



AGM 2016

President's Report

At our annual Strategic Planning session in September we recognized the tremendous opportunity for MPS to encourage all political parties to endorse the importance of increasing access to mental and behavioural health resources (including access to psychologists) on their political platforms. At the time of our planning, we considered current trends in mental and behavioural health across Canada and specifically in Manitoba. Two population groups that are receiving attention by funding sources are children/youth and families, and seniors. In addition, we continue to advocate for the integration of psychologists in Primary Care. In addition to these areas, many other opportunities for working with government and other key stakeholders occurred throughout this year. The following report outlines only some of the work done by the board.

Outreach

MPS recognizes that collaborating with other organizations and associations results in a stronger voice in support of increasing access to services for all Manitobans. Over the past year, we have continued to meet with various key stakeholders and we have developed relationships with new groups.

- Dr. Pam Holens, Dr. Leonard Greenwood, and I have met with members of the Crisis Response Management Team of the Winnipeg Fire and Paramedic Service to discuss collaborations between WFPS and MPS. This group recognizes the need for increased access to psychologists, particularly to psychologists who have experience working with first responders. We also met with Vince Savoia, the Founder and Executive Director of The Tema Center Memorial Trust (based on Toronto), Canada's leading provider of peer-support, family assistance, and training for public safety and military personnel dealing with Operational Stress and PTSD.
- Dr. Teresa Sztaba and I met with Dr. Tamara Buchel, the Executive Director of the Manitoba College of Family Physicians, to discuss opportunities for psychologists and family physicians to work together in various capacities. MPS has been invited to present to family physicians about psychologists (i.e., What does a psychologist do? When is a referral to a psychologist warranted? How does one refer to a psychologist?) in the spring of 2016.
- Dr. Teresa Sztaba and I had several meetings with the Executive Director of Primary Care and the Executive Director of Mental Health and Spiritual Care with Manitoba Health. These meetings have led to an invitation for MPS to be involved in several important initiatives in the near future.

- Dr. John Service (former Executive Director of the Canadian Psychological Association) and I met with the Minister of Healthy Living and Seniors, Deanne Crothers, to discuss various models of healthcare and opportunities for psychologists to work with other professionals to provide better services to all Manitobans.
- I was invited by the office of the Minister of Healthy Living and Seniors to attend a Press Conference to kick off Mental Health week. It was announced that the government has allocated \$2 million for child and youth mental health.
- Dr. Jon Gerrard, on behalf of the Manitoba Liberal Party, again raised the issue of access to psychological services in Question Period, on numerous occasions throughout the year. He has consulted with MPS to obtain information related to psychological services.
- MPS is a non-partisan organization and we have requested meetings with all political parties to discuss the mental and behavioural health needs of Manitobans and psychology's role in helping to improve access.
- Dr. Moira Somers has participated on the Workplace Psychological Health and Safety Advisory Group chaired by Manitoba Health and SAFE Work Manitoba.
- Dr. Teresa Sztaba and I met with Bill Tholl, Founding President and CEO of HealthCareCAN (formerly the merged Association of Canadian Academic Healthcare Organizations and the Canadian Healthcare Association) to discuss leadership and strategies in advocating for increasing access to psychological services.
- On behalf of MPS, I was invited to participate in round table discussions with government and other key stakeholders regarding the mental health needs in Canada. This event was hosted by the Mental Health Commission of Canada and the content of the all discussions occurring across the country will be compiled into a document.
- Dr. Teresa Sztaba, Dr. Colleen Murphy, and I have attended events hosted by the Canadian Mental Health Association.
- Dr. Colleen Murphy and I attended a public forum hosted by the Schizophrenia Society of Manitoba.
- Dr. Jo Ann Unger and Dr. Colleen Murphy are representing MPS on the Manitoba Mental Health Alliance and are joined by various peer support associations, such as the Canadian Mental Health Association (CMHA), the Anxiety Disorders Association of Manitoba (ADAM), the Schizophrenia Association, and the Mood Disorders Association.
- Dr. Jo Ann Unger and Dr. Bruce Tefft represented MPS at Recovery Working Days with Dr. Mike Slade, hosted by Manitoba Health.
- Dr. Pam Holens and other experienced psychologists who treat individuals diagnosed with PTSD commented on the Stakeholder Consultation Document: Amending the Workers Compensation Act to Provide Presumptive Coverage for Post-Traumatic Stress Disorder.
- Dr. Alicia Ordonez facilitated two separate focus groups with the Hispanic community and with the deaf community to learn about their experiences with access to and interactions with psychologists.

