



Saskatchewan Social Worker

FEBRUARY 2019 | Volume 30 | Number 1

Building Capacity in Mental Health: The “Authorized Practice Endorsement”

By Lesley Washington, MSW, RSW

In 2018, SASW launched the “Authorized Practice Endorsement” (APE) which grants qualified social workers working in a clinical setting to provide diagnosis within the scope of their knowledge and training.

One of the intended outcomes is improved access to mental health services, particularly in rural and remote communities. This is of critical importance as delayed diagnosis delays treatment, which translates into unnecessary suffering for those living with mental health problems.

To apply for APE, social workers require a Master of Social Work, a clinical practicum placement of at least 450 hours, and 3,000 hours of post-MSW practice in a clinical setting, with a SASW-approved supervision

plan. Applicants must have also completed specific academic coursework and then sit for a clinical examination.

APE can also be granted to social workers moving to the province who have received APE or equivalent in another jurisdiction, and are registered in good standing in the other jurisdiction. There is also a grand-parenting provision for those who, in addition to the academic requirements, have a minimum of five years of experience in the previous eight years, in a clinical setting. The grandparenting provision expires April 30, 2019.

To date, three Saskatchewan social workers have received APE: Lauralyn Blackburn (Program Director at BridgePoint Center for Eating Disorders), Ralph Aman (Clinical

Did You Know that...?

- **Qualified social workers were permitted to diagnose prior to 2002.** This changed in 2002 with the Proclamation of section 23 of The Psychologists Act which limited diagnostic privilege to qualified medical practitioners and members of the Saskatchewan College of Psychologists.
- **The SASW lobbied for several years to have diagnostic privileges reinstated.** These efforts were ultimately successful with Bill 78, An Act to amend The Social Workers Act, which received Royal Assent in 2013.
- **Previously, British Columbia and Alberta were the only jurisdictions in Canada where qualified social workers could diagnose mental health disorders.** The APE process in Saskatchewan has been modeled after Alberta's model.

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Saskatchewan Social Worker

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Supervisor, Addictions and Adult Community Mental Health, Saskatchewan Health Authority, Swift Current) and Shawna Gray (Mental Health Social Worker in Melfort; Sessional Lecturer, U of R, Indigenous social worker from Carry the Kettle (Ceg-A-Kin) Nakoda Nation).

In this edition we are featuring Shawna Gray and Lauralynn Blackburn, who offered their thoughts on the introduction of APE and the provision of mental health services in Saskatchewan.

Why did you pursue the APE?

Lauralyn: I completed my MSW from the Memorial University of Newfoundland with a clinical specialization. After graduating in 2000, I wanted to have my specialized training recognized. I originally went through the process of becoming an approved clinical social worker with the Alberta College of Social Workers, and decided to pursue the APE designation when I moved to Saskatchewan.



Lauralyn

Shawna: My workplace was supportive of me pursuing APE. As a social worker providing services in a rural mental health system, access to psychologists and psychiatrists can be difficult due to travel or wait times. I have been a mental health social worker since 2004 and felt that this was a natural extension of my practice. Successfully completing the ASWB clinical exam felt like a validation of the value of the practice knowledge that I have acquired and my competency to practice clinical social work.

What will this add to your practice?

Lauralyn: The field of eating disorders is always advancing in knowledge and skills and thus it is crucial that service providers stay up to date with new research and clinical advances. The APE designation is my commitment to the public to stay current in the prevention and treatment of mental health and eating disorders.

Shawna: As a new extension to the services that I can provide, I think that there will be an increasing call to expand into a more specialized clinical/diagnostic aspect

of my practice. The specific requirement for clinically focused continuing professional development will be an opportunity to be more focused in how I expand my skills, knowledge and practice. Having a requirement for clinical supervision from someone who has APE will provide growth to my clinical practice.

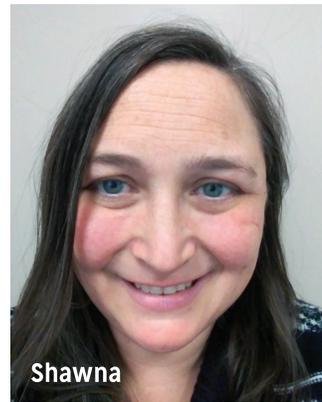
How will the APE benefit your clients?

Lauralyn: Registration with a regulatory body provides the public assurances that as a service provider I will take good care to do no harm. The APE designation is an additional declaration that I am committed to serving the work as an advanced clinician and providing quality service delivery. The

people I work with have often had negative experiences while trying to access support and services. My hope is that with the APE designation and wide-spread knowledge of what this endorsement means, we will

build greater trust and collaboration between service providers and those accessing services.

