



Social Workers Presented with Saskatchewan Centennial Medals

The Saskatchewan Centennial Medal is an official honour of the Crown and part of the Saskatchewan Honours and Awards Program. It recognizes individuals who have made a significant contribution to the province and is a symbol of the pride and vision of Saskatchewan and its people.

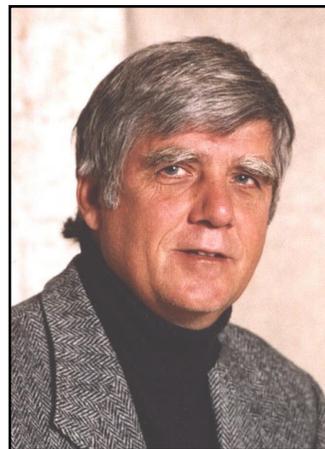
Congratulations to the following registered social workers who have received the Commemorative Medal for the Centennial of Saskatchewan:



Renu Kapoor
Regina, SK
Award presented:
September 4, 2005



Mildred Kerr
Saskatoon, SK
Award presented:
March 8, 2005



Tom Seeley
Yorkton, SK
Award presented:
September 23, 2005



Judy White
Saskatoon, SK
Award presented:
September 17, 2005

If you know of other registered social workers who received this medal, please inform the SASW office so they may be acknowledged in the February 2006 edition of the *Saskatchewan Social Worker*.

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Rural Interest Group: Deborah Bryson Sarauer, Humboldt
Battlefords: Jim Walls

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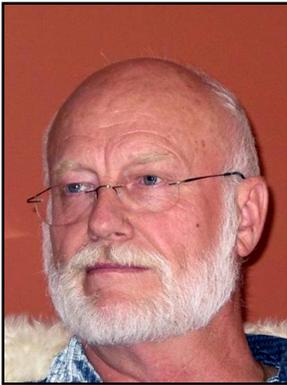
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REGULATE • SUPPORT • PROMOTE • ADVOCATE

Paul Benson Receives Sask Health Care Award



On January 15, 2005, Paul Benson of Saskatoon received the Saskatchewan Health Care Award presented by Group Medical Services. The citation reads “For innovative programs to help people deal with grief after the loss of a loved one.”

This award was in recognition of two programs Paul developed during his tenure in the Palliative Unit of St. Paul’s Hospital. Both programs were geared to help men who had recently experienced the death of a partner. Paul’s outstanding work with these men was strong testimony to the merit of this nomination.

Paul began human service work in Drumheller. He had a “generalized caseload” involving adoptions, foster care, social assistance and disability pensions. He later moved to Edmonton for a short period of time, completed a Master of Social Work degree and eventually, in 1969, moved to Saskatoon.

He worked with Rehab–Homecare for three years and then at the Royal University Hospital In-Patient Rehabilitation Ward for five years. Soon thereafter, he started his long association of 23 years with St. Paul’s Hospital.

Paul has spent the majority of his social work career in a hospital setting. When asked why he chose this type of social work practice he recounted an early experience in which he attended at a private home. He identified himself and explained he was there to see a certain person. He was directed to a detached structure that looked to him much like a “dilapidated chicken coop, very dirty looking.” When Paul approached the building he found a sick and dirty elderly man living in

there. He recalled that this visit instilled in him a desire to help and work with people so that no one would have to live like this elderly man.

Paul allegedly retired from St. Paul’s two years ago but not from social work. He now works part time in private practice.

We honour him for the tenure and excellence of his commitment to social work. We happily applaud the awarding of this honour upon him and his work. He honours the profession of social work, and in so doing, honours all who practice in this profession.

Congratulations, Paul, and every continued success.

Your social work colleagues and friends.

**Wherever you go,
Whatever you do,
Say**

“I AM A SOCIAL WORKER”

You would be surprised at how often social workers say they work with alcoholics or they do therapy or counsel troubled children or direct an employee assistance program. There is nothing wrong with these statements, but preface each with “I AM A SOCIAL WORKER” and then add the statement “...who works with troubled youth.” What you will be doing is performing an invaluable service to the education of the public which benefits the social work profession and ultimately yourself.

The best way to strengthen the image of the social work profession is for social workers to identify themselves as SOCIAL WORKERS.

Social Workers – Make a Difference

Special Edition

The SASW Social Policy Committee has gathered articles of information, opinion and analysis on social policy issues for this newsletter. As you will see, the articles are from members of the committee and others. This collection begins on page 22.

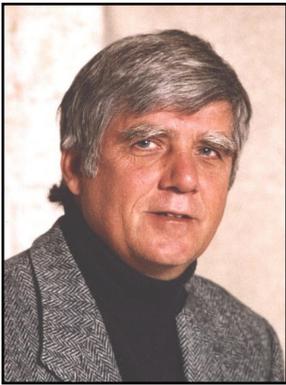
Should you wish to respond to the article(s), SASW would be pleased to print your comments.

Contributions to the newsletter are always welcome.

Read any good books lately?
Working on an interesting project?
Have an area of interest that you would like to share with other people?
Write to SASW Editor and see your name in print!

Deadline for the next newsletter is December 31, 2005.

Message from the President



On August 29, 2005, the Council for the Saskatchewan Association of Social Workers held its regular planning session for the coming year. A number of key decisions were made at this meeting.

Council approved the establishment of a Mentorship Committee to oversee and nurture the development of a mentorship service for students as they prepare to enter the profession. The Saskatoon branch has taken a major leadership role in the development of mentorship in their branch and their efforts have led to a much wider interest in this worthy effort. This work is another example of partnership between the Faculty of Social Work and SASW.

A detailed and ambitious 2005/2006 action plan for our Legislative Review Committee was approved. After some frustrating years of slow movement on this issue, we are hopeful that we can make progress over the next year.

A large percentage of SASW members work in the area of health care. We continue to receive reports of problems these social workers face due to limited access to supervisors with social work credentials and values. On this issue, we have written a number of key players in health care, including the Minister of Health, CEOs of health regions and the leadership of the Saskatchewan Association of Health Organizations (SAHO). We are hopeful that this will be the beginning of a dialogue that will lead toward a solution.

Our association continues to strive for more diversity on a number of fronts. Two recent developments are the appointment of a liaison from our association to the Faculty of Indian Social Work (Mona Acker), and our decision to involve a First Nations elder with SASW in some way.

Another important decision that was made at the August planning session was the appointment of Grace Jasper to the Senate of the University of Regina. We are pleased that we were able to appoint someone of Grace's calibre and experience to fulfil this very important role. Grace replaces Bernie Zaharik, who has served SASW in a number of capacities over the years and has certainly been an effective representative for SASW on the Senate. Thank you, Bernie.

Finally, Council began some reflection on our responsibility to advocate for social justice. My view is

that it is very important for us all to be strong advocates for social justice, as individual social workers, as branches of the Association and as a provincial self-regulating profession. Saskatchewan is coming into a windfall of financial resources due to high crude oil prices. Powerful voices will be calling for tax cuts and these voices will have many friends in the media. However we should not be considering reduction in government commitment when thousands of Saskatchewan families continue to live in poverty and when the condition of the housing in Saskatchewan's inner cities is appalling. We, along with others, were able to have some small impact in last spring's provincial budget, but we must continue to look for alliances to keep the pressure on for improved social justice in Saskatchewan.

Tom Seeley, BSW, RSW (SK)

Donations to SASW Scholarship Fund

The SASW Scholarship Fund is now set up to receive charitable donations. This scholarship fund is administered by the South Saskatchewan Community Foundation Inc., a non-profit organization which manages and invests permanent endowment funds and donations. As such, the SASW Scholarship Fund is able to accept donations from:

- individual SASW members
- bequests from estates
- as the beneficiary of life insurance policies
- fund-raising initiatives both at the branch and provincial level
- anyone else who might wish to contribute to the fund

A receipt for income tax purposes will be provided by the South Saskatchewan Community Foundation as appropriate.

Contributions to the SASW Scholarship Fund should be directed to:

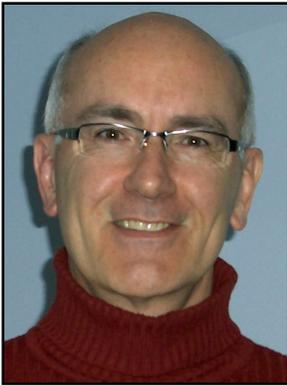
South Saskatchewan Community Foundation
#2 - 2700 Montague Street
Regina, SK S4S 0J9

If you have questions about contributing to the scholarship fund, contact Wain Birch, South Saskatchewan Community Foundation (306) 751-4756.

The SASW Scholarship is awarded each year at the Annual General Meeting in recognition of a student's contribution to her/his community.

Members of the SASW Scholarship Task Team are:
Sandy Vaughan Hastie, Yorkton (306) 786-0588
Liz Newton, Saskatoon (306) 374-8475
Marlene Glettler, Regina (306) 766-2501
Richard Hazel, SASW-Regina (306) 545-9155

Message from the Executive Director



As you will already have seen, this is a special edition of the newsletter with profile on social policy issues. The Social Policy Committee has worked hard to pull together the articles you see beginning on page 22. Members of the committee are Patti Cram and Angela Leski (co-chairs), Nancy Carmichael, Mildred Kerr, David Macknak, Kirk

Englot, Cecil Gooliaff and Brian Howell. Our thanks to the committee.

SASW's golf tournament was held at the Moon Lake Golf and Country Club near Saskatoon on August 26. It was a fine event for all who managed to get the limited spots available. As teams finished their rounds in victorious celebration, there was even a young piper to pipe them off the course. Our thanks to Tracy Muggli and Warren Postlewaite for their amazing organization and hard work, and to all of those deputized to assist in putting the event together. Plan now to attend the 2006 event!

Saskatoon Branch has volunteered to host the 2006 provincial conference at the end of April. Already booked for the conference is Dennis Saleeby, author of the book *The Strengths Perspective in Social Work Practice* (2002). You could mark your 2006 calendars now for the AGM on April 26, with the conference to follow over the next two days.

Speaking of 2006, we have the theme for Social Work Week from CASW. It is "Social Work: Advancing and Strengthening Communities." By now, our branches are into planning events for the week, and we are about to write to the Honorable Joanne Crofford to request that she declare the week for Saskatchewan.