MPS and Syrian Refugees

Following the federal election, the Prime Minister's Office agreed to welcome 25,000 Syrian refugees to Canada. This initiative is relevant to psychologists because the federal government announced that Syrian refugees will be eligible to receive funding for ten sessions of psychotherapy from registered psychologists. MPS has been working closely with Manitoba Health and other key stakeholders to identify services, resources, and pathways to care for refugees.

Given the importance of these services, MPS has facilitated a number of initiatives to better equip MPS members in offering services to Syrian refugees, including:

- Sponsoring a 6-hour workshop on Cultural Competency
- Providing links to a list of resources and webinars directed at psychologists interested in providing culturally competent care to diverse groups (compiled by the Canadian Psychological Association)
- Providing information on the process to be recognized by Medavie Blue Cross as a registered provider
- Adding 'Immigrants and Refugees' to the Referral Directory Search Options (Populations, Areas of Expertise)
- Working with Manitoba Health to identify a user-friendly way for psychologists to access interpreters for sessions
- Chairing a working group and collaborating with the Department of Clinical Health Psychology, the WRHA Child and Adolescent Treatment Service, and other key stakeholders to identify appropriate pathways to mental health care

Representation on National Associations

I continue in the position as the Chair of the Council of Professional Associations of Psychologists (CPAP) and the Practice Directorate (Canadian Psychological Association (CPA)). In these roles, I also sit on the board of CPA, on the Professional Affairs Committee (CPA), and on the Professional Liability Insurance Steering Committee.

As you know, CPAP (i.e., whose members include all the provincial/territorial fraternal associations of psychologists) and CPA are the sponsors of the BMS Insurance Program. We are very excited to be moving to a Professional Model which, over the next few years, will result in a surplus of funds to be used for designated purposes, including direct support to the program (e.g., premium reductions), investments in risk management activities (e.g., workshops, webinars), and other expenses related to the management of the program (e.g., legal fees related to the program). I was involved in the review of the products offered by insurance markets with CPA and our insurance broker, BMS. The number of members in this program continues to grow and we are pleased with the excellent benefits of the program and the ease with online or telephone renewal. All insured members will be receiving renewal notices shortly.

The Practice Directorate is comprised of CPAP members, though it falls under the umbrella of CPA. The Practice Directorate hosted a leadership conference on January 15 and 16, 2016 in Ottawa and funding was allocated to each association to invite additional board members to participate. Dr. Teresa Sztaba and Dr. Colleen Murphy (Member-at-Large, MPS) joined me at this conference. This conference was facilitated by the Advocacy School

and focused on various aspects of leadership, including influencing public policy and policy engagement, developing an appropriate 'ask,' learning about strategic inquiry, and developing a compelling narrative. The content of this conference was excellent and we have already used strategies and templates in our government advocacy in Manitoba. As a follow-up to the conference, a number of board members will be participating in a webinar on 'Strategic Inquiry.'

Additional contributions that resulted in my role as the Chair of the PD included writing a commentary in *Journal Santé Mentale au Québec* based on my presentation at a conference focused on "Improving Access to Psychotherapy across Quebec and Canada" and joining Dr. Maxine Holmqvist (MPS member) as a co-guest editor for a Special Issue of *Canadian Psychology* entitled, "PSYCHOLOGY IN CANADA: OPPORTUNITIES AND CHALLENGES."

Over the next year, the PD will be participating in a strategic planning session to review its mandate and terms of reference and to identify initiatives that would benefit most (if not all) fraternal psychology associations across Canada. We are currently in the process of interviewing for a psychologist Director position for the PD and we hope that this individual will be able to coordinate these initiatives and support the excellent advocacy work being done across the country.

MPS was also represented at the American Psychological Association Practice Organization's State Leadership Conference in Washington, DC from February 26 – March 1. Dr. Teresa Sztaba, Dr. Jeffery Harvey (Communications Director), Dr. Alicia Ordonez (Diversity Representative), and I had an opportunity to network with and learn from psychology associations across Canada and the United States. The seminars focused on building stronger associations and innovative strategies to advocate for psychologists and psychological services.