Shawna: The main benefit will be improved ability to provide a service that will help them access appropriate and meaningful supports in a timely fashion. They



Shawna

will be able to access these supports in a setting that is closer to home and within a team of professionals who are already working closely together and know the resources of the community.

Were there any challenges with the APE process that you would identify?

Lauralyn: The process was very straight forward in my case. I completed the application form and provided documentation to support my 19 years of clinical experience and training. I had already passed the ASWB exam, which is required to be on the clinical social work registry in Alberta.

Shawna: I collected the material to show the required knowledge and practice experience, completed the grandparenting application form, paid the application fee (reimbursed by my employer), requested references from eligible (as stated in the bylaws) professionals who had supervised

“I would encourage anyone with clinical training to pursue APE. It recognizes the time and cost commitments we have made to clinical social work and ensures the highest quality of care for the people we serve.”



me or provided consultation in my practice (two psychiatrists and a social worker with out-of-province APE) and purchased professional liability insurance (reimbursed by my employer).

Once all my references were received, SASW contacted me and I submitted the form to SASW for their approval to take the ASWB exam. I was approved by SASW to apply for the ASWB, applied for the ASWB exam (fee reimbursed by my employer), prepared for the exam (with an ASWB practice workbook and the ASWB practice exam – purchased by my employer) and wrote the exam at the Pearson testing site in the Midtown Tower in Saskatoon. The exam results are provided as soon as you complete the exam, so I knew I had passed immediately. I celebrated at one of my favourite restaurants in the city!

As a rural practitioner, the most challenging aspect of applying for APE was that the bulk of the clinical consultation and supervision I received were from professionals who were not included in the by-

laws – such as physicians or social workers (without APE). Also, attending the testing site in a city (four hours return travel time) was a slight barrier, lessened significantly by the support of my workplace. Trying to find time to study and prepare for the exam in my busy days was a challenge. Again, I am grateful to my employer for allowing me to create space within my work day for this preparation time.

Shawna: Yes. The social work profession brings a different perspective to mental health than that of other professions and our contribution to the work and to clients is valuable. The professional designation of APE demonstrates competency in that the social worker has been assessed for their practice knowledge and skills through standardized testing and the application process.

“One of the intended outcomes is improved access to mental health services, particularly in rural and remote communities.”

To learn more about the Authorized Practice Endorsement, please contact the SASW office.

Lesley Washington is a clinical social worker who works in mental health. She is a Mental Health

Would you encourage other social workers to pursue APE?

Lauralyn: I would encourage anyone with clinical training to pursue APE. It recognizes the time and cost commitments we have made to clinical social work and ensures the highest quality of care for the people we serve.

First Aid (Mental Health Commission of Canada) trainer, and is proud to sit on the Board of Directors for CMHA Saskatoon, an organization dedicated to supporting individuals living with mental illness through programs, services, public education and advocacy.

PA BRANCH SASW

KNOWLEDGE & SKILLS EXCHANGE WORKSHOP

April 8, 2019. 8:30-4:30

Coronet Hotel

3551 2nd Ave W, Prince Albert

Professional and personal resilience

ERIN BECKWELL, MSW, RSW

Connecting the dots between trauma,
chronic stress, and our physical, mental and
social well-being

Somatic Experiencing®

CARRIE LAVALLIE, RPN, BHSC, MHS

Introduction to understanding Somatic
Experiencing®

Somatic Experiencing® Panel

CELESTE BORAN FETCH, BSW, RSW

PATTI CRAM, MSW, RSW, SEP

SHAUNA EVELEIGH HARRIS, BSW, RSW

CARRIE LAVALLIE, RPN, BHSC, MHS

Panel Discussion on our personal and professional
experiences with Somatic Experiencing® training and
practice

Breakout Sessions:

Art Therapy techniques

KARLA ETHIER, MSW, RSW

A critical look at Social Work in
Saskatchewan and the impacts of
compassion fatigue and burnout
(Preliminary findings from MSW
research in progress)

WHITNEY FRASER, BSW, RSW

MSW (IN PROGRESS)

Releasing the residual effects of
professional Social Work through
hypnosis

LORNA GILBERT, MSW, RSW

HEARTT FAMILY THERAPY

REGISTRATION FEE: \$50

REGISTRATION DEADLINE:

MARCH 25, 2019

LUNCH PROVIDED

FOR MORE INFORMATION CONTACT: SASWPA@GMAIL.COM



PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

This Year Begins With a Great Start

By Wanda Miller

We are off to a great start in 2019 and I wish our membership all the best for this year. Our management and front office team continue to work together to support Council, Advisory and our membership. Hats off to Karen, Fay, and Debb for all the work they do to keep our Association moving forward!

