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Bonjour and Hello!

The purpose of this newsletter is to inform you about the activities of the Centre of Research on Community Services at the University of Ottawa.

In presenting this material, it will become evident that our community has a strong commitment to improving practice. A variety of agencies go well beyond the routine provision of service delivery, committing themselves to the rigors of evaluation research enquiry, to further shape and improve outcomes for

Ce bulletin de nouvelles a pour but de vous informer des plus récentes activités du Centre de recherche sur les services communautaires de l'Université d'Ottawa. Les articles qui suivent mettent en lumière le fait que notre communauté est fortement engagée à améliorer ses pratiques. De nombreux organismes vont bien au-delà de la prestation de services en se soumettant aux méthodes rigoureuses de la recherche évaluative afin de modérer et d'améliorer leurs résultats auprès de leur clientèle. Ce bulletin de nouvelles présente certaines de ces activités évaluatives telles que l'évaluation

the persons they serve.

This newsletter highlights some of these activities, which include, the evaluation of intensive case management, "behind the scenes work" that goes into the development of public report card, an examination of what it means to be culturally competent at the organizational level, and much more.

It is our hope that this material will not only inform, but become a

de suivi communautaire intensif, le travail sous-jacent à l'élaboration de bulletins sur des rapports publics et l'examen de ce qu'est la compétence culturelle à un niveau organisationnel.

Nous espérons que ce bulletin va non seulement vous informer, mais qu'il deviendra aussi un moyen d'échanger des informations sur les projets communautaires et de mobiliser le savoir collectif afin d'influencer les pratiques. Nous vous invitons chaleureusement à nous faire parvenir vos commentaires concernant ce bulletin de nouvelles ou toute idée innovatrice

vehicle for sharing information on community projects and mobilizing knowledge to impact practice. We would love to hear your comments about the newsletter and any innovative ideas you have about how the Centre can be further engaged with the community. Please provide your comments to David Vincent at crsc@uottawa.ca.

Our mission is to conduct research and provide training that will contribute to the development of effective health and social services for vulnerable populations in the community.

sur la façon dont le CRSC peut s'engager davantage auprès de la communauté. Veuillez SVP faire parvenir vos commentaires à M. David Vincent à l'adresse électronique suivante : crsc@uottawa.ca

Le centre de recherche sur les services communautaires (CRSC) a la mission de faire de la recherche et d'offrir de la formation pour contribuer à l'essor des services sociaux et de santé efficaces destinés aux populations vulnérables au sein des communautés.

THE COMMUNITY MENTAL HEALTH EVALUATION INITIATIVE IN OTTAWA: EVALUATING INTENSIVE CASE MANAGEMENT FOR PERSONS WITH SEVERE MENTAL ILLNESS WHO ARE HOMELESS

Tim Aubry, Doug Angus, Brad Cousins, Robert Flynn, Pamela Prince, Marnie Smith, & Heather Smith Fowler, Centre for Research on Community Services, University of Ottawa & CMHA Ottawa Branch

A two-year study called Evaluation of Intensive Case Management for Persons with Severe Mental Illness Who Are Homeless has recently been completed by the Canadian Mental Health Association (CMHA/Ottawa) and the Centre for Research on Community Services, University of Ottawa. The study compared the service use and outcomes of clients receiving intensive case management (ICM) with those receiving standard care (SC). Final results are presented in this newsletter. We wish to thank the many people who agreed to fund and participate in this study, as well as the staff at CMHA who worked tirelessly throughout the process. The study represents the Ottawa project in the Community Mental Health Evaluation Initiative (CMHEI). CMHEI is the first-ever multisite assessment of community mental health programs in Ontario. The CMHEI is a partnership of the Ontario Mental Health Foundation, Ontario; and the Ontario Ministry of Health and Long-Term Care, which provided more than \$3.5 million over six years to fund the project.

Who were the participants in the study?

Upon entry to the study, participants had to meet certain criteria. They all had severe and persistent mental illness and many had complex needs, such as concurrent substance abuse problems. All had experienced housing difficulties and most were socially isolated with few resources. Twenty-five percent of the participants had been living on the streets or in shelters 9 months prior to the start of the study. At baseline, 55% of the 147 study participants were over

40, 18% were youth (16 to 24 years) and there were roughly equal numbers of men and women. Virtually all were single and receiving social assistance. Almost half of the participants experienced their first hospitalization for mental illness by age 25. Over 48% of the participants were diagnosed with schizophrenia and 52% with a mood disorder. At 24-months, there were 103 active participants (53 ICM and 50 standard care).

