



## *Addictions Professionals Association of Saskatchewan, Inc.*

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Happy Addiction Awareness Week to our, I'm sure, very busy membership.

Attending the Canadian Centre on Substance Abuse (CCSA) Issues of Substance (ISO) Conference, found me at the airport at 5:40 a.m. on Sun. Nov. 3. It was raining in Saskatoon and the weather forecast indicated snow was coming. Ontario was faring much better. Arrived to beautiful fall weather and those wonderful red maple leaves that we are all so proud of still clinging to some of the trees.

400 people from all over Canada, a few from the USA and some from England and Ireland were in attendance. It was truly two and a half jam packed days! The three keynote speakers included Dr. Gabor Mate, Dr. Franco Vaccarino (on some very interesting new brain research) and Dr. Will Miller (who wrote the book on Motivational Interviewing) spent an hour and a half with us during each morning. These informative sessions set the pace for the presentations that were to follow. With titles like, "Choosing the Right Treatment," "Professional Development for Frontline Workers," "Opioid Use during Pregnancy: Maternal and Neonatal Effects and Management", there was everything from connections between disability and addiction to gender specific treatment, patterns and trends. There was no way that one person could even hope to get a glimpse of all the research findings that were being presented



**And Saskatchewan was there!**

*What unites us necessitates we work together to find better ways.*

As many of you may or may not know, Saskatchewan, through the University of Saskatchewan, is the only province in the country that has a dedicated Research Chair in Substance Abuse; Dr. Colleen Dell, an APASK member, was involved in four different learning offerings. The entire audience was introduced to her latest research on the exploration of benefits of animal assisted therapy through a booth in the trade show, and there was a public invitation to follow Anna-Belle and Subie's Adventures in Pet Therapy by "liking" them on Facebook. <https://facebook.com/AmmaBelleSubiesAdventures> If you would like to contact Colleen directly, her email address is [Colleen.Dell@usask.ca](mailto:Colleen.Dell@usask.ca). Colleen also sits on the ethics committee for CCSA and is a great resource to those of us wanting to continue to move forward through research and the development of professionalism in our little province.

"Improving Prevention Programming through Measurement and Evaluation" saw Sask. Project Hope outcomes reviewed through a presentation done by Prince Albert Parkland Health Region's Chuck McCann and Chris Archibald. Through the assistance of Colleen Dell and her research group at the University, the data collected through this project and application of provincial government funding has the potential to be replicated across the country.

APASK member, Rand Teed, also presented during this segment under the title, "When the Rubber Hits the Road: Adventures in the Teenage Brain." These two presentations were accompanied by a further presentation titled, "Finds and Lessons Learned from the Drug Strategy Community Initiatives Fund", and we were reminded that there is funding available for research projects of this nature through that fund at <http://www.hc-sc.gc.ca/hc-ps/drugs-drogues/dscif-ficsa/index-eng.php>. Rand also entered a poster, "Alternatives to Suspension" in the poster contest and won honorable mention in the Program portion of that competition.

During the session "Reducing Alcohol-Related Harms and Costs in Canada", the director of Saskatchewan's Impaired Driver Treatment Centre in Prince Albert, Michele Ketzmerick, presented the amount of research that has been accumulated through the program's years of operation. She was joined by two other research program participants on comparing provincial policies to reduce alcohol related harm in Canada and utilizing knowledge transfer to develop supervisory and treatment strategies for female drunk drivers in the USA. This last program was undertaken by the Traffic Injury Research Foundation (TIRF), a registered Canadian charity who received funding through the Century Council. Also from Saskatchewan was a session titled "Strategies to Staying Healthy and Revved at Work: Navigating Vicarious Trauma", based on research conducted by APASK member, Garry Perry, Dr. Keira Stockdale of the Saskatoon Police Service and Sara White, a graduate student at the U of S and funded through the Youth Justice Fund. For further information on accessing research funds related to the youth justice system and related youth justice issues, contact [www.justice.gc.ca/youth](http://www.justice.gc.ca/youth)

Overall...Saskatchewan certainly held its own amongst national providers and as chair of the APASK membership committee, I would like to offer congratulations to our members for doing our province proud.

The second day of the conference saw another history making event for our affiliate organization, the Canadian Counsellors Certification Federation (CACCF), with the signing of a Memorandum of Understanding with CCSA to bring the 12 Core Functions which our certification is based on to the drafting of recognized competencies for Addictions Counsellors in Canada. CCSA is in the process of developing a third draft of a Proficiencies and Technical Competencies for Addiction Counsellors that potentially will be recognized throughout Canada both as a hiring guideline and a performance evaluation tool. The first draft is available through CCSA on DVD and is entitled "Competencies for Canada's Substance Abuse Workforce". CCSA also invited conference participants seeking to strengthen competencies in their workforce to a workshop to make further contributions to this endeavor.

Something I personally learned by attending this conference was about the Cochrane Library. ([www.thecochranelibrary.com](http://www.thecochranelibrary.com)) There is a vast amount of current research available through this resource including abstracts for articles dated as late as 2013 on Substance Abuse and Mental Health. They offer various video series' on multiple topics including public health perspective, smoking cessation, senior's health and much, much more. You can also find them at [ccc.cochrane.org](http://ccc.cochrane.org)

Another resource for printed materials I wasn't completely aware of was [www.educalcool.qc.ca](http://www.educalcool.qc.ca). A Quebec company that offers quality printed material for education purposes such as "Alcohol Hangover" and "Be prepared to talk to your children About Drinking." Of course these are separate and apart from the CCSA tools and resources for health care providers whose new publications include Youth Substance Abuse Prevention which provides step by step guidance on how to plan, implement and evaluate prevention initiatives; Prescription Drug Strategy, Canada's Low-risk Drinking Guidelines and Cannabis Research all of which can be accessed through their website at [www.ccsa.ca](http://www.ccsa.ca)

Last but not least, I had the opportunity to meet so many really great, inspiring people: Ann Marie McGuire from the Orchard in BC who assisted Vancouver in winning the Recovery Day Award and Ann Dorsett Johnson, author of the new book, Drink. APASK is considering bring Ann to Saskatchewan next September for a three point speaking engagement to launch the second annual Celebrate Recovery Month.

Regards to all Brenda Hearn, Chair – Membership committee