

# Career Services Guide: Supporting People Affected by Mental Health Issues

Final Project Report

Submitted by Neasa Martin

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Project Funder:



Project Sponsor:



Project partners:



## Career Services Guide: Supporting People Affected by Mental Health Issues

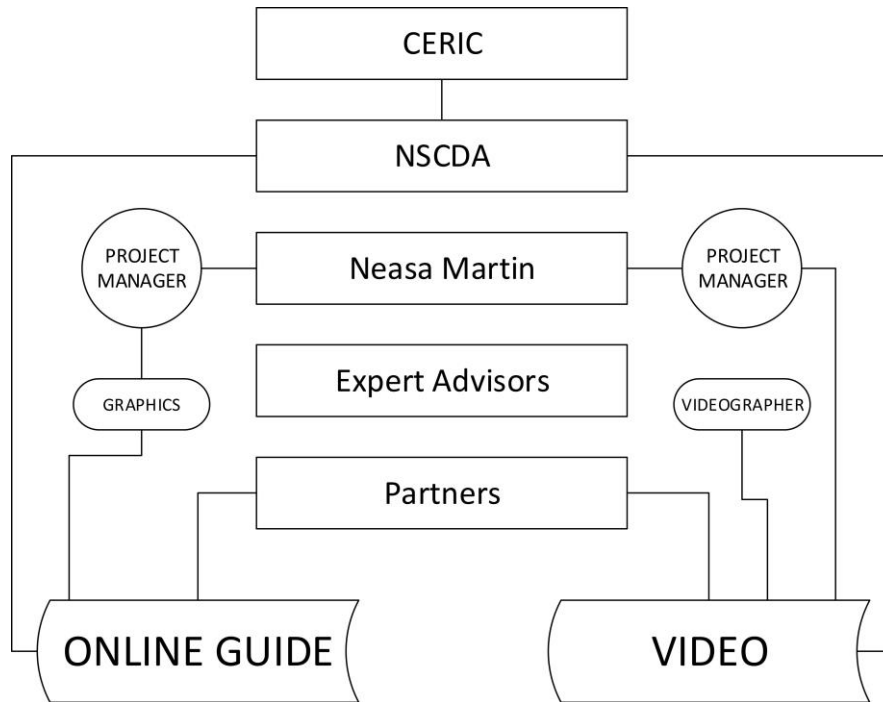
The seed of the idea for the *“Career Services Guide: Supporting People Affected by Mental Health Issues”* began over five years ago when discussions began at the employment services level with Career Service Workers (CSWs) about an observed increase in clients receiving career development assistance who were disclosing that their mental health was a barrier to their ability to earn income. When one rural centre in Nova Scotia began to track this statistic, a surprising 80% of clients were disclosing mental health issues. This information put this project in motion. The first step was to find out if this “80%” was the reality of other career development practitioners and to develop a strategy to train and guide CSWs in their practice. A CERIC funded research project entitled *“Charting the Course: Mapping the Career Practitioner Role in Supporting People with Mental Health Challenges”* was completed in 2013 and provided three foundational concepts that underpin the development of the Career Services Guide. First, the identification of mental health issues as a factor in employment is increasing dramatically. Second, CSWs are concerned that they are not well enough equipped to counsel clients appropriately and thirdly, CSWs would like training, guidance and tools to help them achieve a greater level of competency to deal with this emerging client need.

The Nova Scotia Career Development Association (NSCDA) was the proponent of the original research project and expressed an interest in “operationalizing” the findings of the research with continued support from CERIC. The working concept was to create an online training manual for CSWs that would engage national partners and expert advisors to ensure content met the needs of all CSWs nationally. The digital vision was to augment an online linked document with first person videos for key message delivery. CERIC provided advice on the use of the deliverables, the engagement of partners and digital distribution. CERIC was also very helpful in providing graphics and marketing assistance and in making industry connections where appropriate and providing the overarching guidance to ensure that the project kept to the vision. The NSCDA hired Neasa Martin and Associates (consultant on the original research project) as the content expert and to build a national partner network that would serve not only as expert advisors but who would commit to dissemination of the final product. An Expert Advisory panel was struck to review the document as it moved from concept to reality. At the same time, project management, administration, graphic design and videography progressed and produced results in tandem with the production of the online document.

As key messages were developed and feedback was received, it became apparent that the term “training manual” as asked for by CSWs in the research project, simply didn’t fit in with the results of the research or with leading practice standards in the area of mental health. The NSCDA would not produce a manual that provided tools or data that would “fix” a void in the knowledge base of CSWs, rather the way to change and augment the skills of CSWs was through reflective practice, attitudinal changes and guided learning. The training manual became a Career Services Guide that could be accessed online at the convenience of the user and could be tackled chapter by chapter in the order that makes the most sense for the reader.

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### Project Connections



### The Project - Details

Career Service Workers (CSWs) across Canada want to improve the quality of service they provide to increasing numbers of clients presenting with mental health issues. This increase was noted by the Nova Scotia Career Development Association (NSCDA), by its members in 2010. CSWs stated that they lacked the knowledge and skills to effectively provide career development services to mental health clients. Statistically, one in five clients will have a mental health concern. These numbers mean that counseling services cannot be limited to the realm of specialists. A resource guide was needed for CSWs to help their clients navigate the world of employment. The NSCDA approached CERIC to fund the development of an online resource guide, utilizing Neasa Martin & Associates to build on the research completed in *Charting the Course: Mapping the Career Practitioner Role in Supporting People with Mental Health Challenges*, another CERIC funded project.

The guide challenges common myths and beliefs, develops knowledge, skills, and provides resources to enhance employment outcomes. Diverse 'first person' videos provide 'heart' by telling a compelling story to underscore core messages. The guide provides quick facts, key messages, in-depth evidence-based information, and links to resources, which can also be downloaded as printable pdfs. In order to develop this guide, there needed to be many stakeholders involved. Professionals in mental health and client service were consulted and asked to be part of an Expert Advisory Group for content review and input. Partners were solicited from national mental health organizations to assist with key message review, concept testing and to take advantage of their large dissemination

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channels. Video production and technical teams were assembled to assist with graphics and visual messaging. Finally, mental health consumers who have lived experience shared their journeys and provided input into what they needed in the realm of career development.

The project was complex and had many moving parts, often in several realms and spanning several provinces. The optimistic timeline originally set for the project became problematic when the collaborative nature of the project grew to include a great number of people that took time to manage. In wanting to provide the greatest number of opportunities for people to connect and contribute, the project did not place a limit on the number of advisors. In the end over sixty advisors were asked for feedback. This alone was an administrative task that was unforeseen in the conceptual stages. In a single day the work on this project may have involved graphic design, technical issues, taking input from various contributors, negotiating video shoots and developing questions for participant surveys. The project was challenging and energizing.

