank our many donors whose generosity allows us to continue providing our valuable services to families in need.

Of note is the fact that we do not receive any direct funding from the Ministry or Health Authority, and that provides us with the independence to speak out on advocacy issues without any restrictions. It also allows us to work collaboratively with government and others to assist in solving the challenges faced in the field of serious mental illness.

When you look at the planned growth in the Society's activities and the variety of services provided, much of this was handled in the past

by volunteer coordinators. While, at times, a number of coordinators were also on the Society's Board of Directors, as is still the case today, there is a separation required between their Board responsibilities and those of a coordinator. The Board focuses on the whole organization and needs to look at the future, what it holds for us, and how do we move forward into the next decade and beyond. Whereas, coordinators, assist to carry out the day to day front line work of the Society and are responsible for a narrower, more specific mandate directly related to the position they are appointed to.

To assist in this separation of responsibilities we have installed a number of Standing Committees, each chaired by a Board member. These committees are tasked with reviewing their assigned activity and to develop policy that will help guide the Board's decisions that will also provide a viable framework for the NSSS into the foreseeable future. This continues to be a work in progress that will be reviewed at the upcoming Board workshop on November 21.

To ensure our flagship Family to Family (F2F) course continues unabated, we will be holding a Train the Trainer workshop in January 2016 led by Cheryl Zipper and Lisa Stringle, both volunteer coordinators. This will allow us to develop more F2F teachers from our list of F2F graduates to continue passing on the knowledge to other families on the North Shore and beyond. Additionally, we are exploring the delivery of Family to Family in Farsi that will allow us to better serve our North Shore communities, at large.

We continue to seek new members for our general membership and volunteer service, and also as a Board

Director if you are so inclined to do so. We will have three vacant seats on our Board to consider filling by our 2016 AGM. If you are interested or know someone who may be interested, please let us know by contacting our Executive Director, Nancy Ford, at the Family Support Centre.

So far, 2015 has been a healthy mix of challenges and rewards as we continue to deliver our services across the North Shore and beyond. As the year starts to wind down, there is no time to rest as we plan our activities for 2016. I feel good about our future and no one, or no organization, can move forward without its challenges. Those who have experienced such challenges will tell you they build character and are opportunities for us to learn. I believe the Society will grow in strength and will continue to broaden its reach to serve those in need and who are struggling with issues related to serious mental illness.

In closing, I would like to welcome Pouneh Julia as the latest member of our staff at the Family Support Centre. Welcome Pouneh, we are thrilled to have you on board with us. On a related note, I would like to thank Sue Puchmayr for her time, commitment and contribution as Board member over the past eight months. Sue has announced that she is stepping down from the Board and we wish her well in her future endeavours.

My sincere thanks to all those who have volunteered their time throughout the year and who continue to do so. Also, my best wishes to all our members and we look forward to continuing that relationship throughout 2016.

Steve Watt
NSSS President



Family-to-Family: Teacher Training and Winter Course Dates

Family-to-Family Teacher Training Weekend of January 15 - 17, 2016 Family Support Centre, West Vancouver

The training room may often seem a little crowded (as seen in the photo, above, from our 2015 session), but joining together to become a Family-to-Family teacher is a rewarding experience.

As a family member of someone with a mental illness, your experiences, understanding, and insights already make you an ideal teacher for other families going through similar situations.

By becoming a Family-to-Family teacher, you are helping to empower families to provide the best care for their ill relatives and themselves.

We would love to have you join us for an upcoming teacher-training session. You must be a Family-to-Family graduate to become a teacher.

We also have demand for the course to be held in Farsi, for our Farsi-speaking families. If you are a family member who speaks Farsi and would like to teach, please contact us. □

To register for teacher training or the course:

Call 604-926-0856 or email Melanie at melanie@northshoreschizophrenia.org

Course details:

www.northshoreschizophrenia.org/education.htm

“The family finally gets much-needed information, presented to them by other family members—people no different from themselves. Becoming a teacher is a way to share this information *with* others, but also allows you to gain a lot of information and support *from* others.”