Acknowledgements

More than ever, it is because of the board's dedication that MPS is being invited to meetings with government and other key stakeholders. This board is proud to be the voice of psychology in the province and grateful that the members have entrusted such an important role to this group. Personally, I would like to thank the entire board for their tireless efforts in promoting access to psychology and in educating the public and professionals about the role of the psychologist.

I would like to congratulate Dr. Lesley Ritchie (Director of Continuing Education) and her husband on the birth of their daughter, Kensington. Even during her maternity leave, Lesley has organized two MPS workshops. Dr. Lisa Thouas (Member-at-Large) and Ms. Julie Erickson (Student Director) have improved communication by sending out eblasts to inform members of MPS activities as well as articles and resources that might be of benefit to psychologists. Dr. Jeff Harvey has organized Psychology Month activities, served as a media liaison, and continues to organize public presentations for 'Psychology Year.' There are exciting events planned for 2016!

Dr. Moira Somers has participated on an advisory committee with Manitoba Health, organized the Cultural Competency workshop, and continues to be available to help with initiatives as they arise. Dr. Alicia Ordonez's important work in conducting focus groups with the Hispanic and deaf communities was recognized by the APA Practice Organization and she was invited to participate as a Diversity Representative at the State Leadership Conference in Washington. Dr. Jason Ediger continues to provide valuable input and ideas at our board meetings. As our secretary, Dr. Pam Holens keeps us on track and accountable of our responsibilities and tasks. She has also been very active in working with the Winnipeg Fire and Paramedics Service and other

activities. Though new to the board, Dr. Colleen Murphy has participated in various activities to build relationships with other organizations. We welcome back Dr. Leanne Mak in the role as treasurer. She has been stellar in ensuring that your membership fees are being used in a responsible and effective manner. We also welcome Dr. Jennifer Volk, who joined the board in January. We look forward to benefitting from her unique community-based and programming perspective, which is in keeping with some of our advocacy initiatives.

I would also like to extend my sincere appreciation to our administrative assistant, Ms. Heidi Tucker, our webmaster, Mr. Mokhtar Joundi, and our bookkeeper, Ms. Liisa Burgas, all of whom work to ensure that the association functions smoothly. I continue to marvel at Dr. Teresa Sztaba's energy and dedication to MPS. She works effectively and efficiently for our members and for the mental and behavioural health needs of all Manitobans. It is truly a pleasure to work with her.

It is often difficult to say good-bye to departing board members. I would like to thank Dr. Rehman Abdulrehman for his contributions to psychology advocacy locally, nationally, and internationally. His accomplishments with the Mind Your Mental Health campaign and connecting with peer support organizations increased the profile of psychology. I wish him much success in new and exciting changes in his career and in his involvement with the International Committee of APA.

Our Student Director, Ms. Julie Erickson, has been stellar in her contributions to the board. She has been involved in the updating the website, organizing the eblasts, assisting with numerous AGMs, organizing the student poster competition, and being available to participate in projects as the need arose. I wish her well as she leaves on internship at the Centre for Addiction and Mental Health in Toronto and I hope that she returns to Winnipeg to join the board once again.

After 16 years of serving on the board in various capacities, Dr. Leonard Greenwood, has decided not to renew his term on the board. I am grateful for the opportunity to have worked with and learned from him for almost 10 years. At first, I denied his request to leave the board, however, it was only with the agreement that he will continue to consult that I begrudgingly consented to his request. I wish him all the best in his future endeavours.

I would like to take this opportunity to thank all members of MPS for your dedication to the profession and to the wellbeing of Manitobans. The Manitoba Psychology community is small, but strong. National organizations have described us as 'punching above our weight class' and when issues arise in other provincial associations, they have questioned, "WWMD" (i.e., "What would Manitoba do?"). Manitoba has been well-represented in national and international psychology communities. It is for these reasons that I invite members to join us for the 50th Anniversary of MPS in 2016. The board is busy planning for a Fall Gala event and I look forward to celebrating this momentous occasion with our members.

Respectfully submitted,

Dr. Andrea Piotrowski, Ph.D., C. Psych.

MPS President