### **The Target Audience - Career Service Workers (CSWs)**

CSWs work in varied settings across the country. Generally CSWs are employment or career service providers, program managers, and policy planners working in career planning services at the community, social service, college/university, specialized employment services and at the policy planning level across Canada. There is a growing awareness amongst CSWs of mental health issues, the role stigma is playing in limiting opportunities and that workers do not have the knowledge and skills they need. There is also recognition that mental health in the workplace is a growing concern and enhancing psychological health and safety in the workplace is a shared issue that will benefit everyone.

### **Project Sponsor**

#### [Nova Scotia Career Development Association \(NSCDA\)](#)

The Nova Scotia Career Development Association is an inclusive not for profit organization that provides strategic leadership to Nova Scotia professionals in career development. The NSCDA promote effective practices through the communication of information, providing professional development and encourage the adoption of frameworks promoting enhanced client-centered services.

### **Project partners**

#### [Canadian Mental Health Association \(CMHA\) -- National](#)

Our Vision: Mentally healthy people in a healthy society.

Our Mission: As the nation-wide leader and champion for mental health, CMHA facilitates access to the resources people require to maintain and improve mental health and community integration, build resilience, and support recovery from mental illness.

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**Mark Ferdinand:** National Director of Public Policy. CMHA, [MFerdinand@cmha.ca](mailto:MFerdinand@cmha.ca), (613) 979-8482.

### [The Healthy Minds Cooperative](#)

The Healthy Minds Cooperative is an innovative new health care cooperative that provides a variety of peer-based services to those who access mental health services and their families. It also provides significant and meaningful input into the design, development, delivery, and evaluation of mental health services in the Capital Health District of Nova Scotia.

**Roy Muise:** Nova Scotia Certified Peer Support Specialist Program (CPSSP), Healthy Minds Cooperative, [r.muise-nscps@eastlink.ca](mailto:r.muise-nscps@eastlink.ca), (902) 404-3088 ext. 203

### [Great-West Life Centre for Mental Health in the Workplace](#)

The Great--West Life Centre for Mental Health in the Workplace (the Centre) was established in 2007 and has three main objectives to:

- Increase knowledge and awareness of workplace psychological health and safety
- Improve the ability to respond to mental health issues at work
- Turn knowledge into action through practical strategies and tools for employers

**Maryann Bayton:** Program Director, Great-West Life Centre for Mental Health in the Workplace [maryann@maryannbaynton.com](mailto:maryann@maryannbaynton.com), (905) 689---7447

### [Canadian Alliance for Mental Illness and Mental Health \(CAMIMH\)](#)

CAMIMH is a non-profit organization comprised of health care providers as well as organizations which represent individuals with lived experience of mental illness. Established in 1998, CAMIMH is a volunteer run organization that provides mental health education to the public. A fundamental objective of CAMIMH is to engage Canadians in a national conversation about mental illness. By starting this conversation, CAMIMH hopes to reduce the stigma associated with mental illness and provide insight into the services and support available to those living with mental illness.

**John Higenbottam:** Chair of Psychosocial Rehabilitation Canada & Co-Chair CAMIMH, [higenbottamj@douglas.bc.ca](mailto:higenbottamj@douglas.bc.ca) (604) 527---5314

### **Expert Advisory Group**

Over 60 Canada-wide expert advisors (+61) from all provinces were included from diverse perspectives including: Career Service Workers, Mental Health Experts, Peer Support Workers, Service Users, Educators, Policy Planners etc.

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### Consultant/Project Lead

#### [Neasa Martin and Associates](#)

Neasa Martin and Associates was hired as the lead researcher/collaborator on this project. Neasa has 30+ years of mental health experience in rehabilitation medicine working across services at the clinical, management and consulting level. She is currently an Advisor on Recovery with the Mental Health Commission of Canada. Recent research/policy focus has been mental health related stigma, discrimination, social inclusion, recovery, peer support and quality of life. The only way in which the NSCDA could have completed this project was by hiring a mental health consultant who has the knowledge and contacts to bring all of the stakeholders together and identify the key messages and critical knowledge exchange issues. Neasa was the bridge between CSWs and the mental health field, creating the linkages between mental health consumers, mental health support organizations and career development professionals. Her knowledge was the “guiding light” for the project and she brought an enormous breadth of knowledge and experience to the project. This project was one of several that Neasa was working in a consultant capacity. She was co-writing the *Guidelines for Recovery-Oriented Practice* for the Mental Health Commission of Canada at the same time as this resource guide. The content for this guide is reinforced in the Commission’s work.

**Neasa Martin:** Researcher, Mental Health Consultant

<https://ca.linkedin.com/pub/neasa-martin/19/a9/440>

[www.neasamartin.ca](http://www.neasamartin.ca)

### Project Management

Kathy McKee was tasked with the development and execution of the project deliverables. Kathy is a seasoned leader with 25 years of management and strategic planning experience helping not-for-profit and commercial organizations develop and manage projects that serve the community. As Chair of the Board of the Nova Scotia Career Development Association, the Enterprise Centre of Hants County and as past Chair of the Nova Scotia Career Managers’ Council she has helped lead province-wide training, education sessions and strengthened the profession to serve as trusted advisors to government and industry. Kathy is currently the Manager of the Job Resource Centre in Windsor, Nova Scotia, and involved in strategic development, project management, community economic development, mental health and employment, client service and accountability measurement. Kathy’s input was to help create linkages in the CSW world and to manage the tasks of the project. Coordination of video production and technical matters also fell under Kathy’s purview. Kathy was the conduit between the project, the project consultant and the NSCDA. The NSCDA provided the direct connection to CSWs and mental health consumers in Nova Scotia. The NSCDA also provided some administrative assistance to the project. Kathy undertook this work as adjunct to her day to day duties although the expertise in the field allowed for successful crossover of information and contacts.

**Kathy McKee:** Collaborator, Project Manager and Manager of the Job Resource Centre, Windsor, Nova Scotia

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## EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

**Project Objective:** to improve employment and educational outcomes for people living with mental health issues by enhancing the knowledge, skills, abilities, recovery beliefs, partnerships and improved practice policies of Canada's private practice and mainstream career service workers working in community based career planning and employment agencies.

**Guide Objectives:** are to help Career Service Workers (CSWs) acquire knowledge and skills in:

- Understanding the impact and management of stigma and discrimination (including self stigma);
- Knowledge of disability management, legal entitlements and managing disclosure;
- Targeted career practitioner assessment tools, motivation and adult learning strategies;
- Understanding the role of peers in supporting recovery and employment and how to access services;
- Increased knowledge of mental illnesses, treatment and wellness promotion;
- Knowledge of how to access local mental health resources and the tools to form practice partnerships with specialized services;
- Develop an understanding of employment best practices in mental health;
- Create greater profile and visibility of mental health issues in the career practice field.