- Halina Haboosheh, Family-to-Family teacher

Family-to-Family Winter 2016 Courses

Held 12 consecutive Tuesday evenings,
7-9:30 p.m.

North Shore

January 26 - April 12

Vancouver

February 2 - April 19

Tri-Cities (Port Coquitlam)

February 2 - April 19

Are you a family member wanting to learn more about mental illness?

Family-to-Family is a comprehensive education program designed for families who have a relative with a serious mental illness. Taught by trained family members, the course covers all aspects of mental illness:

- Symptoms of the illnesses (schizophrenia, bipolar disorder, depression, anxiety disorders, borderline personality disorder) and their biological causes
- Medications used to treat these brain disorders
- Problem-solving and how to cope; communicating with someone who is ill
- Advice on working with the system
- Looking after yourself as a caregiver

A Lasting Gift

by Nancy Ford, NSSS Executive Director

As a parent of a son living with a mental illness, and also in my capacity as Executive Director, it's been an extraordinary pleasure working for this Society. Many of our members may not be aware that our Board consists of nine dedicated, talented professionals with backgrounds in architecture, policing, executive and business development, parenting, and accounting, and most importantly, the lived experience of being a family member.

You may be familiar with the many hundreds of hours of volunteer time the NSSS provides for peer support and advocacy. Our volunteers also dedicate a great deal of time delivering our education course and making presentations to schools, service clubs, the HOpe Centre, police, RCMP, the Health Authority agencies, social workers at Lions Gate Hospital, and frankly, to anyone willing to listen.

Volunteers also plan and organize special events such as the Christmas party (I hope you can join us this year) and our long standing lecture series, with audiences spilling into the hall. As you can imagine, it is a privilege to serve. I believe Margaret Mead's famous quote is most brilliantly reflected: *"Never doubt that a small group of thoughtful committed citizens can change the world; indeed, it's the only thing that ever has."*

Over the years the Society has also experienced financial support in the form of legacy and estate planning. These generous funds are held as endowment, earning us the interest for operations, ensuring our financial future. This along with the hundreds of single twenty dollar donations and memberships provide the financial basis of the society. The NSSS mandate of not accepting Ministry or Health Authority funding facilitates our unique position in the world of not-for-profits. We answer to families.

As we approach the end of this year I want to bring to your attention some options to help secure the financial future of the Society. Planned giving refers to gifts made from assets accumulated during one's life rather than writing a cheque from current income. Usually these gifts are part of an overall estate plan.

I hope you'll find the following information valuable in understanding how you might support NSSS through your legacy planning.

Planned gifts are typically made through a bequest in your **Last Will and Testament**. Other options to consider include:

- **Life Insurance**

Gifts of life insurance truly make an impact on the society, often for a very small payment. Donors who want to really make a difference choose the gift of life insurance to create that impact because they are able to give significantly larger gifts than they might otherwise be able to make. You can write new insurance or use paid up policies that are an idle asset to create a win/win situation for your financial and estate tax planning.

- **Charitable Remainder Trust**

Unlike a future bequest in your will, for which you get no tax benefit now, a charitable remainder trust provides you with a large donation receipt in the year you make your gift and you'll also continue to receive the trust income for life. On your death, the trust asset goes to the society. You can use cash, securities, or real estate to fund a trust gift to the society.

- **Appreciated Securities**

When you donate appreciated securities to the society you receive a tax receipt for the full market value of the gift and only pay tax on a percentage of the gain derived from gifting the securities. It is the most tax efficient way to make a donation.

- **Gift plus Annuity**

The Gift plus Annuity allows a donor to make a charitable donation, increase income for life, lower income taxes and avoid future investment concerns through a lifetime annuity. In exchange for your gift, the society buys you a lifetime annuity from a licensed insurance company the amount of our annuity payments depend on your age and size of your contribution, and it is fully guaranteed. It will continue as long as you live, no matter what happens to the economy or to interest rates.