As we move into Year Two of our Strategic Plan I would like to highlight three key focus areas:

Importance of Licensure and Regulations

If the public is to be served competently and with high ethical standards we need to ensure that the values of the social work profession are embodied in the Code of Ethics and the need for public protection is embodied by regulation and licensure.

Social workers bring an ethical perspective that is magnified and enhanced through licensure, and licensure in turn strengthens the core values of the profession through public protection. Both the Code of Ethics and professional regulation support safe and competent practice as well as protection of the public.

As a registered member of our Association I can proudly call myself a Social Worker regardless of my role and/or title of the position I hold with my employer. I encourage each of you to stand up and share the pride in our profession and celebrate Social Work Week March 24 – 30, 2019 “Real People, Real Impact”.

A new image for SASW

What is the image you want your organization to portray to the public, to our membership, to our partners? These are the

questions that guided Council and Advisory as we ‘reviewed the old and considered the new’ in making changes to the messaging and visual identity we want as an Association.

I’m pleased to reveal our new logo and visual identity with this issue. Our new website will be launched during Social Work week so stay tuned and we hope you like it. All feedback is welcome as we continue to work through the communication plan and update our image, messages and communication methods.

It Takes a Committee

Committees are a necessary part of our lives as we need to bring brilliant minds together to talk about certain matters as we move forward. Our association is supported by branches that cover large geographical areas of our province; and committees which focus on finance, awards, children’s issues, discipline, education, mentorship, practice ethics, professional conduct, pub-

lic relations, social justice, standards of practice and volunteer development.

Volunteerism is alive and well in our association. The work completed by these committees and branches moves our plans forward. Great work committee and branch members! Anyone interested in some of this work please contact the office to discuss how you can be involved.

Our membership is increasing and times are changing! As we work toward strengthening our Association, a change toward strong messaging with a clear visual identity and the great work of our membership, we are in a good position to move forward.

Again, I acknowledge my thanks for providing me the opportunity to serve as the President of the Association. It is an honor to get to know you and serve our membership. I welcome any opportunity to meet with you and discuss the challenges and opportunities we face in this great profession of ours. Take Care and Be Safe!





EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR'S MESSAGE

2019 Marks New Beginnings

By Karen Wasylenka

A new year and new beginnings. As you will see from this newsletter, SASW is launching our new and refreshed look! Something new is always exciting! It was clear from our strategic planning session in 2017 that we needed a rebranding.

With the help of Benchmark Public Relations and advice from Advisory Board, our new logo was chosen. As well, our newsletter has a new format; and our Annual Report will also look different. We are also working on refreshing our website. Other communication material will slowly be converted. I hope you like it!

Congratulations to Shawna Gray, Ralph Aman, and Lauralynn Blackburn, three RSW's who have been granted the Authorized Practice Endorsement (APE) designation to date. They are featured in this edition of our newsletter.

It is indeed an accomplishment of SASW to implement this provision and expand the role of social workers with APE. Diagnosis carries considerable responsibility and we needed to ensure that it was implemented well and with due diligence, in the process

to approve applicants. Many thanks to the APE Task Team of Patti Petrucka, Kathy Bovair, Ray Pekrul, and Ralph Aman for all the hard work planning and development of the policies and procedures.

As we prepare for Social Work Week, I encourage you to take part in any activities going on in your area. We will have a list on the SASW website, the SASW Facebook page, and branch Facebook pages. Social Work Week is a time to recognize our profession and the outstanding work that social workers do every day.

The number of Registered Social Workers in Saskatchewan is increasing each year. It is encouraging that employers are requiring registration. I am also encouraged by the increase in student members - they are great ambassadors and are likely to become RSW's when their degree is completed.

The theme for Social Work Week this year is Real People. Real Impact. The work that each of you do every day speaks to the theme. Social workers work with many people and make a difference in their lives.

The theme also speaks to the impact that our membership has on our association.

One of our goals in the Strategic Plan is to increase member engagement. I see it every day in my work - from Council, Committee and Branch Chairs and Members, and those who volunteer to work on a one time project or event. Some of our Committee work requires considerable time of its members. We are grateful for your commitment, time, and effort. It is because of this that we have been able to move forward on many initiatives and make a real impact on the association.

We regularly receive information on conferences, workshops, and other professional development events. They are posted on our website, under the "Resources" tab. If you are looking for some specific training/knowledge or hours for CPE, make sure you check the section out.

I hope that spring is around the corner! Happy Social Work Month and Social Work Week!

Volunteering for SASW Committees



Thank you to everyone who indicated an interest in volunteering for SASW committee work when you completed your 2019 renewal. Committee positions are filled on an "as needed" basis by the SASW Volunteer Development Committee. When there are vacancies on a committee, an email will go out to those who identified interest in that committee. You will be asked to confirm your interest, the amount of time you can commit to the committee, and provide a short statement of your interest and experience. New committee members will then be selected. Please contact the office at sasw.accesscomm.ca if you have any questions about the committees or the process of recruitment.