What is intensive case management and how does it compare to standard care?

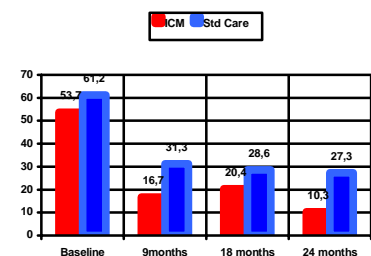
ICM provided clients with many client-directed case management services, including outreach, assessment, service planning and coordination, counselling, advocacy, crisis intervention and long-term follow-up. ICM helps clients to achieve their personal goals, build informal supports, access community resources, and links clients with treatment and rehabilitation services such as social recreation, employment programs, and supportive housing. SC is any community service for which the client is eligible. This may include outreach, referrals, and/or short-term support to help clients meet their basic needs (housing, financial assistance, clothing, food, medical care), as well as other mental health services. Part of this study involved creating a tool to capture the distinguishing features of ICM (as opposed to more traditional ACT services). This tool, called the Case Management Key Component Profile, determined the extent to which ICM was being delivered to the target population in the intended manner, and made it easier to compare functions from one case management program to another.

At 9 months, it was found that, on average, ICM workers reported a higher percentage implementation of five basic components of ICM than workers delivering outreach services: meeting the clients' basic needs, improving both formal and informal connections in the clients' life, improving access to services, and developing skills for goal achievement.

After two years, how are participants doing?

After two years of service, there were very few differences between intensive case management and standard care on outcomes in the areas of community adaptation, clinical functioning, or subjective quality of life. Both groups experienced significant improvements in ability to live in the community and housing stability and a significant decrease in having contact with the legal system (i.e., arrested, jailed, or on probation). ICM clients did show a lower level of housing instability than SC clients at the 24 month follow-up. No gains were apparent over time for either of the groups in terms of returning to school or re-entering the workforce

% with Unstable Housing (Imminent loss of housing or 3+ moves in 9 mos.)

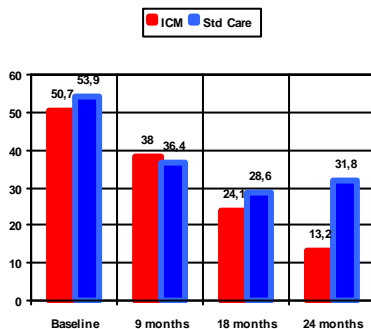


Both groups of clients also experienced improvements in symptom distress, lower rates of drug use, better community functioning, and greater life satisfaction over time both globally and in relation to specific life areas (i.e., living situation, daily activities, family relations, health). It should be noted that most of the changes occurred in the first nine months of the study, but some continue to 18 and 24 months. An area in which some differences between groups emerged was in service use, namely in hospitalizations and medication adherence (fewer hospitalizations and better medication adherence in the ICM group compared to the SC group over the course of the 24-month period of the study).

In conclusion, intensive case management and standard care that includes outreach support of varying intensity and duration produce significant improvements in the areas of community adaptation, clinical functioning, and subjective quality of life. Differences between the two groups in the areas of housing stability, hospitalization and medication adherence suggests that clients may benefit on a longer-term basis from availability of psychosocial support through ICM. Psychosocial support appears to improve and stabilize a person's functioning in the community allowing him or her to meet basic needs, access services, and prevent crises leading to hospitalizations. It may be that housing stability serves as the foundation on which consumers begin to rebuild their lives.

“It may be that housing stability serves as the foundation on which consumers begin to rebuild their lives.”

% Hospitalized (Past 9 mos.)



