

# Centre for Research

## on community Services

# Newsletter

## Fall 2002

### CRCS Update

#### **New CRCS Research Coordinator**

Julie Beaulac replaced Courtney Amo as Research Coordinator at CRCS in January 2002. Julie recently completed her Honours Bachelor of Arts co-op degree in psychology from the University of Waterloo and began employment with CRCS to gain relevant work experience before continuing to pursue her long-term academic goals. Her interests lie in the areas of community, health and well-being psychology, and she next aspires to complete a degree in clinical psychology.

#### **CRCS 5-year Strategic Plan**

We are in the process of developing a strategic plan for CRCS. The process of creating our strategic plan includes (1) the development of a program logic model for CRCS operations, (2) the assessment of our internal and external environments through interviews with CRCS stakeholders, (3) the identification of the strategic issues facing CRCS as an organization, (4) the development of strategies to manage the issues that are identified, and (5) the creation of a written strategic plan to guide the development of CRCS over the next five years. Our written strategic plan will be finalized and available on our website by February 2003.

#### **An ever growing CRCS**

CRCS has grown steadily since its beginnings as a research centre at the University of Ottawa in the spring of 2000. The growth in personnel from 3 core staff to 10 full-time staff, 6 part-time staff, and several part-time associates has led to an expansion in CRCS space at 30 and 34 Stewart Street and an increased need for more permanent office and lab space. Current plans are underway to locate all CRCS staff on the first two floors of 34 Stewart.

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## Three CRCS Project Summaries

### **Communities That Care (2001-2004)**

Communities That Care (CTC) is a structured community development program whereby ordinary citizens mobilize in an effort to prevent problem behaviours among at-risk adolescents, including alcohol and drug abuse, dropping out of school, unwanted pregnancies, and violence. Our CTC project involves three Ontario communities and is funded by the Trillium Foundation of Ontario and the National Centre on Crime Prevention. The project is a partnership between CRCS and Services to Children and Adults of Prescott-Russell (SCAPR). Team members include, from UO, Bob Flynn (CRCS & Psychology), Cécile Coderre (Service social), Colette Parent (Criminologie), and Natasha Bergeron (Psychology) and, from SCAPR, Jean-Clet Gosselin and René Bertrand.

### **A Study of the Deaths of Persons who are Homeless in the city of Ottawa - A Social and Health Investigation (2002-2003)**

This study is an investigation of deaths occurring among homeless persons in Ottawa. The main purpose of the study is to develop and pilot a sustainable methodology that can be used to examine the pattern of social and health factors contributing to untimely deaths in this population. The study uses a case analysis approach, and data are gathered through in-depth interviews with service providers, friends and acquaintances,

and, when appropriate, family members. In addition to the methodology, the study anticipates generating a set of recommendations that can inform policy and help address some of the problems associated with preventable deaths among persons who are homeless. The research team members are Manal Guirguis-Younger, Tim Aubry, Jeff Turnbull, Tina Podymow, Susan Farrell, Peter Tugwell, and Vivien Runnels.

### **Reliability and Validity of the Governance Self-Assessment Checklist (2001-2002)**

The Governance Self-Assessment Checklist (GSAC) is a new instrument, developed by Mel Gill (President of Synergy Associates and an Associate of the Institute on Governance, both of Ottawa) for assessing the effectiveness of boards of directors of a wide range of organizations. Elke Reissing and Bob Flynn of CRCS are currently collaborating with Mel Gill in an evaluation of the reliability and validity of GSAC, including its relationship with external observers' ratings of organizational effectiveness. Mr. Gill presented the findings from this research in November, 2002, at the annual meeting in Montreal of the Association for Research on Nonprofit Organizations and Voluntary Action (ARNOVA). Information about GSAC may be obtained from Mr. Gill ([mel.gill@synergyassociates.ca](mailto:mel.gill@synergyassociates.ca); [www.synergyassociates.ca](http://www.synergyassociates.ca)).

## COMMUNITY MENTAL HEALTH EVALUATION INITIATIVE (CMHEI): OTTAWA PROJECT

The Centre is involved in an exciting partnership with the Ottawa branch of the Canadian Mental Health Association (CMHA), to evaluate the effectiveness of intensive case management services for people who are homeless and severely mentally ill. The research project is being led by Dr. Tim Aubry and is part of a broader, multi-site study – the first of its kind in Canada – funded by the Ontario Mental Health Foundation to examine the effectiveness of community mental health programs.

Using a true experimental design, the Ottawa project compares two groups of people - those receiving intensive case management and those receiving standard care in the community - in terms of outcomes and costs. We also hope to identify which elements of case management help predict positive outcomes.

The study is now in its fifth and final year. All baseline and 9-month data have been collected, and we are continuing to interview people at 18 and 24-months. Our final sample is projected to be 50-55 people in each group, and data collection will end in late 2003.

Our preliminary results are promising. Housing outreach services successfully house people who are homeless and mentally ill (91% were in permanent housing at nine months), and intensive case management (ICM) appears to build on that success: people experience fewer symptoms, lower rates of drug abuse, and better overall functioning, even in early stages of treatment. We have also demonstrated that ICM is a specific, valid, and effective service, and have developed a measure that will help it to be reproduced in other communities, where needed.

Our costing analysis shows that only \$35,000 per year (on average) is currently spent to support an individual in the community, mostly on medical and psychiatric services. However, participants in the study receive almost no services for education, employment, or recreation and leisure, despite the fact that better access to services in these areas would help people be better integrated into the community. Finally, while the ICM program is clearly serving people with complex needs, resources in health and social services in general do not appear to be allocated on the basis of client needs. Better ways of allocating resources across the system are clearly required.

***For more information, please contact Dr. Tim Aubry at 613-562-5800-4815 or by e-mail: [taubry@uottawa.ca](mailto:taubry@uottawa.ca)***

# **2004 International *Looking After Children* Conference**

**First Announcement and Call for Papers**

**Theme** : Promoting Resilience in Children: *Looking After Children*  
and Child Welfare

**Place** : Ottawa, Ontario (Canada)

**Dates** : Monday, August 16-Thursday, August 19, 2004  
(with pre and post-conference events on August 15 and 20, 2004)

**Sponsors** : Child Welfare League of Canada  
Centre for Research on Community Services, University of Ottawa  
Ontario Association of Children's Aid Societies  
Services to Children and Families of Prescott-Russell

**Languages** : English & French  
(with simultaneous translation of plenary sessions)

**Publication** : Selected papers from the conference will be published  
in a special issue of *Child and Youth Care Forum*  
(a Kluwer Plenum journal), with additional outlets to be determined.

**Deadline** : Papers, symposia, workshops, or posters  
may be submitted up until **March 1, 2004**

For further information : [crsc@uottawa.ca](mailto:crsc@uottawa.ca)

## Key CRCS Personnel

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**More Information:** For access to project reports, presentations and other relevant material produced by CRCS (e.g., CRCS Annual Report, press clippings, etc.), please refer to <http://www.uottawa.ca/academic/socsci/crcs/>