

# The View From Here:

## Perspectives on Northern and Rural Psychology

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### Message From the Chair

#### Executive Committee Nominations

Unfortunately due to unforeseen circumstances, Dr. Henry Harder is unable to assume the Chair position as he had planned. I want to thank Henry for his role as the Chair-Elect. Thanks also to Dr. Cindy Hardy, who is just completing her role as Secretary-Treasurer.

We are currently seeking nominations for several positions including the Chair-Elect, Chair, and Secretary-Treasurer. I can certainly say that my position as Chair has provided me with wonderful opportunities to meet other rural and northern psychologists and develop friendships across the country. I've also had the opportunity to work closely with the CPA Board and the other Section Chairs; something that has proven to be an invaluable learning experience. I want to encourage all of our section members to consider a position on the Executive Committee. You won't be disappointed!

Nominations (of yourself or someone else) can be made either by email ([dyckkg@cc.umanitoba.ca](mailto:dyckkg@cc.umanitoba.ca)) or in-person at the Annual Section Business Meeting to be held at the upcoming CPA Convention in Halifax, June 2008. If you are nominating someone, please check with them first to ensure they are willing to accept this nomination. Assuming we have quorum, voting will take place at the business meeting.

#### Update on the Student Representative Position

Section members unanimously approved the addition of a Student Representative position on the executive committee. I have forwarded a request to CPA Board for a revision to our bylaws that would include this position. The Board will be meeting in June and we should be notified of their decision shortly thereafter.

#### Update on CPA Professional Affairs Committee

Thanks to Ms. Judi Malone for her interest in representing our section on the Professional Affairs Committee of CPA.

#### Update on CPA Task Force on Prescriptive Authority for Psychologists

Dr. Brian Bigelow has been nominated as the section's representative for the task force. Thanks to Dr. Leavey and Dr. McWilliams for their interest in this position and their willingness to take on such an important role for the section.

#### Listserv

Thanks again to the volunteer efforts of Ms. Laura Voichita Ocolisan and Ms. Hope Yungblut and the assistance of Mr. Nigel Flear at CPA for the ongoing operation of our section listserv. I want to encourage all the section members to use this mechanism of communication to exchange information with section members.

#### Webpage

Thanks to Dr. Melissa Tiessen, who has volunteered to develop and maintain our section webpage. If you haven't already done so, please check out our much improved webpage.

#### North Star Student Award

I am pleased to announce that the first annual North Star Student Award will be presented at the upcoming section business meeting in Halifax. More information about this award can be found on page 5.

#### Annual CPA Convention in Halifax, June 2008

Thanks to all of you who volunteered to review the submissions for the 2008 CPA Convention. I hope all of you will have an opportunity to take in some of the interesting presentations and posters and join us at the Annual Rural and Northern Psychology Section Business Meeting (see the Upcoming Events column for more information). Hope to see you in Halifax!

Karen Dyck, Rural and Northern Psychology Section Chair

## Senior Rural Women Project

Submitted by Shelley Goodwin

Understanding the needs of senior rural women who are in transition is the focus of a new study being undertaken by the Jane Hurshman Memorial Fund. This community based team which is funded by Status of Women Canada, is comprised of community activists, including rural psychologist, Shelley Goodwin. This is an experienced based project focusing on senior rural women during the transitional phase from living independently to some form of supportive and/or assisted care and the effect this has on their emotional and mental health. A component of the project initiative will be to meet with senior rural women in transition, their caregivers (family and/or professional), service providers, and other senior organizations to delineate the gaps in services and supports during the transitional period. For further information please contact the project coordinator, Dianne Crowell at [decrowell1@ns.symaptico.ca](mailto:decrowell1@ns.symaptico.ca),

## Post-Doctoral Residency Training in Rural Psychology

The Residency training programme in Rural Psychology offered by the Department of Clinical Health Psychology is a one-year post-doctoral training experience in rural Manitoba. The resident is based in Selkirk, but provides services to communities throughout the Interlake Region. Selkirk is a small city with a population just under 10,000, located an easy commute of 30 km north of Winnipeg.

