North BEAT NEWSLETTER

October 2020

WHAT'S INSIDE

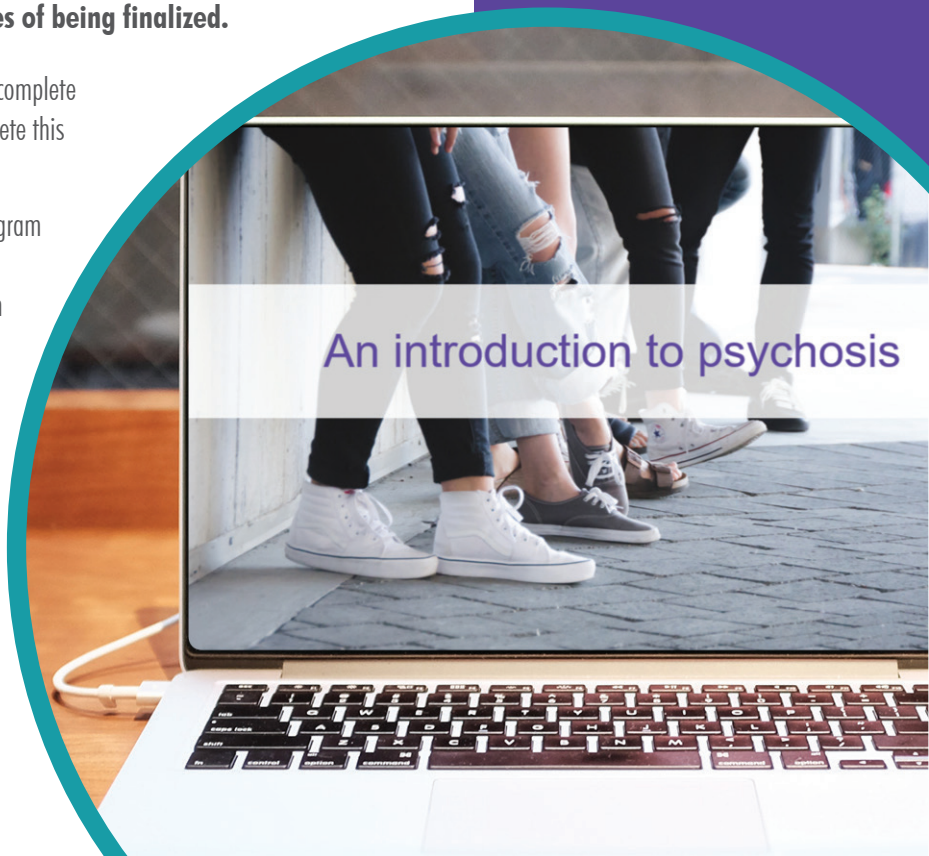
Coordinating Team Update...2
Meet NorthBeat's New Staff...2
Knowledge Exchange MAYNet...3
Youth-Led Mental Health Podcast...3
Evaluation of Collaborative...4

eLearning Modules

NorthBEAT and the eLearning design and development team are currently working on finalizing our three-module learning series. Module 1, *Introduction to Psychosis*, was tested by a small group of members and content was finalized in the spring of 2019. Module 2, *Screening for Psychosis*, has also been completed, with content from Module 3, *Supporting Recovery*, currently in the stages of being finalized.

In addition to these three modules, we will start the groundwork to complete a fourth module for Primary Care Providers. We are hoping to complete this content by September 2021.

As well as creating the modules, we are preparing an eLearning program evaluation to measure how effective the training is in meeting our funded objective as a Collaborative to shift the system for youth with psychosis in Northwestern Ontario. Once final approval is received from our ethics review boards, the modules will be released in the next month or so. Participants will evaluate the modules during the months of November until February, and we plan to conduct focus groups and interviews once initial evaluations have been completed. These results will be ready to report by September 2021. If you are an active participant in NorthBEAT Collaborative meetings but have yet to sign on, please get in touch if you would like to be part of the initial release. The modules will be available to the public in December 2021.



Coordinating Team Update

It is with mixed emotions, we share that Carole Lem, NorthBEAT's Knowledge Facilitator, and Doug Eddington, NorthBEAT's Engagement Coordinator, have accepted new positions outside of the NorthBEAT Collaborative. Carole has accepted a position at Thunder Bay District Social Services Administration Board (TBDSSAB) as their Communications and Engagement Officer. Doug accepted the position of Service Navigator with Autism Ontario.

Both Carole and Doug have been instrumental in NorthBEAT's journey, from the early days of the NorthBEAT Research project, onwards to the NorthBEAT Collaborative. We will miss their passion and commitment to NorthBEAT. We are thrilled for both of them and wish them well in their new endeavours.

