AT A GLANCE  2017

OUR FAMILIES, OUR STORIES
AND OUR PARTNERS

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# TABLE OF CONTENTS

A Message from the President 3.

A New Name 4.

1. Families Supporting Families
   - Meeting Families One-on-One 5.
   - Peer Support Groups 6.

2. Education- Steps Toward Change
   - Family-to-Family 7.
   - First Hand Stories 8.


7. Rebranding 16.

8. Volunteers 17.

9. Leadership 18.19
Greetings,
Family voices individually and collectively can be a powerful agent for change. Pathways is proud to represent those united and unique voices.

Offering our shared experience, understanding and empowerment change people's lives for the better every day. We are working together to do our part in helping communities build responsive, effective, knowledgeable, supportive and inclusive mental health environments for all. Where the effects of serious mental illnesses are no longer disastrous.

We measure our successes by the support, education and services that we provide freely to others. While we operate on a small budget, the passion and commitment of our staff, volunteers and membership is second to none. In 2017 Pathways responded to the needs of families in four distinct regions including Tri Cities, Vancouver, North Shore and Sea to Sky. Within the broader mental illness landscape Pathways organized community events to help bring awareness and forums in which stakeholders and professionals were invited to address current and systemic issues relevant to families dealing with mental health care. Pathways worked in collaboration with many stakeholders, agencies and authorities to support lasting positive changes for everyone. Pathways grappled with the current issues; the mental health issues surrounding the legalization of cannabis in Canada. We arranged for medical experts to lecture on the subject, and we heard from many of our family members regarding their loved ones who have experienced psychotic episodes following drug consumption. We shared the widespread medical concerns regarding negative impacts to brains not fully mature as well as to those that may have a greater genetic predisposition to psychosis. The tragedies of the ongoing fentanyl crisis and drug addictions have greatly increased the negative impact on those already suffering with a mental illness.

The other issue at the forefront for Pathways is the constitutional challenge of the BC’s Mental Health Act. Nothing is more important for those with delusions and other psychotic symptoms than prompt treatment of psychosis. The longer a psychotic episode is allowed to continue untreated, the more destructive and heartbreaking the illness. A look at Vancouver’s Downtown East Side suggests that the Mental Health Act is certainly not being overused, nor as Laura Johnston, lawyer for CLAS, would suggest and asserted in her interview, in her inflammatory language, are masses of people being “locked up” and “punished” in our hospitals; in fact these people are finally receiving the psychiatric treatment they so desperately need. Pathways addressed our concerns with letters written to Attorney General, David Eby, and local MLAs.

I invite you to look through this report as we proudly summarize our major activities and outcomes. In 2017 over 300 families attended our monthly support groups, Pathways 12 week signature education program Family-to-Family was delivered in four communities supported by 16 trained family volunteer teachers, with a team of coordinators. Over all 8,000 people were supported by 100 plus volunteers spending over 5,000 volunteer hours; an impressive accomplishment.
On October 17, 2017 at a Special General Meeting, the membership present of the North Shore Schizophrenia Society voted overwhelmingly to change the name of the society to Pathways Serious Mental Illness Society - Families Helping Families.
In 2017 Pathways supported over 265 unique families. Reached out to families providing support over 1,000 times.

Working with our community partners, with RCMP, Vancouver and West Vancouver Police, the Hope Centre staff, Social Workers, and Youth Workers.

In 2017 diagnoses include:
- 28% Schizophrenia
- 14% Bipolar
- 20% Anxiety / Depression
- 11% Concurrent Disorder
- 27% Other

Providing support, especially one-on-one support, takes on various forms as we attempt to adapt the help requested to each unique situation a family is dealing with. Meetings take place over the phone, over coffee, or while going for a walk. Sometimes the family member who is reaching out is too overwhelmed to meet in person or even to verbalize the crisis or trauma, so we exchange e-mails or texts. Other times two people with similar experience will meet with a support volunteer, i.e., parents with children of similar age and diagnosis. Peer support with similar lived experience is a powerful tool to provide empathy, relief and encouragement and hope. Support -- whether in a group or individually - provides for an opportunity to "let your hair down", so to speak, without having to choose your words carefully, defend or guard. It provides a desperately needed oasis that refreshes to be able to carry on in the battle for a loved one.