The residency in rural psychology is a unique post-doctoral experience that provides opportunities for a diversity of experience. Residents typically provide a range of clinical services (including assessment, individual, family, and group treatment) to a diverse clientele ranging with respect to age, presenting issues, cultural and ethnic background. Opportunities to work closely with a range of professionals and self-help organizations are also available. In keeping with community psychology principles, the resident is also expected to provide an educational presentation during the course of their residency. This may involve an educational presentation to the general public, special interest group, or professional group. Opportunities to provide supervision to more junior residents may also be available. The 2008-2009 resident will begin his/her training September 2, 2008 and will participate in a brief orientation in Winnipeg prior to beginning their placement in the Interlake Region of

Manitoba. Individuals who have completed (or will complete by September 2008) all doctoral degree requirements in Clinical Psychology, including an APA or CPA accredited pre-doctoral internship, may apply for this specialized training position. Stipend for this position is \$50,678 with an attractive benefits package. Criminal records and child abuse registry checks are required. A valid driver's license and vehicle are necessary for this position. The deadline for receipt of applications is June 27, 2008. For further information, contact:

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For further information please visit our website:  
[www.umanitoba.ca/medicine/clinical\\_health\\_psych](http://www.umanitoba.ca/medicine/clinical_health_psych)

## Canadian Ethical Guidelines for Rural Practice Suggestion

### Should we be Developing Ethical Guidelines for Rural Practice?

Winter wishes to my colleagues in Northern and Rural Psychology in Canada. My name is Judi and I am a practising rural psychologist in Northeastern Alberta. Although my practice is normally a mix of generalist rural practice and university instruction, I have minimized my practise while I complete my PhD. I am fortunate to be studying with Charles Sturt University, a respected Australian university with expertise in rural psychology. As my research area is ethics in rural practise of psychology, I have been thrilled to discover the wealth of resources and information that our Australian counterparts have developed. In particular, I have been reflecting on the Australian Psychological Society's specific guidelines for rural practice and how developing Canadian guidelines are similar to benefit our own practises.

I wish to briefly review the *Guidelines for Psychological Practice in Rural and Remote Settings* (APS, 2004). These guidelines: Outline key dimensions of difference between rural and urban practice; Provide a profile of rural and remote psychological practice; Speak to specific consid-

erations for responsibility, cultural adaptation, limits of professional competence, boundary management and dual relationships, confidentiality, and professional and personal isolation in rural and remote practice; And outline particular considerations for newly registered psychologists (APS, 2004). It is noteworthy that "these guidelines are intended to safeguard all clients of APS members, while recognising the particular contexts, rewards and challenges of practice in rural and remote settings" (idib., 2004, p.1). The complete guidelines are available at <http://www.psychology.org.au/Assets/Files/RuralRemoteGuidelines.pdf> You might also be interested in reviewing the links to the Rural and Remote Psychology member group of the APS <http://www.groups.psychology.org.au/rrig/>

I look forward to seeing you at this year's convention in Halifax and at our annual business meeting. Perhaps a discussion about having Canadian guidelines is relevant at this time.

By

Judi L. Malone, PhD candidate with CSU [judim@athabascau.ca](mailto:judim@athabascau.ca)

## CPA News

### CPA ANNOUNCES ITS 2008 ELECTION RESULTS AND THE APPOINTMENT OF ITS NEW EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

CPA is very pleased to announce the results of its 2008 elections. We are indeed fortunate to have such expert and committed members willing to take up the roles and responsibilities of Board membership. Current Board members and Head Office staff extend each of them hearty congratulations and a very warm welcome! Elected to the Board of Directors for 2008-09 through to the end of 2010-11 are:

President-elect: Martin Antony (Ryerson University)

Director-at-large reserved for a scientist working within the NSERC mandate: Peter Graf, University of British Columbia (elected by acclamation)

Director Practitioner: Lorne Sexton, University of Manitoba (elected by acclamation)

Director Scientist: David Dozois, University of Western Ontario (elected by acclamation)

The CPA Board of Directors is also very pleased to announce the appointment of its new Executive Director, Dr. Karen Cohen. Dr. Cohen confirmed her appointment on March 17th, 2008. During her multi-month tenure as CPA's Acting Executive Director, Dr. Cohen has demonstrated an outstanding and unusual level of commitment and competence. Following a national search, the Board of CPA selected Dr. Cohen as the most outstanding and best qualified applicant. She has the trust and full confidence of the Board and has built a strong collaborative relationship with each Board member. For further information about Dr. Cohen, her appointment and her vision for CPA please see Dr. Hadjistavropoulos' article in the Spring issue of *Psynopsis*.

## Student Column

### Making the Urban to Rural Switch: Initial Impressions from a Pre-Doctoral Intern

By Will Shead, M.Sc., University of Calgary

There is a sign on the way into Selkirk, a rural town north of Winnipeg, MB, stating, "If you like shopping, you'll LOVE Big Dollar!!" It's a bold statement. And that sort of moxy wouldn't fly in a big city. But as I've quickly discovered, rural life is different.

