



Mental Health Promotion in Immigrant and Refugee Serving Organizations

KNOWLEDGE EXCHANGE REPORT



Funded by:
Immigration, Refugees
and Citizenship Canada

Financé par :
Immigration, Réfugiés
et Citoyenneté Canada

ABOUT THE PROJECT

The *Mental Health Promotion in Immigrant and Refugee Serving Organizations* project is three year initiative funded by Immigration Refugee Citizenship Canada (IRCC) through the Service Delivery Improvement (SDI) stream. As the lead organization on this project, OCASI is partnering with community organizations across three sectors (immigrant and refugee serving organizations, primary health, and community mental health) to carry out the project over three years (2018 – 2021).

The project's overall goal is to build the capacity of newcomer and refugee services to promote mental health and newcomer wellbeing and respond to mental health issues. The project aims to strengthen collaborations and partnerships between newcomer and refugee serving organizations, primary health, and mental health sectors through the development of a service model for mental health promotion.



Funded by:

Immigration, Refugees
and Citizenship Canada

Financé par :

Immigration, Réfugiés
et Citoyenneté Canada

PROJECT PARTNERS

Access Alliance Multicultural Health and Community Services

Canadian Centre for Victims of Torture

Canadian Mental health Association – Ontario Division

COSTI Immigrant Services

Crossroads Refugee Clinic Women's College Hospital

Hong Fook Mental Health Association

Newcomer Centre of Peel

The Neighbourhood Organization

Mennonite New Life Centre of Toronto

Parkdale Queen West Community Health Centre

Polycultural Immigrant Community Services

Rexdale Women's Centre

Toronto South Local Immigration Partnership Project

Women's Health in Women's Hands Community Health Centre

OVERVIEW

On February 6th & 7th, 2020 the Ontario Council of Agencies Serving Immigrants (OCASI) hosted a Knowledge Exchange Event on the topic of Mental Health Promotion in Immigrant and Refugee Serving Organizations. Over the past year and a half, OCASI has been working closely with partners to develop, implement and evaluate an Integrated Mental Health Promotion Service Delivery Model in addition to delivering ongoing mental health capacity training and developing guidelines and courses on Trauma and Violence Informed approaches.

The two-day exchange brought together leaders, researchers, funders and professionals from across immigrant and refugee serving organizations, health and mental health sectors. The purpose of our gathering was to create a space that promoted cross-sectoral knowledge dissemination, where we iterate on our existing practices, learn from one another and promote integrated knowledge transfer. Over the course of two days, we focused on two primary themes: 1) Working at the Intersections of Mental Health Promotion and 2) Building the Case for Trauma and Violence Informed Approaches to Practice.

We had three key objectives:

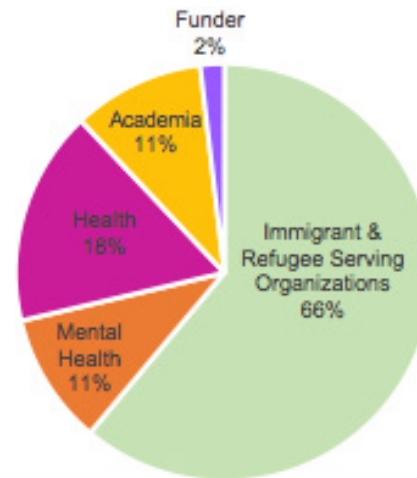
- Share lessons learned from developing and implementing OCASI's Mental Health Promotion Integrated Service Model
- Engage immigrant and refugee serving organizations, health and mental health sectors to share promising practices for cross-sectoral collaboration
- Launch OCASI's Trauma and Violence Informed Guidelines for Immigrant and Refugee Serving Organizations and explore the implications and best practices of adopting trauma and violence informed approaches

We achieved these objectives by hosting **9 sessions**, which included keynote presentations, panels and interactive workshops representing the voices of **19 unique speakers** from across immigrant and refugee serving organizations, health and mental health sectors.

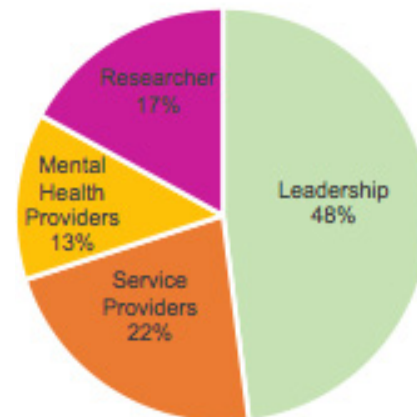
The two days were documented by a graphic notetaker, the visual summary is found here along with details of the various sessions. Presentations made by speakers and panelists have been hyperlinked and can be found in the session summaries.

PARTICIPATION

We hosted nearly 80 people over the course of two days.



Our participation spanned immigrant and refugee serving organizations, health, mental health and academic sectors.



We had a range of voices and perspectives, gathering leaders, service providers, mental health professionals and researchers .

WHAT PARTICIPANTS HAD TO SAY...

"I loved being part of a multi-sectoral group of service providers that place such a high value on being trauma-informed and supporting their staff."

On OCASI's Mental Health Promotion Integrated Service Model...

"A good model for agencies to look into and implement customized services based on their client needs."

"I appreciated the focus on promoting staff mental health and leadership mental health in the workplace"

"Continue doing your great and valuable work"

AGENDA DAY 1

MENTAL HEALTH PROMOTION: WORKING AT THE INTERSECTIONS

8:00-8:30	Registration & Breakfast	1:00-2:30	Facilitating Cross-sectoral Collaborations between Settlement, Health, and Mental Health
9:00-9:15	Opening Remarks by Debbie Douglas, Executive Director of Ontario Council of Agencies Serving Immigrants		This panel explores system-level enablers and challenges of collaboration across the three sectors (settlement, health, and mental health) to promote mental health, improve access to care and facilitate early identification and intervention for immigrant and refugee populations.
9:15-10:15	Mental Health Promotion in Immigrant and Refugee Serving Organizations OCASI's Mental Health Promotion in Immigrant and Refugee Serving Organizations Project is a 3-year project funded by IRCC's Service Delivery Improvement grant. In this morning opening, OCASI will be presenting key findings from an expansive environmental scan and needs assessment and sharing lessons learned in the journey to develop an innovative integrated Mental Health Promotion Service Delivery Model. Speakers: Sajedah Zahraei - Senior Manager Professional Development & Training OCASI	2:30-2:45	Wellness Break
10:15-10:30	Wellness Break	2:45-4:00	Workshop 1. Building on Innovation: Scaling Up OCASI's Mental Health Promotion Model
10:30-12:00	Piloting OCASI's Mental Health Promotion Service Delivery Model Rexdale Women's Centre and Polycultural Immigrant and Community Services are key partners in co-designing, implementing and testing OCASI's Mental Health Promotion Service Delivery Model. In this presentation, both agencies will share their experience as pilot sites speaking to the importance of collaborations between settlement, mental health and primary care services. In addition, both pilot sites describe how they are addressing staff and client mental health and wellness in the workplace. Speakers: Fatima Filippi, Executive Director Rexdale Women's Centre & Nadia Sokhan, Director of Monitoring, Reporting & Partnerships Polycultural Immigrant Community Services		This workshop will be an interactive session building on knowledge shared throughout the morning sessions. We will facilitate a discussion on exploring possibilities for applying lessons learned from OCASI's Pilot project while working together to explore solutions for improving cross-sectoral collaboration. Facilitated by: Fatima Filippi, Executive Director Rexdale Women's Centre & Nadia Sokhan, Director of Monitoring, Reporting & Partnerships Polycultural Immigrant Community Services, Sajedah Zahraei - Senior Manager Professional Development & Training OCASI
1:00-2:00	Lunch		Workshop 2. Promoting Staff & Leadership Mental Health in the Workplace The work we do can often be challenging and result in burnout and vicarious trauma. We present this workshop to facilitate a discussion around staff and leadership mental health. The speakers will speak to organizational level approaches on self-care strategies they've implemented and initiatives they have adopted to promote mental health and well-being of their staff and leadership. Facilitated by: Mbalu Lumor- Senior Manager, Programs and Newcomer Services Canadian Centre for Victims of Torture, & Christine Yip - Founder and Director of Organizations for Impact