The University of Regina Online Therapy Unit (OTU)

Greater capacity than ever with the formation of the SHA's Online Therapy Team (OTT)

By Dr. Katherine Owens (RDPsych) and the Online Therapy Team

Do you have difficulty finding timely, accessible, and evidence-based resources you can refer clients to for anxiety and depression? Or perhaps supports and resources for their caregivers, loved ones, people in your life, or even yourself? With the formation of the SHA's Online Therapy Team, **we will have the capacity to offer free, therapist assisted, internet-delivered Cognitive Behaviour Therapy to more than 1,000 Saskatchewan residents a year.**

We know that approximately 1 in 4 Canadians will experience anxiety or depression in their lifetime and many of these folks will not receive treatment. There are many factors contributing to under-treatment – a shortage of providers, mobility, time, finances, location, and stigma.

Canadian and American clinical guidelines and research suggest that Cognitive Behavioural Therapy (CBT) is an effective first-line therapy for both anxiety and depression. CBT is an important offering for individuals with mood and anxiety symptoms whether as a first line treatment or for those who have a limited response to other intervention.

Therapist-assisted, internet-delivered, CBT (ICBT) is a promising approach for improving access to mental health care. The University of Regina's OTU, and now the newly formed OTT, offer Saskatchewan adults free ICBT

for depression, anxiety, pain, chronic health conditions, and spinal cord injury. Clients work through CBT material online with the weekly support of a registered social worker, psychologist, or a supervised graduate student.

The OTU has been researching ICBT since 2010. More than 3,400 Saskatchewan residents have taken our course and 95% say they'd recommend it to others, their symptoms are better, they feel more confident managing their symptoms, and have learned new skills. Clinical results have been extremely positive showing an average reduction of symptoms by 50% and outcomes similar to face-to-face CBT. ICBT is available for clients to work through any time and currently there is no wait. It is completely free and easy to use.

Online therapy might not be right for people who are at a very high level of severity or risk – or whose primary challenges are active psychosis, mania, or addictions.

Sending clients our way or getting started yourself really is as simple going to the website www.onlinetherapyuser.ca. Posters, cards, data, and presentations are available – let me know what you need at katherine.owens@saskhealthauthority.ca.

Questions? Contact me directly by email or call the OTU at 306-337-3331.

Welcome to SASW Northern!

Following a letter from SASW to social workers in the north, in the fall of 2018 a cohort of school social workers in the Northern Lights School Division #113 decided to form a new branch of SASW. We were seeking both support from our colleagues and more involvement in our professional organization.

Due to the unique nature of social work in the north we knew our group would be different – and we are still finding our way! Utilizing both teleconferencing and videoconferencing, we met as a group on multiple occasions to discuss organizational and

informational topics, and to share issues or concerns related to resources, practice, ethics, and so forth. In this way, we are able to benefit from the support of fellow social workers who we rarely have an opportunity to see in person. This is our form of mentorship and fits our northern context.

We are grateful to have been supported by Ruth Ann Thomas, Provincial Mentorship, in getting our group started and we have also received great support from the Northern Lights School Division #113! We are now looking for others who are practicing social work in the north to join our Branch!

Forming a strong collective of northern social workers will allow for mutual support and the opportunity to stand united on our profession's core values. If you are working in a social work capacity in the north and would like to be part of the group, please contact Shirley Bell-Morin (ShirleyBellMorin@nlsd113.ca), Kelly Miller (KellyMiller@nlsd113.ca) or Linda McKay (LindaMcKay@nlsd113.ca).

We are enthusiastic, committed to our work, and look forward to more involvement with our professional organization!



Members of the Northern Lights School Division #113 recently formed a new branch of the SASW. For more information contact Shirley Bell-Morin (ShirleyBellMorin@nlsd113.ca), Kelly Miller (KellyMiller@nlsd113.ca) or Linda McKay (LindaMcKay@nlsd113.ca).



From the Desk of the Registrar

By Fay Schuster

For members who completed the 2019 registration renewal, you should have received by Canada Post your income tax receipts, licence, calendar and RSW pin. If you have not yet received please let our office know. You can call me at 306-545-6878 and leave a message or e-mail me at registrar.sasw@accesscomm.ca

Importance of Keeping Your Information Current in the Online System

SASW is supported by an online system. We rely on members to keep their information current in the online system to receive important notices by Canada Post mail and by e-mail. You can edit your profile information by logging into the system. Once on your Member home page locate the "View/Edit My Profile" on the left hand side of the page, click on it, and proceed to change your information.

If your name has changed and you would like to change it in the system you will need to locate the "Name Change Form" located on the right hand side of the page under "Online Forms".