I am currently completing my pre-doctoral internship in the Rural Stream of the Department of Clinical Health Psychology, University of Manitoba. This unique year-long training program is divided into two parts. From September to February, rural psychology interns work in a Winnipeg hospital setting, much like interns in one of the urban streams. Then from March to August training moves into a rural area. Approximately two months ago I made the mid-year switchover and I am currently working full-time in the Interlake Region of Manitoba. This drastic change in settings has provided a great opportunity to make a comparison between urban and rural practice. While I certainly do not want to disparage the training experience I received during the urban rotation (my supervisors were fantastic!) I have been immediately taken by the rural rotation. Even within a brief timeframe of actually working in the Interlake region, I have noticed several advantages of rural practice.

It started on my first day of work in the rural area when I was told that parking at our Selkirk office was \$90. "Yes," I answered understandingly, "That was the monthly parking cost at the Winnipeg hospital." "Oh no," I was told, "It's \$90 PER YEAR." Haha. Of course, that's the tip of the cost-of-living iceberg. Anyone who has heard a two-point answer explaining why land costs more in the city knows that it's basic economics. I've also enjoyed the clean air, the traffic-free, relaxed drives between rural offices (I'm learn-

ing French in my car right now!), and the friendly people.

Most importantly, I have enjoyed the freedom and variety afforded by rural practice. I love being able to structure my schedule and caseload to match my training goals and career interests. During the urban rotation, I found that I was seeing a limited variety of clients and types of cases. Many psychologists working in urban hospital settings develop expertise in specific areas of practice which naturally leads to caseloads reflecting a narrower scope of referrals that come across their desk. As a rural psychologist, generalist training is important to be able to tackle any issue that comes through your office door. That's exciting! I've quickly become involved in a wide variety of interesting and challenging cases that will undoubtedly contribute to my growth as a mental health professional.

Of course, these are all very nice sentiments about rural practice, but they need to be experienced to be appreciated. In my view, there are many psychology professionals who are reluctant to consider rural practice simply because they have not had the opportunity to see and believe the benefits. Seventy percent of North Americans live in urban areas making it likely that the majority of potential psychologists have never experienced rural living and/or work for an extended period of time. Is it out of the question to make rural practice a required component of graduate training programs in psychology? After all, we are required to gain breadth in a number of training areas – why not rural practice as well? The other 30% of the population is underserved by mental health, due partly because of a shortage of psychologists in rural areas. That could all change if all new psychologists had a taste of rural practice.

Maybe it's a bold statement, but as a rural psychology resident, I feel comfortable to making it anyway: "If you like psychology, then you'll LOVE rural practice!!"

## Student Column cont.

### The Northern Health Care Labour Market Partnership Project: Perceptions of Mental Health Services in Northern B.C.

Candice Manahan, June Anonson, Jim Randall, Katherine McIndoe, Patricia Covington, Chris Leischner & Randene Wejr

The Northern Health Care Labour Market Partnership was a community-university partnership that included three colleges, one university and one health care organization. The partnership was created to identify the allied health care professional needs of Northern British Columbia (B.C.) and to inform health education programs in the region. The partnership used focus groups and key stakeholder interviews, as well as surveys to assess the region's need for allied health care professionals. This paper highlights the findings from the qualitative analysis of the focus groups and interviews for both health care consumers ( $n=84$ ) and allied health care professionals ( $n=150$ ) in Northern B.C.

Participants in the health care consumer focus groups included parents of young children, residents on a fixed-income, Aboriginal representatives and senior citizens. The findings from these focus groups suggest health care consumers in Northern B.C. perceive a serious lack of general mental health and addictions services in their region. Further, the focus groups suggested that the shortage of mental health professionals created a major barrier in health care access, causing increased mental stress.

One of the main concerns identified was the poor access to addictions services due to the shortage of qualified professionals. Often, participants suggested that the poor access deterred community members from treating their addictions. Participants explained that once a patient was treated for their addiction in an urban center, they were often left without a plan for continuity of care in their home rural community. Consequently, the patients go back to their old ways and do not see the positive effects of addictions treatment.