AGENDA DAY 2

BUILDING THE CASE FOR TRAUMA-INFORMED CARE

8:00-8:30	Registration & Breakfast	1:00-2:15	The Journey to Becoming a Trauma-informed Organization
9:00-10:00	Trauma & Violence Informed Approaches Guidelines for Immigrant & Refugee Serving Organizations This opening will briefly describe OCASI's journey to developing Trauma and Violence Informed Approaches (TVIA) Guidelines for our sector, followed by a presentation by Eunjung Lee from the University of Toronto. Dr. Lee will go through evidence-based approaches to TVIA and the TVIA movement in Canada, in addition to presenting core principles, implications and applications of such an approach at an organizational level. Speakers: Sajedeh Zahraei - Senior Manager Professional Development & Training OCASI, Eunjung Lee, University of Toronto, Faculty of Social Work		This panel will showcase two agencies and their process to becoming trauma-informed from an organizational perspective and service provision perspective. YWCA Toronto will describe their four year journey in implementing an organizational shift toward trauma-informed practice. While, Women's Health in Women's Hands speaks to practices in providing trauma-informed care to clients with diverse needs through an anti-oppression lens. Speakers: Teshia Allen, Manager of Housing Supports & Special Projects, YWCA Toronto, Cheryl, Client & Participant from YWCA Toronto's Speakers Bureau, Nancy Pool, Director Centre of Women's Excellence and Raelene Prieto, Manager of Population Health, Women's Health in Women's Hands
10:00-10:30	Wellness Break	2:15-2:30	Wellness Break
10:30-12:00	Trauma- & Violence-Informed Care: A Platform for Cross-sectoral Collaboration The purpose of this panel will be to introduce the concept of trauma- and violence-informed care (TVIC), share experiences with integrating a TVIC approach to service from within the settlement services sector, partnerships between settlement services and health, and new applications of TVIC in education and the broader social service sector. Speakers: Valerian Marochko – Executive Director, London Cross-Cultural Learner Centre, Scott Courtice, Executive Director, London InterCommunity Health Centre, Professor Susan Rodge and Professor Nadine Wathe from Western University, Mathew Sereda from Thomas Valley District School Board	2:30-4:00	Workshop: What Now? A Think Tank facilitated discussion on what trauma and violence approaches can mean to your agency. Join us for a continued discussion on what next steps can look like and where to start. This workshop will engage participants in an interactive activity to brainstorm: action plans, anticipated roadblocks, mitigating risk factors for implementing an agency-wide approach to trauma and violence informed services. Facilitated by: Raelene Prieto, Manager of Population Health, Women's Health in Women's Hands, Deepa Mattoo, Executive Director of Barbra Schlifer Clinic
12:00-1:00	Lunch	4:00-4:15	Closing Remarks & Evaluation

BIOS

Sajedeh Zahraei is Senior Manager of Professional Development and Training at OCASI - Ontario Council of Agencies Serving Immigrants. She completed her MSW and PhD at the Factor-Inwentash Faculty of Social Work, University of Toronto. Her research interests include social determinants of immigrant and refugee mental health, women, war, structural violence and trauma. Sajedeh has 20 years of experience in the mental health field with a particular focus on equity, inclusion, community development, community-based research, partnerships, and collaborations addressing the needs of racialized communities with mental health and addictions issues

Fatima Filippi is the Executive Director of Rexdale Women's Centre overseeing at staff of more than 80, providing serves to more than 13,000 individuals. Fatima is passionate about social justice and improving the lives of women, their children and family. Having worked in the immigrant and women services sectors since 1982, Fatima has held a number of frontline positions: English as a second language instructor, English as a second language co-ordinator, settlement and woman's abuse counselor. Additionally, she has also held management positions in the social services sector since 1984. A graduate of the University of Toronto, she has also acquired certification from The Canadian Society of Association Executives. Fatima has extensive experience working with non-profit board of directors, networks, coalitions, and partnerships. From 2009 to 2012, RWC was the lead agency for the North Etobicoke Local Immigration Partnership and Fatima was the chairperson and sat on various working groups. She has served on many boards of director of provincial and service organizations such as the Ontario Council of Agencies Serving Immigrants (OCASI) for various terms, Rexdale Community Hub, and CANES Family Health Team. In her work on boards of directors, she has held various officer's positions including chairperson, vice-chairperson, secretary, and treasurer.

Nadia Sokhan

Since joining the not-for-profit sector over 20 years ago, Nadia's career has centred on program development for vulnerable community members including newcomers, refugees, victims of gender-based violence. At present Nadia is a Director of Monitoring, Reporting and Partnerships at Polycultural Immigrant and Community Services. Nadia is responsible for programs' evaluation and performance management, fund development,

designing and establishing new programs and project in response to emerging community needs and developing partnerships to enhance service delivery. Nadia has a Master Degree in Social Psychology and her expertise includes counselling, community engagement, addiction and mental health. Nadia is involved in the community by chairing the Toronto West LIP (Local Immigration Partnership) Women Against Violence action group. She is a member of the Toronto Newcomer Leadership Table and the TW LIP Planning and Coordinating Committee.

Dariya Gusovsky is a program evaluation and policy analyst at the Alliance for Healthier Communities, where she works on a number of research projects related to comprehensive primary healthcare. In the past year she has focused on the integration of mental health and primary care including an evaluation on best practices for creating effective partnerships between primary care and community agencies.

Manjula Alles has been working in the area of health system strengthening and community development in international settings for over 10 years. In the past 2.5 years Manjula has been dedicatedly and passionately supporting the growth and development of Health Access Thorncliffe Park (HATP) as Director with FHC and TNO. Prior to this, he was managing multi-country programs relating to Maternal, Newborn and Child Health issues with Plan International Canada. As well, he has worked with the Canadian Public Health Association (CPHA) on global health programs to support institutional strengthening of civil society organizations.