## HOW DID YOUR OBJECTIVES CHANGE OVER THE COURSE OF THE PROJECT?

### Aligning Guide to Recovery Oriented Practice

Prior to project approval the researcher/writer was hired by the Mental Health Commission of Canada to develop National Recovery-Oriented Practice Guidelines to support the transformation of mental health and support services. This is a strategic document in the implementation of the Mental Health Strategy of Canada. When CERIC approved funding for the Career Services Guide the work with the MHCC was already in development and presented a strategic opportunity to leverage efforts to develop recovery practices targeted to Career Service Workers. However, this opportunity required changing timelines to sync activities across these projects. The result was a lengthening of the original timeline projected for the project.

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### Changing the Approach

Although Career Service Workers wanted to learn more about mental illnesses and their treatment as a stated learning priority we chose to focus on providing a strong grounding in the research that supports a shift in how we view mental illness. We wanted CSWs to move into a new paradigm of thinking where mental illness is viewed as a part of our humanity and not as something that happens to “others” who are “sick”. Research shows that teaching CSWs solely about the signs and symptom of mental illness can actually increase stigma and discrimination leading to greater pessimism, focus on medication and the adoption of paternalistic approaches within support services.

### PROJECT ACTIVITIES

#### Timelines and Milestones

The original timeline for work identified a start date of November 2013 with a final delivery of the product in July 2014. The final timeline was significantly stretched with the workplan taking a more circuitous route than at first planned.

August – September 2013	Development of proposal, conversations with stakeholders confirming need and support
December 2013	Contract with CERIC finalized.
January 2014	Attendance at Cannexus 2014. Attending Wine and Cheese with promotional board, networking and gathering project contents, developing potential Expert Advisory Board members.
February 2014	In conjunction with a national peer support conference held in Halifax, coordinated video recording of the consumer and peer voice.
March – June 2014	Development of content for guide and reviewing and confirming content with the Expert Advisory Group and NSCDA conference participants. Reviewing four cuts of the first video to find the final “message” working with a creative team on look and tone.
August 2014	Second round of video shooting in Halifax with CSWs.
Fall 2014	Project slowly coming together. The difficulty of receiving input from 60+ people in a way that is timely and manageable is causing delays. The NSCDA requests an



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extension to the timeline to deal with these issues.

January 2015	The graphic artist develops concepts that are reviewed by CSWs and adult educators.
March-April 2015	Finalize long video and approve final eight short videos. Approve final graphic layout and begin transferring text document to InDesign publishing software.
May 2015	Testing final document, coordinating tasks with CERIC marketing and technical staff, providing text and graphics for handouts and annual report. Launch of guide at the annual NSCDA conference on May 28 in Nova Scotia. Document available online on CERIC's website May 27, 2015.

### Guide development

A collaborative approach was taken in developing this guide to ensure interest, alignment and buy-in. This began at a national level at Cannexus 14 where we “took the pulse” of interest in the topic. Both through general networking activities and through contact at the wine and cheese event we were able to gather members of our advisory group, ask for input/review and to see exactly what CSWs needed in their practice. From there, the message moved outward to corporate partnerships and mental health profession contacts. The NSCDA kept the project at the forefront with members, updating all members and CSWs in the province and creating a core group with specific interest and knowledge in this area. In addition, interviews with mental health consumers were taking place (informally with contact made through CSWs) to provide important perspectives. Emphasis was always placed on this being a document developed in partnership between mental health and career services experts, as opposed to a continuation of a research study.

- Convened project partners with high visibility and reach to provide advice and support dissemination of the guide. Partners were approached first by personal contact (telephone) and then provided with a brief via email. The NSCDA relied on Neasa Martin for her contacts in this area.
- A project backgrounder and introductory engagement videos were prepared to orient our partners to the project goals and objectives. [Welcome from Neasa](#) and [Welcome from Kathy](#)
- Project Advisors were provided high level overview and index for the guide and endorsement was sought for proposed content and guide format.
- Recruited diverse, Canada-wide expert advisors from all provinces and perspectives including: Career Service Workers, Mental Health Experts, Peer Support Workers, Service Users, Educators, Policy Planners etc. Advisors were asked to set a common schedule to review but the group subsequently decided that the most effective way to provide feedback was by mass email when review was required. There were up to eight reviews asked for depending on the advisors' area of expertise. (See Data Base in Appendix. Permission was

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obtained from advisors to publish contacts.)

- Undertook a 'key messages' survey with project partners and advisors to ensure the guide reflected critical messages. Provided summary report for review and confirmation. These messages were reflected in the guide content.
- Undertook research and grey literature review on guide content and identified leading Canadian resources and best practice examples.
- Undertook consultations with project partners and advisors across the project duration to ensure content reflected end user needs and best practices.
- Provided project update reports to project sponsor and partners throughout project cycle and at critical landmarks and decision-making points.
- Draft guideline was distributed for review and consultation to project partners and advisors.
- Expert Advisors were engaged to field test the guide with career service workers and provide recommendations for improvement.
- Engaged a graphic artist to design guide layout and format for an interactive digital document including hyperlinks to resources, references and on-line videos.
- The guide was completed and launched at the NSCDA Annual conference to 200 + participants using a global cafe format. Participants provided recommendations for the use of the guide which will be posted on the NSCDA website once all comments have been compiled in Fall 2015.
- A marketing strategy and collateral promotion materials were developed with CERIC.

### Video development

- Recruited project videographer to develop associated videos. A total of nine videos was proposed; one longer main video and eight smaller videos to support specific, identified messages. Team meetings were held throughout the project progression. Key messaging documents were developed to confirm approach.
- Recruitment strategy developed to identify potential participants in the Voices of Experience videos from participants at the first National Conference on Peer Support held from April 30-May 2, 2014 in Halifax.
- Recruited video participants including career service workers, peer supporter and service users workers. There were 16 participant stories, filmed over two days. Participants were oriented to the project goals, objectives and key messages. Initial meetings were held to interview participants, review questions that would be used in the video interviews. Care was taken to ensure people understood how footage would be used and attain informed consent. Signed consent forms were obtained.
- Undertook ongoing video review and revisions of footage to align content with key messages, confirm treatment, graphics and sound track.
- Worked closely with CERIC staff to develop an on-line platform for public video access linked back to the guide.