The new *Code of Ethics* (2005) now applies in Saskatchewan. If you've not had a chance to look it over, it would be important that you do so. It can be found on the CASW web site www.casw-acts.ca in the members' section. Marcia Clark from our Practice Ethics Committee and Robert Twigg from our Professional Conduct Committee attended a full orientation and seminar given by Beverley Antle on October 14 and 15. The idea was to ensure that these two committees have what they need to apply the new code in their important work. We are still working with CASW to develop a training session for selected members in each jurisdiction who would then provide briefings or workshops for branch

members, students and others who may have an interest in the code.

A summary on the work of the National Health Interest Group was provided to the Advisory Board on September 23 by Margaret Woloshyn, who is Saskatchewan's representative to this group. Margaret and Tracy Muggli recently sent a letter to our members employed in health settings giving a full update on challenges and opportunities before us in this important area of practice and service. They have invited expressions of interest in gathering for a discussion on options including the formation of an interest group within SASW. A key opportunity for us is to prepare to adequately profile social work in the context of the national project called "Enhancing Interdisciplinary Collaboration in Primary Health Care" (EICP). It is planned that the developmental work that has been done on EICP will begin to roll out across the country early next year. For more information, have a look at the web site at www.eicp-acis.ca.

The registrars and presidents of national social work regulatory organizations met in Montreal in April and in September with representatives from the federal government on the development of a Mutual Recognition Agreement for social workers in Canada. The issue centres around labour mobility and the agreement signed by provincial, territorial and federal governments to ensure the removal of barriers to movement for employment across the country. Given there are differing requirements for registration from one jurisdiction to the other, it is a challenge to find a way to keep the BSW as the point of entry while developing an accommodating mechanism for a registered social worker who does not meet that requirement.

Please keep an eye on the "News/Events" section of the SASW web site. The first of the continuing professional education offerings developed from the partnership between our Education Committee and the Centre for Continuing Education, U of R, is now scheduled.

You may also be interested to know of the recent work done by our Public Relations Committee to raise the profile of social work with insurance carriers as a key option for employee assistance services. To private health insurance benefit plans and unions, the committee has sent letters and packages of information promoting and encouraging that clinical social work services be covered under extended health care plans.

As the festive season approaches, I hope you all have an opportunity to have a break and to reflect on a year of quality professional contribution.

Richard Hazel, MSW, RSW (SK)

Registrar's Message: Information on Registration Renewal for 2006



The deadline for renewing your professional registration is fast approaching.

Registration renewals are due by December 1, 2005. It is necessary to renew on time in order to retain your registered social worker status. The process is three-part:

- Payment of annual fees;
- Completion of the Renewal

Registration Form with required signatures;

- Completion of the Continuing Education Form with required signatures.

Frequently Asked Registration Questions

1. Can I send a post dated cheque?

Yes. Members can attach a post-dated cheque to their registration renewal/continuing education forms. The cheque must be dated for on or before December 1st.

2. Are renewal registration/continuing education forms available on the SASW web site?

Yes. If members have misplaced their pre-printed forms, copies of the forms are available by going to the SASW web site www.sasw.ca and clicking on the tab "Membership." Please ensure that you download the Renewal Registration Forms and the Continuing Education Forms.

3. Can I pay by Credit Card?

No. SASW does not accept credit cards as a method of payment.

4. Can I join the Preauthorized Payment Plan for payment of 2006 registration fees?

No, but members can call the SASW Office to receive forms to start making payments for the 2007 registration year.

5. May I renew over the phone?

No. The SASW Office requires that the registration/continuing education forms be signed by the member and that the payment is attached.

6. Can I fax my forms and send the money?

No. Registrations must be on the original forms and be accompanied by payment.

7. What happens if an individual submits registration between December 2 and December 31?

Registration/continuing education forms are returned to the member with a late penalty being assessed in the amount of \$15. A registration is not valid until the late charge is paid.

8. What happens if an individual submits registration after January 1?

According to Section 24 (4) of *The Social Workers Administrative By-laws*:

"The registrar shall strike the name of any member who has not paid the annual license fee before January 1st in a year from the list of members who are licensed to practice as social workers."

If an individual's name has been removed from the Register, they are no longer registered with the Saskatchewan Association of Social Workers. Section 24 of *The Social Workers Act* (1993), states: "No person other than a member shall engage in the practice of social work by using the title social worker."

Unless the registration is continued, the individual cannot use the title, call or represent themselves as a Social Worker or Registered Social Worker (RSW). There is a \$50 charge to reinstate a membership in addition to the full year of membership fee.

If an individual lets their registration lapse for more than one year, upon reinstating the process is:

- completion of reinstatement application
- submitting current criminal record check
- letter of reference from RSW or current employer
- resume outlining work/volunteer experience
- transcript of marks being sent directly from academic institution where degree was obtained
- payment of the full year of membership fees plus the \$50 reinstatement charge

9. What happens if I do not submit my Continuing Education Forms?

In 2003, the reporting of a minimum of 40 hours of continuing professional education became mandatory for SASW members. Renewal registrations cannot be processed and will be returned to the

continued on page 7

Notice of Registration Renewal, continued

individual until the requirement has been met and the necessary paperwork has been completed.

10. What is the purpose of completing the Continuing Education Forms?

The purpose is to document continuing education activities in such a way that the required hours can be evaluated. Members are required to record continuing education activities over the past year being **as specific as possible** about what activities were undertaken, the name of university classes taken, and/or the names of books/journals which were read, etc. Failure to list activities with specific information will result in the continuing education forms/registration renewal being returned to the member with approval not being granted until the required information is supplied. All continuing professional activities do not need to be listed. A minimum of 40 hours of CPE per year is the requirement. If submitting more than the 40 hours, a minimum of 10 hours to a maximum of 20 hours can be carried over to the next reporting year.

11. What is the 2006 Fee Schedule?

Full-time Membership - \$302

Part-time Membership - \$185

Non-practicing Membership - \$80

Associate - \$70

Student - \$50

12. When will receipts be issued?

- If you are paying by cheque, receipts can be issued once your cheque clears the bank (10 banking days). It is SASW's intent to have all receipts out by December 31.
- Members who have been on the Preauthorized Payment Plan must forward their renewal/continuing education forms before receipts will be issued and once the last payment (December 1) has cleared the bank. If renewal registration forms are received in the SASW Office after December 1, the late/reinstatement charge applies.
- If you are paying in cash/money order, a receipt is issued immediately. Please have the correct amount for payment as the SASW Office may not have change.

13. What are the hours of the SASW Office?

The hours of operation are 8:00 a.m. to 12:00 noon and 1:00 to 4:00 p.m.

Please note that the SASW Office will be closed from December 23, 2005, to January 2, 2006 (inclusive).

Submitted by

J. Rawdon Bieber, BSW, RSW (SK)

New and Reinstated Members

The following individuals applied and were approved for registration as Registered Social Workers with SASW for the period May 5, 2005, to October 11, 2005 (inclusive).

Barlow, Amber
 Carlson, Marnie
 Durocher, Phyllis
 Enns, Karen
 Hamilton, Michele
 Johnstone, Barbara
 Kraus, Dale R.
 Lavalley, Elaine
 Lucyk, Terry
 Prete, Carol
 Rask, Terri-Lynn
 Robertson, Lloyd
 Townsley, Brenda
 Walker, Cristen
 Walker, Karlee
 Weighill, Joanne
 Wiberg, Pamela
 Wiss, Karen

Student Members

The following students made application & were approved as a student member of SASW between May 5, 2005 and October 11, 2005:

Bear, Lois
 Britz, Amanda
 Burkell, Anita
 Charuk, Debra
 Clein, Rebecca
 Courtney, Carole
 Donison, Joanne
 Eveleigh, Shauna
 Neyedley, Bobbi M.
 Pura, Tanis
 Rancourt, Nicole
 Schroeder, Lindsay
 Schuster, Tara
 Sedley, Andrew
 Wood, Jennifer

SASW Speaks Out for Same Sex Marriage

At the Advisory Board meeting in June there was discussion on the need for SASW to be on the record in support of the federal same-sex marriage legislative proposals. After receiving the advice of the members of Advisory Board, Council decided to send a letter to the Prime Minister, with copies to Saskatchewan MPs and to Opposition Leaders. In addition, it was directed that there be a press release to publicize the position that had been taken. Both of these items follow.

In the letter to the Prime Minister, the beginning of the second paragraph references difficulties experienced by those with “committed personal and religious views.” It has been accurately pointed out that there are also those with committed personal and religious views who are in complete agreement with the federal position. It was not the intention of Council to avoid the acknowledgement of this perspective.

Press Release

The Saskatchewan Association of Social Workers (SASW) sent a letter to the Right Honorable Paul Martin expressing its support for the legislation that would legalize the civil marriage of same-sex couples. The profession of social work is premised on a set of values and principles enshrined in its *Code of Ethics* (2005) that speak to equality, acceptance, self-determination and respect of individuality and cultural diversity without

prejudice. It is from this perspective that SASW’s support for this legislation comes.

SASW President Tom Seeley said, “While it is important to respect that some have personal and religious reasons for questioning the proposed legislation, this becomes an issue of basic human rights that needs our careful reflection.” Seeley added, “There is a value statement within the new Code of Ethics for our profession titled *Pursuit of Social Justice* that calls on social workers to oppose prejudice and discrimination against anyone or any group on any grounds. Therefore, the right for opposite-sex partners to commit themselves to each other fully through marriage should be a right shared by partners of the same sex.”

The Saskatchewan Association of Social Workers, a membership association, is one of 10 provincial/territorial associations of social workers belonging to the Canadian Association of Social Workers. The SASW has 1,088 members, of which those in practice are employed in a variety of settings such as community services to children, families and youth, health services, private practice, residential care, and in schools.

The Canadian Association of Social Workers together with the Ontario Association of Social Workers presented a statement of support for recognition of same-sex unions to the House of Commons Standing Committee on Justice and Human Rights on April 11, 2003.