Mbalu Lumor is the Senior Manager, Programs and Newcomer services has been working with the Canadian Centre for Victims of Torture (CCVT) for many years. Mbalu is passionate about Social Justice, Public Education and Human Rights. She has extensive experience working with diverse groups, providing trauma related counseling, program design, management, evaluation and group facilitation. Mbalu is the lead person in public education and has participated locally, nationally and international forums and conferences. Mbalu is also currently a candidate of Masters in Leadership and Community Engagement (MLCE) at York University.

Christine Yip is the Founder of Organizations for Impact, a management consultancy that works with leaders across sectors to build more inclusive, psychologically safe, and empowering workplace cultures. Previous to this, Christine worked as a Manager at both Accenture

and KPMG consulting practices, and as a social policy researcher at the University of Toronto's Mowat Centre and the London School of Economics' Centre for Analysis and Social Exclusion. She holds a Masters Degree in Social Policy and Planning from the London School of Economics and a Masters in Industrial and Organizational Psychology from the University of Guelph. She also teaches Change Management at York's Schulich School of Business.

Eunjung Lee, PhD, RSW is an Associate Professor and Endowed Chair in Mental Health & Health at the Factor-Inwentash Faculty of Social Work at the University of Toronto. She is a psychotherapy process researcher focusing on cross-cultural practice serving marginalized populations with trauma and violence experiences in community mental health. Her research focuses on everyday interactions in clinical practice using psychodynamic approaches and critical theories in language and power, as well as utilizing simulation-based learning in social work education.

Nadine Wathen, PhD is Professor at Western University and Canada Research Chair in Mobilizing Knowledge on Gender-Based Violence. She is a Research Scholar at Western's Centre for Research and Education on Violence Against Women and Children, and a Member of the College of the Royal Society of Canada. Her research examines the health and social service sector response to violence against women, interventions to reduce health inequities, and the science of knowledge mobilization, with a focus on partnerships to enhance the use of research in policy and practice.

Susan Rodger, PhD is a Psychologist and Associate Professor at the Faculty of Education at Western University, a Research Associate at the Centre for Research and Education on Violence Against Women and Children and a Principal Investigator with the Centre for School-Based Mental Health. Her research within the education, health and child welfare systems examines mental health literacy and trauma and violence informed care for teachers, teacher candidates, teachers and foster care providers. She leads or co-leads a number of research and education initiatives including Mental Health Literacy course, Teach Resiliency, and TeachMentalHealth.org.

Jennifer Sandu, MSW, RSW is a social worker and currently the Capacity Building Specialist at the London Cross Cultural Learner Centre (CCLC) and Professor at Fanshawe College in the Social Service Worker Program. Jenn focuses her work on building capacity

around the needs of newly arrived government-assisted refugees. Jenn is also the lead contact for the TVIC organizational implementation at CCLC. Prior, Jenn spent time as the Director of Client Services in Windsor supporting individuals living with HIV/AIDS and as a case manager at CCLC working with newly arrived refugees. She is currently completing a certificate in Non-Profit Management from Ryerson University.

Matthew Sereda is the Equity and Inclusive Education Learning Coordinator for the Thames Valley District School Board. Previously, Matthew acted as the Safe Schools Learning Coordinator for TVDSB and helped to create and implement the School Within A College Program, a TVDSB initiative designed to re-engage students who had previously dropped out of high school. Matthew is a recipient of an Atlohsa Peace Award for his work towards Truth and Reconciliation with the See Me Project, a program designed to teach students about Canada's Residential School System and Missing and Murdered Indigenous Women and Girls. Matthew is also a recipient of a Prime Minister's Award for Teaching Excellence for his work with the School Within A College Program.

Valerian Marochko, PhD, MBA, CMC is the Executive Director of the London Cross Cultural Learner Centre (CCLC) since 2009. Prior to this position, he worked to develop Collège Boréal, which provides education and newcomer services to Francophones in Ontario. He consulted for United Nations, World Bank, and Harvard Institute for International Development projects; and for businesses and not-for-profit organisations. He earned a Doctor in Science degree from AgroParisTech and a Master of Business Administration degree from Ivey Business School. His current work focuses on advocating for equitable access to services and creating inter-organizational structures for successful integration of newcomers to Canada.

Teshia Allen is currently the Manager of Housing Supports and Special Projects at YWCA Toronto. She is the former Mental Health Counselor of the YWCA 1st Stop Woodlawn shelter, and its previous manager. Teshia has provided counselling, biopsychosocial assessments, crisis prevention/intervention and advocacy to marginalized communities for over 10 years. She has conducted Brief Solution Therapy sessions for women where many of her clients sought holistic therapy in order to cope with present and past trauma. Coming from the Ryerson School of Social Work, Teshia's practice is embedded with the teachings of an integrative feminist, anti-racist and anti-oppressive philosophy. She believes strongly in the strength and resiliency of children, youth and adults around ending the cycle of poverty and violence;

this belief drives her to take a client-centred approach to practice where her work is guided by social equity work, and dismantling systems of oppression.

She visions her current role as the YWCA special projects manager as a way to build bridges through processes of collaboration, with communities who are often disenfranchised and marginalized.

Cheryl Smith, as a past member of the Toronto Speakers Bureau: Voices from the Street, Cheryl Smith has shared her lived experience of poverty and mental health issues with post-secondary students, frontline social workers, and Health Care professionals. For the past seven years, she has been a resident at the YWCA's Elm Centre in downtown Toronto. Cheryl has been an active participant in the TIDE initiative and looks forward to continued involvement and learning