Student Members

One of the benefits of being a student member is that SASW will upgrade you to RSW status in the year that your degree is conferred at \$0.00. If you do not complete an "Upgrade Application" in the year that your degree is conferred you will need to apply as a new member. Our application year runs on a calendar year from January 1 to December 31.

For student members who complete their studies at the end of December in the calendar year, your degree will not be conferred until the third week in January of the next year. To accommodate this timeline our

online system is set to charge the student fee of \$58.00 to accommodate the Upgrade.

We do send e-mails to student members three times per year advising of renewals and upgrades.

Member Reporting of Continuing Professional Activities (CPE)

Members are encouraged to enter their CPE activities and hours into the online system when undertaken. This alleviates stress at renewal time when trying to remember and locate what you did over the past year. This approach also gets members, especially new members used to using the online system.

As well, new members, members who have reinstated their membership after having

their membership lapse over one year and non-practicing members are exempt from reporting the 40 hours of CPE for the next renewal year.

For example, if you became a new member or a reinstated member after January 1, 2019, you will not be required to report and enter CPE for the 2020 renewal year. You will need to undertake 40 hours of CPE throughout 2020 to report for the 2021 renewal year. If you renewed your membership for 2019 as "non-practicing" you will not be required to report CPE for the 2020 renewal year.

As always, if you need assistance please do not hesitate to contact the office. We are always happy to help.



Upcoming Branch Professional Development Events

Posters on SASW website, under Resources Tab

April 19 - Yellowhead East Branch, Yorkton | 8:30 - 4:30 at SIGN on Broadway

"Unpacking Trauma Symptoms and Discharging Trauma Stories" - Speaker Dr. Dawn McBride, PhD, RPsych, Associate Professor at the University of Lethbridge

Cost \$65 early bird, \$80 after March 31.

For more information email yellowheadsaswpd@gmail.com.



Attend the AGM on May 2 and then on May 3 - Saskatoon Branch Conference | 8:00 - 4:30 at the Saskatoon Inn

"Sustaining Health" Learn about how physical health, mental health, and community health are impacted by the quality of our environment and the role of environmental advocacy in diverse micro and macro practices.

Keynote speaker (a.m.) Dr. Michael (Mishka) Lysack, Professor in the Faculty of Social Work, University of Calgary. Dr. Lysack will facilitate a panel discussion in the afternoon. Panel members are Tania Lafontaine, Erin Beckwell, Beima Podrug, Kristy Kominetsky, and Cara Taylor.

Cost to SASW members is \$100, Student Members - \$40. Registration deadline is April 8.

Registration and information available at www.sasw.ca.



Sustaining Health

An interdisciplinary conference & networking opportunity for social work & related disciplines.

hosted by:

The Saskatoon Branch of the
Saskatchewan Association of Social Workers



Join us on:

FRIDAY, MAY 3, 2019

AT THE SASKATOON INN AND CONFERENCE CENTRE
2002 AIRPORT DR, SASKATOON, SK
IN THE CANADIAN ROOM FROM 8:30 AM - 4:30 PM

To learn about:

HOW PHYSICAL HEALTH, MENTAL HEALTH, AND
COMMUNITY HEALTH ARE IMPACTED BY THE
QUALITY OF OUR ENVIRONMENT.

&

THE ROLE OF ENVIRONMENTAL ADVOCACY IN
DIVERSE MICRO AND MACRO PRACTICE
SETTINGS.

REGISTER @ SASW.CA

Sustaining Health

Learn how physical, mental and community health are impacted by the quality of our environment

In the first week of May, the Saskatoon Branch is hosting an event called Sustaining Health – an interdisciplinary conference and networking opportunity for social work and related disciplines. The event takes place on Friday, May 3 at the Saskatoon Inn and Conference Centre (2002 Airport Dr.) in the Canadian Room from 8:30 a.m. to 4:30 p.m.

The event is a great opportunity to learn how physical health, mental health and community health are impacted by the quality of our environment. Attendees will also learn the role of environmental advocacy in diverse micro and macro practice settings.

The keynote speaker and conference facilitator is Dr. Michael (Mishka) Lysack, a full professor in the Faculty of Social Work and an adjunct assistant professor in Psychiatry in Medicine at the University of Calgary. His teaching, research, and knowledge mobilization work and community outreach focuses on climate change and environmental protection, renewable energy, effective public policy, mental and physical health, and sustainable economies and social development.

To register, visit www.sasw.ca.