Christine Kelly, Co-Chair, Support Team
Nothing is quite like the support of others who are dealing with the same problems on a day-to-day basis or who have been faced with similar challenges in the past. It’s why leading American psychiatrist E. Fuller Torrey, in his book *Surviving Schizophrenia*, advises that “to survive schizophrenia, the single most important step which should be taken by families with a schizophrenic family member is to join a family support group. “

Every month, family members meet in West Vancouver, Squamish, Whistler, Vancouver, and Port Coquitlam for regular sessions of the Family Support Groups. For information on any of the groups, or to register, please contact the Family Support Centre.

1. **PORT COQUITLAM**—2nd Thursday 7:30pm
2. **WHISTLER**—4th Thursday 6:30pm
3. **SQUAMISH**—2nd Thursday 7:00pm
4. **NORTH SHORE**—3rd Wednesday 7:00pm
5. **NORTH SHORE**—2nd Friday 1:00 pm
6. **VANCOUVER**—Sat. 10:00am
“Family-to-Family is more than just an education course. It could be described as a course in empowerment. It changes the people who take it, giving them new strength and confidence. Through the course, family members gain the knowledge and skills to cope more effectively with their relatives with a mental illness.” Course Graduate. The volunteer teachers have been described as: “excellent—positive, supportive, knowledgeable, organized, prepared, punctual and aware of the break time and ending time!” High praise from a recent graduate.

- 19 Graduates on the North Shore
- 31 Graduates in Vancouver
- 26 Graduates in Port Coquitlam
- 16 Graduates in Sea to Sky
First Hand Stories consists of a panel of two speakers – a person with lived experience, and a family and is based on a personal storytelling model. It is a unique and powerful presentation that helps students and people in the community understand the nature and prevalence of chronic and severe mental illness. Being able to listen and talk to people with first-hand experience struggling with the illness gives the audience an even greater appreciation for how hard it can be. Questions are answered directly by the presentation team.

Here is a sample of the touching feedback presenters receive from the students:

“Dear Ava, you and Brandy were by far the most touching guest speakers my class has had this year, (in my opinion) and I think you guys should discuss this more with other schools. I’m really proud of all the problems you’ve overcome through the years! Forever indebted.”

These presentations are designed and coordinated by trained volunteers. In 2017 there were:

- 2 Coordinators
- 5 Family Presenters
- 7 with lived experience

Cheryl Zipper, Volunteer Coordinator
Our long-running Public Education Lecture Series allows family members, those with the illness, professionals, and the general public to ask questions and get answers directly from experts and service providers on a wide range of topics covering all serious mental illness. The question-and-answer interchange makes each session particularly valuable. Last years diverse topics included:

- **Cognitive Remediation (CR) In Psychotic Disorders - The Implications and Opportunities - Dr. Todd Woodward** -- CR is a program designed to address the cognitive losses associated with mental illness, such as processing speed, memory, executive functioning, and motivation. Cognitive Remediation.


- **Understanding Electroconvulsive Therapy (ECT), - Fidel Vila-Rodriguez, MD, FRCPC, FAPA, Assistant Professor, Dept. of Psychiatry, UBC. ECT-Understanding Electroconvulsive Therapy**

- **New Research in Using TMS to Treat Psychosis - - Dr. Fidel Vila Rodriguez, MD, FRCPC, FAPA, Assistant Professor, UBC, Director, Non-Invasive Neurostimulation Therapies Laboratory and Schizophrenia Program New Research In Using TMS To Treat Psychosis**
Dec. 4, 2017

Letter to the Globe and Mail, Vancouver Sun, and to CBC Radio 1

Cc: Hon. David Eby, Q.C david.eby.mla@leg.bc.ca
    Hon. Judy Darcy, Mental Health and Addictions: MH.Minister(at)gov(dot)bc(dot)ca
    M. Jane Thornthwaite, MLA, Critic, North Vancouver-Seymour jane.thornthwaite.mla@leg.bc.ca


My son’s right to health care.

As the executive director of the North Shore Schizophrenia Society I was deeply concerned to hear on CBC Radio 1 and to read in the Globe and Mail and Vancouver Sun, that a person’s right to critical care and to their health and safety, was being reported in such a sensationalized manner without any proper research into the subject. The fact that the Community Legal Assistance Society (CLAS) would initiate such a distorted attack on BC’s Mental Health Act leaves me to question both their credibility and their agenda.