Nancy Pool

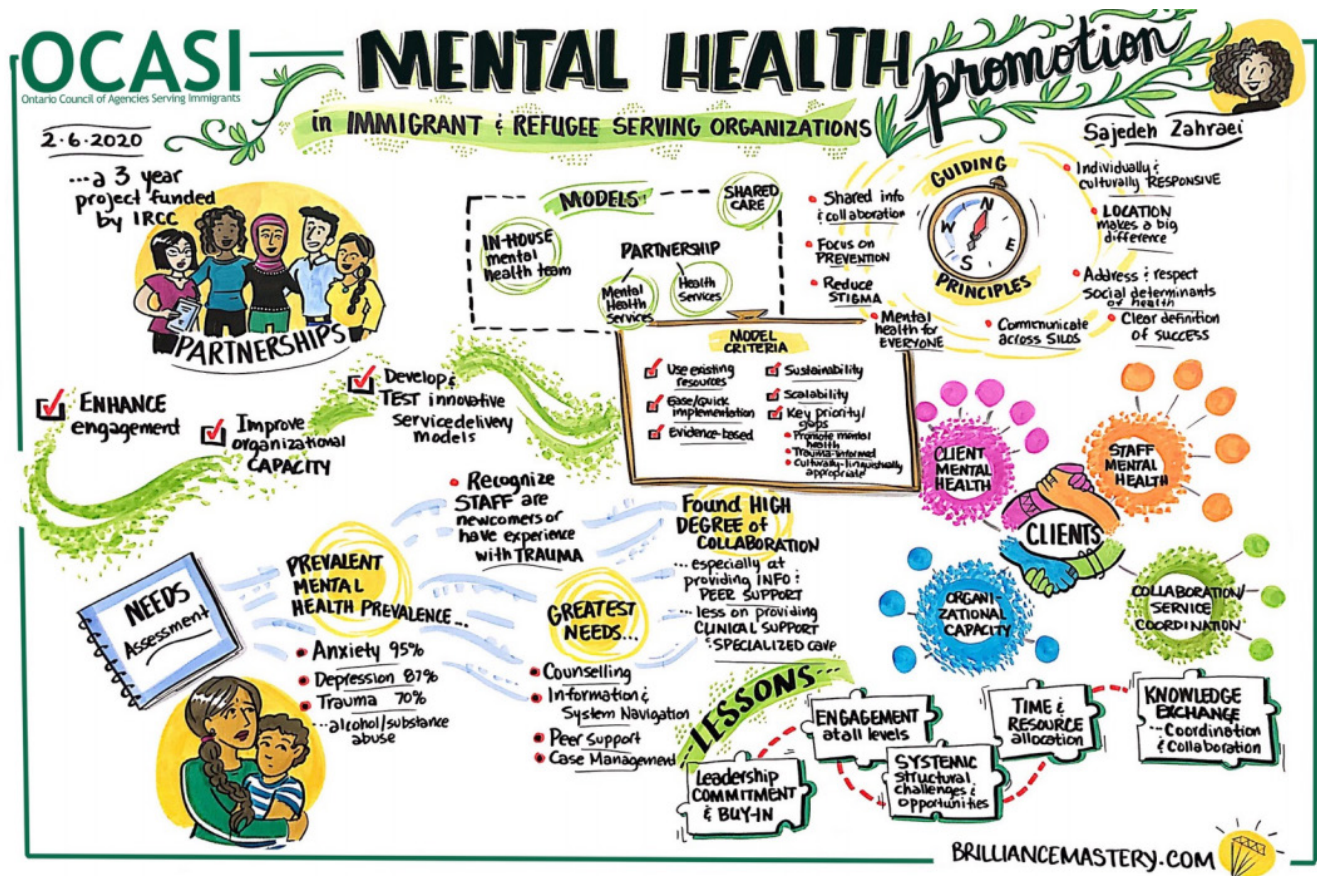
Nancy is the Director of the Centre of Excellence for Women's Health, a NGO research centre hosted by BC Women's Hospital + Health Centre in Vancouver. In that role she leads knowledge translation, network development, and research related to improving policy and service provision on girls' and women's health, and gender and health overall. In the past several years Nancy has co-led system change initiatives, and co-developed toolkits, training curricula and guidelines on 'trauma-informed practice' with agencies and governments across Canada.

Raelene Prieto represents Women's Health in Women's Hands CHC with over fifteen (15 years of experience in therapeutic dialogue and planning in organizational psychology, anger resolution practice and healthcare. The cornerstones of Raelene's philosophy are empathy and compassion. One of her foundational beliefs is that true healing is possible when organizations are intentional about balancing inequity and work tirelessly to co-create opportunities for change in clients/patients' lives. Having earned her Masters of Education in Counselling Psychology M.Ed. from the University of Toronto, Raelene is also a Registered Psychotherapist with the College for Registered Psychotherapists of Ontario (CRPO).

Deepa Mattoo

Deepa is Executive Director at the Barbra Schlifer Commemorative Clinic. Previously, she was the Schlifer Clinic's Director, Legal Services. Before joining the Schlifer Clinic, Deepa was Project Co-ordinator, Staff Lawyer and Executive Director at the South Asian Legal Clinic of Ontario. In her role at the Schlifer Clinic, Deepa oversees the Clinic's strategic direction and provides leadership to the legal, counselling and interpretation services. Also, Deepa is directly involved in three critical projects related to the criminalization of women and the risk assessment of gender-based violence. Deepa is an Adjunct and Visiting Faculty at the University of Toronto's Faculty of Law. In 2017, Deepa was appointed Adjunct Professor at Osgoode Hall Law School for her role as the Co-Director of the Feminist Advocacy Program, hosted at the Schlifer Clinic. Deepa was the Law Foundation of Ontario's 2017 Community Leadership in Justice Fellow at Factor-Inwentash Faculty of Social Work at the University of Toronto. She has trained thousands of service providers for best practices and legal education to work with forced marriage survivors, racialized non-status women, and immigration law clients in the context of gender-based violence. Deepa has appeared before parliamentary committees and commissions on a wide range of social justice and human rights issues and has represented hundreds of clients at multiple tribunals and courts in numerous jurisdictions.