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## COLLABORATIONS

### **Nova Scotia Career Development Association:**

The inclusion of NSCDA opened up important opportunities for working with Career Service Managers across the province, participating in training and education events and enhancing access to staff contributing to the development of the [Canadian Standards and Guidelines for Career Development](#). This relationship opened up opportunity to have the guide incorporated as a tool in developing core competencies in the areas of diversity, relationship and community development. The NSCDA has built strong partnerships with government policy planners and this guide helped support a policy direction for creating mainstream service accessibility through inclusive design.

### **National partners**

The involvement of National project partners lent profile, visibility and credibility to the project and valuable advice on country-wide issues and resources. Great West Life Mental Health in the Workplace is a leading resource for employers in addressing mental health issues. They provided a valuable reference point around workplace issues. The CMHA provided deep understanding of mental health issues and valuable feedback on content and how to frame issues of mental health education for readers who may not have had personal contact in this area. The involvement of the Healthy Minds Cooperative helped ensure the service user voice was strong within the document and facilitated access to 'voices of experience'. These partners were also important resources for CERIC's other initiatives and the project was a means of building ongoing partnerships. The consultant also reached out to specific organizations with content expertise to ensure materials on sensitive topics were accurate, accessible and relevant, including the Ontario Human Rights Commission and the Canadian Association of Suicide Prevention. The commitment of partners was made possible by the existing professional network that Neasa Martin brought to the project and her contacts within the mental health community. Partners were contacted through telephone and email, usually once a month, and were provided with written progress reports and updates, usually every quarter.

## **NON-FINANCIAL SUPPORT PROVIDED BY CERIC**

The staff at CERIC provided important support and encouragement throughout the project's development.

- Ongoing support in identifying and recruiting content experts
- Technical assistance in creating an interactive digital document including video streaming
- Marketing and distribution support including profile in the CERIC 2014 Annual Report

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### ABSTRACT

CERIC identified, through consultation with its stakeholders, that mental health and employment is a critical unmet priority. “Deliberations of the Future of Career Development Education in Canada” (a CERIC funded project) identified a lack of consistent definition of the role of career service professionals, varying levels of education, an absence of consistency in training and a wide diversity of sectors in which career service professionals work. There is a recognized need for an education strategy to support career development work and a national need for training, including a focus on mental health, social justice issues and collaboration to link diverse professionals to support clients. Included in CERIC’s 2013 Professional Development & Ongoing Learning goals is addressing the “*impact of disability and / or mental health issues on career development*”. CERIC’s pan-Canadian focus, commitment to education, research and program development in the field of career counselling and extensive reach makes this a strong synergistic fit.

Through [Charting the Course: Mapping the Career Practitioner Role in Supporting People with Mental Health Challenges](#) a CERIC-funded research project, the need for training was established by identifying not only the gaps but the preferred approach to improving CSWs knowledge and skills. The NSCDA is committed to, and is recognized for, providing leadership in the delivery of quality, client centered career development practices. The NSCDA supported the findings of the Charting the Course project and endorsed this learning and practice proposal to develop specialized mental health training tools for CSWs employed in private and mainstream service settings.

Partnerships with leading stakeholder organizations were critical to this project’s success in moving from the provincial to national realm. Letters of support from partner organizations confirmed the project’s need and endorsed the proposed approach. The partnerships increased our access to subject matter expertise, built awareness and interest in the project’s goals, improved visibility of the deliverables and supported dissemination of the resource guide. This level of partnership also lent legitimacy and thereby enhanced the potential adoption of the resource guide into practice. By aligning the resource guide content to diversity measures identified in the [Canadian Standards & Guidelines for Career Practitioners](#) this resource will influence practice standards for CSWs nation-wide. Our partnerships with leading stakeholders helped to bridge the gap between service sectors, and helped create collaborative partnerships. Neasa Martin & Associates led the research project that formed the foundation of this work and she has in-depth subject-matter expertise in evidence-based research, knowledge of best practices and emerging trends acquired through multiple research projects and policy development work on stigma, discrimination, social inclusion, and mental recovery. Neasa is experienced in working collaboratively with consumers, in resource guide development and is skilled in plain language knowledge exchange. Her work with national stakeholder groups, including the Mental Health Commission of Canada, opens up opportunities for the transfer of project learning to a national-level.

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## OUTPUTS

### Project Deliverables:

- A user friendly, web-based resource guide for career service workers ([ceric.ca/mentalhealth](http://ceric.ca/mentalhealth))
- Production of quality first-person videos from a consumer, CSW, mental health & rehabilitation perspective. One overarching project video and eight topic specific videos were produced. Creation of a specialty channel to host and promote videos. (<https://www.youtube.com/channel/UC1uMBN1U-zhFPbBxMJtrcgQ>)
- Development of protocol for creating partnerships between career services and mental health, community services, rehabilitation, and peer support services (included in guide on building partnerships).

## SURVEYS AND DATA COLLECTION

Data was collected at strategic points using semi-structured telephone interviews, and on-line surveys. Summary reports of consultations were prepared and provided to expert advisors and partners. The information gathered was used to inform content and identify high quality resources for the guide. Focus groups were held at CERIC's 2014 Cannexus annual conference, NS Career Service Manages Meetings, through a Global Cafe with over 200+ participants at the 2014 NSCDA annual conference. Experts were asked to identify key messages, research of importance and leading Canadian references for the guide. Key messages and feedback were incorporated into the document in an iterative way. Both qualitative and quantitative tools were used to measure satisfaction and seek input.

**Ethical considerations:** Data was aggregated to protect the privacy of participants. Only people who gave permission were identified within the project materials. Data was gathered using a Canadian survey tool (Fluid Survey) to prevent unintended access under the Patriots Act. Video participants were provided information to understand the project goals, how their images would be used and consent forms were signed.

### On-line survey tools used:

- Expert Advisors Key Message Survey - 17 participants (<http://fluidsurveys.com/s/settingthecompassadvisors/>)
- DRAFT Guide review and feedback survey - 23 participants (<http://fluidsurveys.com/s/expert-advisers-survey/>)  
See Appendix A (attached) for both surveys.

## CHALLENGES, SETBACKS AND LESSONS LEARNED

### Everything takes longer than you imagine

Initial timelines for this project were unrealistic from the outset. Because we strived to use a collaborative and

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inclusive approach to the guide's development additional time was required to develop engagement tools and undertake outreach. Developing and managing the data-base and maintaining communications requires considerable time and effort.

### **The more project elements the longer the process**

The scope of the project was ambitious and the development of an interactive on-line digital guide and supporting videos was both complex and time demanding. Both of these project elements were new to the team and required a learning curve to understand and master. Working with videographers, editors, and post production team members also required significant time to attend to the multitude of details involved. We also worked closely with the graphic artist to make sure the design supported the content and worked well from a technical perspective.

