



Mental  
Health  
Estrie

## ANNUAL REPORT 2016-2017

Annual General Meeting • June 22 2017

Recovery  
of hope  
& Hope  
of recovery

Marguerite Knapp Building  
257 rue Queen, Sherbrooke QC  
(Borough of Lennoxville)

## Profile

### *Mission Statement*

*Mental Health Estrie is committed to providing information, support, education and advocacy to English-speaking caregivers & individuals affected by mental illness in Estrie.*

### Membership and Volunteers

- 42 members (membership is not a requirement for services)
- 141 Facebook members
- 7 Board members provided 410 hours for administrative tasks and activities
- 67 volunteers contributed over 1200 hours to activities

### Phone calls and Visits

- Approximately 530 phone calls and visits in 2016-2017 from individuals, families and health and social services providers, seeking support and / or information & referrals.
- 44 client support group meetings took place, with an average of 6 participants, 16 individuals involved throughout the year.
- 21 family support group meetings took place, with an average of 4

#### **Where to find us:**

257 Queen St., Office 900  
Sherbrooke QC J1M 1K7

#### **How to contact us:**

TEL: 819-565-3777  
FAX: 819-565-4160  
mhe.info@bellnet.ca  
www.mentalhealthestrie.com

#### **Office Hours**

9:00 a.m. – 4:30 p.m.  
(Monday-Thursday)

## Board of Directors 2016-2017



Esther Barnett  
*President*  
Waterville



Irene Briand  
*Vice-President*  
Sherbrooke



Norma Salisbury  
*Treasurer*  
West Bolton



Martha Welsh  
*Secretary*  
Sherbrooke



Paulette Losier  
*Director*  
Compton



Holly Moore  
*Director*  
Magog



Lynn Ross  
*Director*  
Magog

## Directors Emeritus



Lynne Beattie  
Canton de Hatley



Barbara Drexel  
Sherbrooke



Jo-Anne Anderson  
Canton de Melbourne



Judy Ross  
(Exec. Dir. Emeritus)  
Magog

## Staff



Tanya Gibson  
*Executive Director*  
Sherbrooke

## President's Report



The Board of Mental Health Estrie (MHE) has spent a lot of time during this past year seeking new sources of funding. Our core funding from the Provincial Government “*Programme de soutien aux organismes communautaires*” (PSOC) covers less than one-half of our expenses and increased by only the cost of living, 2%, so we have had to dip into dwindling capital to meet operating costs. The MHE board decided in early 2017 to apply to various foundations for additional funds. Many foundations do not fund operating costs but we were successful in our applications to Townshippers’ Research and Cultural Foundation and the Tillotson Coaticook Region Fund for specific projects. The two United Churches in Sherbrooke chose MHE for their Lenten calendar project. They not only collected funds but raised awareness about mental illness in general and MHE in particular.

Over the year we considered other funding opportunities and finally decided to hold a Méchoui at the Hut in the spring of 2017. We are hopeful that the local community will come out and support us.

Our “Walk in My Shoes: HUGS for the Homeless” program expanded this year and we were able to provide winter clothing items to individuals at Accueil Poirier, a shelter for the homeless, to clients of Maison Wilfrid, a transitional housing program to re-integrate individuals into society, and to La Source Soleil, where ten young people are provided lodging and support while they work to get their lives back on track. The HUGS project continues to be an important part of our outreach and receives wonderful assistance from people in communities both near and far.

More support came from the Bishop’s University Undergraduate Psychology Society (BUUPS) who ran a raffle for the second year in a row, and from Champlain College Nursing School with bake sale proceeds coming to MHE. Bishop’s Psychology Department continues to be extremely supportive and this year we had two practicum students: Emilie Jobin and Brieanne Marcoux assisting with support groups and office duties.

Judy Ross our former Executive Director, is an invaluable resource person and advisor and we gave her the title, Executive Director Emeritus at our March board meeting. Her question to Prime Minister Trudeau at the town hall meeting held in Sherbrooke in January 2017 and the subsequent response by the media succeeded in sensitizing the population and the government to the need for mental health services to be offered in one’s mother tongue.