2006 SASW AGM and Provincial Conference

AGM: April 26, 2006

Conference: April 27 & 28, 2006

Centennial Auditorium – Saskatoon, SK

Keynote Speaker: Dr. Dennis Saleeby, DSW, Professor Emeritus,
School of Social Welfare, University of Kansas and
author of “The Strengths Perspective in Social Work Practice, 2002”

Topic: “Practicing the strengths perspective”

Overview:

- A thorough overview of theoretical perspective
- Using the strengths perspective in assessment
- Putting theory into practice in a variety of practice settings

The principles of the strengths perspective are that every individual, group, family and community has strengths; trauma, abuse, illness and struggle may be injurious but they may also be sources of challenge and opportunity; we do not know the upper limits of peoples capacity to grow and change; we best serve clients by collaborating with them; every environment is full of resources, and everyone has the right to be cared for and to care for others.

The strengths perspective is about the revolutionary possibility of hope (Saleeby, 2002).

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OR

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Phone: (306) 655-8864



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Website: www.sasw.ca

"Social Workers - Make A Difference"

June 28, 2005

The Honorable Paul Martin
Prime Minister of Canada
Ottawa, Ontario
K1A 0A2
Email: pm@pm.gc.ca

Dear Mr. Prime Minister:

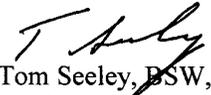
On behalf of the *Saskatchewan Association of Social Workers* (SASW), I am writing to endorse the proposed legislation on same-sex marriage.

You are only too familiar with the challenges and concerns this whole debate has precipitated for those individuals with committed personal and religious beliefs. Our Council and Advisory Board have encountered these concerns in our discussions. However, as a profession we are guided by the values and principles enunciated in our Code of Ethics (2005), and these led us to a position of supporting the legalization of civil marriage for same-sex couples.

In our Code, under the heading "Pursuit of Social Justice" it is stated that "*Social workers...act to reduce barriers and expand choice for all persons, with special regard for those who are marginalized, disadvantaged, vulnerable...Social workers oppose prejudice and discrimination against any person or group of persons, on any grounds, and specifically challenge views and actions that stereotype particular persons or groups*". We also ascribe to a separate set of social policy principles which include a principle on equality: "*Because of the intrinsic worth of every human being, each person shall be treated equally without unfair discrimination on the basis of disability, color, social class, race, religion, language, political beliefs, sex or sexual orientation.*"

On the basis of these values and principles we believe that same-sex partners should have the same option to commit themselves completely to each other that exists for opposite-sex partners.

Sincerely,


Tom Seeley, BSW, RSW (Sask.)
President

cc: Leaders of the Opposition Parties
Saskatchewan Members of Parliament

A Member of The Canadian Association of Social Workers



Depression and the Fight for Inner Space: An Examination of Social Work's Role in Big Pharmacy

“The only sanity worth having is one which, in a deep sense, is a recognition of the madness of contemporary society” (Maguire, 1996, p. 171).

No authority has credibly identified a reason for the West's current epidemic of depression. Social workers, psychologists, sociologists, and scientists speculate, “Is it nature? Is it something in the physical environment? Do economic forces drive a new social construction of depression?” Answers to these questions will likely elude us well into the future. For those living in the West, the question is “What is the point of living in one of the most affluent locations on earth if record numbers of people are chronically depressed?”

Confronting these questions takes us to the underbelly of the West's medical industrial complex, which demonstrates little patience with holistic answers. Instead, the focus on financial gain drives the culture of corporate psychopharmacology that markets chemical solutions to treat depression. As a result, the West is undergoing a pharmaceutical invasion of inner space.

According to DeGrandpre (2005), North American pharmaceutical companies expended much the same on advertising in 2003 (\$25.3 billion) as on research and development (\$33.2 billion).

The CASW addressed this problem in the document *The Role of Social Work in Mental Health* (2001). It is a document that supports this author's argument against the traditional medical model and urges the social work profession to “go beyond the medical model's focus on individual diagnosis.” The social work profession is called upon to deconstruct this approach and focus on depression as potential sociocultural phenomena rather than as individual flaws.

Despite CASW recommendations, many social work agencies respond with budget-wise solution-focused therapy sessions accompanied by psychopharmaceutical referrals. This approach does not expose oppressive structures that influence depression. Consequently, social work is in danger of being labelled a profession that speaks the rhetoric of personal fulfilment and empowerment but not one that challenges a medical industry that milks consumers of millions of dollars. This negates the historical foundation upon which social work was built. That is, the philosophy of assessing individual problems in the context of social influences.

The CASW (2001) asserts that the social work profession is “to look beyond illness and treatment issues [and] consider the broader human, social and political issues in mental health.” Indeed, social workers need to begin collectively questioning rather than passively endorsing the medical model's grip on depressive disorders. In doing so, political activism that challenges structures would not be seen as unprofessional, but would instead be viewed as a compulsory step in identifying sources of externalized oppression. Such a change should be seen as an opportunity to advance the profession and reclaim its commitment to the authentic “promot[ion] [of] social justice” (CASW, 1994).

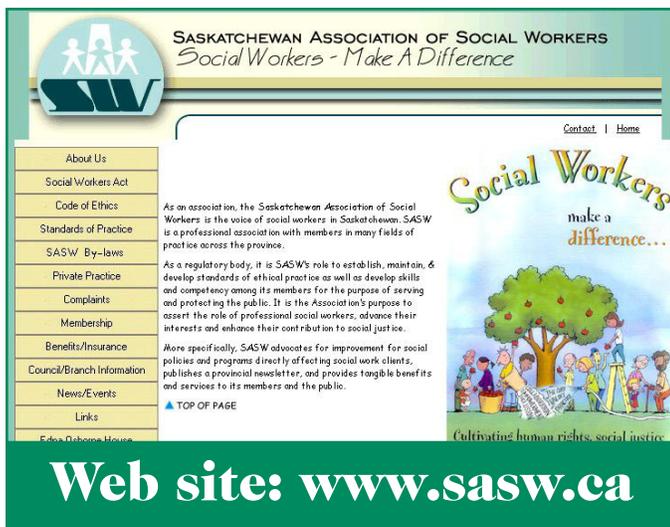
This is a time when reductionist biomedical explanations of depression dominate scientific and therapeutic interpretations. Nonetheless, it is possible to break

continued on page 11



Saskatchewan Agriculture and Food

FARM STRESS LINE
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www.agr.gov.sk.ca/saf/



SASKATCHEWAN ASSOCIATION OF SOCIAL WORKERS
Social Workers - Make A Difference

As an association, the Saskatchewan Association of Social Workers is the voice of social workers in Saskatchewan. SASW is a professional association with members in many fields of practice across the province.

As a regulatory body, it is SASW's role to establish, maintain, & develop standards of ethical practice as well as develop skills and competency among its members for the purpose of serving and protecting the public. It is the Association's purpose to assert the role of professional social workers, advance their interests and enhance their contribution to social justice.

More specifically, SASW advocates for improvement for social policies and programs directly affecting social work clients, publishes a provincial newsletter, and provides tangible benefits and services to its members and the public.

Social Workers make a difference...

Cultivating human rights, social justice

Web site: www.sasw.ca

Depression and the Fight for Inner Space, continued

out of the medical model's grip on depression. This can be accomplished by simply reversing social work's methodological framework. For instance, embracing a socialpsychobio model can reintegrate the language of relationships as a focus when attempting to understand depression. Such a theoretical revolution has great potential to positively impact all areas of social work theory and practice.

It cannot be denied that the biopsychosocial model takes into account several factors. However, it still places the primary responsibility for the problem on clients rather than society. Social work needs to challenge the model's inherent tendency to blame the victim. It is only logical that "individual difficulties are related to systematic dysfunction, and interventions must therefore be directed to the system as well as the individual" (Hepworth, Larson, & Rooney, 2002, p. 39). In essence, a socialpsychobio model would not only reflect a sovereign social work ethos, but it would also give social workers intellectual and practical leverage against a dominant medical model. Confronting the Western way of life, rather than the depressed individuals embedded in it is an urgent task for social work.

In conclusion, no pharmaceutical utopia exists. Only

when social work claims its own assessment model, one that refuses to place biology first, can the medical model be challenged. Until then, clients may never feel truly sane in the insane domain of postmodern values. Now that is something to be depressed about.

Submitted by

Warren Postlewaite, BSW

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LG Personnel
Reed Social Care



CASW Section



Social Work Practice in Child Welfare

Child welfare is considered a special area of practice within the profession of social work, and the principles and values of the social work profession generally fit with policies that guide modern child welfare organizations. In most jurisdictions in Canada, social workers in child welfare agencies have a minimum of a Bachelor of Social Work degree and are registered with a provincial body that holds them accountable for competent and ethical practice.

The mandate of child welfare agencies is to work with the community to identify children who are in need of protection and to decide how best to help and protect those children. A fundamental belief is that government interference in family life should be as minimal as possible, except when parental care is below the community standard and places a child at risk of harm. The major guiding principle is always to act in the best interests of the child.

Social workers in child welfare agencies are involved with the planning and delivery of a variety of services for children and families, such as family support, residential care, advocacy, and adoptions and foster care programs, as well as child protection. The social worker's task is to understand a variety of factors related to the child, the family, and the community and to balance the child's safety and well-being with the rights and needs of a family that may be in need of help. The professional social work judgment involved in these decisions serves children and families well in the great majority of situations, a fact often lost when a case decision becomes the object of intense public and legal scrutiny. As in other professional work, it is difficult never to make a mistake, and most decisions about complex matters involve risks as well as benefits.

The typical referral to a child welfare agency involves a child who is the victim of neglect, not of physical or sexual abuse. Very few children who are known to child welfare agencies are removed from their homes. Social workers in child welfare believe that most children are better served within their own homes, with resources being used to shore up and strengthen families, and removing children from their homes is a measure of last resort. When a child is removed, it is usually for a temporary period with the idea of working

intensively with the family so that the child can return home as soon as his or her safety can be assured. Chronic shortages of resources, however, make this work difficult. When a child is removed and the family's situation poses ongoing risks to that child, the court may decide to remove guardianship permanently from the parent or caregiver. Whether the child is removed temporarily or permanently, a home within the extended family is the preferred placement, but it is frequently necessary to place the child in a foster or adoptive home or in residential care.