MEET THE PANELISTS:

- **Tania Lafontaine** is from George Gordon First Nation in Treaty Four territory. She is a mother of four children. Tania has worked in First Nations and Métis health for three years. She has a Master's Degree in Social Work. Tania is passionate about creating cultural safety and health equity for all. She previously taught in the School of Indigenous Social Work at First Nations University.
- **Erin Beckwell** is a social worker who has spent her career working in the areas of health, education, and community development. In her current role as Knowledge Translation Specialist with the Saskatchewan Health Authority, Erin's work focuses on mobilizing knowledge to support the health system to achieve health equity and provide culturally safe care for all.
- **Belma Podrug** is the Executive Director of the Global Gathering Place, an organization which she helped found in 1998 and nurtured from very humble beginnings into becoming a primary point of contact for the many newcomers who make Saskatoon their home. Ms. Podrug's personal perspective of having lived in Bosnia during the Bosnian war gives her insight into how war and violence can impact human rights and first hand perspective into the struggles of newcomers and refugees.
- **Kristy Kominetsky** is a medical social worker at Royal University Hospital in Saskatoon. Her MSW thesis explored social work students' understanding of the physical environment, including environmental issues, and their relationship to social work practice. Moving forward, Kristy plans to continue advocating for the inclusion of the environment in social work with the intent that environmental social work becomes an integral component of holistic social work practice.
- **Cara Taylor** is a mental health educator based in Saskatoon. Professionally, she has worked in diverse mental health settings. Her education has involved both graduate coursework in social work and counselling psychology as well as lived experience of mental illness and suicide loss. Currently, through her small business, she develops and facilitates workshops and creates customized resources on a variety of mental health topics.

Itinerary

Provincial AGM SASW

May 2nd, 2019 | Manitoba Room
6:00 PM

Breakfast Provided

May 3rd, 2019 | Canadian Room
7:00 AM - 8:00 AM

Keynote

8:30 AM - 12:00 PM

Lunch Provided

12:00 PM - 1:00 PM

Panel Discussion

1:00 PM - 4:30 PM

Cost

RSW Member rate: \$100

Non Member rate: \$140

Student Member: \$40

Student Non-Member: \$60

Registration Deadline

April 8th, 2019

www.sasw.ca



The Importance of Including Animals in Social Work Practice

By Darlene Chalmers, PhD

The beneficial role of companion animals, or pets, in human health across the life cycle is well documented in the literature. In North America, over one-half of households include a pet and research suggests that the majority of people consider their animals to be family members. In fact, between 2005 and 2009, Canadians, on average, spent more money on their pets than on their child care expensesⁱ.

The positive relationships that people have with their pets, or the human-animal bond (HAB), can impact on human health such that animals can influence bio-psycho-social-spiritual wellbeing. Notably, this has been documented in studies that suggest that we can experience enhanced good feelings through the release of oxytocin from merely petting a dog or cat, and beneficial impacts can also occur via increased exercise and activity that can lend to enhanced social capital. Animals are also recognized as important sources of comfort and support.

This is especially relevant to the mental health and addictions fields which are highly stigmatized in society and increasingly criminalizedⁱⁱ. In 2018, the Canadian Centre on Substance Use and Addiction released the findings from a first-time national survey on Life in Recovery. This survey included a question about the role of companion animals in recovery. Interestingly, 88% of survey participants indicated their relationship with pets as an important support in their recovery from addictionⁱⁱⁱ. This example highlights how client populations, their identified needs, and the type of support that they find helpful is shifting.

The inclusion of animals in social work, regardless of practice setting, can enhance practice by keeping it current, relevant, and

holistic^{iv}. Animals may play a multitude of roles in a client's environment. Assessing the "place" of the animal can inform the development of client intervention plans^v. This can range from pocket pets, such as hamsters and gerbils, providing companionship to young children to the use of psychiatric service dogs to enhance daily functioning.

On the other hand, an animal may highlight risk of harm either to the human, animal, or both. Thus, animals may be barometers of stress and violence or an important source of support. The inclusion of animals in practice may also involve animal assisted interventions (AAIs); the incorporation of animals across a range of therapeutic service delivery settings and client populations e.g., corrections, mental health and addictions, long-term care, child welfare. Some social workers are using animal assisted interventions (AAIs) either directly, by incorporating an animal into their practice, or indirectly, by referring a client to an AAI provider.

A survey of social workers' practice and knowledge of human-animal interactions in Atlantic Canada and the USA revealed that a small percentage of respondents have a baseline of information about animals, knowledge about the human-animal bond, and incorporate animals in their practice^{viii}.

The vast majority of social workers' report to ignore animals as family members, and those who do incorporate animals in assessment and treatment are doing so with little education. While still under peer review, a similar survey in the prairie provinces is suggesting the same^{viii}.