Thank you to all the board members for their dedication to MHE. This year we welcomed a new member - Paulette Losier. Paulette has retired from a career in education and she brings wonderful organizational skills, energy and fresh ideas to the team.

I want to also mention Terry Moore, Executive Director of the Lennoxville & District Women’s Centre. She has been an important resource person for us. Her experience in running a community organization and particularly her expertise in applying for government funding is greatly appreciated.

This has been our first year with our new Executive Director, Tanya Gibson. I am pleased to say the transition has been very smooth. I want to express my admiration of Tanya for her hard work and professionalism. She is dedicated to our mission and has taken every opportunity to seek professional development. We are in good hands.

*Esther Barnett*

# 1. Services to Families & Individuals

## Outline

***Mental Health Estrie provides a friendly and confidential environment where people can discuss issues of mental health:***

- ✓ Support groups
  - For Family & Friends
  - For individuals coping with mental illness
- ✓ One-on-one assistance: in person, via telephone or e-mail.
- ✓ Information and referral services
- ✓ Educational sessions animated by professionals in small group settings at the office of MHE
- ✓ Promotion of and participation in AMI Québec's distance education programs

***MHE is committed to eliminating stigma through public awareness, including:***

- ✓ Educational events for the region of Estrie, led by professionals in the area of major mental disorders and recovery
- ✓ Information sessions on mental health subjects and promotion of services available in Estrie led by MHE staff or volunteers
- ✓ Information booths at public events staffed by volunteers

***MHE Offers tools to better understand mental illnesses and assist in the process of recovery:***

- ✓ A lending library of books, videos, DVD's and periodicals
- ✓ A documentation centre offering free and up to date literature

***Thanks to the financial support of Tillotson Coaticook Region Fund, MHE will soon be expanding its Library! Do you know a great book or DVD that will help others? We welcome suggestions!***

## 1.1 Information & Referrals

***Assistance, information and referrals are provided on an individual basis in person by telephone, via email or Facebook. Referrals are made to government health services such as:***

- ✓ The CIUSSS de L'Estrie-CHUS (including the CLSCs in each MRC and the Emergency department of the Hotel Dieu and clinics).
- ✓ Urgence Détresse / Info Santé.
- ✓ Other mental health service providers and community organizations e.g. JEVI (suicide prevention) and Centre Nuhab (addictions and mental health) to name just two.
- ✓ Community organizations involved in health and social services e.g. CALACS (support to victims of sexual aggression) ARRIMAGE (eating disorders), Lennoxville & District Women's Centre etc.
- ✓ And to AMI Québec (Action on Mental Illness) in Montreal—the oldest mental health community organization in Québec serving the English-speaking community.

## 1.2 Peer Support Group for Families & Friends

The Peer Support Group for family, friends and caregivers is held the second and fourth Wednesday of every month, from 10 a.m. to noon.

Facing mental illness in the family is a daunting task. Being able to share with others – or simply listen – provides new strength to cope with difficult and/or ongoing situations.

This support also contributes to one's own well-being and reduces the burden put on close friends.

***21 meetings took place with an average of four participants.  
A total of 11 individuals involved throughout the year.***

### One-on-One Support

In addition to the two peer support groups for individuals and family members, Mental Health Estrie's one-on-one services are also very important. Not everyone who reaches out to MHE is seeking group support. Some are looking for individual guidance. Individuals, families and friends continue to reach out to MHE for knowledge, resources, support and accompaniment on their path to reaching their goals.

***Approximately 70 personal visits to MHE for one-on-one support  
by families and individuals in 2016-17.***

## 1.3 Peer Support Groups for Individuals

The peer support group for individuals with a lived experience of mental illness meets weekly on Monday from 1 – 3 p.m. Meeting time is divided between talk support and activity as needed.

