



**Stigma and
mental illness:
A VICIOUS CIRCLE**

March 15 and 16, 2007



Hôpital
Douglas
Hospital
www.douglas.qc.ca

INTRODUCTION

One person in five will experience some form of mental illness in his or her lifetime. The hardship that accompanies mental illness targets people of all ages, independent of race, gender, culture or social status. Increased media attention devoted to the problems of mental illness leave the impression that it is a normal part of life.

In reality, however, the mentally ill continue to receive a frigid or negative reception; an aloof concoction of fear and prejudice. People who suffer from mental illness are pushed to the fringes or directly excluded from society. Stigma takes on many forms, some explicit, others more subtle and underhanded. It is sometimes difficult to appreciate how some attitudes and behaviours can impede recovery and reintegration into society.

Over two days, many key players in the mental health field will come together to share their experience and expertise on the problems of stigma, to impart lessons learned, and to explore the paths that could lead to a solution.

To promote exchange, the bulk of the conference will be devoted to round table discussions, joining together people with varied proficiencies in order to debate, and to open a dialogue with the audience. The round tables will assemble service consumers, family members, clinicians, journalists and researchers in the mental health domain.

Objectives:

- To identify some of the principal manifestations of stigma experienced by people with mental health problems and to ascertain their impact
- To create an atmosphere conducive to dialogue between key players and the public
- To learn the ways in which people with mental illness face stigma and to explore possible solutions
- To sensitize the public to the problems of stigma



MARCH 15, 2007

8:30 **Registration**

9:00 **Welcoming Remarks: Ellen Corin, PhD,
Conference Chair**

9:05 **Testimonials**

- Jim Tremain
- Julie Laflèche
- Lorna Knight

9:30 **Lecture: Current Concepts and Trends
in Stigma Research**

Speaker: Ross Norman, PhD, Departments of Psychiatry, and of Epidemiology and Biostatistics, Director of Research, Department of Psychiatry, University of Western Ontario

10:30 **Coffee Break**

10:45 **Stigma in the Workplace**

Presentation of the documentary *Quand le cadre ne cadre plus* (52 minutes, Virage Productions) followed by a discussion period.

Statistics Canada reports that 500,000 Canadians aged 25 to 64—4 per cent of the work force—experienced depression in 2001, interfering with their capacity to work effectively. In a society that venerates performance, admitting to incapacity is often viewed as a confession of personal weakness. *Quand le cadre ne cadre plus* documents the experience of three individuals who fell into depression: the personal and organizational events that led them there, their struggle to overcome their illness, and the challenges of returning to work.

Moderator: Gilles Bibeau

Panelists:

- **Camillo Zacchia**, PhD, Chief Psychologist, Douglas Hospital
- **Participant to be confirmed**



12:45

Lunch

1:30

Round Table: The Personal Face of Stigma

Stigma, in all its forms, constitutes a major obstacle to people living with mental health problems. It can impede their attempts to recover, to find their place in the world, and thwart the efforts of their loved ones. Flagrant examples of stigma are easy to detect. Others are more insidious, but their effects are no less damaging. How do people experience stigma? What is the “personal face” of stigma? How does stigma affect how people relate to themselves and others? How can one protect oneself from its effects?

Moderator: Gilles Bibeau

Panelists:

- **Linda Bourgeois**, consumer
- **Lord Maurice**, family member, PABEMSOM (*Parents et amis du bien-être mental du Sud-Ouest de Montréal*)
- **Pierre Nadeau**, consumer
- **Marc-Alain Wolf**, MD, psychiatrist, Douglas Hospital Emergency Department

3:30

Closing Remarks

MARCH 16, 2007

8:30 **Registration**

9:00 **Lecture**

Testimonial presented by Guy Latraverse, artistic event and television producer and president of REVIVRE (Quebec Anxiety, Depressive and Bipolar Support Association)

10:00 **Coffee Break**

10:15 **Round Table: The Media and Stigma**

How does mass media influence people's perception of mental illness? How does it approach or treat the subject? What images does it help to perpetuate, transform, or create? Journalists, directors, politicians—even bloggers—use powerful modes of communication that shape our opinions and behaviour. Is this positive or negative?

Moderator: Gilles Bibeau

Panelists:

- **Katia Gagnon**, journalist, *La Presse*
- **Mimi Israël**, MD, psychiatrist-in-chief, Douglas Hospital
- **Richard Langlois**, author, lecturer and educator (diagnosed with bipolar disorder)
- **Lise Ravary**, editor-in-chief, *Châtelaine*

12:00 **Lunch**

1:00 **Round Table: Stigma in Our Mental Health Services**

Our mental health system has undergone significant change over the last few decades not the least of which is the shift towards community-based interventions. Major changes include greater involvement of family members and consumers, as well as concepts such as recovery and prevention. This has forced service providers to

re-examine their approach to the treatment of the seriously mentally ill. These developments are likely to be successful only if accompanied by equally significant changes in thinking and attitudes on the part of service providers. What is the perspective of the different actors that comprise the mental health network?

Moderator: Gilles Bibeau

Panelists:

- **Ella Amir**, president, Ami-Québec (Alliance for the Mentally Ill Inc.)
- **Karen Goldberg**, screening clinician, PEPP-Montréal Program, Douglas Hospital
- **Brenda Wentzell**, family member, founding member of the National First Episode Psychosis Family Network
- **Participant to be confirmed**

3:00

**Discussion Summary:
Ellen Corin, PhD,
Conference Chair**

3:30

Closing Remarks

The conference will be held at the

**Douglas Hospital
Douglas Hall**

6875 LaSalle Boulevard
Borough of Verdun
Montreal, Quebec H4H 1R3

* Simultaneous translation service will be available.

Scientific Committee: Sylvain Bernier, Ellen Corin, PhD, Caroline Dusablon, Karen Goldberg, Hani Iskandar, MD, Stéphanie Lasseonde, Ashok Malla, MD, and Joseph Rochford, PhD.

REGISTRATION

Places are limited. The deadline for registration is March 9, 2007.

Registration fees:

(includes coffee breaks, lunch, documentation and taxes)

- Professionals: **\$190**
- Members of community organisations: **\$75**
- General public and students: **\$50**

(Please print in block letters)

Name: _____

Address: _____

City: _____

Postal Code: _____

Telephone: _____

Fax: _____

Email Address: _____

Occupation: _____

Employer: _____

Make Check Payable to:

Douglas Hospital (Continuing Education)

Your payment must be post-marked no later than March 9, 2007, and sent to the following address:

Douglas Hospital

Teaching and Training Office
6875 LaSalle Boulevard / Borough of Verdun
Montreal, Quebec H4H 1R3

Cancellations

Cancellation requests received before March 9, 2007 will be respected and fully reimbursed. No reimbursement will be provided for requests received after March 9, 2007.

Parking

Conference registrants are responsible for parking fees in the amount of \$3.00 per day (payment by credit card or exact change).

For Additional Information:

Colette Beauchemin (514) 761-6131, extension 2779

Visit our website: www.douglas.qc.ca
(to obtain additional copies of this flyer)

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