The use of InDesign provided the technical capacity required but was complex to work with. At each project stage coordinating schedules of the multiple players and scheduling films shoots caused unanticipated project delays. The time and effort were worth it, producing a quality guide we are proud of.

### **Building on the work of the MHCC delayed the project progression**

Being hired to serve as researcher and writer of the MHCC Recovery-Oriented Practice Guidelines offered a strategic opportunity to leverage, align and coordinate efforts. Both documents required detailed research and continuous review which was taxing and led to a level of content fatigue. The MHCC Guidelines serves as an important primary source for understanding and delivering recovery-oriented services lending greater credibility to the Career Services Guide and the proposed approach to changing service practice.

### **Project partners are valuable but challenging to engage**

We sought out the best National partners to collaborate with for maximizing expert input and marketing reach. The leaders of these groups have multiple demands on their time, had limited time availability for the project and ongoing efforts to engage them was challenging. Interest in the project from the field was high and many people offered their expertise, support and assistance. Over 60+ experts from diverse geographic and professional perspectives were recruited. The logistics in managing contacts and the associated database was complex and time demanding. In the end, only about a third of this number made a contribution to the review process.

### **Video production is complicated and time demanding**

The inclusion of videos from a first person perspective was seen as essential. We took advantage of a national

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peer support conference being held in Halifax to have a Canada-wide representative voice included in the videos and to work effectively within a limited production budget This required the rapid mobilization of the video production team. More time to develop the story arc through use of a story board and confirming our approach before filming may have improved the final product.

### Life has a way of interfering

Working on the MHCC Recovery Guidelines at the same time as the Career Service Workers guide with a similar subject matter but with different focus was intellectually demanding at best. The consultant was also faced with unexpected family health crisis mid project. As a mental health consumer the multiple project demands, tight timelines and competing priorities had a negative impact making it hard to maintain balance and good mental health. Thankfully the NSCDA was supportive and negotiated a contract extension with CERIC providing a reasonable accommodation that allowed me to balance my work, caregiving and protect my own personal mental health. This was a good example of the guide in action!

### MARKETING / DISSEMINATION

As of June 24th 2015 there have been

- 2,226 individual downloads of the guide
- 287 Voices of Experience videos viewed
- 432 Slideshare project presentation downloads
- 160 page views related to the guide on LinkedIn, 21 likes, 6 comments

- The Guide was shared with all project partners and expert advisors with suggestion on how they could support distribution and market the guide. Project partners were individually contacted to explore marketing and promotion opportunities.
- The Career Services guide was launched in May 29th 2015 (over 200 + career services, mental health workers and managers participated). The guide was promoted through the NSCDA conference, newsletter, NSCDA website, and marketing materials were included (postcard) in all 300 delegates bags.
- The Guide was promoted through the NS Career Managers Network along with an opportunity to explore ways it can be applied to program operations and policies.
- Emphasis was placed on the use of Twitter, LinkedIn, Facebook, Pinterest etc. Favoured and retweeted by people such as Andres Pichard, Caroline Bennet, MP, Mary Walsh, Community Housing, Shelagh Rogers, Centre for Addiction and Mental Health, Children's Hospital of Eastern Ontario, Ontario Shores, Mood Disorders Canada, Schizophrenia Society Canada. Professional organizations (Nursing, Psychiatry, Psychology), HR specialists, Ontario Human Rights Commission etc. (See partial list in the Appendix)

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- The guide and promotional materials sent through mental health peer support networks including Public Service Alliance of Canada, Ontario Peer Development Initiative, National Network for Mental Health, Empowerment Council at Canadian Association of Mental Health etc.
- OPDI included the guide in their news-to-go - <http://www.opdi.org/news-441.php>
- Work Place Strategies for Mental Health has posted a link to the guide on their website: <https://www.workplacestrategiesformentalhealth.com> They are also planning to include reflective questions from the guide on the Mental Health Works website with a link back to the guide.
- The guide was posted on academia.edu (8 downloads).
- Project presentations and guide were shared through Slideshare (432 downloads) .
- EENet News promoted the guide through their newsfeed.
- Head of Social Work at CAMH distributed the guide to over 60 staff social workers.
- The guide was sent to hospital--based Vocational Rehabilitation programs, Psychosocial Rehabilitation Canada etc.
- LinkedIn discussion groups and tweeters interested in mental health, stigma, discrimination, recovery, career counselling, addictions, vocational rehabilitation, peer support, counselling employment, policy makers, poverty advocates, professional associations, politicians, human rights were targeted for distribution with a request to support distribution.
- The MHCC promoted the guide through its communication mechanisms.
- The International Initiative in Mental Health Leadership posted a notice in their newsletter.
- Ontario Peer Development Initiative has requested a presentation on the guideline at the fall conference.
- A unique strategy to promote the guide within organizations and agencies serving immigrant, refugee, ethno- racial and diversity communities enlisted the support of a diversity specialist.

### REVENUE GENERATION / COST RECOVERY

No plan was made for cost recovery or revenue generation. The publication is free and download costs are carried by the end-user.

### EVALUATION

The impact of the guide will need to be measured over time. CERIC is the owner of the guide and on completion of the project CERIC is advised to create a high level Fluid Survey tool to evaluate the guide with responses being directed back to CERIC staff. A link to the guide can be embedded in the guide.

The following evaluation tools were identified as ways to evaluate the guide and measure its impact.



## Career Services Guide: Supporting People Affected by Mental Health Issues

### Qualitative Measures

- High approval ratings by CSWs, rehabilitation and mental health professionals for content and approach to the resource guide gathered through field testing and the consultation processes (gathered through semi-structured interviews, on-line surveys, workshops and conferences). Refer to comments below.
- High approval rating by people living with mental health issues on the value and relevance of the manual.
- High CSW user satisfaction ratings gathered through an embedded evaluation survey to measure self rating changes in knowledge, skill and attitudinal shifts.
- Adoption of the resource guide as a resource demonstration meeting diversity, relationship and community engagement targets within the guidelines developed by Canadian Council for Career Development (This is currently in negotiation).
- High approval ratings by project partners for the process and products emerging from this project mid and post resource guide production, based on agreed performance measures (Attained through survey and CERIC will undertake a post project review).
- Post project evaluation of references by CERIC based on their self defined impact measures

### Quantitative Measures

- Number of expert advisors engaged and partnerships developed through the project (61 experts and 4 project partner agencies were recruited)
- Number of times resource guide are promoted on stakeholder websites, newsletters and networks ( see marketing section - ongoing and in development)
- Number of downloads of resource guide (within three weeks 2,226 were downloaded).
- Number of participants in project--related workshops (over 300 to date). See evaluation below.