ÉVALUATION DES BÉNÉFICES ASSOCIÉS AUX SERVICES OFFERTS PAR TEL-AIDE OUTAOUAIS ET LE CENTRE DE DÉTRESSE D'OTTAWA ET LA RÉGION

Tel-Aide Outaouais (TAO) et le Centre de détresse d'Ottawa (DCO) sont deux organismes sans but lucratif offrant un service d'écoute téléphonique dans la région d'Ottawa et de l'Outaouais. Ces deux organismes, en partenariat avec le Centre de recherche sur les services communautaires à l'Université d'Ottawa, ont collaboré du mois de juillet 2003 au mois d'août 2005 à l'élaboration et à l'implantation d'un système d'évaluation interne de leur service d'écoute téléphonique et de leur programme de bénévolat. C'est Mme Myriam Lebel qui fut chargée de coordonner ce projet de recherche sous la supervision de Tim Aubry et Caroline Andrew. Le système a d'abord été

élaboré, puis testé à deux reprises et il a finalement été appliqué à grande échelle au sein des organismes. Deux rapports finaux discutant respectivement de l'évaluation des services et du programme de bénévolat des deux organismes sont sur le point d'être finalisés et traduits dans les deux langues officielles.

De part sa nature innovatrice, le système d'évaluation des services d'écoute téléphonique a suscité beaucoup d'intérêt de la part des membres de l'Association des centres d'écoute du Québec (ACETQ). Mme Lebel a participé cet automne à titre de consultante à une évaluation des services

d'écoute téléphonique de Tel-Aide Montréal. Cette évaluation a été effectuée par Mme Maryse Lavoie, étudiante à la maîtrise de l'ENAP, Mme Maryse Lavoie, grâce aux outils du système d'évaluation développés pour TAO et DCO. Des représentants de l'ACÉQ examinent présentement la possibilité d'étendre l'évaluation des services d'écoute téléphoniques à d'autres centres d'écoute du Québec.

Pour de plus amples informations, veuillez communiquer avec Myriam Lebel, à l'adresse électronique suivante : mlebel@uottawa.ca

“Deux rapports finaux discutant respectivement de l'évaluation des services et du programme de bénévolat des deux organismes sont sur le point...”

This project, funded by the United Way of Ottawa, provided an overview of the literature on report card methodology to assist the Alliance to End Homelessness in the development of Ottawa's first report card on homelessness, which was released in March 2005.

Reports cards, also referred to as *status reports, profile reports, and community indicator reports*, appear to have increased in popularity in the past decade. The report card is one of many tools that is used to measure organizational performance. More specifically, report cards provide an overview or snapshot of a particular system or program and permit others, including the general public to assess its performance. They are also a tool for monitoring and tracking changes, facilitating public

education, accountability, and as an information tool to facilitate informed decision-making.

The stages of report card development that have been described in the research are variable, but typically include:

- Planning and staffing;
- An evaluation of other report cards;
- A literature review;
- Information gathering in the community;
- Identification of existing data;
- Indicator selection;
- Data collection and analysis;
- A review of report card components by community experts and advisory groups;

- Report preparation;
- Final approval by the key report card team members;
- Dissemination and translation of findings into action; and,
- Evaluation of the report card.

Three types of report cards have been suggested by Gormley and Weimer (1999).

1. The scientific report card - based on empirical data, it is methodologically strong, comprehensive, and valid.
2. The popular report card - seeks to communicate relevant information clearly and effectively.
3. The hybrid report card - combines scientific rigor with effective communication.

THE METHODOLOGY BEHIND REPORT CARDS

Julie Beaulac, Laura Goodine, & Tim Aubry

Continued

“Report cards provide an overview or snapshot of a particular system or program and permit others, including the general public to assess its performance.”

A key facilitator for the development of a successful report card is the participation of a variety of community group and organizations. On the other hand, identified obstacles include problems with data collection and the lack of existing data. Furthermore, the process of developing and

disseminating a report card is a timely and expensive process.

The development of the report card is only the first step toward change. In order to produce true change, effective knowledge translation must take place.

For an example of a report

card, see “*Experiencing Homelessness: The First Report Card on Homelessness in Ottawa, 2005*”

For more information on this project contact the Centre at crsc@uottawa.ca.

ORGANIZATIONAL CULTURAL COMPETENCY

Marcela Olavarria. Julie Beaulac. Alexandre Belanaer. Marta Youna. & Tim Aubrv

This project represents a collaborative effort between CRCS and the Centretown Community Health Centre (CCHC). The objectives of the study were to:

1. To review the literature on organizational cultural competence and identify a set of standards that define a culturally competent organization that could be used as point of reference for CCHC.
2. To identify and review the most relevant self-assessment tools of organizational cultural competency for the standards as identified in objective one.

What is organizational cultural competence and why is it important?

