

Summary of OCC Consultations Re: Informing the Future Direction of OCC

Attendance: 7 Eastern; 8 Francophone; 9 Central; 4 Southwest; 4 Northern

1. *What is your current involvement with OCC?*

- read/contribute to/gather information from the ListServ,*
- read/contribute to/gather information from Between Us,*
- attend regional meetings/AGM,*
- have served on the Executive/or would like to,*
- attend P.D. events.*

- Most participants have been OCC members a long time, most have held an Executive role at some point, and some were on sub-committees (Entre-Nous or research related)
- It was noted there was little participation from newer members in general; particularly as AGMs and conferences have been no longer been w/ CCDI and as funds/time have become increasingly constrained to attend meetings.
- The Listserv is seen as a relevant tool to gather or share information and most read/use it.
- Most had attended the JRM/AGM at some point and found the PD's helpful and affordable. Keeping them low cost and centrally located seems easiest for travel purposes.
- The need remains to fill executive positions.

2. *The following are the five main activities of OCC:*

- providing relevant Professional Development opportunities*
- facilitating research which benefits college counselling services and their clients*
- using the ListServ for gathering information or sharing best practices*
- producing Between Us/Entre Nous, a 40 year record of the reports, best practices and special projects of college counsellors across the province*
- facilitating networking opportunities at conferences, regional meetings, and at the AGM*

Do you see these as valuable? Is there anything missing?

Professional Development:

- Lots of discussion ensued about OCC continuing to provide PD or not, given that
 - the role of the newly formed CICMH (Centre for Innovation in Campus Mental Health) appears to be as provider of relevant PD, including having the technological capacity to do short webinars;

- the trend toward college support of longer, content specific, evidence-based PD resulting in certification vs. networking opportunities; and colleges bringing in group PD opportunities or counsellors seeking local PD opportunities;
- the preference for counsellors to find PD which meets their own levels of training needs; especially given the low budgets attached to this support which is not consistent across the colleges (average PD seems to be in the \$300-500 range)
- Observation that colleges may not support 'networking' as a stand-alone objective any longer.
- Suggestion that OCC re-consider being a provider of PD and perhaps being better suited as a "connector" to PD:
 - E.g. provide links to PD resources in major centres across the province;
 - have blog posts that provide reviews of PD that members found useful; and
 - have shorter, more frequent webinars to facilitate discussion about best practices and "support sessions" around trends and developments around one's particular college which can act as "virtual meetings"
 - have more OCC members learn how to offer a webinar on special topics of interest (e.g. aboriginal, international, outreach activities)
- Counsellors need more lead time for OCC sponsored PD so they can plan their year and budget their funds accordingly.

Communication:

- Suggestion was made to use technology (teleconferences, webinars) for AGM's and JRM's so more members can actually access these meetings with the hope this will encourage involvement in these stand-alone events.
- Between Us/Entre Nous is seen as a valuable resource for communication, although lack of French content prohibits use by Francophones.
- Forwarding Between Us/Entre Nous to managers and VP's could be done by all regional reps. in order to increase management's awareness of our activities.
- Between Us/Entre Nous could include a section on mental health apps that are useful.
- The Listserv acts as a Community of Practice.
- In the North, Aboriginal counsellors identify w/ ONECA and links with CCDI more readily.
- We need a networking coordinator on the executive. How can we engage those who participate less?

Research:

- the Research that has been supported, and continues to be supported by OCC, is very valuable and a key role to continue; efforts must be made to get the findings disseminated and shared with college management and the full OCC community

- Opportunities for summaries of, and follow-up on the research findings was highlighted as important e.g. through live PD, webinars, on the website, and in the newsletter
- Research should describe the impact of our presence on college campuses. Outcome measures that link counselling to student retention (e.g. Shirley Porter's research at Fanshawe) are needed.

Other:

- OCC must remain relevant to administrators. Does OCC meet the needs of our managers? Collect data that administrators need to inform their decision-making. Make sure OCC is on your team meeting agenda.
- Networking and data collection is what we do best: we should limit ourselves to that.
- In response to the request for OCC to play a larger advocacy role, it was noted that OCC can advocate for good counselling services but not go outside our Terms of Reference (i.e. tackle union issues).
- Perhaps the issue of Clinical Supervision and how this is being met at various colleges could be explored and discussed via a webinar.

3. Our recent experience has shown that attendance at OCC events is encumbered by a number of obstacles (e.g., restrictive budgets, the expectation to use PD days, lack of support for the work of OCC). If we used more webinar/teleconferencing options, would that encourage your participation?

- It was noted that it is very difficult to determine the goals, direction and shape of OCC at this time b/c of the following unknowns:
 - The evolution of the role and the continued existence of the new player, Centre of Innovation. It was agreed that it would be useful not to duplicate what the Centre can do easily (e.g. webinars b/c of their technology expertise) and to focus on aligning with them where appropriate or cost-effective; and filling gaps not addressed by them.
 - the fact that HOSA seems to be analyzing the role of reporting groups, and moving toward a more generic type of conference for all;
- All agreed technology would likely increase participation although bemoaned the loss of the networking and support that comes from live interaction with one's colleagues.
- Suggestion was made of having a 'virtual banquet' in order to
 - include those who do not necessarily get to the AGM,
 - to provide a year-end wrap up of OCC's accomplishments (e.g. Ethics handbook), and
 - to thank people who have contributed over the year either in executive roles or on the sub-committees (Between Us, etc.).
- Webinars would be helpful, but likely would not increase communication and connection.

4. Are there other activities that you would like OCC to organize? If so, would you be willing to spearhead any of it?

- ✓ Perhaps an annual welcome at start of the year to new and 'seasoned' counsellors to familiarize them with the Listserv, it's purpose, and how to use it;
- Have a person responsible for the Listserv in terms of adding PD opportunities across the province; book reviews; a blog.
- A monthly webinar, facilitated by our own members with the technical support of CICMH, to provide PD reviews, trends at your college, any specialized training they would like to share.
- Perhaps more networking opportunities – not sure what that might look like. But more opportunities to connect. Creating a facebook page for counsellors?
- Get new counsellors on Listserv immediately, perhaps a function that could be formalized at all colleges by the college rep.
- Should we reconnect with CCDI for a conference again? The Mental Health agenda increases the need to collaborate with one another and our partnership has history.

★ → P.D. Animator/Facilitator → attentive to P.D. across the prov.
 → listserv (COP)
 → webinars - 1hr. (Safetalk)

Key Questions for Discussion:

1. Given the above, where should OCC put its attention?
2. Are there elements of our work that need to change or be eliminated?
3. Are there folks here who have the interest to join in the work of OCC at the level of subcommittees, special roles, or the executive? These rather.

Send to Greg

★ #5
 - research
 - best practices

- OCC to work on mgmt. to support OCC
 - focus on 1 or 2 key trainings: leverage our #'s / brokerage
 - specialized P.D.
 - "Standards of practice"
 - ~~Scott Miller~~
 - Standardized reporting
 - data
 - ~~models~~
 - consistent to a model
 - consistency
 - how do we measure our standards
 - ↑ graduation rates / retention rates

1 good P.D.
 1 good research → buy in from mgmt?
 buy in w/ mgmt. collectively

* French listserv
 - OCC leadership + a compass

- response to White Paper
 - regulation of psychotherapy
 - need bridges gaps
 - targeted specific P.D.] OCC