### OUTCOMES

#### **The Intended Impact:** (Demonstrating the impact of the guide will take time to measure)

- Close an identified training gap for CSW in meeting the needs of their clients with mental health issues.
- Improve the quality of services for clients by providing tools to improve CSW practice.
- Bring CSW practices into alignment with best practices in mental health employment counselling.
- Build a deeper understanding of the impact of stigma and discrimination and tools to address this issue.
- Acknowledgement of service users as vital experts in training.
- Increased client choice in accessing mainstream career planning services.
- Encouragement of CSWs to apply a social justice and social inclusion lens into their practice.
- Improve practices by linking career planning services with mental health, recovery and peer support services.

## Career Services Guide: Supporting People Affected by Mental Health Issues

- Provide evidence-based tools to improve mental health in the workplace.
- Provide a performance measure for demonstrating competency in meeting diversity goals outlined by the Canadian Council of Career Development (CCCD).

### EXAMPLES OF HOW THE GUIDE IS BEING USED INCLUDE:

- The Government of Nova Scotia policy planners are using the guide to support inclusive design.
- Public Health Hants County is now offering mental health training program within the Windsor Job Resource Centre as part of building collaborative partnerships. Community Peer Support engaged as partners.
- The guide is being used as a staff training tool within the Job Resource Centre, Windsor, Nova Scotia.
- NS Job Managers Network held a training session to explore the guidelines and consider how they can be used in staff training, program and policy development.
- The guide is being used to inform curriculum development at Sheraton College Re-Turn to Work - Mental Health Programs, Centre for Workforce Development.
- Reflective questions in the guide will be incorporated into the Great-West Life's Mental Health Works website with links back to the guide.

### FEEDBACK ON THE GUIDE:

The guide has received positive ratings from project partners and advisors who commented on relevance, thoroughness, user friendly style and clarity. Positive feedback has been received from career service workers and workshops received uniformly high approval ratings.

- *Thank you for developing "Career Services Guide – Supporting People Affected By Mental Health Issues". More folks with mental health issues need the opportunity to work. I am looking forward to learning more about the obstacles and solutions through this new resource. This topic is extremely important to ME. I have, by and large, stayed well for ages by being employed and getting the focus OFF me and my issues and as a peer support worker onto helping other people with their concerns. Work has truly been HEALING. Thanks for making your focus something THIS important. I have been in a good mood – for days --- having learned that there is this support for those seeking employment and for those wanting to assist those wanting employment. Cheryl Yarek, Case Manager/Specialty Peer Support Worker Trillium Health Centre*
- *I think you did a fabulous job! I cannot wait to see the final product as I am certain my colleagues and I and of course our clientele will greatly benefit from this tool. Thank you! Edina Markovitz, Agence Ometz*
- *Terrific information.*
- *I thought it was fab! Very needed and great tools.*
- *The videos are so powerful.*
- *Great information to facilitate supporting employment for everybody.*

## Career Services Guide: Supporting People Affected by Mental Health Issues

- *Excellent content, though a little lengthy.*
- *I am excited to be able to share this guide with my staff. I think it is excellent and very comprehensive and it supports the messages regarding recovery and employment that we try to provide both our staff and our consumers!!*
- *Very valuable resource that has the potential to change lives. Thank you for the opportunity to contribute comments.*
- *I really believe this document has covered all of the important information needed to fully educate and sensitize employment counselors and administrators in the field. I can't find anything missing. It is extremely comprehensive and I think it will be a wonderful guide for all professionals working in the area of mental health and employment.*
- *I learned so much reviewing this I can't think what would be missing. I see it as an excellent resource to hold up the importance of work to self esteem and repeated reminders to career service workers to remain empathetic and see job seekers for what they have to offer which also helps them see themselves beyond the limitations of their illness.*
- *Great job! Extremely comprehensive, will be a great support for our work Very good at navigating the thorny places in the relationships of the various service providers in our province at any rate. Project Co-ordinator Employment Services*
- *My biggest concern as an educator is that this document is very long. There is significant repetition throughout the document (which is not necessarily a bad thing), however, I'm not clear on how this information will be disseminated to the CSWs. Given it's relatively didactic nature, the CSWs will need to be very motivated to go through all the modules and with no testing or interaction with the content or with each other, I wonder how well this great information will "stick".*

### **NSCDA Conference Plenary Session, Thursday May 28, 2015**

*Accelerating Change: Applying the Mental Health Career Service Guide to Your Practice*

200+ participants --- 89 evaluations received

Scoring based on a 1---5 scale (1 being the lowest, 5 being the highest)

Areas rated:

- Effectiveness/Relevance of Workshops
- Effectiveness of Workshop Presenter(s)
- Overall Satisfaction
- Comments

53 responses scored average 5

32 responses scored average 4

4 responses scored 3 or lower (comments cited lack of working microphone in the crowd)

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### A few comments from the launch

*"Learned a lot in this area where I have limited knowledge and experience. Thank you for sharing and opening the discussion around mental illness. Fear of the unknown can be crippling – let's put it out in the open. Many thanks."*

*"Great presentation and sharing of information. Looking forward to reading, sharing and using the guide."*

*"Excellent presentation. Fabulous document and video. Great job."*

*"Becoming connected with partners in rural areas is a challenge...having a guide provides a base for all".*

*"Looking forward to reading the guide. Should be distributed to all agencies."*

*"Excellent and thrived on your enthusiasm! Good to know I am on the right path."*

*"More time! Fantastic and so important. Thank you!"*

*"Awesome video, questions, discussions of ideas and opinions."*

*"Can't wait to read it and use it in my practice."*

### KEY FINDINGS FROM THE PROJECT

#### Training Manual versus Resource Guide

During the proposal stage and into the first months of production the deliverable was referred to as a "training manual." It was thought that the final version would be a series of lessons that the CSW would read and learn and be able to apply immediately to their work. As the work unfolded, it became apparent that a manual (even though CSWs indicated that they wanted one) would not allow for the kind of high level contemplation, questioning and conversations that were needed around these issues. The main barrier to providing the appropriate counselling to clients with mental health challenges is attitudinal. Attitudes are not changes by providing tools, (do this and that will happen) but rather a series of chapters are provided which outline the many varied issues around the complex issues of mental health, with appropriate questions and review provided. The document is now a resource guide and helps CSWs move through the issues at their pace in the order that they deem most helpful in their area of practice.