Organizational cultural competence is defined as the ability of health care providers and organizations to provide effective care to culturally diverse populations. A culturally competent organization has many advantages compared to an

organization that has not integrated cultural competencies, including improved efficiency, satisfaction, and quality of care and improved health outcomes for minority and underserved populations. Importantly, cultural competence occurs along a continuum ranging from low to high achievement of competence. The assessment of organizational cultural competence is a continuous process that is meant to help the organization plan future objectives to move the organization along the cultural competence continuum.

Standards for organizational cultural competency

The identification of cultural competent standards for an organization such as CCHC allows for a self-assessment of organizational cultural competency. A standard relates to a specific criterion for the purpose of comparison, monitoring, and evaluation in cultural competency performance. Standards can be mandatory or optional. The mandatory nature of standards, however, promotes the institutionalization of cultural

competence.

The culturally competent standards identified for CCHC have been organized into five domains:

1. *Organizational norms, principles, and policies:* the norms, principles, and policies of the organization, such as the inclusion of cultural competencies in the mission statement of the organization, leadership commitment to a culturally competent organization, and the presence of an advisory committee for cultural competence.
2. *Asset and need identification research related to cultural competence:* the identification of both the strengths and needs of the population, including the identification of community resources and barriers and issues related to cultural competence.

Continued

3. *Human resources management: policies and practices:* policies and practices related to employees of the organization, such as the representation of the target population at all levels of employment within the organization.
4. *Services and service delivery:* culturally competent services and service delivery involve the adaptation of services to meet the needs of diverse clientele such as extended service hours and specific services for different cultural groups.
5. *Community consultation, partnership, and information exchange:* relates to the communication of progress related to cultural competence to consumers and the community at large.

For more information on this project refer to the project reports contact Dr. Tim Aubry at taubry@uottawa.ca

PANEL STUDY ON HOMELESSNESS IN OTTAWA: INTERIM REPORT

As many of our readers are aware, since the summer of 2004 the Centre has been involved in the second phase of the Panel Study on Homelessness with the objective of examining pathways into and out of homelessness by following persons who are homeless in Ottawa over time. The study will attempt to explain factors that distinguish those who successfully exit homelessness from those who remain homeless or experience multiple episodes of homelessness.

To date, 256 interviews have been completed out of the original sample of 412 participants in order to examine the course of homelessness, the factors that help or hinder the exit from homelessness, and the impacts of a changed housing status on their health and well-being.

The research objectives for the second wave are as follows:

1. to test a model of facilitators and obstacles related to exiting homelessness
2. to develop a typology of different courses of homelessness
3. to examine health status change vis-à-vis housing changes

At follow-up, participants were also asked about factors that they perceived as having contributed to their finding housing, and/or impeded their escape from homelessness, the advice they would give to other homeless people who are looking for housing, and what difference being housed has made. Such questions will provide information complementary to the quantitative measures of factors that have had impacts on housing stability.

Respondents were also asked what they found helpful in using health and social services, as well as the sorts of problems they have encountered. Insights may also be gleaned about the characteristics of services that participants perceive as having contributed to measurable incremental changes to health outcomes.

Stay tuned to our website at crsc@uottawa.ca for study results.

This project is funded by the Social Science & Humanities Research Council and the National Homelessness Initiative –Supporting Community Partnerships (administered through the City of Ottawa Housing Branch).



Cristina Bonetta is the Research Coordinator for the Panel Study

DISCOVERY UNIVERSITY: EVALUATION OF THE PILOT COURSE "DISCOVERING FICTION"

Vivien Runnels

Some readers might recall the last edition of the Centre for Research on Community Services' Newsletter article on Discovery University. (Spring 2005) Several people from a number of different organizations in Ottawa had worked to develop and implement a program which offered university-level education to individuals who were homeless or living on low incomes. The first course was offered in the Spring of 2005. It was called "Discovering Fiction," a course in literature, and taught by Dr. Henry Imbleau at the University of Ottawa. At the time of writing, Discovery University is now building on the success of the first program with a second program on Critical Thinking Skills, a philosophy program taught by Dr. Gerry Wilson of Saint Paul University, at the University of Ottawa.