While we will miss Carole and Doug, we are also excited to announce three new staff. We would like to introduce Stephanie Schurr, Tixiana Ferrari Rovira, and Simone Smith.

MEET NORTHBEAT'S NEW STAFF

STEPHANIE SCHURR

Starting this fall, Stephanie joins NorthBEAT as the new Coordinator. Stephanie has been working as an occupational therapist with St. Joseph's Care Group since 2008 in the Outpatient Neurology and Mental Health Outpatient Programs. With her educational background in Psychology and a Clinical Doctorate in Occupational Therapy, Stephanie is a great addition to the team. She is looking forward to applying her research and knowledge translation skills to work with the Collaborative.

TIXIANA FERRARI ROVIRA

Tixiana joined NorthBEAT in February of 2020 as a Research Intern, supported by funding from Northern Ontario Heritage Fund Corporation (NOHFC). Tixiana has experience working with marginalized youth and is looking forward to growing her knowledge of youth mental health. She is hoping to apply her research and youth engagement skills to help improve access to mental health services for youth in Northwestern Ontario.

SIMONE SMITH

Simone has recently joined us this past summer as our Youth Researcher, supported by the Canada Summer Jobs Program. Through her experiences during her clinical placement and while conducting research at the Thunder Bay Regional Health Sciences Centre, she has developed interest in learning more about the disparities that people face while living in rural and remote settings.

Knowledge Exchange
MAYNet

Earlier this year, we received one-year funding from Canadian Institutes of Health Research (CIHR) to conduct a mixed-methods approach to lay the groundwork for a national youth-friendly mental health and addiction services strategy. This project is called Mental Health and Addictions Youth Network (MAYNet).

MAYNet will connect organizations and champions across Canada to explore what youth-friendliness looks like in the Canadian mental health and addictions context. The World Health Organization (WHO) released its Adolescent-Friendly Health Services Framework (AFHS) in 2002, which officially highlighted the different needs of adolescents to the attention of healthcare providers around the world. In response to this framework, Ambresin and colleagues revisited the WHO AFHS in 2013 with an emphasis on youth perspective and expanded the definition of youth to include youth 12- 25 years. Despite the availability of AFHS resources, youth-friendliness remains a poorly defined concept in Canada's youth mental health and addictions services. MAYNet will engage and empower the youth lived-experience voice and strengthen youth partnerships in mental health and addictions research using Youth Participatory Action methods.

In order to continue the work of MAYNet past the one-year funding, we applied for funding through the TD Ready Challenge for the development of Quality Standards for Youth-Friendliness in Mental Health and Addictions Services (YFMHS). We hope to continue the work of MAYNet and adapt existing quality indicators for youth-friendliness, mental health and addictions services, and virtual care into one comprehensive quality standard that includes a framework, implementation guide, and a measurement tool. As well, our team will engage youth in participatory action research to get the full picture of what Canadian youth want to see from their mental health and addictions services. We will hear back about the funding decision in November.

CIHR IRSC

YOUTH-LED MENTAL HEALTH PODCAST

NorthBEAT has recently applied for funding through the Canada Post Community Foundation to support the production of a youth-led, six-episode podcast series about mental health.

There are a few goals we are hoping to achieve through this podcast.

To begin, we want to assist in building capacity within our team and the YAG – this is a great opportunity for all of us to develop new skills with technology, mental health literacy education, and marketing.

As well, we hope that this podcast will be more relevant and engaging to our youth audiences as all of the education will be youth-led and therefore youth-focused. With guidance from NorthBEAT staff and our knowledge about community partners, we will ensure that all information will be accurate and reflect best practices.

Ultimately, through this podcast, we are aiming to address the barriers to accessing youth mental health services and create an educational resource that will specifically help youth living with psychosis in Northwestern Ontario.

We are looking forward to hearing about the results of this grant next month (November 2020).

Coming up:
Evaluating NorthBEAT's first two years

NorthBEAT has just received REB approval to evaluate our first two years of the NorthBEAT Collaborative. This work is required by our funders (Ontario Trillium Foundation – Youth Opportunities Fund), who arranged for Student's Commission of Canada (SCC) to complete the evaluation. Interviews will be conducted by SCC and will include Collaborative core team members and signed partners from across the region. This information will be gathered through both individual interviews and focus groups to reflect on the first two years of the Collaborative.

From this new evaluation, we are hoping to understand both what was achieved and how we can improve. We are specifically interested in the impact the Collaborative has had on youth and want to understand the impact that we have made, as well as learn about future initiatives and areas of need.

Questions? Please contact:

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BARRIERS TO EARLY North BEAT ASSESSMENT & TREATMENT

North BEAT COLLABORATIVE

SUPPORTED BY ST. JOSEPH'S CARE GROUP & ONTARIO TRILLIUM FOUNDATION

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