#### Project Partners and Advisors

Project partners and advisors were critical to the success of the project. We needed their expertise and their commitment to the project in order to move it forward and to provide the feedback to ensure that the document accurately reflected current practice and need. The sheer number of people involved in these groups (60+) created challenges around information exchange and the timeliness of communications. The project may have benefitted from a smaller group of advisors and a group meeting at the start of the project to develop the working relationship. Partners and advisors were very busy and timelines were hard to meet so a better understanding and management of partner capacity and constraints may have alleviated some issues. Partnership development takes time and effort and it is difficult to know how much time and effort is needed to appropriately leverage partner assets and

## **Career Services Guide: Supporting People Affected by Mental Health Issues**

expertise. Additionally, sending out a document for comments to many people ends up being quite complicated when multiple reviews come back. Deciphering document markup and having a system to better deal with this would have been helpful.

### **Creating an on-line digital document is a smart direction**

The development of this guide as an on-line, digital document with embedded links to references, resources and videos increased our capacity to share broad-based and comprehensive information. This guide is a 'living document' that can be easily updated with new resources and provide for revisions on an ongoing basis. A digital document is a green option and useable on-line. When wanted, the cost of generating print documents is borne by the end user. The digital format of the guide makes it easy to promote, share and readily access through social media.

### **Untangling complex interconnected issue is challenging**

There are no five steps or three ways to improve mental health support. Changing beliefs and behaviours around mental illness and promoting the capacity of people to work requires a careful unpacking of both cause and effect of mental illness, understanding stigma and discrimination, exploring the environmental context and promoting psychological safety and workplace mental health. This guide is intended to challenge prevailing 'orthodoxy' about the role of mental health literacy in addressing stigma and the need to consider the broader social context of peoples lives in order to understand and address their mental health needs. The guide challenges career service workers to look beyond the individual's employment challenges, and address internal and systemic barriers, consider unemployment as a social justice issue and take action to advocate for social change as allies of people living with mental health problems.

### **More may be less.**

Concerns were raised by a few advisors on the length of the document which it is felt may pose a barrier to its uptake by career service workers. Some people were wanting a simpler 'how to' guide that outlines the steps to improve counselling practice. The use of key messages, facts and reflective questions were attempts to provide a high level synthesis of materials in each chapter and section. The insertion of personal quotes and video stories was another way of personalizing and animating the material. However there may be value in considering creation of a simplified version of this document or developing webinars to encourage adoption.

### **The challenge is now knowledge exchange**

This project has evolved over a number of years from the initial research to the development of the guide. Now the challenge is to ensure this knowledge is adopted in the field. The consultant was engaged by the NSCDA to develop this guide and involvement concludes with the completion of the guide.

## **Career Services Guide: Supporting People Affected by Mental Health Issues**

### **POLITICAL ACTIVITIES WITH FUNDS PROVIDED FOR THIS PROJECT PARTNERSHIP?**

No political activities were engaged in with the funds from this project. Project materials were shared with government policy planners in Nova Scotia to support transformational thinking about how services are delivered and ways to enhance the capacity of employment services to be more responsive to the broad diversity of clients served. Politicians were also asked to tweet the guide through their network - with some success.

### **TIMELINE**

As discussed, the timelines for the project were extended to reflect the need for greater time for engaging partners, experts and project suppliers. A request for accommodation was made to provide additional time to address family issues, provide more time for writing and maintaining mental health and well-being. This represented the guide in action!

### **NEXT STEPS AND RECOMMENDATIONS**

#### **Develop tools for knowledge exchange**

The usability of the guide would be improved through the development of a web-based seminar, and potentially a condensed high-level version of the document. There are discussions at the NSCDA about undertaking the development of a training module to be delivered to members in the Fall of 2015 and possibly to Cannexus

#### **Translate document into French**

To make this truly a national document, translating it into French is important. However, having the document reviewed by someone with expertise in the content will be critical to ensure it accurately reflects the messaging. Finding relevant resources in French will require additional research. Videos could be dubbed however finding native French speakers to provide perspectives would be more authentic. This is a costly and time demanding process requiring additional resources to complete.

#### **Evaluation will be an on-going process requiring CERIC's involvement**

The measures of success of the guide require an on-going evaluation process. As the owners of the guide this is best coordinated through CERIC. I would recommend the creation of a brief Fluid Survey on CERIC's account using both qualitative and quantitative questions focused on who is using the guide and how, its relevance to practice, ease, readability and usefulness, and the impact of the guide on practice. A link to the evaluation tool can be imbedded into the digital document.

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### POSSIBLE FUTURE PROJECTS

#### **Engaging physicians in understanding work and disability issues**

Physicians play a central role in mediating return to work or supporting people in taking short and long term disability leave for all health and mental health conditions. There is a paucity of training focused on physicians in understanding employment issues and disability management. Collaborative practice and shared care is an important approach to improving the management of mental health issues, substance misuse and chronic illness. CERIC could play an important role in raising the profile and visibility of career counsellors as part of collaborative health teams. To learn more about collaborative care:

<http://www.shared-care.ca/page.aspx?menu=69&app=266&cat1=738&tp=2&lk=no>

#### **Mental health in the workplace**

The MHCC is undertaking a significant issue to raise awareness on mental health and psychological safety in the workplace. CERIC may benefit from exploring opportunities to collaborate on this initiative, advocate for the adoption of the National Standards and consider ways that career counsellors can contribute to promoting this issue through their practice. See <http://www.mentalhealthcommission.ca/English/issues/workplace/national-standard> for more information.

## Appendix A – Survey Questions



### Setting the Compass - Project Advisors

CERIC has agreed to fund the development of a web-based training manual for career service workers that will improve employment and educational outcomes for people living with mental health issues by enhancing the knowledge, skills, abilities, recovery beliefs and improving practice policies of Canada's mainstream career service workers. <http://ceric.ca/?q=en/node/788>

You have generously agreed to serve as project advisors on the guide content and field testing. We hope to have your responses gathered by mid May 2014.

We will build content based on the research findings of Phase 1 of this project: [http://issuu.com/ceric.ca/docs/charting\\_the\\_course\\_project\\_final\\_report](http://issuu.com/ceric.ca/docs/charting_the_course_project_final_report)

The final product will be a downloadable PDF Guide, hyperlinking users to high-quality evidence informed resources. We are also develop a supporting video including people who are delivering and managing career services in both mainstream and specialized mental health employment services, clients accessing services and mental health peer support workers. Our project partners and advisers (like you) will help us confirm key messages and identify the best resources available.

### Key messages for career service workers

What key messages do you want career service workers to learn about supporting clients with mental health problems/ illnesses?

### Key messages for service users

What key messages do you want career service workers to convey to mental health clients who seek their services?

### Key messages for employers

What key messages do you want to give employers about mental health and employment recovery?

### Reference & resources

What research, best practice resources, links, would you like to see included in the manual?

Please share comments, questions, cautions or best advice about the project?

Are you interested in staying involved and receiving updates please provide us with your contact information.