Towards the completion of the pilot course, steps were taken to formally evaluate the implementation of the pilot course, and to make recommendations based on the findings. Clinical psychology doctoral students Leigh Karavasilis, Tiffany Hunt-Shanks, Michele La Roche, and Laura Goodine, in training at the Centre for Research on Community Services, were assisted by Vivien Runnels, CRCS Coordinator at the time, and supervised by Dr. Tim Aubry, Director of CRCS. Specifically, the evaluation focused on the process of selection and accompaniment of students, course content and processes, as well as evaluation of the professor and students' satisfaction with the course. We used a multi-informant, multi-method approach that consisted of individual interviews with students and the professor, and focus groups with tutors and the Discovery University Planning Committee, as well as a review of all documentation associated with the development of the program.

Selected findings

The course process generally corresponded with the planned process. Participant retention was good with 17 of 20 (85%) participants who began the course completing it. Students felt that they were given sufficient information to decide whether the course was a good fit for them, and feedback regarding the information and orientation sessions was generally positive. Students had the opportunity to participate in a non-credit university course that was delivered in a manner that both facilitated their learning, and suited their abilities. Overall, the student feedback about the class format and discussions was positive. Although some role uncertainty was experienced by tutors at the beginning of the program, feedback provided from the professor and students revealed that for those students who had tutors, it was a beneficial and helpful experience. Overall, the student-tutor relationship was characterized as mutually respectful. The professor was pivotal in enabling the students to feel relaxed in all phases of the program, in particular, the classroom setting. The students' perceptions of the professor were overwhelmingly positive. Several students acknowledged both his admirable personal qualities and relational skills. Respect and appreciation was also expressed for his competency, and knowledge of the material. Overall, the participants were highly satisfied with the course. Generally, it went beyond their expectations, they enjoyed it immensely and they had little that they disliked. All of the students responded that the course had greatly impacted either upon their lives or upon their appreciation of English literature.

Some recommendations

The Evaluation team made a number

of recommendations which included continuing to offer information sessions to potential participants and orientation sessions to participants; monitoring people who drop out of the program in order to assess any special needs or considerations that might be addressed in future participant recruitment. It was recommended that course instructors in future courses be experienced teachers who have group facilitation skills as well as effective interpersonal abilities. Given the important role of tutors in fostering a supportive relationship with the students it was recommended that their role was clarified and that they also participated in the orientation sessions. Additionally for tutors it was recommended that they receive training sessions and support from the professor with respect to class content, and clarification of course expectations and goals for both the students and tutors. It was recommended that a tutor training session that focused on expectations and responsibilities, class processes, format and expectations (i.e. assignments), and student/tutor boundaries (i.e. personal/ethical issues) be implemented. It was also recommended that participant satisfaction continue to be assessed in order to appropriately monitor and modify the program where needed.

Discovery University hopes to continue to give individuals an educational opportunity that they might not have otherwise. Heart-felt congratulations are extended to the students of "Discovering Fiction" for their success in the program. Also acknowledged are the Service Commission of the First Baptist Church and the leadership of Marg Eisner and Deborah Dempsey.

Continued

Community Members and organizations are thanked for their contribution of time, skills and resources including Saint Paul University, the students of Ottawa University, the City of Ottawa, the Mission, the Shepherds of Good Hope and Centre 454.

Look for the complete report at the Centre website at CRSC@uottawa.ca

LE BÉNÉVOLAT À L'UNIVERSITÉ D'OTTAWA

Sylvia Grznarova (3^e année, École de psychologie)

Étant une étudiante universitaire, il est facile de constater que gérer son temps est primordial pour survivre dans l'environnement universitaire. Débordé avec des études à temps plein, des nuits blanches passées à terminer des devoirs et, pour la plupart, des fins de semaines occupées avec un emploi à temps partiel; il reste donc peu de temps pour porter à d'autres activités. Toutefois, le bénévolat, même pour quelques heures par semaine, offre aux étudiants des perspectives et des expériences différentes que ceux dans les cours traditionnels. Il existe plusieurs associations et organisations à l'Université d'Ottawa, tels que le Centre de recherche sur les services communautaires (CRSC) ainsi que le nouveau Programme d'apprentissage par l'engagement communautaire (AEC). Ces derniers nous offrent non seulement des possibilités d'instruction et d'apprentissage mais nous permet également de rendre service à notre université ainsi qu'à notre communauté tout en accommodant nos horaires et charges de travail.

