

INTERNATIONAL AFFAIRS & BEST PRACTICE GUIDELINES CENTRE

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THE POWER TO INFLUENCE POPULATION HEALTH THROUGH ADVOCACY BY COMMUNITY HEALTH NURSING

Presenters:

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Introductions

Partner Organizations:

- Registered Nurses Association of Ontario (RNAO)
- Community Health Nurses' Initiatives Group (CHNIG) of RNAO

Registered Nurses' Association of Ontario

- Professional association of Registered Nurses in Ontario, Canada
- The strong, credible voice leading the nursing profession to influence and promote healthy public policy, and clinical excellence
- International Affairs and Best Practice Guideline Program Centre is a signature program of RNAO



Community Health Nurses Initiatives Group

Mission:

To act as the **voice of community Health Nurses** influencing the health care system, and health and social policy in areas which affect the work of Community Health Nurses and the public we serve

Goals:

- To **build capacity** in Community Health Nurses
- To **strengthen the profile of CHNs** and articulate the significance of their practice
- To **influence health and social policy**, taking into consideration the social determinants of health
- To promote, engage and maximize membership in CHNIG
- To promote engage and maximize student involvement in community health nursing and CHNIG

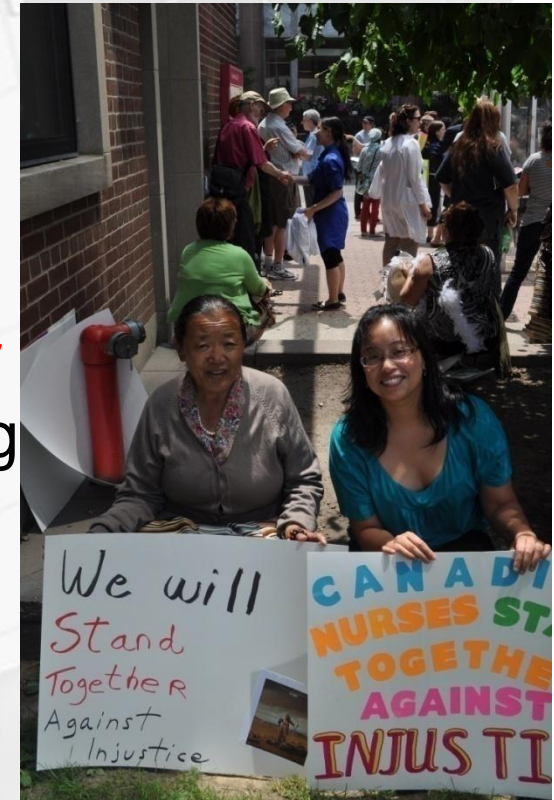
Objectives

- Explore the role of the community health nurse in advocacy and methods of action
- Analyze an example of systems level advocacy in influencing programming at a Ministerial level
- Explore participant opportunities and advocacy resources available

What is Advocacy?

“A combination of **individual and social actions** designed to gain political and community support for a particular goal. Action may be **taken by, or on behalf of, ‘or with’** individuals and groups to create living conditions which **promote health.**”

(WHO, 2005)



Individually and collectively...

"As professionals who practice at the intersection of public policy and private lives, **nurses are ideally situated and morally obligated** to include political advocacy and efforts to influence healthy public policy in their practice." (Falk-Raphael, 2005)

Advocacy is ...



Advocacy Steps : The How To?

1. Taking Action (Decision to take action)
2. Selecting Your Issue
3. Understanding Your Political Context
4. Building Your Evidence Base
5. Engaging Others
6. Developing Strategic Plans
7. Communicating the Messages and Implementation Plans
8. Seizing Opportunities
9. Being Accountable
10. Taking a Development Approach

Step 1: Taking Action

The Health Issue:

- 1 in 5 Ontarians will experience a mental illness or addictions issue some point in their lifetime
- 70% of mental health issues have their onset during childhood or adolescence
- 15 to 21% of Ontario's children and youth have at least one mental health disorder
- Mental illness affect school dropout rates (approx 25% males and 14.2% females) and school attendance (40% more missed school days)
- Poor school performance: 30% to 58% of students with psychiatric disorders will experience under achievement.