SESSION SUMMARIES

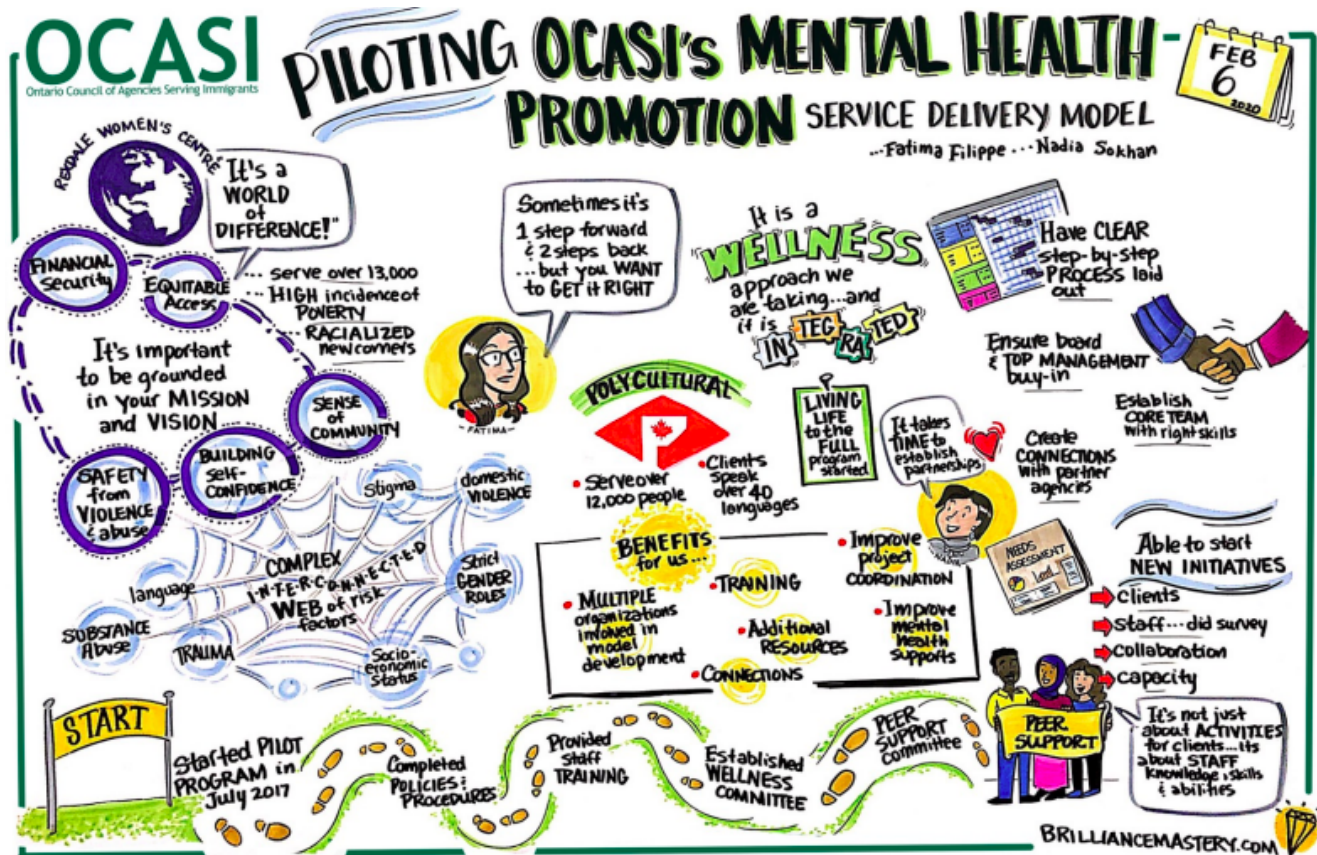


SESSION 1: MENTAL HEALTH PROMOTION IN IMMIGRANT AND REFUGEE SERVING ORGANIZATIONS

This presentation focused on OCASI's Mental Health Promotion in Immigrant and Refugee Serving Organizations Project. Sajedah Zahraei presented on the background, process and progress of the project and provided an overview of:

- The project's goals and objectives include: 1) enhancing engagement of new and existing partners within the immigrant and refugee sector, mental health primary care, 2) improving organizational capacity to promote mental health and response and 3) developing and testing an innovative service delivery model.

- Findings from a needs assessment & environmental scan that highlighted the necessary mental health needs and desired mental health supports by clients and staff, and promising models for collaborating across the immigrant and refugee serving sector health and mental health sectors.
- OCASI's Mental Health Promotion Service Delivery Model, which included the development process, describing the Model's Guiding Principles and Criteria, and the four key components: client mental health, staff mental health, organizational capacity and collaboration & service coordination.



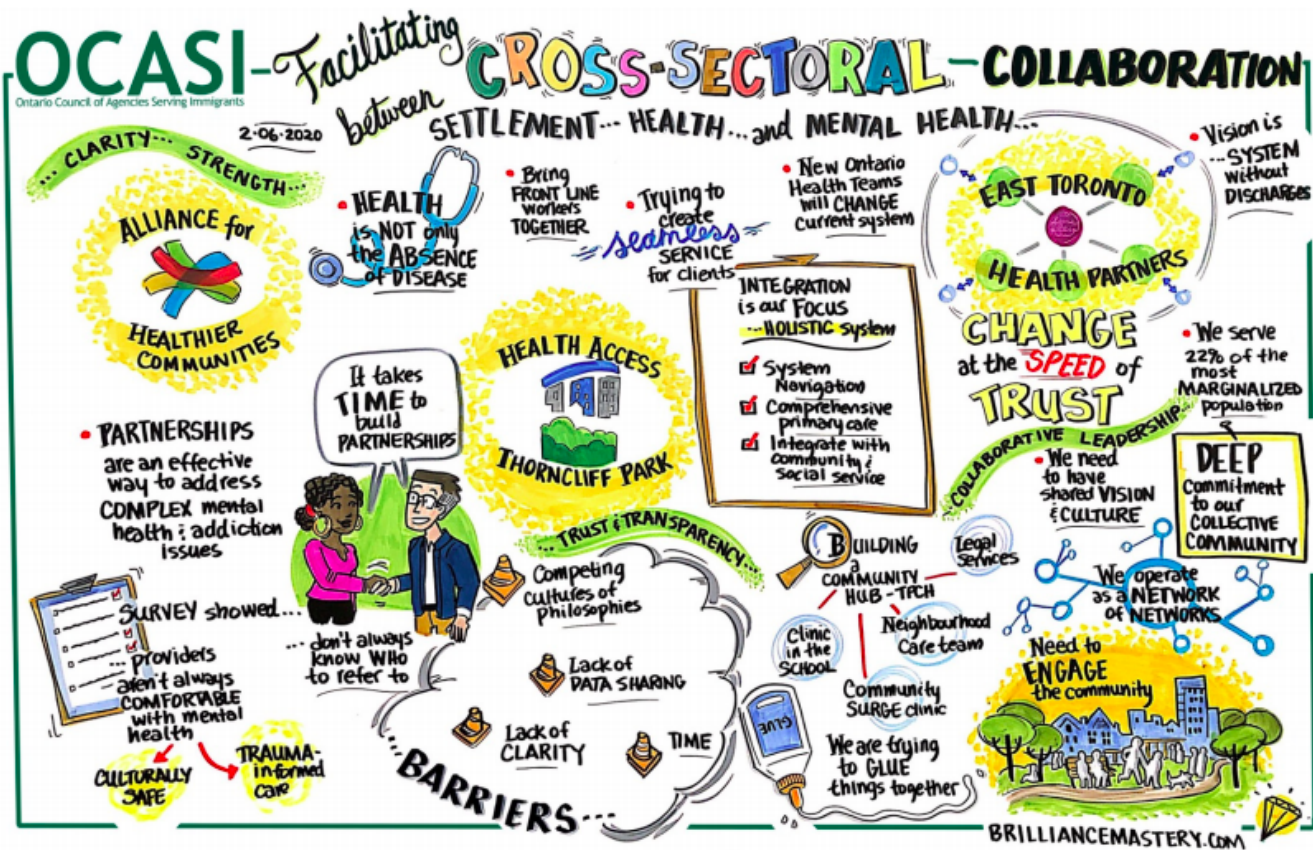
SESSION 2: PILOTING OCASI'S MENTAL HEALTH PROMOTION SERVICE DELIVERY MODEL

Building on OCASI's morning address, [Fatima Filippe](#) & [Nadia Sokhan](#) described their agency's experience in implementing and pilot testing the Mental Health Promotion Service Delivery Model. Both agencies spoke to:

- Their individual journeys in integrating mental health as part of their agency's vision.
- The process of participating in the pilot, implementing novel peer programming and establishing staff mental health initiatives. Fatima described four factors to consider when implementing the Model, including
 - 1) following a clear step-by-step process to assess the organization and create a plan for change,
 - 2) establishing a core team with the right skills and experience,
 - 3) ensuring senior management and

Board buy-in and 4) creating connections with partner agencies to learn from their experience, share resources & discuss training possibilities.