As a mother of a son diagnosed with schizo-effective disorder, I am personally concerned with such biased and sensationalized reporting. Under the BC Mental Health Act and with the help of the RCMP, my son received involuntary treatment and medication. Prior to treatment, he had no insight into his delusions, and lacked any appreciation as to how extremely ill he was. Without the help of the BC Mental Health Act he would have continued to be a threat to others, a threat to himself, and most probably would be living on the Vancouver Downtown Eastside, or very possibly dead. Instead he is connected to his family, works part time, has a diagnosis of schizo-effective disorder, is seen regularly by a psychiatrist, takes his medication willingly and understands his illness.

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Sincerely, Nancy Ford

Executive Director—North Shore Schizophrenia Society
#Let’s Talk About Patient Care in Mental Health and Addictions

Wednesday, January 31st
7:00 - 9:00 PM
FREE EVENT
All are welcome

HOpe Centre Atrium
First Floor (By Blenz)
1337 St. Andrew’s Ave
North Vancouver

Pathways Serious Mental Illness Society (formerly NSSS), in partnership with CMHA, invites you to a panel discussion featuring:

**Jane Thornthwaite**  
*North Vancouver MLA*

**Dr. Dianne McIntosh**  
*Psychiatrist and clinical assistant professor, UBC*

**Andrea Paquette**  
*President, Stigma-Free Society and Bipolar Babe*

**Dale Handley**  
*Head Nurse, Carlyle Youth Concurrent Disorders Centre*
Rendezvous

Rendezvous is a gathering of volunteers and members to exchange ideas. One was held in West Vancouver where an ad hoc Housing Committee was struck to research what could be done to improve housing situation for those with a SMI. This action was in response to concern raised by a number of Pathways' members who have loved ones experiencing serious difficulties with housing. This Committee continues to meet regularly and with assistance from Shirley Chan is steadily gaining knowledge and awareness.
Pathways sponsored its annual Christmas party for people dealing with mental illnesses and their families. Over 150 attendees were served up a Christmas dinner with all the trimmings before Santa Claus arrived to give out presents. With over 20 volunteers, including the cook who recently moved to Saskatchewan but graciously returned for this event, the Christmas Party was a huge success. We were pleased to have Carol Todd, Amanda Todd’s mother, join us as well.

Thank you to those who generously made donations. Our Christmas appeal raised $2,550.00.
Your donations provide programs and services free of charge, and are tax deductible.

Our CRA registered charity number is 894226935 RR0001.

To make a donation online, please visit our website, www.pathwayssmi.org or:

Payment by Cash or Cheque: Amount: __________________________
Credit Card No. ___________________ Type: __________ Expiry: ______
Name: __________________ Address: ____________________________
Tel: ___________________ Cell: __________ Email: _______________ Or Mail a donations to:
Pathways, 1865 Marine Drive, Suite 205, West Vancouver, BC V7V1J7 or call 604-926-0856 to donate.
Pathways 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
❖ Mayor’s Golf Tournament, Seymour Golf and Country Club, Vancouver Foundation,
❖ West Vancouver, and Squamish Community Foundation, Senft Family Foundation
❖ North Shore Rotary Club, North Shore Legions, North Shore Lions Clubs, Soroptimists, North and West Vancouver, Squamish Rotary, Madeleine Investments
❖ Real Estate Association of Whistler, Kiwanis West Vancouver, Squamish Rotary
❖ Bouygues Building Canada, First Memorial Funeral Services, Tricor Pacific Lands INC,
❖ Margitta’s Flowers, Eyes Wide Media, Plutonic Press, Pacific Honda
❖ Our many generous family donors.

2017 Sources of Income

- Member Fees 4,340
- Donations 70,659
- Direct Access 46,083
- Endowment 17,163
- Grants 90,093
- GST 1,466

2017 Assets

- General Fund 34,686
- Janet Morgan 173,084
- Family Navigator 24,000
- Mayors Golf Tournament 10,000
PATHWAYS SERIOUS MENTAL ILLNESS SOCIETY’S WEBSITE WAS LAUNCHED NOVEMBER 2017
www.pathwayssmi.org
8,000 plus people served by over 100 volunteers contributing to Over 5,000 volunteer hours as

- Family to Family Teachers
- Support Group Facilitators
- Peer to Peer Supporters
- First Hand Story Tellers
- In support of Lectures
- Rendezvous
- Christmas Party
- Canada Parade
- Circle of Strength Fundraiser
- Will and Estate workshops
- Re-Branding
Janice Lilley – President

Janice was first introduced to the NSSS eight years ago when looking for help for her ill sister. “Through the Family to Family course I gained the knowledge, understanding, and strength to change the downward trajectory of events,” Janice says. “The darkest days are behind us now. Our lives have improved and my sister’s life was saved.” An architect by profession, she enjoys the creativity, complexities, and teamwork.