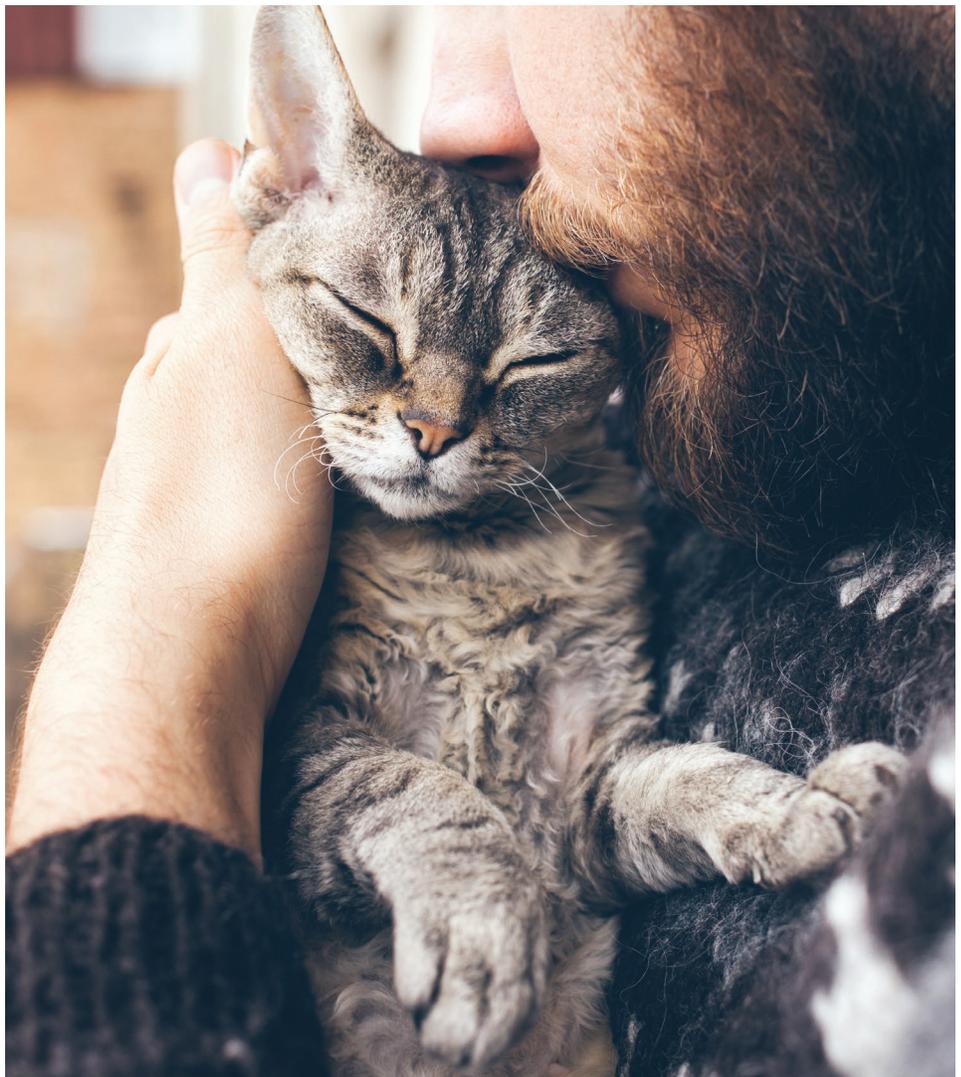
So, where to begin? The inclusion of animals in social work practice can start quite simply. The use of the practical *Pet Query*^{ix} involves asking if there are pets in the fam-

ily/household and, if yes, how many and what species. These questions have the potential to build rapport and the therapeutic alliance by validating the importance of an animal companion in a client's family or support system. Additionally, including animals in an ecomap or genogram can provide a window into the client's environment which can lead to innovative and relevant service delivery.

Not all social workers, nor all clients, will have pets and therefore the relevance of including animals in practice may not seem obvious. However, for those clients who consider animals a vital and important part of their family or wellbeing, it is incumbent upon practitioners to be informed to ensure ethical and effective practice.

This can be done through continuing professional education e.g., reading books or journal articles, attending workshops, or reaching out to practitioners with related experience. Social workers can also advocate in their organizations for training and practice support in this area. It is our obligation, regardless of practice context, to provide services that meet clients where they are at. For many, this includes their animals.

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ⁱStatistics Canada. (2012). *Average expenditure per household, Canada, provinces and territories, recent years*. Retrieved from <http://www.statcan.gc.ca/pub/62-202-x/2008000/t002-eng.htm>

ⁱⁱLivingston, J., Milne, T., Fang, M., & Aman, E. (2012). *The effectiveness of interventions for reducing stigma related to substance use disorders: A systematic review*. *Addiction, 107*(1), 39-50.