Public child welfare agencies have evolved as a result of society's belief that all children have the right to stable homes where they are well cared for and are safe from abuse and neglect. But this cannot be solely the concern of government and those who work in human services. The public is not always aware of the lack of resources for children from impoverished homes who so often end up in the child protection system with concomitant poor success rates in school, poor employment opportunities, and a greater than usual chance of becoming involved in the mental health or corrections system. It is not always easy to convince the voting and taxpaying public that spending on vulnerable young children and their families can save a huge cost down the road. Children need to be a priority not only for governments, but also for the communities in which they live.

Social work in child welfare settings is frequently stressful. Caseloads are often large and there are chronic shortages of needed resources, both within the child welfare system itself and in community agencies that support it. Sometimes social workers experience differences between the demands of the workplace and their own allegiance to the ethics of the social work profession, largely because the systems that employ them can be driven by political and budgetary agendas. Nevertheless, there are many thousands of skilled and ethical professional social workers in Canada who are committed to their work in child welfare agencies and whose efforts have made positive differences in the lives of countless vulnerable children and families.

*from CASW Project
"Creating Conditions for Good Practice"*

Enhancing Interdisciplinary Collaboration in Primary Health Care (EICP) Initiative

What Is Enhancing Interdisciplinary Collaboration in Primary Health Care (EICP)?

The objective of the Enhancing Interdisciplinary Collaboration in Primary Health Care (EICP) Initiative, which is funded by Health Canada's Primary Health Care Transition Fund, is to encourage health professionals to work together in the most effective and efficient way to produce the best health outcomes for clients and providers. The Initiative hopes to attain this objective by developing a shared vision of interdisciplinary collaboration in primary health care and to begin to develop the support for fundamental and effective change in primary health care in Canada that reflects this shared vision.

Several key deliverables will emerge from this initiative in an attempt to meet the purpose and objective. The primary outcome will be the development of principles and an EICP framework. The principles will reflect the shared values that are critical to establishing a primary health care system that promotes collaboration, and the framework will outline the structural elements required to support this primary health care sys-

tem. The principles and framework are based on the two key activities of the initiative: consultations and research. National consultations have occurred with the public, health care providers, government officials, leaders in each profession and relevant experts. Research has been commissioned that explores interdisciplinary practice in primary health care from a national and international perspective.

Who are the Partners?

The EICP Initiative is under the leadership of a Steering Committee that includes representatives from many of the professionals providing front-line care within primary health care settings.

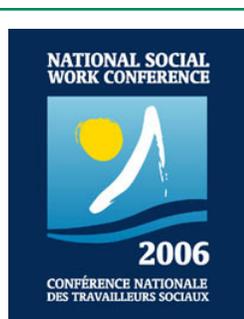
The EICP partners include the following:

- Canadian Association of Occupational Therapists (CAOT)
- Canadian Association of Social Workers (CASW)
- Canadian Association of Speech-Language Pathologists and Audiologists (CASLPA)
- Canadian Coalition on Enhancing Preventative Practices of Health Professionals (CCEPPHP)
- Canadian Medical Association (CMA)
- Canadian Nurses Association (CNA)
- Canadian Pharmacists Association (CPhA)
- Canadian Physiotherapy Association (CPA)
- Canadian Psychological Association (CPA)
- College of Family Physicians of Canada (CFPC)
- Dietitians of Canada (DC)

How is the EICP Initiative Relevant to Social Work? Recent demographic information indicates that social workers are often employed in health care settings. Given the importance of an effective primary health care system to governments at all levels, changes within primary health care are bound to directly or indirectly influence the areas and environments in which social workers practice. **Many of the elements essential for effective interdisciplinary collaboration are core social work values and within social work's basic skill set.**

How Can I Learn More?

The EICP web site provides thorough and up-to-date information on the initiative. The web site provides access to the principles and framework, as well as the outcomes of the national consultations and the commissioned research. Please visit www.eicp-acis.ca, www.casw-acts.ca, or contact your provincial/territorial association to learn more about this initiative.



Transformation: Charting Our Course

Traçons notre voie à l'ère des transformations

The Nova Scotia Association of Social Workers is excited to be hosting the 2006 National Social Work Conference at the Westin Nova Scotian Hotel in Halifax, June 17-20, 2006.

"Transformation: Charting Our Course/Traçons notre voie à l'ère des transformations" provides a framework for exploring the current status of the profession and beginning to establish a direction for the years ahead. We are inviting four plenary speakers to challenge our discussion on these topics. We will have focused workshop and networking opportunities designed to involve practitioners in creating a unified vision for the future and to foster professional resilience. There will be a day that focuses on two themes: children's services and health issues. Social Workers from all areas of practice will be encouraged to present new and innovative practice and community initiatives.

Look for a call for papers in the spring of 2005.

Visit the NSASW web site for further information & updates at www.nsasw.org

Join us in Halifax to participate in shaping your profession's course for the future.

Letter from CASW to Paul Martin

DATE: July 5, 2005
FROM: Canadian Association of Social Workers
joining millions worldwide
TO: The Right Honourable Paul Martin,
Prime Minister of Canada
SUBJECT: Make Poverty History
IMPORTANCE: Highest

Dear Prime Minister Martin:

This week you and your G8 colleagues have the opportunity to make poverty history by delivering crucial changes on trade justice, debt, aid and climate change. As social workers we know the significance of these issues for billions of individuals and families around the world. We see the realities of the current crisis every day. Thank you for putting Africa, climate change and poverty at the top of the G8 agenda.

You and seven other men in Gleneagles can stop a child dying every three seconds. You can stop the policies that create poverty and instead begin to transform the lives of the world's poorest people.

Please use your unique position and influence as G8 host to:

- change the unjust rules of trade, respecting poor countries' rights to decide on trade policies that will help end poverty
- cancel all the debt of all the poorest countries that need it
- deliver at least \$50 billion more in aid each year starting now, and make it work better for people in poverty
- push for action which will protect our planet and ensure sustainable development for all

Attention:

Social Workers in Private Practice

Are you interested in having an opportunity to promote services offered by private practice social workers?

We are interested in your ideas regarding how SASW and private practitioners can educate the public about the work that you do. Please contact Maria Badrock, SASW Public Relations Committee member, with your ideas –(306)244-6637 or email them to innersource@sasktel.net.

Along with millions of others around the world, social workers will be watching to see if the G8 leaders can respond to the realities of the lives of billions and offer hope and practical support. We will keep reminding you of what you must do, wait to see if you deliver and hold our leaders to account.

Now is the time Mr Martin. Please do not squander this moment.

Sincerely,
Eugenia Repetur Moreno S.W., MSW (Equiv.), RSW
Executive Director

CALL FOR SUBMISSIONS

Canadian Social Work

Canadian Social Work, the official journal of the Canadian Association of Social Workers (CASW), reaches social workers throughout Canada and beyond. The journal is published annually in October in on-line format. Where appropriate a special issue or an additional issue is published. *Canadian Social Work* is indexed with Social Work Abstracts and Social Services Abstracts.

Journal Goals

- To provide a forum in which Canadian social workers can share practice knowledge, research and skills, and debate contemporary social work concerns.
- To stimulate discussion of national and regional social policy issues.
- To promote exchange between social workers in different regions and language groups in Canada, the CASW and its member organizations, and Canadian and international social work communities.
- To share information about social work education resources—books, films, videos, conferences and workshops.

We welcome articles that are consistent with the journal's mandate and contribute to the profession's knowledge base. The journal aims to present perspectives that reflect our diversity as a country and as a profession. We are particularly interested in receiving submissions from practitioners and students. All articles are anonymously peer-reviewed.

Articles (2,500 to 5,000 words) can be submitted in either French or English. Manuscripts accepted for publication will be printed in the language in which they were submitted, but the abstract will be translated into the other official language.

An information package for prospective authors is available from the CASW web site (<http://www.casw-acts.ca>) or contact:

Canadian Social Work
Canadian Association of Social Workers
383 Parkdale Avenue, Suite 402
Ottawa, Ontario K1Y 4R4
Phone: (614) 729-6668 Fax: (613) 729-9608
casw@casw-acts.ca



Committee, Branch & Task Team Section

A Day in the Life...

Doris Colson has been a social worker in Saskatchewan for 26 years, during which time she has assumed and enjoyed a variety of professional roles. She has recorded the following snapshot of "a day in the life of an Area Service Manager." Doris currently is employed at the Department of Community Resources and Employment, Child and Family Services, Saskatoon.

- Arrive at work. Note on my door from staff requesting urgent callback regarding a difficult situation from the night before. Return the call to staff. Determine that the children are safe. Appropriate actions were taken.
- Next, arrive just in time for a weekly manager's meeting located upstairs. Get seated just as the meeting comes to order. Agenda is full, including monthly consult with Children's Advocate office, review of regional work plan, discussion of training and budget review. Regular reassessment of financial and program priorities.
- Return to my office. Retrieve telephone messages from the Deputy Minister's office and also, from the parents of the children involved in last night's crisis.
- Gather information to respond to requests for information regarding last night's crisis. Contact supervisor responsible for the area and request that a briefing note be drafted for the Minister's office.
- Return telephone call to concerned parents. Reassure them and begin the process of collaboration with the family to keep the children safe. Ensure that I meet my responsibility on an ongoing basis to be sensitive to community concerns regarding this office's action or perceived "lack of action."
- 10:20 am. Meet one of many community partners to discuss our service agreement and any issues that may have arisen since last meeting. These agencies have made remarkable commitments to provide support to children and families. This is a commitment that is important to nurture and support.
- 11:30 am. Arrive back at office. Complete outstanding financial approvals. Time passes slowly for this task, as the computer is slow. I multi-task by reviewing written drafts, including draft of a child death review that was completed by a supervisor. In the midst of this, I also find myself grieving about the death of a child. This is the most disheartening event that can occur in this

work. The review of actions taken, trauma that impacts the entire organization and need to access Critical Incidence Stress Debriefing is part of my responsibility. I experience this, along with the cumulative events of my role, on both a personal and professional level.