- **Retirement Plan Gifts**

By designating the Society as a beneficiary of your RRSP or RRIF, you will be creating a significant gift and eliminating the tax payable on death. Probate fees and will challenges are also avoided by choosing this option. □



Planned Giving

by **Bill Murdock**

Family Member and Financial Planner

Bill Murdoch is a member of the North Shore Schizophrenia Society, a financial planner, and has a brother with schizophrenia. You may have had the opportunity to attend one of his estate planning workshops over the last couple of years, organized by NSSS. We are fortunate to have Bill as a member of our organization. As a brother, Bill understands first-hand the implications of having a good will and estate plan.

We invited Bill to share his own thoughts on planned giving:

“What is ‘Planned Giving’? To a charity it means seeking regular or lump sum financial arrangements from its members and donors. Many people give casually when asked or if brought to their attention, but may not plan in advance, creating risks for the preservation of the charity and its programs.

“Donors who provide a stable and predictable flow of funds provide for the annual expenses to run programs and support on an ongoing and year-to-year basis. These in turn preserve the legacy for the current and

future families while improving the level of help they can provide to those in need, rather than turn people away. To donors, it simply means including charitable donations in their annual financial plan or estate plan, saving taxes, and doing good work.

“One simple way to donate is the gift of a life insurance plan. You can make a gift of monthly premiums, a transfer of an existing policy you no longer need/want or a special designation on a policy from your Estate. There are many flexible options. Each plan can be tailored for your needs when it comes to taxes, whether you choose to get an annual tax receipt now, for many years, a lump sum receipt today or an increasing deduction down the road.

“Be sure to consult with a professional before making your decision, given the different tax results depending on which option you might choose.” □

Securing the Future — Two Estate Planning Workshops to Be Held in 2016

NSSS is planning two workshops in the new year to help NSSS families better understand the implications of estate planning when it comes to securing the future of a loved one. More information will follow in the January issue of the *Notepad*.

Finally, if you do decide to make a gift in your will to the NSSS, you will be joining a very special group of people who have also left important and tangible gifts as a legacy to help those with mental illness.

All bequests, regardless of their size, provide the NSSS and our Family Support Centre with the financial stability necessary to meet the needs of family members and their relatives. Your thoughtful plans and stewardship mean a great deal to the Society.

Such testamentary gifts will, over the years, provide a strong financial base to help the NSSS fulfill its mission.

Marijuana Presentation Sparks Debate: Medicine or Menace?



Dr. Siavash Jafari

It's easy to have a false impression of marijuana, particularly when the word "medical" is attached to the growing number of dispensaries opening across the Lower Mainland.

At the last Public Education Lecture Series, held September 30, in the Lions Gate Hospital auditorium, Dr. Siavash Jafari, clinical faculty in the UBC Department of Family Medicine, and the Burnaby Centre for Mental Health and Addictions, gave an unbiased, scientifically grounded look at marijuana. He answered key questions: what marijuana is and how it works, its potential medical uses, and its potential risks and impacts on the brain and mental health.

The scientific evidence does not exist for many of the health claims made by dispensaries, save for its use for some patients in palliative care dealing with excessive symptoms. Many of the reports or expert opinions offered daily by the media are drawn from cases that have not gone through the most rigorous scientific review or have been disproven, such as the widely accepted no-

tion that marijuana use can ease glaucoma.

Because marijuana is viewed as a friendly, natural herb, many families don't talk to their kids about it, despite mounting evidence that marijuana can trigger psychosis in those with a genetic predisposition to mental illness. The number of cases of teenage youth in acute psychiatric care is mounting because of the dramatic increase in THC levels since the 1990s, from five to 15 per cent.

Using the term "medical" to describe marijuana is a misnomer and is not supported by the broader medical community. While marijuana is far less addictive than heroin or tobacco, upwards of 10 per cent of those who use it regularly will become dependent on it. The amount consumed over time will increase health problems, from brain to feet, with a smaller risk to those who only smoke marijuana a few times a year.

An audio recording (CD) of Dr. Jafari's presentation is available for short-term loan from the NSSS library.