Don Pavlovich – Vice President

Don, now retired, has 28 years’ experience in securing capital for companies, specifically mining. He served as president & executive director on several junior mining companies. As a lover of art and culture, he’s currently ventured into the film industry (A Last Train Picture Production) and now as an Executive Producer. As a graduate of the Family to Family “I now understand how important it is that we reach other families in similar situations”

Gerard Darnel—Treasurer

As a semi retired Chartered Professional Accountant (CPA, CGA) with over 25 years of progressive Accounting, Controller and Financial Management experience mostly in the residential and commercial real estate sectors, I am always looking for ways to give back to my community. I have recently stepped back after volunteering with the Easter Seals 24 Hour relay for over 20 years as a fundraiser and as a team captain and now look forward to contributing to the Pathways as a board member and treasure

Gillian Santo – Events Committee Chair

In the fall of 2008, following her daughter’s quite lengthy depression, Gillian enrolled in the Family to Family course. “I was so grateful for the comfort which came from becoming educated in some of the mysteries of mental illness that when the course ended, I felt a great desire to give something back.” In the spring of 2009, she became a member of the NSSS Fundraising Committee and helped the Society launch its first Circle of Strength luncheon in North Vancouver.

Joe Gormley – Chair Membership Committee

“The Family to Family course provided me with the knowledge and tools to better understand and help my family members with this illness. The value of the program provided by the Pathways inspired me to contribute by offering to serve on the board.” Joe has served on the board of directors of several other organizations. Professionally Joe has worked for Public Works and Government Services Canada in real estate specializing in Aboriginal consultation.
Patricia Murray – Chair Advocacy Committee

Patricia first came in contact with the NSSS when she noticed a brochure for the Family Support Centre while taking her son to an appointment at the Kitsilano Mental Health Team in late 2014. She had heard of the society but wrongly assumed she was not eligible for our services, as she did not live on the North Shore, and her son did not have schizophrenia. “I telephoned and found out they were having Family to Family classes in Vancouver so I signed up for the January 2015 sessions that were expertly taught by members Janice Lilley and Arlene Kennedy. For the first time since my son’s original diagnosis in Kindergarten I did not feel alone in my struggle to help him.”

Shirley Chan, Chair Fundraising Committee

As a girl, Shirley Chan campaigned with her parents going door-to-door to canvass opposition to the freeway plans and organized a network of block captains to keep residents informed. That community activism has remained with Chan in the years since. An established leader in the Chinese-Canadian community, the Vancouver native has held leadership roles in community-based advocacy, national housing, health and sustainability programs and inclusive social and economic development. Shirley has taught numerous Family to Family classes and worked as an advocate on behalf of her daughter.

Kim Thomas – Chair Support Committee

Kimberly, along with her husband, enrolled in the Family to Family course in search of answers to better understand what their young son was dealing with and to learn ways to help the family deal with mental illness.” Kimberly went on to teach the Family to Family course and continues to be a facilitator of the support group that was created from the fall class of 2014. She is an advocate for better support to both people dealing with mental illness and their families. She resides in Coquitlam with her husband and children.

Adel Bellemlih – Board Treasurer, Fundraising Committee Co-Chair

Adel is a professional with nearly two decades of experience in the executive management of commercial, financial, legal and technical aspects of a wide range of projects with a particular focus on the construction and real estate industry. He played an active role in the Canadian market since 2007 and, over the course of his career, worked on several continents, including North and South America, Europe, and North Africa. His educational background is in both business and construction engineering.

Cheryl Zipper, Past President and Co-Chair Education

Cheryl will always be grateful for the Family-to-Family course she attended in 2008, which empowered her to move forward with her son on the journey of mental illness. Since then she has been involved in teaching and coordinating both the First Hand Stories program and the Family-to-Family course, trained by NAMI as a Family-to-Family teacher trainer, and a member of the board as President, Chair of the Nominating Committee, and co-chair of the Education Committee. Being involved in NSSS has been both a very rewarding and humbling experience.”
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