Activities are animated by MHE facilitators, special guests or group members and include workshops and activities such as:

- ◆ An awareness activity of different perspectives animated by volunteers from the Bishop's University Psychology Program
- ◆ A visit from a special guest who shared their experience of psychosis and hospitalization.
- ◆ Communication Techniques
- ◆ Depression
- ◆ Bipolar Disorder
- ◆ Self-Esteem Activity
- ◆ Pumpkin Carving at Halloween
- ◆ A Christmas lunch followed by the sorting and gift wrapping of new items collected for the shelter for the homeless, in Sherbrooke (See "Outreach" )

***44 meetings took place with an average of six participants.  
A total of 16 individuals involved throughout the year.***



### 1.3 Peer Support Groups for Individuals *cont'd*

#### **Stanstead Mental Health Project: “After the Rainbow Comes the Sun”**

This program aims to reduce the isolation of individuals living with moderate to severe mental health problems in the Stanstead area. Participants meet once a week for 30 weeks, to enjoy activities, a meal, and some form of physical activity.

The program provides participants with the opportunity to set goals and the tools to pursue them. The “tool box” includes the development of greater self-esteem and social skills, as well as the opportunity to work on attitudes and behaviors, thus equipping participants to face personal life challenges.

MHE has been a member of the Steering Committee since its inception in 2009, alongside partners: Centre D’Action Bénévole R. H. Rediker, the Centre des services sociaux et de santé Memphremagog (CSSSM) and Townshippers’ Association.

Coordinator Lynn Wood, is assisted by a dedicated group of volunteers who generously donate their time in support of the regular weekly activities, as well as special excursions.

***During 2016-2017 staff of MHE accompanied the Stanstead group on several special outings that included: a trip to the Granby Zoo, an end-of-session barbecue, and a Christmas lunch held at the A&M Restaurant***

### 1.4 Practical Experience for B.U. Student

For the tenth year, Mental Health Estrie welcomed a psychology student from Bishop’s University to complete a 13 week practicum. From January to April, Brienne Marcoux co-facilitated support group meetings and provided one-on-one support.

Brienne was a tremendous asset to the team, demonstrating maturity, initiative, commitment and compassion. She ran many workshops on topics such as: Communication Techniques, Depression, Bipolar Disorder as well as Coping Mechanisms and Techniques

Brienne graduated from Bishop’s in June and plans to pursue a degree in *Couples and Family Therapy*, at Yorkville University.

Appreciation is extended to Dr. Claude Charpentier of Bishop’s University for including MHE in the practicum program and allowing MHE to share real life experiences with the students interested in making a difference in the future.

In spring 2017 MHE submitted an application to the Canada Summer Jobs Program in hopes of hiring Brienne as a Mental Health Worker and Administrative Assistant (this application was successful).



**Brienne Marcoux, a student from Bishop’s University psychology program, benefitted from a practicum at Mental Health Estrie.**

## 2. Public Engagement

### 2.1 Mental Health & Well-Being Information Session

Each year Mental Health Estrie, in collaboration with Bishop's University and the Université de Sherbrooke, presents a Mental Health & Well-Being Information Session. These sessions are free of charge, and are intended to promote services to the English speaking community, prevention of mental illnesses and public awareness.

In the fall of 2016, the partners mentioned above collaborated with Townshippers' Association to host a mental health and well-being information session titled "Who Cares for Caregivers," presented by Amanda Rocheleau, Certified Compassion Fatigue Specialist and Registered Social Worker. Attended by approximately 60 people, this presentation was designed for family caregivers as well as professional helpers, and included information on signs of compassion fatigue, a better understanding of personal and professional needs, as well as strategies for self-care and prevention of "burnout."

For more information, visit Amanda's website <http://www.amandarocheleau.com/resources> where you can access free tools for caregivers and sign up for her newsletter.



Amanda Rocheleau, Registered Social Worker and Certified Compassion Fatigue Specialist presented an information session titled "Who Cares for Caregivers."

*"You Cannot Pour from an Empty Cup" — Amanda Rocheleau*

#### ***Education Sessions provided by Staff***

MHE staff presented information on mental illnesses and MHE services to the following community groups:

- OWLS (Outstanding Wise Ladies Sharing) an activity program for women provided by the Lennoxville & District Women's Centre
- Richmond Watchdog Group
- O.P.A.L.S (Older People with Active Lifestyles) an activity program of the Lennoxville & District Community Aid)



## 2. Public Engagement cont'd

### 2.2 Distance Learning Opportunities

Mental Health Estrie actively promotes and participates in the distance learning programs of AMI Quebec (Action on Mental Illness) in Montreal. These programs are available throughout Quebec and are interactive, free of charge and animated by mental health professionals, such as psychiatrists, psychologists and social workers.

