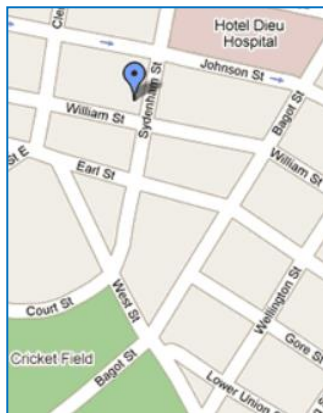


Compassion in Healthcare: An Interprofessional Education Event

Monday, September 21, 2015

This annual event, sponsored by the Office of Interprofessional Education & Practice (OIPEP), provides all students in the Faculty of Health Sciences with an opportunity to learn about and reflect on compassion and compassion fatigue. The role of compassion within the healthcare system, for future clients/patients, colleagues, and oneself, is explored with resources provided for additional learning. The event is designed as an *Immersion* level activity within the Faculty of Health Sciences Framework for Interprofessional Education (2009), engaging students in the middle phases of their programs.

This year's event is led by **Ms. Françoise Mathieu**, M.Ed., RP, and CCC. Françoise is a Registered Psychotherapist in the province of Ontario and compassion fatigue specialist. Her experience stems from 20 years as a crisis counsellor, working in hospital, university counselling service and community mental health environments. Françoise is co-executive director of *TEND*, whose aim is to offer counselling, consulting and training to helpers on topics related to self care, wellness, burnout and compassion fatigue. Since 2001, Françoise has given hundreds of seminars on compassion fatigue and self-care to thousands of helping professionals in the healthcare fields. Françoise is the author of "The Compassion Fatigue Workbook" which was published by Routledge in 2012 as well as several articles and publications.



This event is taking place at Sydenham Street United Church at 82 Sydenham Street, steps from Queen's campus. Constructed in 1852, it is popular as a venue for concerts, lectures and community events in addition to its primary function as a place of worship, and is a landmark in downtown Kingston. Located just north of the Queen's Cricket Field (Barrie/Bagot/Court/West Streets), it is a 5 minute walk from campus. Doors open at 4:00 pm. with the event running from **4:30-6:00 pm**. Please sit in the 4 central blocks of pews on the main level of the church for best sound and sightlines.

Learning Outcomes:

Interprofessional learning events sponsored by OIPEP are based on the National Interprofessional Competency Framework (CIHC, 2010). This session relates most closely with the competencies of patient/client/family/community-centred care, interprofessional communication and team functioning.

After this presentation, participants will be able to:

- 1) Identify the newest research findings in reducing/managing Compassion Fatigue and Secondary Trauma
- 2) Apply three key tools for their practice
- 3) Explore new directions building resiliency skills

Compassion fatigue refers to the profound emotional and physical exhaustion that helping professionals can develop over the course of their career. It is a gradual erosion of all the things that keep us connected to others in our caregiver role: our empathy, our hope, and of course our compassion - not only for others but also for ourselves. When we are suffering from compassion fatigue, we start seeing changes in our personal and professional lives: we can become dispirited and increasingly bitter at work, we may contribute to a toxic work environment, we are more prone to clinical errors, we may violate client boundaries and lose a respectful stance towards our clients. We become short-tempered with our loved ones and feel constant guilt or resentment at the never ending demands on our personal time.

Compassion Fatigue has been described as “the cost of caring” for others in emotional pain (Figley, 1982). It can strike the most dedicated nurse, physician, therapist, social worker, teacher, police officer and personal support worker alike. Ironically, helpers who are burned out, worn down, fatigued and traumatized tend to work more and work harder. As a result they go further and further down a path that can lead to serious physical and mental health difficulties, such as depression, anxiety, substance abuse, chronic pain, other stress-related illnesses and even suicide.

2015 marks the 20th anniversary of the publication of Charles Figley's pioneering book "Compassion Fatigue", which explored the potentially negative impact of trauma exposure on helping professionals. Since then, the field of Compassion Fatigue (CF) and Secondary Trauma (STS) has grown exponentially, and new research has emerged suggesting effective ways for therapists and other helping professionals to sustain and protect themselves. New research suggests that in order to reduce compassion fatigue and secondary trauma, we need to adopt a multi-pronged approach. Helpers, on their own, cannot be expected to fix an entire system. They do however remain responsible for their own well-being - it is an ethical responsibility, for themselves, their patients and the community in which they live.

The resources below are provided as preparation, ongoing reflection and/or future resources:

Compassion Fatigue Solutions website: <http://www.compassionfatigue.ca/>

Compassionate Collaborative Care online module: Coming soon to the OIPEP website.

Mathieu, F., & McLean, L., (2014) Managing Compassion Fatigue, Moral Distress and Burnout in a context of patient-centered care in Walton, M., Barnsteiner, J., & Disch, J. (eds) *Patient/Family Centered Care – Patient and Care Provider Considerations*, Sigma Theta Tau International.

Mathieu, F. (2009) Mindfulness-Based Stress Reduction: An Important Tool in Mitigating Compassion Fatigue in Helpers. <https://compassionfatigue.ca/mindfulness-based-stress-reduction-an-important-tool-in-mitigating-compassion-fatigue-in-helpers/>

A Story about Care, one person's reflections on the power of the caring relationship that can exist when people working in health care see the “person and not a pathology”.

http://www.casn.ca/en/Whats_new_at_CASN_108/items/117.html

References:

1. Queen's Faculty of Health Sciences Framework for Interprofessional Education (2009) http://healthsci.queensu.ca/education/oipep/about_us/ipe_framework_for_fhs
2. Canadian Interprofessional Health Collaborative (CIHC). (2010). A national interprofessional competency framework. Retrieved May 26, 2015 at http://www.cihc.ca/files/CIHC_IPCompetencies_Feb1210.pdf

September 2015