Step 1: Taking Action

Issues: Health System Gaps

- Fragmentation of Mental Health and Addictions, systems are not a seamless (i.e. transitioning between sectors)
- Glorification of prison system as method of 'treatment'
- Lack of Trained Mental Health and Addictions Professionals, especially for children and youth
- Erosion of Mental Health Curriculum in Undergraduate Nursing Program
- Societal and/or Cultural Stigma and Discrimination includes attitudes and beliefs of nurses

*"Could someone help me with these?
I'm late for math class."*



Step 3: Understanding Your Political Context:

Ontario Comprehensive Mental Health and Addiction Strategy

The strategy focuses on children and youth in the first three years

Goals (Year 1 – 3):

1. Provide fast access to high quality service
 2. Identify and intervene in kids' mental health needs early
 3. Close critical service gaps for vulnerable kids, kids in key transitions, and those in remote communities
- Inter-ministerial collaboration: Children and Youth and Services, Health and Long-Term Care, Education and Training Colleges and Universities

OVERVIEW OF THE THREE YEAR PLAN

Starting with Child and Youth Mental Health

Our Vision:

An Ontario in which children and youth mental health is recognized as a key determinant of overall health and well-being, and where children and youth reach their full potential.

THEMES	<p>Provide fast access to high quality service</p> <p>Kids and families will know where to go to get what they need and services will be available to respond in a timely way.</p>	<p>Identify and intervene in kids' mental health needs early</p> <p>Professionals in community-based child and youth mental health agencies and teachers will learn how to identify and respond to the mental health needs of kids.</p>	<p>Close critical service gaps for vulnerable kids, kids in key transitions, and those in remote communities</p> <p>Kids will receive the type of specialized service they need and it will be culturally appropriate</p>			
INDICATORS	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Reduced child and youth suicides/suicide attempts • Educational progress (EQAO) • Fewer school suspensions and/or expulsions • Higher graduation rates • More professionals trained to identify kids' mental health needs • Higher parent satisfaction in services received • Decrease in severity of mental health issues through treatment • Decrease in inpatient admission rates for child and youth mental health • Fewer hospital (ER) admissions and readmissions for child and youth mental health • Reduced Wait Times 					
INITIATIVES	<p>Improve public access to service information</p>	<p>Pilot Family Support Navigator model Y1 pilot</p>	<p>Implement <i>Working Together for Kids' Mental Health</i></p>	<p>Implement standardized tools for outcomes and needs assessment</p>	<p>Enhance and expand Telepsychiatry model and services</p>	<p>Provide support at key transition points</p>
	<p>Funding to increase supply of child and youth mental health professionals</p>	<p>Increase Youth Mental Health Court Workers</p>	<p>Amend education curriculum to cover mental health promotion and address stigma</p>	<p>Develop K-12 resource guide for educators</p>	<p>Hire new Aboriginal workers Implement Aboriginal Mental Health Worker Training Program</p>	<p>Improve service coordination for high needs kids, youth and families</p>
	<p>Reduce wait times for service, revise service contracting, standards, and reporting</p>	<p>Outcomes, indicators and development of scorecard</p>	<p>Implement school mental health ASSIST program and mental health literacy provincially</p>	<p>Provide designated mental health workers in schools</p>	<p>Expand inpatient/outpatient services for child and youth eating disorders</p>	<p>Hire Nurse Practitioners for eating disorders program [part of 9,000 Nurses Initiative]</p>
			<p>Implement Mental Health Leaders in selected School Boards</p>	<p>Provide nurses in schools to support mental health services [part of 9,000 Nurses Initiative]</p>	<p>Create 18 service collaboratives</p>	<p>Plan/Evaluation</p>

Mental Health & Addiction Nurses in School Program Goals

- Provide mental health and addictions **early identification and early intervention** in an inter-disciplinary team
- Work with **students (and families** where applicable) with **mild to complex mental health and/or substance use issues.**
- Students **transitioning** back to school from a hospital/institution because of a mental health and/or substance use issue is a particular focus for the program.