#### Tele-workshops

This past year AMI Quebec provided four tele-workshops. Members of the community are invited to listen in a small group setting at the office of MHE via speaker-phone or to listen from their own home via telephone. The presentations are 20 to 25 minutes and are followed by a question and answer period.

#### Tele-workshop Topics

- ◆ Talking to your Doctor about Mental Illness
- ◆ Coping with Holiday Stress
- ◆ Anxiety Disorders
- ◆ Grieving Mental Illness

### 2.3 Public Information Booths



**Mental Health Estrie's kiosk at Champlain Regional College during Mental Illness Awareness Week, Fall 2016.**

Kiosks at different events with free literature on a variety of mental health topics provide information to the general public while staff and volunteers are available to answer questions. Mental Health Estrie provided a kiosk at:

- ◆ Richmond Health & Wellness Fair
- ◆ Friendship Day in Lennoxville
- ◆ Townshippers' Day in Brome
- ◆ Champlain Regional College:
  - Mental Illness Awareness Week
  - Suicide Prevention Week

## 2. Public Engagement cont'd

## 2.4 Outreach

**Walk in My Shoes: *HUGS* for the homeless**

Each year Mental Health Estrie runs a campaign to collect **new** warm clothing for the homeless. What began as a Christmas project in 2007 evolved into an annual winter project, running from December through March. HUGS stands for Hats, Underwear, Gloves and Socks. In addition to these items, cash donations go towards the purchase of other warm clothing, such as long johns, sweaters, jogging pants, jackets, boots etc. Items are collected and delivered to Accueil Poirier in Sherbrooke, the local shelter for the homeless.

This initiative remains possible thanks to the generosity of Townshippers – individuals, organizations and businesses. A sincere thank you is extended to the church organizations and social clubs that provided significant funds for the necessary purchases. Special thanks go to **Clark & Sons** for their help in providing winter clothing.

Experience shows us that there is a much greater need for men's items – especially warm socks and gloves. We always receive more than enough items for women because very few women actually use the shelter.

This year the shelter expressed a special need for jogging pants and belts. Thanks to your monetary donations, the shelter was provided with 30 pairs of jogging pants and 20 belts.



**The "HUGS-Mobile" has important role**  
Marie-Pier Latour, Intervener at Accueil Poirier, Esther Barnett, President of MHE, and Jean-Philippe Blain, Intervener at Accueil Poirier, load up the HUGS-Mobile to deliver warm clothing to the shelter.

**Response to warm clothing campaign**

<b>H</b> Hats, headbands, balaclavas	<b>248</b>
<b>U</b> Underwear	<b>77</b>
<b>G</b> Gloves / Mitts	<b>117</b>
<b>S</b> Socks	<b>385</b>
<b>S</b> Scarves, neck warmers	<b>46</b>
Articles of warm clothing	<b>76</b>
Numerous toiletries	
<b>Total number of items:</b>	<b>950 +</b>

*The greatest needs are for MEN, especially*

*and*



## 3. Community Engagement

### 3.1 Networking

Collaboration with the Faculté de médecin at the Université de Sherbrooke/CHUS and the Department of Psychology at Bishop's University continues. The partnership plans *Mental Health & Well-Being Information Sessions* to promote mental health and the services for the English-speaking population in Estrie. Visit our website or Facebook page to stay up to date on upcoming presentations.

A good working relationship exists with public and private mental health care providers in the Estrie region. MHE receives calls from social workers from various departments of the CIUSSS de L'Estrie, from the CHUS-Hotel Dieu, Centre des services sociaux et de santé (CSSS) of Memphremagog, Coaticook, Haut-St-François and Val-St-François, as well as community organizations such as JEVI, Centre NuHab, APPAMME, Centre l'Élan, Townshippers' Association, Lennoxville & District Women's Centre and Lennoxville & District Community Aid to name a few.