- The challenges in building and establishing cross-sectoral partnerships to serve the mental health needs of their clients, emphasizing that building mutually beneficial partnerships requires time. In addition to describing the benefits of participating in the pilot, which included reviewing and enhancing mental health policies and protocols, increased opportunities for staff training and capacity building and engaging agencies at a leadership level (i.e. Board of Directors) to enable a paradigm shift.



SESSION 3: FACILITATING CROSS-SECTORAL COLLABORATIONS BETWEEN SETTLEMENT, HEALTH, AND MENTAL HEALTH

This panel explored system-level enablers and challenges of collaboration across the three sectors (settlement, health, and mental health) to promote mental health. **Manjula Alles** and **Shannon Weins** described existing collaboration models of Health Access Thorncliffe Park and East Toronto Health Partners while **Dariya Gusovsky** spoke to the Alliance's TeamCare technology solution, a network that connects primary care physicians to interprofessional care teams.

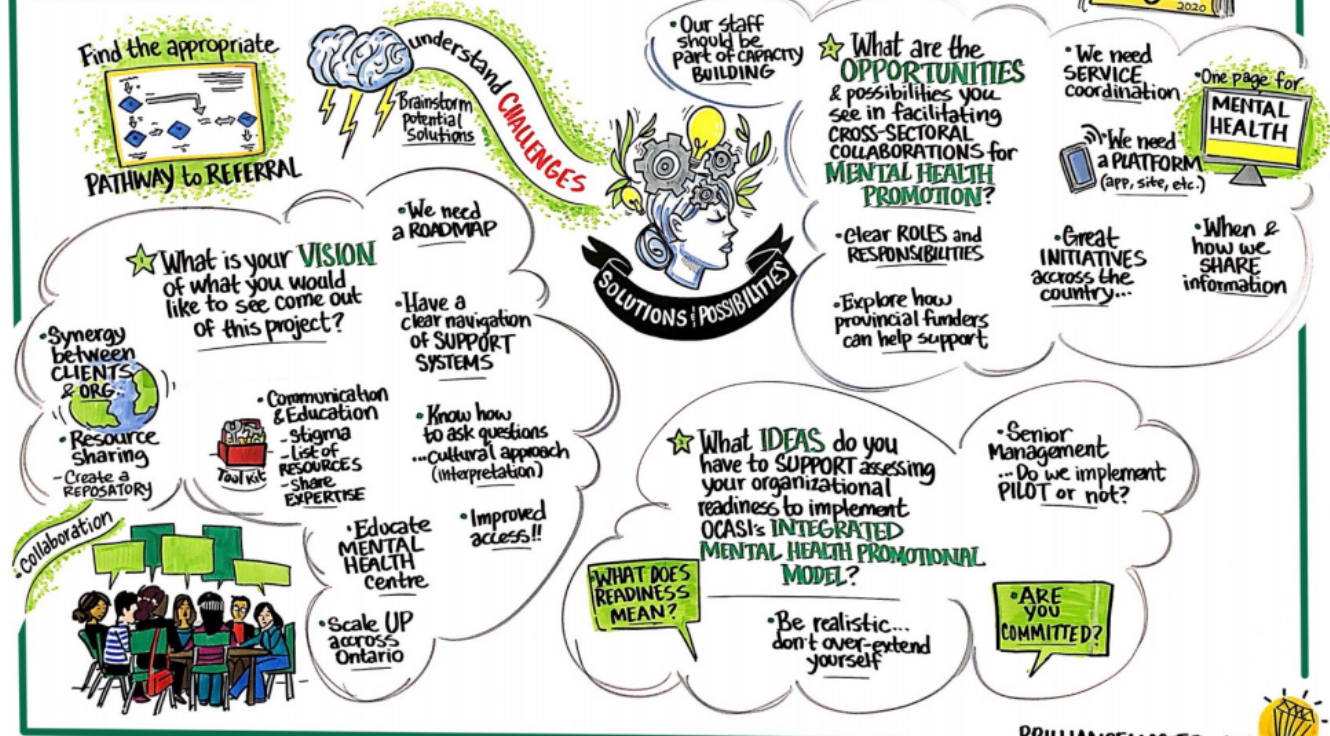
- Each panelist spoke to critical factors that contribute to successful cross-sectoral collaboration, including: shared vision and aligned values, time investment, sharing of resources and clarity of roles and responsibilities.

- Panelists commented on the importance of engaging communities to identify their needs in order to determine how best to build effective and meaningful partnerships that will serve the needs of the community.
- In a changing health system, Shannon Weins described the development of the East Toronto Ontario Health Team. As an approved Ontario Health Team, Shannon shared the Team's vision, engagement strategy and first year priorities; describing community support as a key element in delivering integrated care.

OCASI-BUILDING on INNOVATION:

SCALING UP OCASI'S MENTAL HEALTH PROMOTION MODEL

Ontario Council of Agencies Serving Immigrants



SESSION 4: BUILDING ON INNOVATION: SCALING UP OCASI'S MENTAL HEALTH PROMOTION MODEL

This workshop was an interactive session building on knowledge shared throughout the morning sessions. This workshop was facilitated by Fatima Fillipi, Nadia Sokhan and Sajedeh Zahraei on exploring possibilities for applying lessons learned from OCASI's Pilot project while working together to explore solutions for improving cross-sectoral collaboration.