- Check voice-mail. Return several messages addressing Legal Services issues, a Cognitive Disabilities strategy, a new joint initiative that the Province is launching, and the development of this month's agenda from an employee co-chair of the Union Management Committee.
- Lunch. Forgot it at home. Eat an apple left from another day. While eating my apple, prepare for meeting on file compliance. Exciting process, but comprehensive and time-consuming.
- 1:15. Meet with staff and supervisor to resolve outstanding conflict. This part of my role accesses my skills as a social worker, including the need to be an active listener, a sounding board, a mediator, and to achieve resolution to conflict.
- By 2:30 p.m., we have reached agreement on most of the issues and have developed a follow-up plan, including a review meeting in two weeks.
- Answer a number of e-mails from staff, central office consultants, other managers, and a variety of committee members.
- 3:00 p.m. Attend weekly protection supervisor's meeting. The purpose is to ensure consistency and good communication between work units. Also, the problem of recruitment and retention is discussed.
- Return to my office and a "Place of Safety Designation" document that requires my signature.
- Spend the next hour developing proposals regarding several new initiatives for which I am responsible.
- 5:30 Leave the office for the day to Attend Annual General Meeting Barbecue at the Core Neighborhood Youth Co-op. As I do so, I reflect on the multiple challenges I faced today and know that I will do so daily. I am often pulled in a variety of directions. To be an effective leader, I need to be positive and to act as a role model to help to create a healthy work place. The focus should be on solutions, not problems. I look forward to meeting these and other challenges as I continue in this role as a social worker. Today was fulfilling. I look forward to tomorrow.

Doris Colson, BSW, RSW (SK)



Faculty of Social Work Section

Message from the Dean

Greetings from the Faculty of Social Work at the beginning of the 2005-06 academic year. We have had an excellent start to this year in that there is a strong and robust number of BSW students in our undergraduate classes in Regina, Saskatoon, Prince Albert, Yorkton, Moose Jaw and Whitehorse, in addition to students in on-line courses. We, in the Faculty of Social Work, are always excited about the enthusiasm and commitment of all our undergraduate students because each student brings something to the program that improves our BSW degree. This year we are especially excited about the cohort of BSW students in Prince Albert. We have developed this cohort approach to the BSW program to organize the completion of all courses over the next two years. We hope this cohort will contribute to more social work students being interested in rural and northern opportunities. We will monitor this approach to the BSW degree, with the support of the Centre for Continuing Education and the office of the Associate Vice President (Student Affairs), to determine if another cohort could be accepted for September 2006. We have had excellent student orientation sessions in Regina, Saskatoon and Prince Albert to help students begin to develop a social work identity. Several SASW members contributed to these sessions and encouraged students to become members of the Association. We hope this will lead to greater student involvement in SASW during the coming year. Certainly, there seems to be increased interest in Social Work on behalf of undergraduate students so this augers well for the continuing growth of the profession in Saskatchewan.

We are also pleased about our MSW program for the coming year. We have just admitted 20 MSW students to our graduate program so there are now approximately 65 students in the MSW program.

We are also excited about the number of graduates that we will have at Fall Convocation this year. There will be 16 BSW graduates, 20 BSW graduates, 13 CISW graduates, and 5 MSW graduates. This group of gradu-

ates will contribute significantly to improved social conditions for people in Saskatchewan and to the strength of our profession.

I am also very pleased to report that we have hired two professors in term positions in the Faculty of Social Work in Regina: Margi Hollingshead and Donald Halabuza. We have also hired Raven Sinclair in a 50% tenure-track position for our Saskatoon Community Education Centre program. Each of these colleagues will make significant contributions to our teaching, research and administrative work in the Faculty of Social Work this year. We also have the honour of having two professors of Social Work from Shandong University in China visiting us for the fall term: Zhongming Ge and Shengli Cheng. They will be interacting with faculty, staff and students in formal (teaching one course each; making public presentations; attending faculty and staff meetings; among other activities) and informal ways. This is a great opportunity for our students to have the benefit of social work insights from China. We are very excited to have each of these five colleagues with us in the Faculty of Social Work as they will enrich our programs.

We also have several interesting and exciting initiatives that will link the Faculty of Social Work and SASW this year. We now have a mentoring program that links students and social workers in Saskatoon and Regina. We are continuing to offer workshops on issues related to supervising students in practicum settings in Regina, Saskatoon, Prince Albert and Yorkton. We look forward to co-hosting activities in Social Work Week with SASW branches in Regina, Saskatoon and Prince Albert. We are also working together to organize the SASW annual provincial conference to be held in Saskatoon in April 2006. And, naturally, we will continue to serve on various SASW committees in the interests of contributing to the excellent work of the Association.

In closing, I would like to say, as I have said before in these messages, that it is a pleasure to be working with all of you in the interests of improving and expanding the social work profession in Saskatchewan. It is great to work with the SASW Council on many of the above issues. We look forward to continuing to work together to promote the excellent social work practice, research, education and policy we are doing in Saskatchewan.

Submitted by

Michael MacLean – Dean, Faculty of Social Work

Field Instructor Training

Saskatoon

January 27, February 17, and March 17, 2006

Prince Albert

April 21, May 19, and June 16, 2006

To register for either class, contact:

Darlene Chalmers at (306) 664-7379

Indian Social Work Program Report

Tansi!

I am providing recent information on the Indian Social Work Program with First Nations University of Canada, Saskatoon Campus. I would like to begin with the following from our vision statement, "we treasure our collective values of wisdom, respect humility, sharing, harmony, beauty, strength and spirituality.... The Elders teach us to respect the beliefs and values of all nations." Statements such as this are important when discussing the role of an organization, its spirit and objectives. These provide the necessary foundation in letting people know what the organization stands for and they articulate for the agency's personnel the values, objectives and outlook that should be adopted if individuals choose that organization as a place to work or volunteer. This statement draws an abstract comparison to the depiction a few years ago that the Saskatchewan Association of Social Workers used as a graphic to portray on their documents and posters. It showed children gathered around a hole. Within the hole was a bridge that was constructed to assist individuals to cross a gulf. This bridge symbolized the roles and influences that social workers had on the lives of people. It sent a stronger message of community since various ethnic groups were represented and all seemed to be working together for a common good.

The Indian Social Work Program (ISW) of First Nations University of Canada views itself in this fashion. It

is the intent of the ISW to maintain a community that is represented by various groups. Our Elders and the traditional teachings refer to it as the four directions that include, red, white, yellow and black peoples. The programs that ISW provides reflect this inclusivity and stress the importance of women and their contribution to each of us as human beings.

These values and traditions were reflected in an article published recently by *The Fort Qu'Appelle Times*. A reporter from the *Times* visited the undergraduate ISW Culture Camp held on Standing Buffalo Reserve in July of this year. The *Times* article is dated Tuesday, August 2, 2005, and was titled "Native traditions learned at cultural camp." It speaks to a program that offers a variety of classes specifically on culture and tradition and that respects other Nations.

As First Nations University moves more deeply into the new academic year there are various challenges. They include expanding the variety of classes offered to students, an increased enrolment and enhancing relationships with stakeholders that include other institutions.

First Nations University values our Elders and we look to them for leadership, ceremony and continued development of our students and the upcoming generations. This is accomplished by meeting the collective requirements of academics, ceremony and tradition.

*Submitted by
Cakvin Redman, MSW*

Field Instructor Training

We are very excited about the response to the training and support we are providing field instructors in Saskatchewan. In partnership with SASW, the Faculty of Social Work has initiated the delivery of three training modules to include: Feedback and Evaluation, Ethics and Professional Boundaries, and Theories, Perspectives and Models in Social Work practice. In the past year, the following individuals received certificates of completion of the Field Instructor training.

Fall 2004 (Regina)

Kim Annesley	Trina Kennedy
Joanne Durst	Jim Kleckner
Dave Gibson	Myrna Machin
Gisela Hall	Michelle Marce
Shirley Hall	Sandra Pfeifer
Kyla Habicht	Kelly Stankewich
Faye Huggins	Shelley Stulberg
Dawn Jacobs	Brenda Townsley

Winter 2005 (Saskatoon)

Brenda Andreas	Ashraf Mir
Kim Barnes	Judy Panko
Deborah Bryson-Sarauer	Val Pottle
Michelle Buglas	Bob Pringle
Tammy Hankel	Bernadette Prokopetz
Annette Kinal-Charpentier	Herb Schmidt
Margo Kirzinger	Maureen Walker
Lori Lefavivre	Victoria Walton
Chris Mayhew	Helen Bzdel

Spring (Yorkton)

Laurie Blahay	Ardyth Natrasony
Marg Harper	Wanda Nelson
Rhonda Hawkins	Kim Rumball
Rita Herperger	Rick Yachiw
Dennie Hughes	

*Submitted by
Myrna Pitzel, MSW, RSW (Sask.)*



Family Tree Section

Hazel Berg



It is very humbling to see that you may have helped others, even in a very small way.

(Hazel Berg, August, 2005)

Hazel Berg graciously contributed to the final edits and granted approval of this edition of the Family Tree Section. At one point during this collaboration, Hazel seemed to vanish from the scene altogether. When she contacted me again, it was after her return from the Metis Wagon Trek near Turtleford, which was en route from Batoche to northern Alberta. Those first few contacts were, therefore, intriguing. What followed was the opportunity to know Hazel Berg as a dedicated social worker, a dynamic woman, and adventurous spirit.

Hazel was born at Kinistino Union Hospital and raised in the Fort a la Corne District. This is the historical location of the first gardens in the area and is near the Hudson Bay post on the banks of the North

Saskatchewan River. She attended grade school in the one-room Fort a la Corne School and attended RJ Humphry High School also at Kinistino. Hazel accessed university classes at surrounding regional colleges over a span of years. She lived on a small mixed farm throughout her childhood and was nurtured by a large network of extended family members.

This same support network now nurtures her children.

Hazel reflects, “My father attended boarding school for all his elementary school years and then he joined the army and served in Europe during WW II.” She describes her grandmothers with affection. One grandmother, Isabella Ducharme (nee Sanderson), was from the James Smith Cree Nation-Chacastapasin Band. The other grandmother, Mary Sauve (nee Seeseequasis) was from the Beardy and Okemasis First Nation. Hazel describes these women as particularly strong individuals. “They were very religious women in the Roman Catholic and Anglican faiths respectively. They also practiced and participated in Aboriginal traditional ceremonies. This included relying on traditional knowledge for medicine and healing,” she explains. Often, her grandmothers incorporated traditional healing and support with large doses of humour “many times each day.” The relationship with her grandmothers remains a powerful guiding force in her life. She stresses that her grandmothers “were consistently supportive of our growth into responsible, educated and upstanding citizens. My family and my extended families experienced great financial hardship. However, they did not allow this to deter their strong resolve to make a living and to raise children with good moral character and to be very resourceful in achieving the best in life.”