Most focus groups in the interior region listed psychologists as one of the most needed professionals in their community. A major theme was the need for assessments for children. One rural mother who volunteers at her daughter's school explains:

*"We don't have a developmental psychologist either; one has to fly up from Vancouver. It is not very often. If you have a child that needs to go for testing, you just can't do it. They say, we should send your child for assessment, but it just takes a really long time. We have a lot of kids that fall through the cracks with that".*

Many health consumer focus groups also suggested that the residents in their community had little to no support for mental health problems, which often need immediate attention. As one participant explains:

*"...These mental health problems, they just happen, bam, there is no warning...The people who need information can't get information so they're stressed..."*

Participants in the health care professional focus groups and interviews included health administrators and allied health care professionals such as medical laboratory technologists, speech language pathologists, occupational therapists, physiotherapists, psychologists and social workers. These focus groups and interviews also highlighted a shortage of psychologists and other mental

health services. According to one key stakeholder interview, "...in B.C. there are about 1,000 psychologists in the college, and there are about ten registered psychologists in the north out of that 1000". In addition, participants reported that not all of the psychologists in Northern B.C. are currently working in clinical practice, with five of the registered psychologists working only one half day per week because they are also working in academia.

Another emergent theme was the issue of para-professionals diagnosing mental health conditions because there is such a severe shortage of registered professionals. A moderate to low number of professional interviews and focus groups discussed concern for this issue in Northern B.C. One health care professional explained:

*"Clinicians are being asked to assign preliminary diagnosis to their clients and they have no training whatsoever in how to do that. I think it is a huge ethical problem because when you misdiagnose mental illness of different kinds, you can spend years mistreating them."*

The need for child assessments and waitlists for services were also emphasized by the professional participants. One health care professional explains, "I have heard of kids waiting two years before they're assessed after the time the assessment is ordered". The wait for psychological assessments and treatment can have a very profound impact on educational development and self-esteem. A health care professional explains:

*"I have seen kids who get to university level age before they are ever assessed, even though they have perhaps known all along that they have trouble with learning...having to wait for an assessment when they are having trouble learning is very negative...they think they can't learn, they think they are stupid."*

Many psychological services are not available in Northern B.C. and patients must often fly to other regions to obtain psychological services. Further, if there is a psychologist serving the area, it is often just one psychologist taking referrals. One psychologist explains:

*"If I can't do the assessment time wise or schedule wise, the only thing that we can do is refer them [out of the region] because there just isn't anyone else to do it."*

The shortage of psychologists in Northern B.C., as well as the lack of services they provide is a major mental health concern for people living in these regions. These findings suggest that people living in northern and rural areas of Canada have trouble accessing the mental health services and the trained professionals that they need. This poor access to service or sub-standard quality of service can further add to mental stress for both the consumer and the health care professional. Further, the findings suggest we need to increase the number of registered and chartered psychologists trained to work in northern and rural Canada.

**For more information, please contact:**

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## North Star Student Award



The North Star Student Award has been established by the Rural and Northern Psychology Section to recognize the student with the most meritorious submission to the Rural and Northern Section of the CPA annual convention. Any student whose presentation/poster has been accepted into the Rural and Northern Psychology Section Program is encouraged to apply. The winning submission will be recognized with a certificate and a monetary award. The student will also be invited to describe his/her work in the fall issue of the Rural and Northern

Psychology Newsletter, *The View from Here: Perspectives in Rural and Northern Psychology*.

## Upcoming Events

### 69<sup>th</sup> Annual Canadian Psychological Association Conference June 12 – 14, 2008 The Mariott Harbourfront Hotel Halifax

The assessment and treatment needs of children with ADHD in a rural community: An inter-institutional partnership among mental health, health and education.

Conversation Session by Penny Corkum  
Thursday, June 12<sup>th</sup> 3:00 – 3:55 pm.  
Acadia A, Main Floor Mariott

Career opportunities in rural and northern psychology  
Conversation Session (Student Section) by Karen Dyck  
Friday, June 13<sup>th</sup> 1:00 – 1:55 pm.  
Halifax C, Second Floor Mariott

Rural and northern psychology poster session  
Friday, June 13<sup>th</sup> 2:00 – 2:55 pm.  
Nova Scotia CD, Second Floor Mariott

Speaking a common language: A framework for a youth-friendly definition of “rurality” in Canadian mental health research  
Poster by Laura Armstrong

Role of rural versus urban location in access to professional mental health care.  
Poster by Cindy Hardy

An exploration of perceptions of interprofessional collaboration and rural mental health  
Poster by Jennifer Kilfoil

Planting the seeds of change: Evaluation of the impacts of community gardens on well-being and connections to community and nature in First Nations youth.  
Poster by Graham Trull