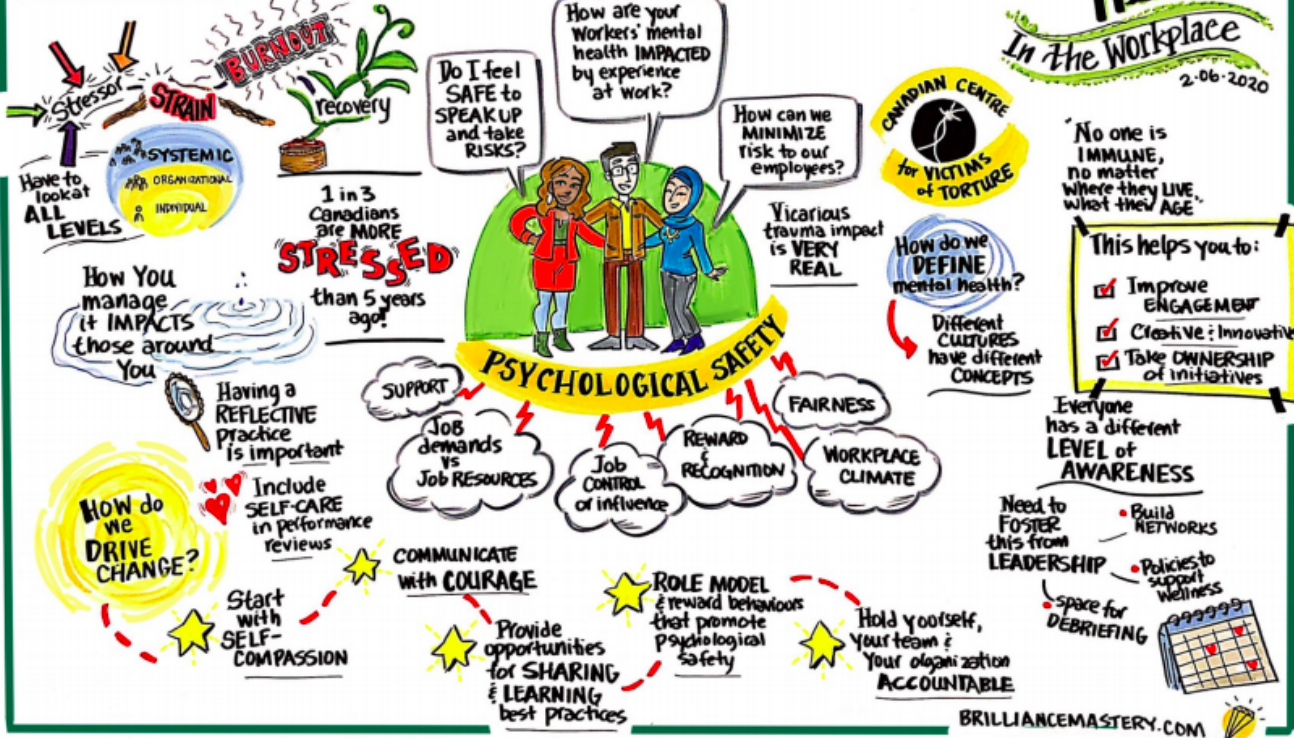
- Fatima and Nadia highlighted lessons learned from their experiences in facilitating OCASI's mental health pilot at their agencies, including: time and resource allocations, leadership commitment and buy in, time and effort to build trust within the health care sector and challenges of cross-sectoral partnership building.
- After discussing challenges and success factors for their pilot the facilitators divided the room into groups to discuss innovative solutions and possibilities of what attendees would like to see at their agencies if they implemented OCASI's pilot model. Participants brainstormed different solutions, some including: LINC teachers being trained on

mental health 101 as they are in direct contact with newcomers, increasing collaboration with agencies with diverse resources (i.e. OCASI, CMHA), increased awareness of trauma informed care in mainstream clinical and medical settings, and having language specific supports for mental health supports.

- One of the challenges for both pilot sites was cross-sectoral collaboration, participants brainstormed ideas to address this challenge. Some responses included: identifying other mental health professionals or crisis workers in house - community centres to start that partnership, defining a clear referral pathway to navigate mental health services, screening tool for settlement workers to better support clients, educating mental health workers and settlement workers to have a clear understanding of support systems in place to best navigate the system for their client.

OCASI-PROMOTING STAFF & LEADERSHIP Mental Health In the Workplace

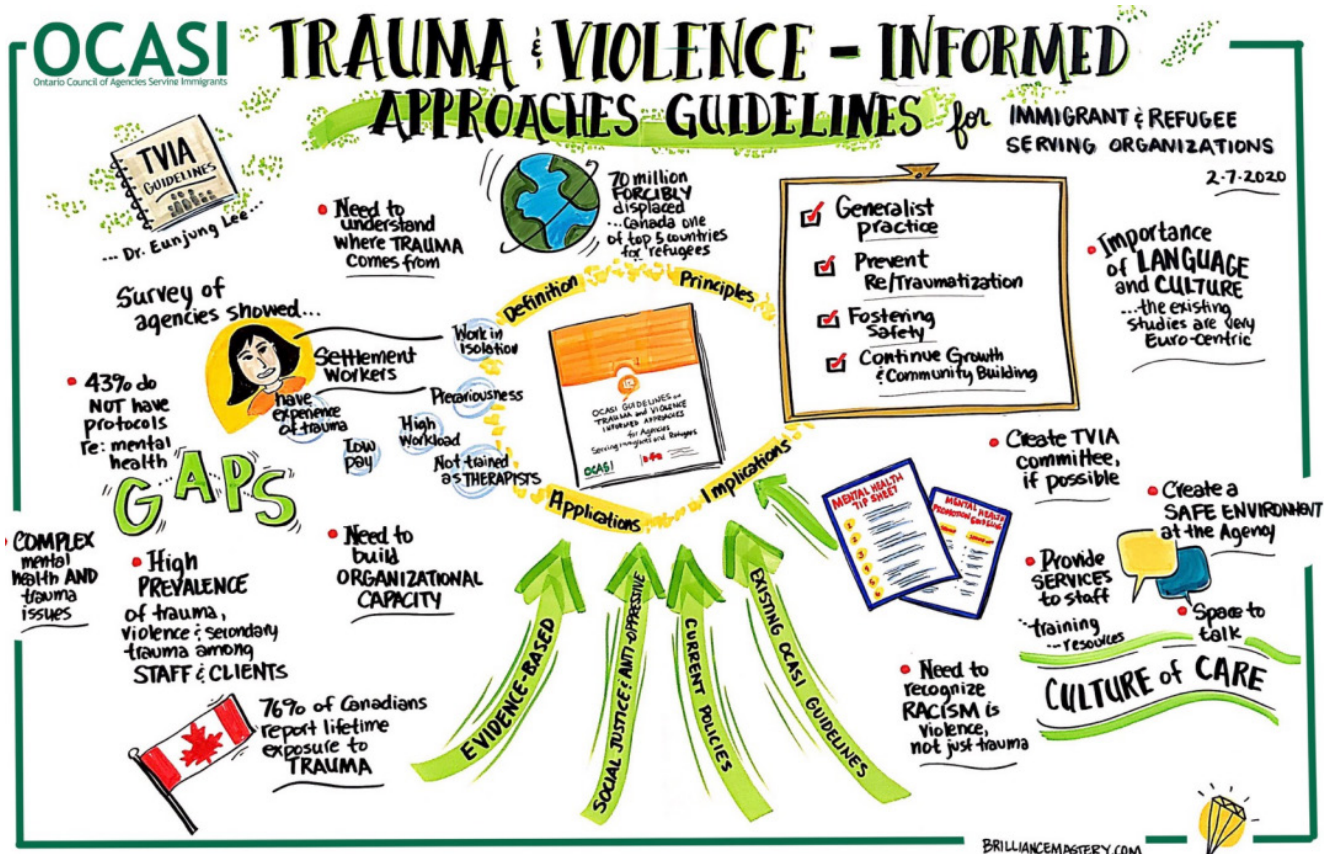
Ontario Council of Agencies Serving Immigrants



SESSION 5: PROMOTING STAFF & LEADERSHIP MENTAL HEALTH IN THE WORKPLACE

This interactive workshop was facilitated by **Christine Yip** and **Mbalu Lumor**, with a focus on psychological safety in the workplace and addressing well-being of staff and leadership mental health in the settlement sector. Both facilitators spoke to strategies to drive change including:

- **Starting with self-compassion:** Knowing our work can be emotionally exhausting, challenging and powerful and yet being able to reflect on the importance of your own value and contributions you bring to your job.
- **Communicating with courage:** Many service providers do this very well for their clients to ensure they get the services that they need. That being said, it is important to speak up for yourself and ask for support in your area of work in order to shift the workplace culture.
- **Providing opportunities for sharing and learning best practices:** there may be people in your agency who are working against the dominant culture to keep their team safe through varying self-care practices. It is important to engage colleagues and see what they are doing differently to manage their stress.
- **Role model and reward behaviour that promotes psychological safety:** It is important to shift the conversation on how you get into the type of culture where you reward people taking care of themselves. These types of reward mechanisms that are informal have a huge impact that has effects on behaviours.
- **Hold yourself, your team & your organization accountable:** Most organizations are measuring employee engagement. How do we start looking at these concepts such as level of demand and resources and holding organisations accountable? Making sure that policies are in place. Research shows that organisations only consider physical safety and that putting psychological safety in their policies is novel, and the first start is looking at your policies. There are a lot of tools available for that.