“Grandma Isabella was a dedicated community worker especially during illness and at funerals. Grandma Mary was a resourceful worker—gardening, sewing, picking wild berries (even in the rain), and planting and digging other people’s potatoes to make a buck. Grandma Mary and her husband had a general store at Montreal Lake across the lake from the First Nation when my mother was a child,” she adds. “Given that my grandmothers extended to me a great deal of patience which

continued on page 19

It is time to thank those who have offered valuable feedback about this feature. Please continue to do so.

Life lived as a social worker in Saskatchewan is unique, not only because we share the experience of work and practice in the same province, but also because the essence of each individual’s personal history (including culture, race, gender, ability, sexual orientation and age) coalesces with professional practice. The result is great and rich diversity in our SASW Family Tree.

Thank you everyone for reminding us that the essence of the SASW membership is such that “the whole is greater than the sum of its parts.”

Brenda Stinson, MSW, RSW (SK)

Hazel Berg, continued

always included warmth, caring, and gentle guidance, I want to provide this to my grandchild Jada and any other grandchildren that come my way. My grandparents and parents were committed to setting good examples. They knew they could not make decisions for us or live our lives, but were always there to provide support while passing on the values of their forefathers. As I reflect on this, I realize that they were adept at minimizing negative behaviour while actively encouraging positive behaviour. They intuitively practiced what is now recognized as good parenting practices. They spent as much time as possible with their family and children. This included having picnics in the field when the men were working. It wasn't until I was married that I learned that this wasn't always the way things are done. My mother-in-law did not drive, so then it was not so easy to get together in such a way."

"During my single years," Hazel explains, "I travelled to Europe (England, France, Holland, and Morocco), Ethiopia, and the Canary Islands. In the USA, I have been to California, Nebraska, and both North and South Dakota. I have spent time with my brother in Kansas (who is wheelchair-bound), Colorado, Wyoming, and Montana. During those times, I developed a broader worldview and interest in current events. I developed an enhanced appreciation of life in Canada despite the deficiencies regarding Aboriginal peoples. I also learned to appreciate my family, financial security and the fundamental freedom to travel, to enjoy learning, and to experience first hand how people live in different parts of the world."

Regarding the choice of social work as a career, Hazel states that she read about social work in high school but did not think it was an option because of financial barriers. The supernumerary program provided the opportunity she needed to become a social worker and to take the required training on the job while getting a degree off campus. She describes this as an "excellent fit as I enjoyed work from the beginning." She adds, "There were great role models and teachers who provided guidance. This included social workers that were supervisors and the Regional Director. I have enjoyed many roles, including helper, cultural liaison, and facilitator. The work of supporting families and nurturing them to be strong and help themselves is rewarding and challenging since it often involves very difficult and delicate situations." Although many social work tasks are the same, the richness and rewards for Hazel were in developing relationships with families. Many of these relationships now involve more than one generation of the same family.

Hazel has begun to work on a Master of Social Work degree. She completed a BSW in May 2000 (University of Regina) and currently is Child and Family Services Supervisor for the Kinisten and Yellow Quill communities, Saskatoon Tribal Council. She supervises three staff on site and three staff located at the main office as part of the team in the program development and delivery of Family Services and Child Care Programs. Hazel is the Saskatchewan representative for the CASW Aboriginal Social Workers Interest Group formed this year.

Hazel has three children (Jake, 22 years; Beth, 20 years; Marc, 18 years). She is also blessed with one granddaughter (Jada Sky Berg, 6 months). A niece, Melissa (22 years old), has resided with Hazel's family part of every year of her life and lives with Hazel currently. Melissa's youngest brother also lives with Hazel's family some of the time. Her other niece and nephew, Donna and Bradley, have resided in Hazel's home for brief periods (their mother is deceased). Hazel particularly enjoys spending time with the children and enjoys cooking for the family. When asked what she would want her granddaughter to read in this article, Hazel replied, "My hopes and dreams for my granddaughter are that she will have many happy experiences, that she is able to learn and understand the world, make the most of her life, and develop her potential. I want her to know it is possible to dedicate oneself to work that is rewarding and enjoyable."

To relax, Hazel listens to the music of Luciano Pavarotti. Her favorite movies are *Out of Africa* and *Bridges of Madison County* with Meryl Streep. She loves growing perennials and houseplants. Her love of gardening includes growing a variety of orchids. Hazel also comments that she has had the usual pets, but after travelling to the Canary Islands, she "took the fancy of owning a parrot." As a result, she has had two parrots—a blue and gold macaw called McGraw and a little African Grey called Piper.

Reference:

Personal Communication. Hazel Berg (August-September, 2005)

HealthLine, Saskatchewan

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Resource Box Section

Supporting Social Interaction in Small Communities

Despite the fact that Saskatchewan celebrated our centennial this year, many small towns are faced with closures and need to adapt. But when changes have to be made, that is when battle lines can get drawn. The resources this month include *Empty Houses*, a book by Mike Jones, who is not a social worker. Mike, a member of the United Church clergy, realized there is little written to help organizations close down or amalgamate in a healthy way. Mike can be reached at tmkjones@telus.net or at (403) 257-0644. I believe that beyond social engineering, social policy, and individual support/therapy, social workers have a communal professional concern to assist small communities with issues of empowerment, and help make a difference in some of these struggling communities. Not everyone may agree with me, but I believe every social worker is called to do some *pro bono* work, to help small communities to find ways to adapt and maintain a changed style of community. In Saskatchewan “community” is what we are all about.

People are not always cooperative when facing downsizing. In Pleasantdale, the local Legion didn't want the farmers coming into their hall with mud on their boots. So the Pleasantdale United Church set up a daily coffee club in their basement. Ironically these older residents have to struggle with stairs, because some other organization doesn't want to wipe up some dirt. But given there is no longer a café in town, one group is providing the means of connection and socialization.

The Abbeyfield Society of Prince Albert the second Abbeyfield House in Saskatoon. Abbeyfield Houses provide supportive living for seniors, not nursing or

personal care, but provides the most important health factor for elderly people—fellowship, community and on-going friendships. A house manager promotes social interaction, prepares two meals a day and has their own personal suite within the House. There are many schools, churches, and other organizations being abandoned in small towns, which have the necessary water and sewer infrastructures, and are adjacent to good paved all-weather roads which could allow people to live in a small community, but not be more than a half hour from medical health centre or hospital services. Schools can be upgraded for energy conservation and various grants and community initiations can give these buildings, often less than 20 years old, another 20 to 30 years of being supportive living communities. I would challenge rural communities to look at providing such services in their community. Abbeyfield Society of Canada (www.AbbeyfieldCanada.ca), a non-profit group, focuses on seniors having individual personal suites, but living also in community, with supportive services which allow them to remain in areas that they likely lived in.

Abbeyfield is a clear alternate to the profit-oriented corporate sector which has begun to take over in Saskatchewan. These corporate groups tend to charge much higher costs, and do not always provide as comfortable or spacious living accommodation.

The second resource book is *The Tyranny of Niceness—Unmaking the Need For Approval* (2005) by Evelyn Sommers, a Canadian psychologist (Hounslow Books, an imprint of Dundurn Press, Toronto. ISBN 1-55002-558-9, \$24.99).

Nice can be a very nasty word. To act nice to someone when you don't feel that way is being nasty. To be nice when you don't mean it is to be a hypocrite and liar. To be nice because you are afraid to be anything else is to allow other people to control you. I see this as a critical book for everyone who wants to be in charge of their own mental health and social destiny.

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This column needs suggestions and input from you. If you discover a good resource, whether in print or on the Internet, please advise me (petergrif@sasktel.net) so I can include it in future newsletters. Brief guest evaluations of resources are also appreciated.

Supporting Social Interaction in Small Communities, continued

It points out how we are often conditioned from childhood, especially women, to take on responsibility for other people by being nice, or saying nothing when we should be speaking up for ourselves.

The silence of niceness can occur in many ways. Some people believe they can't say no to a request. Of course they can, but they don't believe they can or have the right to say no. People know they are overextended, but don't step down or resign from some of their responsibility because it wouldn't be "the nice thing" to do. After all, who else would do that work or chair that committee or do what has to be done. Yet, if a person does it when it is harming them, what good results? If they don't do it and nobody else is willing to do it, what happens? It doesn't get done. But the world likely will not fall apart. People who need approval often are their own worst enemies. They forget to take care of themselves at a time when this is exactly what they need to do.

Sommers's book is the first book I have found that focuses on this tyranny of niceness, that points out its deadly power when people choose being nice over being honest and true to themselves. I will be exploring some of Sommer's eye-opening ideas and perspectives in my columns for the next few weeks which will be posted each week on my web site.

The Anger Education Program

In December 2004 I mentioned an anger education program I had developed which avoids the negative reaction to "Anger Management"—nobody is going to tell me what to do. It focuses on what the individual, man, woman or youth can learn about themselves. It is delivered in small groups of six to eight persons, and to all female or male groups only. Pilot programs with women showed major improvement. Rather than overwhelm people, often with limited vocabulary or grammar with too many concepts at once,

the program has twelve sections. The outline to the course is posted on my website. User friendly communication such as "us," "we," and "I," rather than "you" or "you should" was used, and feedback from northern Saskatchewan communities and aboriginal and non-aboriginal groups has been positive. In the north some facilitators are considering putting the material on a CD or DVD with an aboriginal voice-over to help people recognize the principles and ideas in their language of origin.

A Personal Note

I believe columnists need to be honest with people about what is happening to them. Five years ago I made a full recovery from prostate cancer, and encouraged all men at age 40 and over to get a baseline PSA from their family doctor. However I recently found that undifferentiated prostate cancer cells can slip under the radar of a PSA test. I am now on chemotherapy for a major tumour. I hope for the best and believe I will control, if not lick this health challenge. I will continue as the Resource Box editor and write my newspaper columns which are posted to my internet site www.sasktelwebsite.net/petecope and deal with e-mail consultations.