Dilemmas, opportunities, and lessons to be learned: Exemplary professional practice in rural psychology.  
Theory Review by Judi Malone  
Friday, June 13<sup>th</sup> 4:00 – 4:25 pm.  
Maritime Suite, Second Floor Mariott

Lessons learned in conducting community-based research.  
Conversation Session by Melissa Tiessen  
Friday, June 13<sup>th</sup> 11:00 – 11:55 am.  
Alexander Suite, Main Floor Mariott

Is rural diversity an oxymoron?  
Conversation Session by Becki Cornock  
Saturday, June 14<sup>th</sup> 1:00 – 1:55 pm.  
Acadia C, Main Floor Mariott

Rural and Northern Section business meeting  
Presentation of North Star Student Award  
Saturday, June 14<sup>th</sup> 2:00 – 2:55 pm.  
Acadia C, Main Floor Mariott

## Useful Links

The North American section of the Rural and Remote Health Journal is now live online. Visit <http://www.rrh.org.au/nthamer/defaultnew.asp>.

For a report on the review of the Canadian Society for Rural Health Research, visit [http://crhrs-scrsr.usask.ca/eng/reports/CRHRS\\_Report-Mar11.pdf](http://crhrs-scrsr.usask.ca/eng/reports/CRHRS_Report-Mar11.pdf).



Please forward all submissions to the attention of:  
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The Newsletter is produced by the Rural and Northern Section of the Canadian Psychological Association (CPA) and is distributed to members of the Section. The purpose of the Rural and Northern Section is to support and enhance the practice of rural and northern psychology. The goals of the section are: 1) Establish a network of professionals interested in the areas of rural and northern psychology (this may include individuals currently practicing in rural/northern areas of those with an interest in this area), 2) Enhance professional connectedness by facilitating linkages between rural and northern practitioners, 3) Distribute information relevant to the practice of rural and northern psychology, 4) Provide a forum to discuss practice issues unique to this specialty, and 5) Introduce students and new or interested psychologists to rural and northern practice. An application for membership in the Rural and Northern Section can be obtained from Dr. Karen Dyck, Section Chair, 200-237 Manitoba Ave., Selkirk MB, RIA 0Y4, [dyckkg@ms.umanitoba.ca](mailto:dyckkg@ms.umanitoba.ca).

This issue of the Newsletter was edited by Karen Dyck and Cindy Hardy. Many thanks are extended to Silvia Simoes for her invaluable contributions to design and layout.

The opinions expressed in this newsletter are strictly those of the authors and do not necessarily reflect the opinions of the Canadian Psychological Association, its officers, directors, or employees.

All submissions are reproduced as submitted by the author(s).

## Literary Notes

### Check out these on-line articles.

Battye, K.M. & McTaggart, K. (2003). Development of a model for sustainable delivery of outreach allied health services to remote north-west Queensland, Australia. *Rural and Remote Health*, 194. Retrieved April 2, 2008, from <http://www.rrh.org.au/articles/showarticlenew.asp?ArticleID=194>

Gibson, A., Miller, R., & King, R. (2007, October). Staying connected: Videoconferenced supervision for rural provisional psychologists. *InPsych Bulletin*. Retrieved April 2, 2008, from [http://www.psychology.org.au/publications/inpsych/video\\_supervision/](http://www.psychology.org.au/publications/inpsych/video_supervision/)

Government of Canada (2002, June). Canadian rural population trends [Electronic Version]. *Agriculture and Agri Food Canada Publication Number 2138/E*. Retrieved November 1, 2007, from [http://www.rural.gc.ca/research/note/note1\\_e.phtml](http://www.rural.gc.ca/research/note/note1_e.phtml)

Kee, J.A., Johnson, D., & Hunt, P. (2002). Burnout and social support in rural mental health counselors [Electronic Version]. *Journal of Rural Community Psychology*, 55(1). Retrieved March 24, 2008, from <http://www.marshall.edu/jrcp/sp2002/Kee.htm>

Lipzker, A. & Stokes, D. (2007, October). Some preliminary ideas from the APS rural and distance client services taskforce. *InPsych Bulletin*. Retrieved April 2, 2008, from [http://www.psychology.org.au/publications/inpsych/rural\\_taskforce](http://www.psychology.org.au/publications/inpsych/rural_taskforce)

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## Call for Submissions

The Newsletter Editors invite submission of articles and items of general interest to rural and northern psychologists. Faculty and students are encouraged to send submissions for the next newsletter to Karen Dyck, [dyckkg@ms.umanitoba.ca](mailto:dyckkg@ms.umanitoba.ca). We also welcome submissions of photos of rural life and settings.