MHE continues to participate in the mental health committees of the CIUSSS de l'Estrie - CHUS:

- The transitory Access to English Services Advisory Committee
- Table de concertation en santé mentale Memphremagog
- Steering Committee for the Stanstead Mental Health Project (in partnership with the CSSS Memphremagog, Townshippers' Association and CAB Rediker).

Additionally MHE participated in other community partnerships:

- Table de concertation communautaire Lennoxville
- Partners for Health and Social Services Network Estrie (PHSSNE)
- Lennoxville borough Advisory Committee for Social and Community Development

### 3.2 Promotion of Services

Services and events are publicized via:

- Public service announcements in local newspapers, CBC radio and CJBQ radio
- Paid advertising in local newspapers for special events and workshops
- Community email bulletins (e.g. Townshippers' Association)
- Wide distribution of posters for special events
- Notices and emails sent to members and friends of MHE, community organizations and local churches
- Announcements on MHE's Facebook Page and website

### 3.3 Membership

**Services are offered to everyone and membership is not a requirement, however it is encouraged throughout the year.**

## 4. Administrative Activities

### 4.1 Professional Development

Staff, Directors and volunteers attended a number of professional conferences to help achieve the mandate and objectives of MHE.

#### A) Borderline Personality Disorder: Family Connections

When a loved one has Borderline Personality Disorder (BPD) or “emotional dysregulation,” family and friends often suffer as well. BPD can include a pattern of intense and stormy relationships. Family and friends can find themselves on the roller coaster of extreme closeness and love (idealization) to extreme dislike or anger (devaluation). Changeable moods, high risk behavior, suicidality and intense anger are often part of life for a person with BPD, and thus, they become part of life for those who love him or her.

MHE Staff participated in a 4-day program called “Family Connections,” designed to provide education, skills training and support for people who are in a relationship with someone who has BPD (family, friends, spouses). Led by trained family members, this course was developed by Dr. Allan Fruzzetti and Dr. Parry Hoffman. Family connections provides current information and research on BPD and family functioning, as well as individual coping skills based on Dialectical Behavior Therapy (DBT). This program is now being offered by AMI Quebec (Action on Mental Illness in Montreal). We highly recommend it to family members who are seeking: (a) to better understand their loved one, (b) to improve their relationship with their loved one, and (c) to cope with the often turbulent relationship that can accompany BPD. The skills developed through this program can help you and your loved one to regain control of your lives and your relationship.

A sincere thank you to AMI Quebec for bringing this invaluable program to Montreal and for providing MHE staff with the opportunity to participate. To learn more about this program, visit:

<http://amiquebec.org/bpd/>



Mike Menu and Lynn Courey (left), parents of Sasha Menu Courey (right), founded The Sashbear Foundation following the death of their daughter Sasha, who suffered with Borderline Personality Disorder (BPD) and died by suicide. The Sashbea Foundation partnered with AMI Quebec to bring the “Family Connections” program to Montreal. Family Connections aims to improve the lives of families and loved ones who live with BPD, by teaching family members skills to cope with the stormy relationships that can accompany BPD.



#### 4. Administrative Activities cont'd

### B) Other learning experiences included:

- ◆ A workshop on ***“Anxiety”*** presented by Dr. Camillo Zacchia, psychologist
- ◆ A conference on ***“Living with Addictions”*** presented by residents of Centre Nuhab in Ascot Corner (now relocated to Dunham and called Maison Dunham House)
- ◆ A workshop on ***“Wellness and Caregiving”*** by Amanda Rocheleau, Social Worker and Compassion Fatigue Specialist
- ◆ ***“Hero in 30”*** a First Aid training course.

## 4.2 Administration

Nine meetings were held by the volunteer Board of Directors during the year to supervise and to oversee the work of the Executive Director and volunteers, and to review the budget as well as many other tasks. This year Directors spent a great deal of time searching for funding sources and preparing grant applications wherever possible and this is reflected in the number of hours given to MHE.