*Contributed by
Peter Griffiths, MSW, RSW (SK)*



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Leadership in Human Services MSW (Distance Learning)



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Special Edition Section

SOCIAL POLICY ISSUES

Presented by the SASW Social Policy Committee

New Income Security Policy Initiatives

Just after the provincial budget was released this spring the SASW Social Policy Committee met with policy officials from the Department of Community Resources and Employment (DCRE) to learn more about policy changes that have been made to Saskatchewan Income Security Program delivery. Our intention in this article is to provide a basic overview of the income support programs that now exist alongside the Saskatchewan Assistance Plan and to look at some of the changes introduced in this fiscal year.

The Building Independence Program is based on eight specific programs as well as other initiatives in the areas of housing, career services and child care.

- The Saskatchewan Employment Supplement is an income supplement paid to families which supplements income from wages, self-employment and child and spousal maintenance payments.
- Family Health Benefits extend health benefits to children of working poor families.
- The Saskatchewan Child Benefit is included with the National Child Benefit Supplement.
- The Saskatchewan Rental Housing Supplement is a rental supplement made available to individuals with physical disabilities and families that fall under a maximum income level.
- The Provincial Training Allowance supports individuals who are upgrading their education or skills.
- Child day care subsidies provide significant subsidies to lower income families who are working or attending school.
- Employment support for persons with disabilities provides career counselling and employment supports for persons with disabilities.
- The Transitional Employment Allowance (TEA), provides short term financial support to employable social assistance applicants

While there were many policy and program delivery changes announced for May 1, 2005, one of the most significant policy changes has been the expansion of the TEA Program. This new direction of the department essentially changes the way income security benefits

have historically been administered in Saskatchewan. It basically divides income security policy into two streamlines—TEA is administered to individuals who are expected to attach to the labour market within one year, while SAP is available to those who are assessed as having long term disabilities or other factors that may limit the ability to compete in the labour market without longer term supports or interventions.

One feature of the flat rate TEA is a set of restrictions on the allowances that are provided. While TEA benefits are technically equivalent to SAP benefits the most significant difference is the lack of extra supports available. For instance, there is no consideration for special needs such as excess shelter, special diet, monthly household advances or wage exemption. Most significantly, utility benefits are much more limited. Under SAP utilities are paid directly to the utility company for the actual cost. TEA flat rate administration does not take into account the actual cost of the utility and is attached to an individual's monthly benefit and capped at a maximum (*i.e.*, Energy is capped at \$70 as a base amount, with an additional \$15 per family member and a maximum of \$130).

While DCRE has assured our committee that the TEA program will not result in a loss of income to individuals there is some evidence to suggest that this will not be the case in every situation.

Many of the policy developments introduced by DCRE have the potential for strength, especially when one considers the array of supports available to an individual even after he or she has attachment to an earned income. There is, however, much work to be done in addressing issues around adequacy, as well as the maintenance of Income Security programming as an effective response to the realities of wider social and economic conditions. It is essential that income security programming is responsive and effective in ensuring an adequate social safety net in Saskatchewan.

Submitted by

Kirk Englot, BSW, RSW (SK)

Brian Howell, BSW, RSW (SK)

New Look of Income Assistance in Saskatchewan

Social assistance (welfare) programming in Saskatchewan has undergone important and significant shifts in benefits and eligibility requirements since the end of the national cost-shared Canada Assistance Plan (CAP) in 1996. The CAP program was replaced with the Canada Health and Social Transfer (CHST) program, which ended in April 2004. The CHST program included block funding to participating provinces for health care, post-secondary education and welfare funding with some related social services. Health funding and programming was removed from the CHST, with post-secondary education and welfare funding now operating under the Canada Social Transfer (CST) program. Important changes to welfare in Saskatchewan have occurred since the introduction of the CHST, as it has in all Canadian provinces. In Saskatchewan the changes have occurred under a program titled the Building Independence program introduced in 1997.

The welfare funding and program changes initiated under the Building Independence program have been ushered in mostly through changes to welfare program Regulations rather than changes to the *Saskatchewan Assistance Act*. Introducing changes to Regulations rather than Acts cloaks the shifts in policy direction since Cabinet approves changes to Regulations. Changes to Acts require introduction of legislation within the Legislature, which opens an arena of greater public scrutiny of the proposed changes.

The first phase of restructuring welfare in the province saw the introduction of eligibility for benefits or level of benefits for children tied to the labour force attachment of their parent(s). Examples of employment-tested programs in Saskatchewan include the Saskatchewan Child Benefit and the Saskatchewan Employment Supplement. The second major shift in welfare programming in Saskatchewan occurred with the creation of a separate welfare program with its own Regulations called Transitional Employment Allowance (TEA). The TEA program was for applicants deemed to be employable or those who would be on welfare for only a short period of time. Ongoing recipients of TEA were transferred to the provincial welfare program (SAP) after three to four months. Applicants and recipients of the TEA program received fewer financial benefits than recipients of SAP.

The latest restructuring of welfare in Saskatchewan occurred in May 2005, with TEA becoming the program most applicants for welfare will now qualify for includ-

ing those not able to work at the time of application and disabled people. New applicants and recipients of the TEA program will remain on that program for an indefinite period of time. As well as fewer financial benefits under the TEA program, a major policy shift has been the introduction of flat rate utility payments for applicants and recipients.

Additionally, the Department of Community Resources and Employment (Social Services) have introduced the new Rental Housing Supplement (RHS) program. This program will supply a monthly benefit to low-

The first phase of restructuring welfare in the province saw the introduction of eligibility for benefits or level of benefits for children tied to the labour force attachment of their parent(s).

income families who rent their accommodation. The receipt of payment of this benefit is dependent upon the condition of the rental property. If the rental accommodation is deemed to be substandard, then the low-income family will not receive this benefit. A subsidy program exists under the Saskatchewan Housing Corporation to help property owners improve the condition of their rental property. There are no checks and balances within the RHS program to prevent property owners from increasing their rents and absorbing the benefit provided to low-income tenants.

Social workers need to be aware of the additional burden and stress the poorest and most vulnerable citizens are experiencing while the province of Saskatchewan continues to erode their benefits.

*Contributed by
Dr. Garson Hunter, Director, Social Policy
Research Unit, Associate Professor, Faculty of
Social Work, University of Regina, and
Kathleen Donovan, Assistant Professor, Faculty of
Social Work, University of Regina*

Dr. Hunter and Professor Donovan have written an in-depth paper on the current changes to welfare programming in Saskatchewan. The paper is titled "Transitional Employment Allowance, Flat Rate Utilities, Rental Housing Supplements and Poverty in Saskatchewan; Occasional Paper #20," and it is available from the Social Policy Research Unit, Faculty of Social Work, U of R.

What Is “Social Policy” and How Is It Intertwined with Social Work?

Citizens of a country expect protections in war and in want. The UN Social and Economic Charter measures a country’s responses to citizens at risk from loss of ability to be self-sufficient from effects of war, of aging, of illness, of disability, of desertion, of unemployment, of incarceration, of lack of education, or of training or—if they are children—of all of these. Social needs warrant social policy legislation to be enacted in a democracy. In total, they make up the social contract between a government and its people. When the social contract is broken, countries receive censure because of the effects of forced migration, hunger, diseases, illiteracy, and crime.

Theologies of most religions uphold human interdependency, and the social contract comes forward from these beliefs. Canadian social policy work grew out of social gospel responses and lobbying by churches for the groups cited above. So did our profession. Our training and skill development reflect these areas of social responsibility. Social workers have historically led in identifying, organizing, designing and lobbying for specific social justice legislation, and in monitoring the effectiveness of each for our clients. Our code of ethics expects activism, but the codes of lawyers, doctors, nurses and other professions call them to social policy advocacy as well, so we are not alone in this. Every school of social work has required social policy classes that prepare us for this responsibility to social policy development and for community development work to build alliances that will support meeting the needs of our client groups.

The most politically popular legislated policies benefit the majority: old age pension is universally paid at age 65; Medicare; universal education, K-12; access to post secondary education or training. But beneficiaries—or those in need because they are not able to work, whether disabled by war, work, illness, or by barriers to learning—are all subjected to tight policy controls and to the risk of bureaucratic disenfranchisement.

From left wing to right wing, voters align themselves from redistributive spending to protection from the tax burdens of social spending. Taxation hurts low income earners more than high income earners, but even resource revenue taxation receives the left to right taxpayer responses if this revenue is targeted to social spending.

First world countries are now at risk of renegeing on the social contract because of the political pressure from

economic globalization. Welfare has, in fact, become increasingly absent from debate during elections. Federal government maintains control over the lucrative insurance policies like Employment Insurance and Canada Pension, despite the constitutional division of powers. The Canada Social Transfer Act replaced fifty-fifty cost sharing with the provinces for all three areas of health, education and welfare spending. Accountability measures for just distribution have been eroded under the CST, though the federal government kept specific accountability measures for Medicare only.

Many politicians and human resources policy designers, both federally and provincially, have usurped the language of just social policy. For example: “Labour force attachment enables equal participation as citizens and builds self-esteem.” The language of the Building Independence Program leaves out the fallout from deepening poverty and eroded social entitlement. The government’s own brochure states that the program “began the process of fundamentally redefining the social assistance program.” (Garson Hunter and Kathleen Donovan, Occasional Paper #20, University of Regina Social Policy Research Unit, December 2005). Hunter and Donovan’s analysis accurately predicts the findings of Carmen Dyck’s research with past clients of the Transitional or TEA Program for the Saskatoon Anti-Poverty Coalition.

Social work standards or measures will determine if a social policy is being adequately delivered when funding enables fair administrative feasibility, is equally accessible wherever a client lives, and there is equity, fairness, and treatment with dignity for all citizens who are eligible under each program. Those who do not qualify have the legal right to appeal because programs have been designed with those in need of the program democratically involved in the design. Accountability for effective outcome is to the beneficiaries, our clients, as well as to the taxpayers.

In 2002 and 2003, the National Association of Poor People (NAPO), a coalition of advocacy groups, convinced the United Nations to censure Canada’s treatment of its poorest citizens. Bonnie Morton from the Regina Anti-Poverty Ministry was NAPO’s spokesperson. While CASW, SASW, CCSD and the National Council of Welfare serve as advocates for citizens in poverty, they do not offer the activism that NAPO needs to convince taxpayers of the social cost of renegeing on our social contract.