SESSION 6: TRAUMA & VIOLENCE INFORMED APPROACHES GUIDELINES FOR IMMIGRANT & REFUGEE SERVING ORGANIZATIONS

On February 7th, OCASI launched its Trauma and Violence-Informed Approaches (TVIA) and Guidelines. In this presentation, [Eunjung Lee](#) described the context in which the Guidelines were developed in addition to the key principles, applications and implications for implementation. The presentation gave an overview of:

- The need for TVIA Guidelines, OCASI developed this resource to form a system level response to addressing the high prevalence of trauma experienced by staff and clients in immigrant and refugee serving organizations. The Guidelines were developed to build organizational capacity around trauma and trauma-informed practices while incorporating key principles of anti-racism and anti-oppression.
- Four key principles of TVIA, which include: 1) Generalist Practice, 2) Preventing Re/Traumatization, 3) Fostering Safety, 4) Continuing Growth and Community Building, and defined implications for embodying each principle.

- The applications of TVIA principles, which could vary based on the agency's needs. Some best practices described included the following: forming an agency TVIA committee to implement and monitor Guidelines, making an explicit and visible agency wide commitment to being trauma and violence informed and embedding TVIA principles in hiring and training staff.



SESSION 7: TRAUMA- & VIOLENCE-INFORMED CARE: A PLATFORM FOR CROSS-SECTORAL COLLABORATION

This diverse panel of speakers spoke to their shared experiences of integrating a **Trauma and Violence-Informed Care (TVIC) approach** as a tool for cross-sectoral collaboration between settlement services and health, in addition to discussing new applications of TVIC in education and the broader social service sector. Panelists spoke to their range of expertise highlighting:

- Key definitions of trauma-specific versus trauma-informed care and the importance of incorporating trauma and violence informed care in order to bring attention to broader social conditions impacting people's well-being and ongoing violence, including systemic/historical violence.
- Procedures and protocols (i.e. frequent team debriefing, pre-screening, co-locating services etc.) put into place to deliver healthcare in settlement settings.

- The effort of becoming a trauma-informed community, through working with the education sector (Thames Valley District School Board) and introducing concepts of TVIC in teachers' education with the goal of equipping teachers to support the mental health needs of students.



SESSION 8: THE JOURNEY TO BECOMING A TRAUMA INFORMED ORGANIZATION

Building on the principles and applications of trauma and violence informed care, this panel focused on what steps organizations can take to incorporate anti-racist, anti-oppressive, intersectional approaches to trauma and violence informed practices. On this panel Raelene Prieto, Teshia Allen and Cheryl Smith shared their journey of becoming a trauma and violence informed organization.

- Each panelist spoke to their ongoing work, the importance of an organizational top-down and bottom-up approach to becoming trauma-informed, and emphasized the importance of engaging management and staff in training development and implementation processes.
- Through a clinical lens, Raelene Prieto described actionable items to implementing trauma-informed practices including: being aware of stigmatizing verbal and nonverbal language, creating physically and emotionally safe spaces, and being mindful of the systems and structures you work in and the multifaceted barriers clients may face.

- From an organizational approach, Teshia Allen and Cheryl Smith described the process of developing a framework for becoming a trauma-informed agency, which involved input from people with lived experiences, increasing staff awareness, skills, and building sustainable training models that focused on professional capacity of leadership.



SESSION 9: WHAT NOW? A THINK TANK FACILITATED DISCUSSION ON WHAT TRAUMA AND VIOLENCE APPROACHES CAN MEAN TO YOUR AGENCY

Building on discussions from the afternoon panels, this final workshop conducted a think tank on how managers and leaders in the community envision planning and implementing the TVIA Guidelines. Facilitated by Raelene Prieto and Deepa Mattoo, participants were asked to identify key elements of an action plan, potential challenges and risks associated with implementing such an approach.

- Participants emphasized that it is important to recognize what state you are currently in and how you can build from existing structures and programs in place. One participant shared: "implementing TVIC as part of a strategic plan, not only management but also having buy-in from the board of directors. Within 5 years there has been a shift. Sometimes when we rush, we may cause harm, therefore it is important to take time as an agency to create these policies.

- Action plans require an understanding of the context. Participants highlighted the need to have the relevant resources, knowledge and terminology; recognizing that many languages don't have definitions for trauma or how trauma is conceptualized.
- Overall the discussion was very hopeful on how agencies in all three key sectors can continue envisioning and implementing TVIC policies, and creating a culturally safe workplace for clients and staff

NEXT STEPS

We would like to thank and acknowledge the hard work and involvement of our partners throughout the process of the project. At this stage, OCASI is wrapping up the first round of pilot sites and onboarding two new community agencies to implement and evaluate the model in different contexts. The lessons learned, resources and recommendations of this project will be shared widely in 2021.

Over the next year, OCASI will continue to refine and disseminate the Model, work closely with pilot sites and continue to offer in-person and online mental health training for frontline workers and leaders in the sector. The project and our partners will continue to work closely across health and mental health sectors to form a systems response to improving cross-sectoral collaboration between settlement, health and mental health sectors.

STAYING CONNECTED

We want to stay connected with you. Resources and updates from the project will be shared on our webpage: www.ocasi.org/mental-health-promotion

We will be continuing our learning, hosting discussions and sharing resources through SettleNet. You are invited to join the conversation at the Mental Health Promotion in Immigrant and Refugee Organizations group on www.SettleNet.org - a new national online Community of Practice for the Settlement Sector where you can ask questions, engage in discussion, and search for resources that serve your professional development needs.

[Click here](#) to register on SettleNet. After you have registered and logged in, type in Mental Health Promotion in Immigrant and Refugee Organizations in the search tab at the top right of your screen to join.

Interested in contacting us directly? Send us an email at mhpresearch@ocasi.org



Mental Health Promotion in Immigrant and Refugee Serving Organizations

KNOWLEDGE EXCHANGE REPORT



Funded by:

Immigration, Refugees
and Citizenship Canada

Financé par :

Immigration, Réfugiés
et Citoyenneté Canada