***7 Directors provided 410 hours for administrative duties and other activities***

## 4.3 Volunteers

MHE is fortunate to have a bank of dedicated volunteers to help achieve its goals by assisting at kiosks, helping with mailings, providing transportation, facilitating support groups, and helping with the Walk in My Shoes campaign – to identify only a few of the many tasks completed.

A key component to the success of any community organization is the strength of its volunteers; we are grateful for the help we receive. The generosity of volunteers in all forms, is an essential element for the continued development of MHE services.

***67 volunteers contributed over 1200 hours to activities***  
***Total volunteers: 74      Total hours contributed: over 1600***

#### 4. Administrative Activities cont'd

## 4.4 Funding

### A) Provincial Government

Mental Health Estrie receives financial support from the *Programme de soutien aux organismes communautaires* (PSOC) of the CIUSSS de l'Estrie-CHUS (previously, the "Agence"). This program supports non-profit community organizations working in the health and social services sector.

Support from PSOC program since 2011 has provided MHE with a base of recurring funding. However, the first grant of \$26,000 represented 50% of the total amount for which MHE was eligible. In 2015-2016, in light of the increase in demand of services and functioning of MHE, the PSOC program recognized that MHE had changed from classification "A" to "B." However, this achievement was not recognized in the annual grant funding, other than approximately 1.2% annually for the cost of living.

The annual grant of \$27,619 is designated for three years (2015-16, 2016-17, and 2017-18) and is less than 25% of the level "B" classification. In reality, MHE struggles with a shoestring budget and is unable to provide the level of services demanded.

### B) Community Support

**The very existence of MHE is dependent upon tangible help from the community. The generous financial support of individuals, organizations, social clubs and corporations is greatly appreciated and allows MHE to empower families and individuals affected by a mental illness on their journey of recovery.**

### Bishop's University Undergraduate Psychology Society (BUUPS) Fundraiser

For the second year the executive committee of the Bishop's University Undergraduate Psychology Society (BUUPS) held a hockey raffle and the proceeds were shared between MHE and the Refugees Program for students attending Bishop's University and Champlain Regional College.



#### Leadership recognized and rewarded

Liz Therrien, one of three BUUPS students honoured with a *Young Townships Leaders Award* from Townshippers' Association, and Tanya Gibson, Executive Director of MHE, following the Awards Ceremony at Townshippers' Day 2016

A huge thank you to these exceptional young leaders: **Liz Therrien**, **Lisa Astrologo** and **Lisa Tejpar**. In recognition of their achievements, dynamism and involvement in the community they were nominated by MHE for Townshippers Association's *Young Townships Leaders Award*.

Thank you to selection committee for recognizing their leadership and presenting each with the award at the 37<sup>th</sup> edition of Townshippers' Day held at the Brome County Fair Grounds in September 2016.



## B) Community Support cont'd

### Champlain Regional College Nursing Students Create Awareness & Raise Funds

Many teenagers are often moody due to hormonal and physical changes that happen during puberty. However, when mental illness is involved, it can become difficult to differentiate between “normal teenage behaviour,” and symptoms of depression, anxiety and other mental illnesses. Half of all chronic mental illness begins by age 14 and three-quarters begin by age 24.

With a focus on the risk of onset for mental illness in late teens, the Nursing students helped to create awareness around warning signs and risk factors that can appear during this critical time period.



**As part of their class project for “Ethics in Nursing”, Champlain Regional College Nursing students held an information kiosk for the campus population and a bake sale for Mental Health Estrie.**

### Applications for Project Funding

Applications were made to Townshippers’ Research and Cultural Foundation (TRCF) and Tillotson Coaticook Region Fund in the spring of 2017.

Mental Health Estrie will publish a new bilingual brochure in 2017-18, thanks to a favourable response from TRCF . It will be widely distributed amongst health and social service providers, i.e. medical clinics, CLSCs, offices of psychiatrists and the CHUS.

Thanks to the support of Tillotson Coaticook Region Fund, MHE will be expanding the lending library.

## 5. Financial Report

**A “Review Engagement” was completed by Marie-Josée Fauteux, CPA Auditrice, CGA. A copy of the Financial Statements for the year ending March 31, 2017 is available from the office.**