Pendant ma durée comme étudiante, j'ai remarqué que plusieurs opportunités nous sont disponibles et que ça soit du bénévolat ou du travail rémunéré, les deux se trouvent sur le campus. Pour ma part, il était important d'obtenir de l'expérience et d'apprendre dans mon domaine d'étude. Étant étudiante de l'école de psychologie, j'étais impatiente d'être exposée au domaine et d'avoir une meilleure idée du monde qui m'attend une fois mes études terminées. C'est pour ces raisons que j'ai décidé d'offrir un peu de mon temps libre au CRSC, qui me donne de retour la chance d'avoir des connaissances du monde de recherche communautaire. Je suis étonnée de voir, à l'aide de mon bénévolat, à quel point les recherches peuvent être approfondies et détaillées. Le travail qui est impliqué est remarquable.

J'assiste une étudiante au niveau doctoral dans sa recherche, plus particulièrement, dans l'aspect de transfert de données et dans

l'établissement de coûts de revient. Le travail consiste à transférer l'information pertinente de dossier de client de gestion de soins de la région d'Ottawa à des rapports plus détaillés et pratique à manipulés. L'information est par la suite transférée à une base de donnée informatique avec lequel l'établissement de coûts de revient sera fait.

Depuis mon arrivée au centre, j'ai été témoin du travail intéressant qui est effectué dans le domaine de la recherche communautaire. Mais surtout, je ne peux pas omettre l'excellente atmosphère qui facilite la charge de travail et qui rend mon expérience de bénévolat très enrichissante et mémorable.

THE COMMUNITY FORUM ON HOMELESSNESS

Organized by the Alliance to End Homelessness

Responses from participants attending the Community Forum on Homelessness: Linking Ottawa Research with Action and Policy indicates that it was a huge success. This event was held at the University of Ottawa on November 22 in honor of National Housing Day and was well represented by over 200 participants that included professionals, the media, and consumer groups.

The forum is organized by the Alliance to End Homelessness, a coalition of community stakeholders whose mandate is to work collaboratively to eliminate homelessness by gaining a better understanding of its causes and developing and implementing strategies to end it. The forum is an annual event and provides research related

presentations and workshops to educate and equip citizens to address the growing and complex issue of homelessness in Canada. Our congratulations are extended to the Alliance for a job well done. For further information and conference material, please see the Alliance web page at www.endhomelessnessottawa.ca

CENTRE UPDATES

Vivien Runnels who has been the Coordinator for the past two years has left us to become a full-time student in the Ph.D. program in Population Health at the University of Ottawa. Vivien, a committed life-long learner, completed a master's degree five years ago and fell in love with research. Despite her mature years, she was reported to have said in reference for her love for research, "I have finally found what I want to do when I grow up." She will be studying with Dr. Betsy Kristjansson, a measurement and evaluation specialist with the School of Psychology and Institute of Population Health, and has also suggested that a return to the Centre on the completion of her degree is a hoped-for possibility.

Following Vivien's departure, we are very pleased to announce that her position is now held by David Vincent who has recently come to us from the Ottawa Booth Centre where he was the Executive Director. For David, the Centre provides an opportunity to participate in the ongoing development of a university research centre with tremendous future prospects. David has had experience working in a number of sectors. These include public, for-profit and non-profit organizations spanning positions that were essentially clinical, early in his career, to CEO/Senior Executive Director, responsible for the integration of city-wide social and health services (Calgary). David holds a master's degree in rehabilitation from Boston University, maintains certifications in rehabilitation and vocational evaluation, and

is a Registered Social Worker. David is particularly interested in the reciprocal mobilization of knowledge between academic and community settings and believes that the Centre for Research on Community Services provides an ideal setting for community engagement.

John Sylvestre, Senior Researcher with the Centre for Research on Community Services is a proud father. His daughter, Leela Sundar Sylvestre was born April 11, 2005 18:22 hrs weighing 5 lbs. 4oz. Mom (Purnima) and Papa were reported shortly after birth as being "ecstatically exhausted".

Outstanding Leadership in Child Welfare

We are delighted to let readers know about a special award. Dr. Robert (Bob) Flynn of the Centre for Research on Community Services and the School of Psychology at the University

AWARDS

of Ottawa, was awarded the 2005 OACAS Ontario Association of Children's Aid societies Outstanding Leadership in Child Welfare Award for his leadership in the development and implementation of the Ontario Looking After Children program.

The award was presented at the Awards Celebration Dinner in June in Toronto. Congratulations Bob for all your hard work!

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