*Submitted by
Mildred Kerr, BSW, RSW (SK)*

Off Welfare—Now What?

Research Findings of the Saskatoon Anti-Poverty Coalition

“You can’t sit and not do something, but you do have those days where you’re just like, I’m tired of worrying, tired of trying. I’m just not going to try for a while. I’ll pretend it’s not there, but it’s always there the next day. But somebody’s got to leave the house....”

The Saskatoon Anti-Poverty Coalition is a group of concerned citizens and organizations dedicated to addressing the root causes and effects of poverty. The Coalition formed in October 2000 in response to changes to income assistance policy under the auspices of the Department of Social Services, now Department of Community Resources and Employment (DCRE).

The Saskatoon Anti-Poverty Coalition met with community members to address concerns about the shift from welfare to labour force attachment programs and asked the question, “What is the impact on quality of life for people who participate in labour force attachment programs?” More specifically, the Coalition was interested in the extent to which participation in the Jobs First and Transitional Employment Allowance Program affected economic status and overall sense of health and well being. Under the new model, success is measured by reduction in numbers of Saskatchewan citizens accessing social assistance. However, quality of life for citizens leaving

social assistance is less certain. One of the common concerns was in relation to the focus on labour force attachment. To answer this question, the Saskatoon Anti-Poverty Coalition studied the impact on a sample group of people who have experienced this shift.

At a Coalition Meeting, members discussed their concern over changes in Social Service policy. One of the common concerns was in relation to the focus on “labour force attachment.” This prompted additional research, resulting in several participant stories. For example, one interview participant had been through three job training programs. He had difficulty getting to his appointments because he lived in a rural area. He also suffered from mental health issues so sometimes had difficulties coping in general. Another participant received social assistance and wanted to access Provincial Training Allowance (PTA). She wanted to improve her level of education and not have the stigma of being on “assistance,” but felt it was the same type of “hoop-jumping” she experienced under the Social Assistance program. One mother, who had two of her own children, plus foster children wanted to access money from social services because she did not have enough money to look after her family. Also, one of her foster children was a special needs child and needed a specific diet and care. This child’s social worker informed the foster mom that she wasn’t entitled to any money because she was already receiving money for the foster children and was not reporting money she earned from babysitting. She had to baby-sit for other people to make some extra money.

Many of the interview participants expressed their frustration with paperwork, misinformation, and social workers that provided inaccurate information or withheld pertinent information about access to money that may have been available to them. They all experienced difficulty completing the process of providing information to be considered for any kind of social assistance, job training or otherwise. Some participants became so frustrated with the process that they claimed **“anything is better than having to go through welfare again.”** In *Social Assistance in the New Economy* (SANE), Herd and Associates (2003) define this phenomenon as “bureaucratic dis-entitlement.” Rather than receiving assistance based on need, people are denied welfare through bureaucratic dis-entitlement. For example, they may be unable to supply all information requested or they are discouraged by the difficult and drawn-out application process (2003) also have documented in a Canadian welfare reform initiatives that social welfare

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Off Welfare—Now What? continued

tors use a wide variety of contractual agreements, case plans, and orientation sessions with conditions that are difficult to meet even in the best of circumstances. These impossible standards are used to scare people away and to intimidate them from using the welfare system. However, when faced with welfare as a last option, many people do not have the luxury of choosing not to go through the welfare process or become part of the welfare system. Barriers to accessing social assistance include excessive requests for information, long application processes and appeals, and confusing language.

Some interview participants shared their experiences of bureaucratic disorientation with the researcher. For example, “I got cut off [of assistance] two or three months ago without any warning or anything. Me and my girlfriend were living just down here, and she moved out to her own place, and then they cut me off. She [the social worker] gave me a letter saying I was cut off and had to fill out proper forms or whatever and so I filled them out and I never heard back. But I got a job after that. It’s not only me it’s happened to.” Another participant stated, “We moved out at the end of June, and I thought that we would get (financial) help for July, but I didn’t get anything. The

reason they gave was that they said we didn’t fill out the proper forms.” Another example: “I was off and on (assistance). They wouldn’t subsidise anything. I bugged them about that because they didn’t give me anything. I wasn’t making any money. And still they gave me nothing. Probably like \$400 for two weeks but because now they say I’m working they won’t give me anything. They won’t help me with rent or washing or anything.” One participant reported that, “Last year I was trying to get on social assistance, they gave me a rough time. I don’t know why. I thought maybe it was because I was an Indian, I don’t know. I wasn’t doing anything wrong. Then one time I had to go see my social worker and she asked me, ‘why did you move back to Saskatoon?’ And I wondered why she asked me that. She didn’t care. I’m sorry to say that, but she didn’t like me.”

One woman reported, “Someone told social services I was in a common law relationship and they came to my house and I said I don’t even have a boyfriend. I asked them if you had to be single to be on social services. They said I was living with some guy named _____. They started looking around my stuff and I said I’m poor, I don’t have

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UNIVERSITY OF
REGINA

*SASW Education Committee in conjunction with
the Continuing Education Centre – University of Regina,
will be presenting an Educational Workshop:*

The Healing Practice of Mindfulness

presented by

Pat Cavanaugh & Donna White

Travelodge – Saskatoon, SK

January 26 and January 27, 2006

For more information, or to register, contact:

Elizabeth Ealey at the University of Regina, Centre for Continuing Education
phone: 585-5853 email: busprof@uregina.ca web site: www.uregina.ca/cce/business

Dana White has been practicing Insight Meditation for the past seventeen years. Since 2000, she has been regularly teaching insight meditation classes and retreats in Saskatchewan. In 2003, she began teaching Healing Through Meditation courses in Regina, teaching mindfulness as a practice for healing. Dana is trained in social work and also group facilitation skills.

Pat Cavanaugh is a registered psychologist who has been working as a psychotherapist and group facilitator for the past twenty-five years. She has been an Insight Meditation practitioner for twelve years. She has found mindfulness practice to be very valuable in her role as therapist and that it provides wonderful healing tools for clients.

Workshop Description:

This two-day experiential workshop will offer an opportunity to learn mindfulness practice and explore its relevance to the helping/therapeutic/counseling relationship. In this practice, we learn how to cultivate awareness of our body and mind allowing us to connect with our own experience and our hidden capacity to face life's challenges. We will explore the relationship of mindfulness to our own self-care, "being present" as a helping professional, and as a healing tool for clients to use.

An Alliance in Support of Child Welfare Services

The Saskatchewan Association of Social Workers (In conjunction with the Social Policy Committee) has called on several provincial agencies—the Provincial Department of Community Resources and Employment, the Office of the Children's Advocate, the University of Regina School of Social Work, the First Nations University of Canada, School of Social Work, and representatives from Indian Child and Family Services Agencies—to join them in exploring the potential for a Provincial Alliance of Organizations to address children's issues in the province. Three meetings were held between December 2004 and June of this year. To this point the following decisions have been made:

- To pursue the goal of creating partnerships for shaping policies on children's issues rather than emphasize advocacy and lobbying. The latter direction would make it difficult for Government Child Welfare officials to be regular, active participants in an alliance.
- To address child welfare in the narrower sense rather than children's needs in the wider sense in hope that this will enable the group to set a firm direction.
- To choose a project that will engage all the players in the belief that a project tests the strength of a coalition and coalesces commitment. The project should have most of these characteristics:
 - * Recognize the unique position of First Nations Children in Saskatchewan child welfare

- * Be strength based rather than problem based.
- * Suggest a new model for intervention. (A new vision for child welfare?)
- * Begin to create a new language to replace worn out concepts, e.g., prevention, protection, least intrusive, integration.
- * Recognize the ambivalence of the community wishing to be supportive but reluctant to draw from the public purse.
- * Operate in a collaborative fashion.
- * Have a tie-in to curriculum at schools of social work.
- * Recognize the need for outcome indicators.
- * Find a way to include youth and parents early in the development.
- * Be workable on and off reserves.
- * Involve schools—perhaps be centred there. Schools still carry the community's hope for children.

The next meeting this fall will focus on choosing a project and adding additional partners to the discussion. The Saskatchewan Federation of Labour and the Saskatchewan Registered Nurses Association have already shown interest. It is also the desire of current members to invite representatives from youth and parents groups to join us along with someone to represent First Nations Elders.

*Submitted by
David Macknak, MSW, RSW (SK)*

Off Welfare—Now What? *continued*

much stuff. They pulled out all these men's clothes and I have a son who is a teenager and a pretty big guy, and sometimes, I wear men's stuff. And they asked me to see some receipts for clothes and so I showed them some and there was no men's stuff on the receipts. Sometimes I wear men's shirts, I'm a large woman and sometimes I wear men's clothes. They didn't believe me."

Another participant explained, "Sometimes when you have the papers you have to fill in, for example, when you are moving, and you get a receipt, and you hand it into your worker...last year I moved and I got my landlord to help me move furniture to my place. He charged me \$175.00, and I am still stuck with that bill. They told me they would pay it for me, but they haven't and I am still trying to pay that off."

Conclusion

While labour force attachment programs teach skills to look for work and allow access to education, they have not directly affected welfare recipients' ability to find work in today's challenging labour market. Some people who

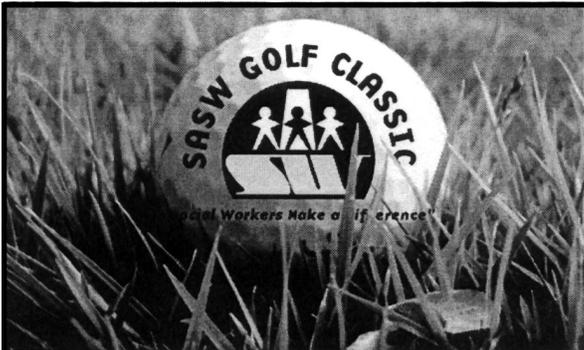
are on assistance are not able or capable of working. Putting them through job training programs exacerbates bureaucratic disenfranchisement. Furthermore, the social assistance program in Saskatchewan does not promote the health and well-being of its recipients through its work, and creates a cyclical system of despair that impacts on the physical, mental, and emotional health of those who become a part of it.

*Submitted by
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or Geri Stolar

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