

FRONTENAC COMMUNITY MENTAL HEALTH SERVICES is committed to using client input when planning programs.

The Client Advisory Committee is evidence of this! Your committee's purpose is to assist in improving communication, and strengthening clients' voices, in the planning and direction of service at this agency.

On the committee we have 8 volunteers and a Peer Specialist so we have 9 voting members. They include a Secretary (Terry C.), a Treasurer (Eleanor S.), a Chairman (Don, C., myself) and a Peer Specialist (Karen B.P.). Karen is our peer and our staff. The Vice Chair is vacant at this time. There is a two year term for elected executives.

The Client Advisory Committee was born in June 2006. Since that time we have laid the foundation for the Committee. We have put together our Terms of Reference which are our guiding principles. Mike I., (past Chairman) has made a document that lists our Client Bill of Rights. Mike has since found fulltime work.

Our Client Advisory Committee has listed our four objectives:

- 1) To provide advice, guidance, and support regarding issues related to Clinical Programs.
- 2) To provide opportunity for social interaction among clients.
- 3) To promote community understanding of mental health issues.
- 4) To have a voice in program evaluation. To become educated about all necessary aspects of the agency in order to evaluate and monitor outcomes, so that we can respond to the needs of the community.

We are being educated about the Agency. The Client Advisory Committee has been host to almost every Program Team Leader. We have had many power point presentations about programs. We are learning about Psycho-Social Rehabilitation and Recovery. These are the principles of this Agency.

There is no doubt! Your Client Advisory Committee is here to stay. We just had our annual retreat in March 2008. The people who have been instrumental in getting us the resources we needed are Glenda Carter, Joanne Mayo and Nancy Barkman.

As part of our social agenda your Client Advisory Committee will be sponsoring several free BBQs and lunches throughout the next year (held at 107 Wellington Street). It will be at these events that I will give clients and staff a report on our progress.

One of the events the Client Advisory Committee would like to be a part of this year is a conference on recovery.

Right now your Client Advisory Committee is working on a project about recovery. As part of this project I have done a client survey. The question is "What does recovery mean to you?" I collected many opinions of what recovery means. The answers came with such ease and certainty and speech it reminded me of something. At our very first meeting Murray Hillier looked out at us in the audience and said "You are the experts, your voices need to be heard".

We have a website where we post minutes and agendas: www.fcmhs.ca, other links/Client Advisory Committee.

The Client Advisory Committee meets every 3rd Thursday of the month in the classroom at 107 Wellington Street from 1pm to 2:30pm.

Thank you for the opportunity to share this information with you.