



The Canadian Coalition for Seniors' Mental Health

Lessons Learned from the Promoting Seniors' Mental Health Policy Lens

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The CCSMH is committed to

Promoting the mental health of seniors by connecting people, ideas & resources.

Strategic Priority Areas include:

- Education
- Advocacy / Public awareness
- Research
- Best Practices - Assessment & Treatment
- Family Caregivers
- Human Resources



Strategic Goals of the CCSMH

- Ensure that seniors' mental health is recognized as a key Canadian health and wellness issue
- Facilitate initiatives related to enhancing & promoting seniors' mental health resources
- Ensure growth and sustainability of the CCSMH



CCSMH Involvement with the SMHPL

- CCSMH - member of the SMHPL Advisory Group since the project began in 2005.
- CCSMH has advocated for the use of the policy lens in all policy / program development.
- The CCSMH's mandate and focus is already on seniors' mental health, but we're not perfect.



The CCSMH Guideline Project

- Funding awarded in January 2005 by Public Health Agency of Canada, Population Health Fund
- Goal: to lead and facilitate the development of evidence-based recommendations for best practice guidelines in areas of seniors' mental health.



Creation of Canada's **FIRST** National, Evidence-based Guidelines for Seniors' Mental Health

- Assessment & Treatment of **Delirium**
- Assessment & Treatment of **Depression**
- Assessment & Treatment of **Mental Health Issues in LTC Homes (with a focus on mood & behaviour)**
- Assessment of **Suicide Risk** and Prevention of **Suicide**



Relation to the Seniors Mental Health Policy Lens

- The guidelines are completed and recommendations are moving to practice and policy across the country.
- Hope that the recommendations would act as policy foundations for individual / provincial institutions.
- Do they meet the policy lens standards?



A Closer Look ... Where We Could Improve

- Has the policy been developed in collaboration with those who will be most affected?
 - Yes and no. It was a struggle to find appropriate consumer involvement. Caregiver representation was the compromise.
 - * Senior involvement is an area for improvement.



A Closer Look ... Where We Could Improve

- Does the policy address the diverse needs, circumstances and aspirations of vulnerable sub-groups within the seniors' population?
 - Guidelines don't necessarily discuss the unique needs / considerations for diverse groups (i.e. gays and lesbians, ethnocultural minorities, etc.)
 - * Special populations is an area for improvement.



A Closer Look ... Where We Could Improve

- Does the policy consider accessibility?
 - Guidelines have taken the perspective of care in the ‘ideal world’ but in many cases this makes recommendations too expensive or not accessible by smaller institutions with limited resources.



What We Did Well ... Our Strengths

- When advocating for the use of guidelines, the following components (as described by the policy lens) strengthen its basis for use:
 - Specific focus on mental health and mental illness, including cognitive impairments
 - One in particular focused on LTC homes (as a special population)
 - Took a biopsychosocial approach which came from our strong multidisciplinary teams
 - Promotes seniors' social participation and / or relationships



What We Did Well ... Our Strengths

- Does the policy support seniors' dignity?
 - YES!
 - One of the many goals of the guidelines is to ensure that seniors are assessed, treated and managed appropriately and respectfully in the mental health system.
 - Use of restraints is a good example of considering the individual vs. collective needs.



What We Did Well ...

Our Strengths

- Does the policy support seniors' independence, self determination?
 - YES
 - Guidelines aim to reduce social isolation
 - Information in the guidelines helps facilitate choices for seniors' and their caregivers/families.



Taking the Lessons to Heart

- As the CCSMH Guideline Project moves forward in implementation, we need to focus on our areas for improvement and where our current strengths lie.
- Pilot projects currently under way across Canada focus on moving the Guidelines into standards and policies.



An Example: The Baycrest Implementation Project

Purpose of the study:

- To pilot implementation of LTC Guideline recommendations on 3 units in the Nursing Home at Baycrest
- To evaluate feasibility and outcome of implementation
- To contribute to and improve mental health services
- To improve inter-professional practice (IPP)
- To develop recommendations for guideline implementation



An Example: The Baycrest Implementation Project

- All implementation is based on the feedback of residents - what they would like changed to improve quality of life as a resident in the long term care home.
- Participatory Action Research – improving on involving seniors in our work!



Final Thoughts

- The use of the Policy Lens has helped the CCSMH to reflect on its program development, in particular the National Guidelines Project.
- We're not perfect...but the lens has helped us to explore areas we need to improve and allowed us to feel confident in the strengths of our work.



Visit our website to download the guidelines – www.ccsmh.ca

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health by connecting
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Promouvoir la santé mentale
des personnes âgées en
reliant les personnes, les
idées et les ressources

CCSMH

Canadian Coalition for
Seniors Mental Health

English
Welcome



CCSMPA

Coalition Canadienne
Pour la Santé Mentale
des Personnes Âgées

Français
Bienvenue