Please visit his website for articles on various mental health topics: www.MentalHealthForAll.com. □

NSSS Welcomes Two Additions



We would like to extend a warm welcome to two newcomers to the Society:

Pounesh Jula has joined the staff at the Family Support Centre as Membership and Administrative Assistant, taking over from Susanna Junnikkala.

Pounesh has a Graduate Diploma in Business Administration, from Simon Fraser University, and a Bachelor's degree in Accounting, from Iran. She is fluent in Farsi and English.

Brittany Beggs will soon begin conducting a short survey in the Sea to Sky corridor on behalf of NSSS. Brittany is a registered nurse with experience in psychiatric emergency care and palliative care. Brittany has worked at Vancouver General Hospital, Lions Gate Hospital, and at the Repulse Bay Health Centre, in Nunavut. She also works currently as the Squamish Patient Resource Navigator with the Sea to Sky Division of Family Practice.

If you live in the Sea to Sky corridor, you may be hearing from Brittany in the near future. She will be talking to families and professionals to help us learn more about the challenges those with an ill relative are facing in those communities, where the gaps in services are, and what specific needs families have in terms of mental health programs and services. □

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; Vancouver Foundation; West Vancouver Community Foundation, Community Foundation of Whistler; North Shore Rotary Clubs; Lynn Valley Legion; Bouygues Building Canada; Margitta's Flowers; and our many other generous donors.

Renew Your Membership and Stay Connected to NSSS



Membership remains the best way of keeping in touch with what's happening at NSSS, and helps strengthen our work with families. We value our members and encourage anyone interested in our work and in helping to alleviate the suffering caused by schizophrenia and other serious mental illness to become a member and renew membership each year.

As a member, you receive *The Notepad* newsletter and notices on current events, invitations to special events, and more. Membership also allows you to vote for the directors of the Society at its annual general meeting.

If you received a renewal form with your printed copy of *The Notepad* or one in PDF format with your email version, please fill out and return it to the Family Support Centre with your membership dues, still just \$20 per year.

We would like to thank you for your continued support. □



HELP WANTED

Our Volunteers are What Makes Us Strong

NSSS believes in families helping families. All our programs and events are designed and delivered by family members, from peer support, to Partnership presentations in schools, to community outreach activities and advocacy, to lecture series and events planning, to fundraising (see pages 4-5), to the Family-to-Family education course. Even our annual Christmas party (see back page) is planned and organized by dedicated family members just like yourself.

We appreciate the investment of all our volunteers' time and energy.

If you would like to become involved with any of our programs or events, please contact staff at the Family Support Centre—Nancy, Melanie, or Pouneh—by calling 604-926-0856 or emailing info@northshoreschizophrenia.org. □

Family Support Centre

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

604-926-0856

www.northshoreschizophrenia.org

info@northshoreschizophrenia.org

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, Squamish, Whistler, and Tri-Cities for family members and close friends of people who have serious mental illnesses.

For information, please call 604-926-0856.

Christmas is Coming Early this Year!

RSVP today and join NSSS for our
annual Christmas Party:

Saturday, November 28, 2015

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

Doors open at 5:30 p.m.
Dinner at 6 p.m.



Enjoy a roast turkey dinner prepared by local chefs, seasonal musical entertainment by **Marcus Mosely and the Burstin' with Broadway Choir** (left), and a visit from a jolly old character with a sleigh full of gifts!

This is a **free event** for people with any serious mental illness or family members.

Reserve your seat today!

Registration closes Friday, November 20, at 5 p.m.

**Please call 604-926-0856 or email Pouneh at
pouneh@northshoreschizophrenia.org**



This Holiday Season, give the gift of a donation to the NSSS

Looking for the perfect gift for someone who cares? Why not make a donation to NSSS in lieu of a Christmas parcel and surprise your friends and family on Christmas morning? When you send us your donation we'll send a Christmas thank-you card before December 25. Any amount aids the NSSS in getting people the services they need, and also warms the heart of your friend or family member.