Step 2: Identify the Issue

Issues:

- Awareness raising of the Role of Community Health Nurses (working in Schools) to the Ministry of Health & Long-Term Care Initiative: Mental Health & Addiction Nurses (MHANs) in District School Boards Program
- Advocating for the Role of Community Health Nurses to key stakeholders, including Ministry of Education and Ministry of Child and Youth Services
- Awareness raising of the Public Health Nurse role in Schools and setting up collaboration with MHANs

Step 3 (Cont'd): Understanding Your Political Context: RNAO

- RNAO advocating for timely investments in the Mental Health and Addiction services for a Healthier Ontario
- RNAO submitted a successful proposal to offer provincial training to the MHAN's & Nurse Leaders
- RNAO was also invited to join the Provincial Reference Group

Provincial Nurse Reference Group

Purpose: To advise regarding education/training of the nurses, coordination of the program with the other school-based mental health initiatives and program evaluation measures.

Membership: Health, Education and Children's Mental Health Sectors, Local Health Integration Networks, CCACs, Public Health and School Boards

Key Successes:

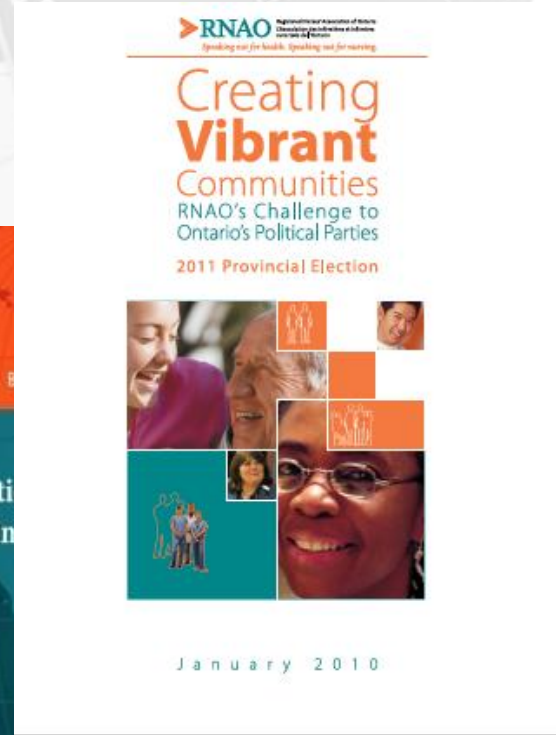
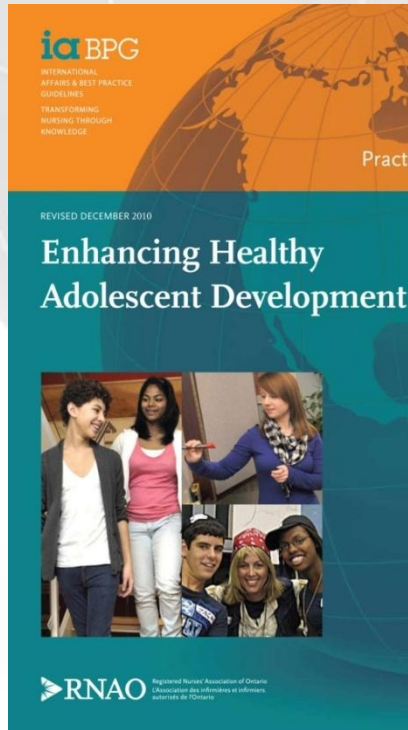
- Developed a minimum specifications document for the program which articulates the purpose, role and responsibilities of the nurses
- Provided advice on data collection, tools and evaluation
- Heard from other sectors/organizations including public health about opportunities for collaboration and shared learning

Step 4: Building Your Evidence Base



Open Minds, Healthy Minds

Ontario's Comprehensive Mental Health and Addictions Strategy



Step 5: Engaging Others

- RNAO advocacy with Reference Group to invite front-line school public health nurse to join Group in recognition public health's role in schools mental health promotion
- RNAO collaborated with CHING to provide School Health Nursing Representation
- Reference Group advocacy to engage those from the Education and Community sectors

Step 6: Developing Strategic Plans

Goal: Advocate for the role of the School Health Nurse

Objectives:

- Articulate the contribution of *Community Health Nurse (working in schools)* in care of students with Mental Health and Addictions including mental health promotion
- Foster MHAN and CHN roles as complementary not competing at the provincial planning table
- Facilitate collaboration between MHAN program with Public Health

Step 7 Communicating the Message

- Sharing of school CHN best practices
- Discussing public health role with mental health promotion
- Exploring public health supports to MHAN initiative, including community supports that work with Youth

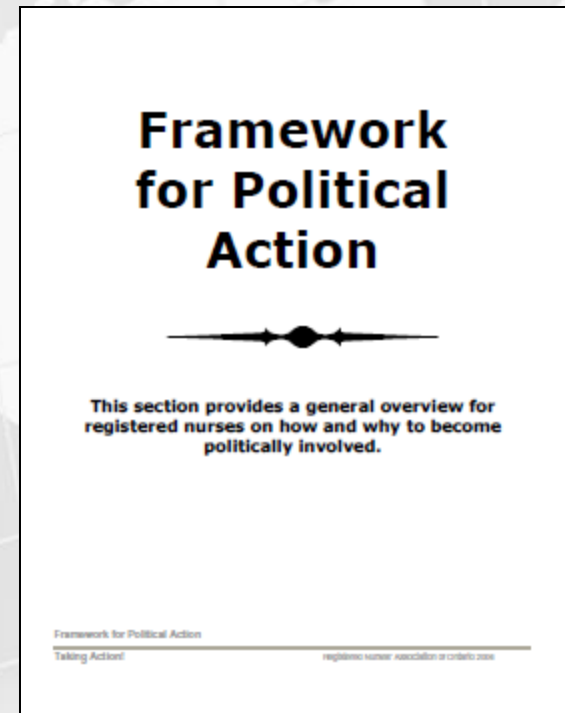
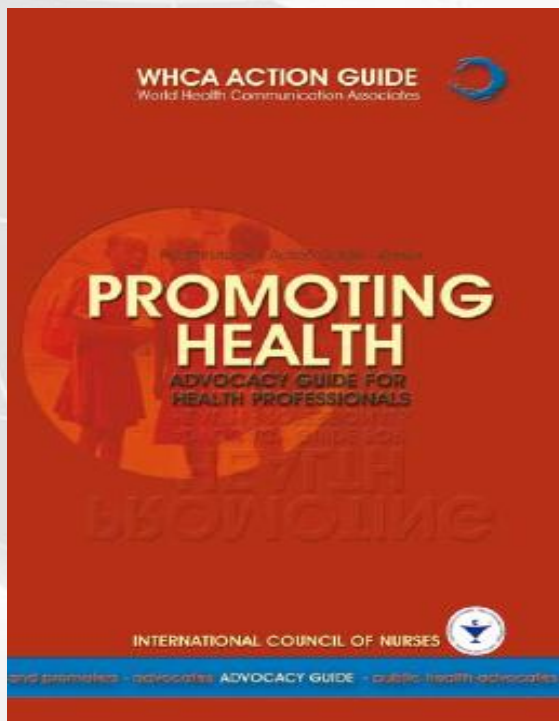
Step 8: Seizing Opportunities

- Presenting school CHN and PHN role to Reference Group (based on best practice)
- Mental Health and Addiction Learning Institute as a vehicle for promotion of role of PHN in Schools
- Individual discussions with Inter-ministerial colleagues to advocate for the role of CHN as complementary to other school/community based services
- RNO input into Toronto Start Nursing Week Supplement re: MHAN Initiative and role of School Health Nurse

Step 9 & 10: Accountability (Evaluation) and Sustainability

- Steps encompass impact of advocacy and key learning's
- Partner Reflections
 - CHNIG
 - RNAO

Resources for Advocacy: Frameworks



Where do we go from here?

“We must create a public opinion which must drive the government, instead of the government having to drive us -- an enlightened public opinion, wise in principles, wise in details.”

Florence Nightingale, 1892



Questions to Consider

1. What are the issues you would like to advocate for?
2. Who would you partner with to begin your advocacy?
3. How do you plan to engage in advocacy in 1 month from today?

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