ⁱⁱⁱMcQuaid, R., Malik, A., Moussouni, K., Baydack, N., Stargardt, N., & Morrissey, M. (2017). *Life in recovery from addiction in Canada*. Retrieved from <http://www.ccsa.ca/Resource%20Library/CCSA-Life-in-Recovery-from-Addiction-Report-2017-en.pdf>

^{iv}Hoy-Gerlach, J. & Weylan, S. (2017). *Human-animal interactions: A social work guide*. Washington, DC: NASW Press.

^vMacNamara, M. & Moga, J. (2014). *The place and consequence of animals in contemporary social work practice*. In T. Ryan (Ed.), *Animals in social work: Why and how they matter* (pp. 151-166). England, UK: Palgrave.

^{vi}Hanrahan, C. (2013). *Social work and human animal bonds and benefits in health research: A provincial study*. *Critical Social Work, 14*(1), 63-71. Retrieved from <http://www1.uwindsor.ca/criticalsocialwork/SWhumananimalbonds>

^{vii}Risley-Curtiss, C. (2010). *Social work practitioners and the human-companion animal bond: A national study*. *Social Work, 55*, 38-46. doi:10.1093/sw/55.1.38

^{viii}Hodgson, K., Darling, M., Freeman, D., & Monavvari, A., (2017). *Asking about pets enhances patient communication and care: A pilot study*. *Inquiry: The Journal of Health Care Organization, Provision, and Financing*. Doi: <https://doi.org/10.1177%2F0046958017734030>. Retrieved from <https://journals.sagepub.com/doi/10.1177/0046958017734030>

News Briefs

New Logo and VI Standards

We are proud to announce the launch of our new logo as part of the ongoing evolution of our association. Our association has grown and evolved over the last 57 years, and now it is time for a change. We have revised our logo to reflect who we are today and to symbolize our dynamic future.

Our new logo and visual identity standards will be available for download on our new website. The standards will provide direction on how to best use the logo for creating a standard brand for our association. Please download the new logo and discontinue using the old logo in future communications.



Like Us on Facebook

If you have a Facebook account, visit the Saskatchewan Association of Social Workers page at the following link: <https://www.facebook.com/Saskatchewan-Association-of-Social-Workers-1507915522864962/?fref=ts>. We chose a page instead a group to be more visible to the public, which is part of our mandate to promote the profession to our members and the public. This page is managed by two Public Relations Committee members and the Executive Director who post relevant information and articles (following the media guidelines), communicate SASW updates when requested by the SASW Office/Council and police potential spam (controls will be set to minimize this risk).

Contributions Welcome

Contributions to our newsletter are welcome anytime. Please feel free to share information from books you're recently read, interesting projects you are working on, or any other item you think the membership might be interested in. Please send your articles and ideas to sasw@accesscomm.ca.

Call for Proposals

The Education Committee welcomes proposals from Registered Social Workers who would like to share their knowledge and expertise in a SASW/CASW webinar. Webinars are one hour, conducted from the comfort of your home/office, the technical details are all taken care of, and it's a great opportunity to share information and open dialogue across Canada on a topic of interest. Your preparation also counts for CPE hours. Submit an outline of your topic to ed.sasw@accesscomm.ca.

Roadmap to Excellence: Navigating Boundaries

Is your branch looking for professional development opportunities? The Navigating Boundaries Workshop (advanced ethics) is an opportunity to talk about boundaries, get some continuing education hours and network with colleagues. Workshops are approximately a half day in length but can be tailored to meet your needs (even a lunch and learn session). The workshop is free to members and led by a group of enthusiastic volunteer facilitators. To request a workshop in your area, please e-mail to ed.sasw@accesscomm.ca.

Practice Ethics Committee Support Service

The Practice Ethics Committee is a confidential support service for SASW members that offers guidance on ethical decision-making. The committee will make every effort to respond in a timely fashion, and will provide alternate ways of viewing and acting on ethical issues.

To contact the Practice Ethics Committee with your questions or dilemmas, please complete the form that has been developed and placed under each member's Profile home page. This form is received in the SASW office and forwarded to the Chair of Practice Ethics.

SASW YELLOWHEAD BRANCH

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EARLY BIRD FEE (BY MAR. 31): \$65
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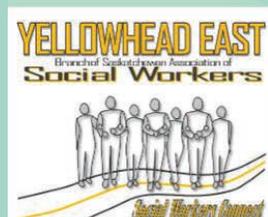
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Intermediate to Advanced Workshop - Somatic Based
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Dr. Dawn McBride, PhD, RPsych
Associate Professor at University of Lethbridge

Dr. Dawn McBride is a registered psychologist and associate professor in counsellor education (University of Lethbridge, Canada). Her main areas of study include ethics, multiculturalism, supervision/training, family violence, and the advance use of many therapeutic approaches. In 2018, she presented in Yorkton on self-harm.



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