Name

Address



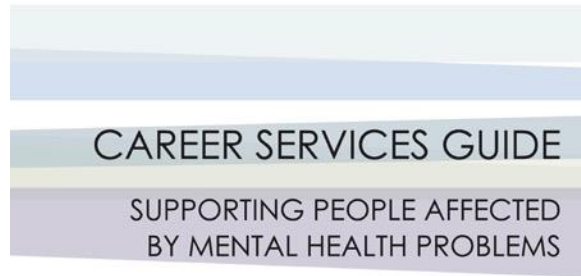
## Career Services Guide: Supporting People Affected by Mental Health Issues

Phone

Email

Describe your position /  
role

## Career Services Guide: Supporting People Affected by Mental Health Issues



Expert Feedback

THANK YOU FOR YOUR HELP!

Thank you for agreeing to be an expert adviser to the 'Career Service Workers Guide to Supporting People With Mental Health Issues' initiative. We appreciate your patience as we have worked through completion of the many program elements.

Attached you will find a DRAFT version of the guide in PDF. Hyperlinks are active leading to resources or supporting videos (but not our project videos - yet). We are using this on-line survey tool to gather your feedback. Your opinions on issues of clarity, readability, length, relevance and reliability of references and resources would be invaluable.

This survey includes one page for reviewing the guide content, and a review of video and recommendations. We anticipate each guide chapter will require 15 - 20 minutes to review. We hope you can complete your review of the document over the next three weeks and hope to receive your responses by February 23rd 2015.

We hope to launch the final document sometime in early March. If you have questions or concerns please feel free to contact either of us.

Neasa Martin  
neasamartin@primus.ca (416 691-8346)

Kathy McKee  
kmckee@ns.sympatico.ca (902 798-6652)

Tell us a little about yourself...

Expert advisers will be credited within in guide. Please provide us information on how you would like to be described.

Name

Title

Role

Years of experience

How would you describe your area of expertise?

Check as many as appropriate:

## Career Services Guide: Supporting People Affected by Mental Health Issues

Experiential expertise (lived experience of mental health issues)

Career services counsellor

Career / job / employment resource centre manager

Mental health counsellor

Mental Health program manager

Educator

Other, please specify.

Introduction and background

The introduction provides an overview of the project background, purpose and a brief introduction to recovery-oriented practice. After reviewing this section how satisfied are you with the following elements:

Very Unsatisfied    Unsatisfied    Neutral    Satisfied    Very Satisfied

Information was clear

Ease of readability

Content length

Please share any comments, concerns, suggested additions, or corrections.

### Chapter one

Chapter one reviews the importance of employment to recovery, barriers, current context in mental health in the workplace and creating psychologically safe workplaces.

After reviewing chapter one please rate your satisfaction in the following areas.

Very Unsatisfied    Unsatisfied    Neutral    Satisfied    Very Satisfied

Agreement with key messages

Content clarity

Ease of readability

Length

Relevance to career service workers

Value of resources

Chapter 1 Please share any comments, concerns, suggested additions, or corrections.

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## Chapter two

Chapter two looks at recovery-oriented approaches to employment counseling, including adopting a holistic approach, self management, peer support, crisis management and caring for the caregiver. How satisfied are you with the following elements.

After reviewing chapter two please rate your satisfaction in the following areas.

	Very Unsatisfied	Unsatisfied	Neutral	Satisfied	Very Satisfied
Agreement with key messages					
Content clarity					
Ease of readability					
Length					
Relevance to career service workers					
Value of resources					

Chapter 2 Please share any comments, concerns, suggested additions, or corrections.

## Chapter three

Chapter three focuses on promoting recovery by strengthening relationships and connection to community, diversity, collaborative partnerships and the impact of stigma and discrimination.

	Very Unsatisfied	Unsatisfied	Neutral	Satisfied	Very Satisfied
Agreement with key messages					
Content clarity					
Ease of readability					
Length					
Relevance to career service workers					
Value of resources					

Chapter 3 Please share any comments, concerns, suggested additions, or corrections.

## Chapter four

Chapter four focuses on employment and recovery including messages to employers, accommodations, disclosure and specialized approaches to supporting employment.

	Very Unsatisfied	Unsatisfied	Neutral	Satisfied	Very Satisfied
Agreement with key messages					
Content clarity					
Ease of readability					
Length					

## Career Services Guide: Supporting People Affected by Mental Health Issues

Very Unsatisfied    Unsatisfied    Neutral    Satisfied    Very Satisfied

Relevance to career service workers  
Value of resources

Chapter 4 Please share any comments, concerns, suggested additions, or corrections.

### Chapter five

Chapter five focuses on understanding mental illness and its complex pathways and accessing resources.

Very Unsatisfied    Unsatisfied    Neutral    Satisfied    Very Satisfied

Agreement with key messages  
Content clarity  
Ease of readability  
Length  
Relevance to career service workers  
Value of resources

Chapter 5 Please share any comments, concerns, suggested additions, or corrections.

### Appendix

Included in the appendix are counseling tools to support the career service worker in understanding the stages of recovery, how to enhance motivation and information on managing risk.

After reviewing the Appendix please rate your satisfaction in the following areas.

Very Unsatisfied    Unsatisfied    Neutral    Satisfied    Very Satisfied

Usefulness of tools provided  
Relevance to CSWs role  
Ease of readability  
Length  
Value of resources

Appendix Please share any comments, concerns, suggested additions, or corrections.

Almost done!

The last page focuses on your satisfaction with the overall design, layout and structure of the document.

## Career Services Guide: Supporting People Affected by Mental Health Issues

What could improve the relevance of this document for career service workers? Is there anything missing?

### Project story video

This project video reflects the 'voices of experience' from diverse perspectives including people living with mental health issues, career practitioners and peer support workers. Additional individual short videos will be incorporated within the guide as well. For costing reasons the only viable change possible at this point is the use of quotes and key messages.

Download Link:

<http://www.animatrixproductions.com/conduit/Mental%20Health%20Video%202015.zip>

Watch video (this version does not include intro titles):

<http://www.animatrixproductions.com/conduit/Mental%20Health%20Video%202015.mp4>

How satisfied are you with the following elements?

	Very Unsatisfied	Unsatisfied	Neutral	Satisfied	Very Satisfied
Overall story line					
Length					
Use of quotes and tag lines					
Key messages					

Video Additional comments:

References and resources

Do you have any suggestions for additional references, resources or 'best practice' program examples?

Do you have any final thoughts, advice or recommendations?

Thank you for taking the time to review this document.

This guide will no doubt be strengthened by your feedback. When the final document is complete we will send it to you. Please give some thought to how we can distribute the guide to achieve the broadest reach possible.

Thank you!

Neasa and Kathy