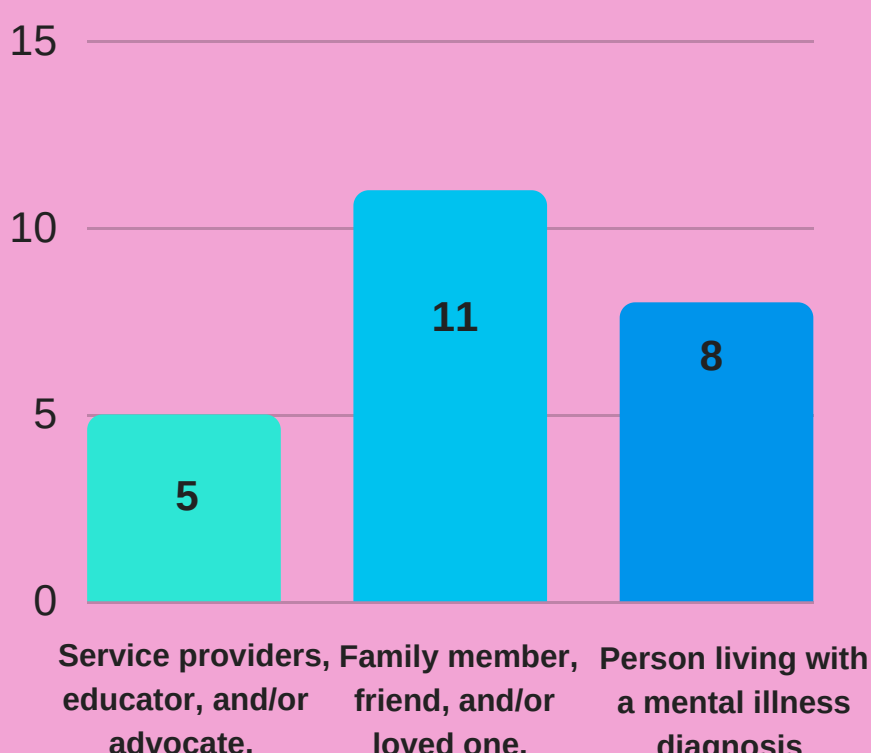


OTTAWA FAMILY MENTAL HEALTH CAFÉ 2018 PROJECT SUMMARY

On September 15, 2018, the Family Mental Health Research Project made its second stop in Ottawa, ON. This study is led by Prof. Charmaine Williams and was hosted by the Canadian Mental Health Association, Ottawa Branch (CMHA Ottawa). Thank you for joining the conversation!

WHO WAS IN THE ROOM?



FEEDBACK FROM YOU!

- 100% **strongly agreed or agreed** that the topics discussed were relevant.
- 100% **strongly agreed or agreed** that the café was well organized and planned.
- 100% **strongly agreed or agreed** that the facilitators were engaging.
- 85% **strongly agreed or agreed** that they would recommend this café to others
- 57% **strongly agreed or agreed** that they met people at this café that they would like to connect with in the future

ROOM FOR IMPROVEMENT

- More time needed (suggestion: all day)
- Get more participants to attend
- Send some information before the day – what the general questions may be so we can be prepared.

KEY AREAS OF CONVERSATION

'CAREGIVING FAMILIES'

- Bigger load to support
- Isolating
- Blurred Boundaries
- Family is not always available



'CAREGIVER' ROLE

- Feel responsible to educate other family members
- Also need to receive support and care
- Feeling isolated

'CARE RECEIVER' ROLE

- Feelings of guilt
- Feeling isolated
- People who "care" can harm

GROUP'S REFLECTION: These traditional terms (i.e. caregiving family, caregiver, and care receiver) sets polarized roles. A better way to address these relationships is the term **'SUPPORTER'**.

CHALLENGES

- When you want to give support, but the person does not want to receive that support
- Limited resources (i.e. lack of psychiatrists in Ontario and practical support)
- Stigma and shame
- Denial in families (i.e. family member(s) who don't believe in mental illness)
- Lack of communication and follow-up between professionals and families
- Finances and housing
- Life goes on...

HELPFUL STRATEGIES

- Mutual understanding, communication and collaboration
- Recognize and celebrate moments in the recovery journey
- Having a plan for when you're discharged from the hospital.
- Peer support
- Access to support during and post-crisis (i.e. psychologist, GP, distress line)
- Person-centered support
- Wellness Recovery Action Plan (WRAP)
- Hope and having something to live for...

WHAT DO FAMILIES NEED?

- Educating health professionals, public institutions, and the police (more general knowledge about mental illness) .
- Education/courses on *how* to advocate
- Stable programs in the community
- Access to flexible paid work that includes benefits
- Person-centered system navigation and a resource network for families
- Respite
- Stable housing
- Reduce stigma
- Better understanding of the relationship between mental health and gender.
- More men involved in the "helping professions."
- Prevention-based interventions
- More funding
- More accessible and culturally appropriate services.