

President's Corner

It is my pleasure as CASP President to send greetings on behalf of the Board of Directors. The Canadian Association of Suicide Prevention has a long history of having very dedicated and passionate individuals on its Board and the current Board is no exception. The Newsletter will be featuring profiles on various board members so that you have an opportunity to get to know the CASP team.

These are busy days for the CASP Board. The Board has participated in the national consultations of the Mental Health Strategy developed by the Mental Health Commission of Canada. The primary message to the Mental Health Commission of Canada has been to ensure the mental health strategy incorporates an explicit goal related to suicide prevention, and stressed the need for a national suicide prevention action plan that has synergy with the National Mental Health Strategy. All of CASP members are encouraged to participate in the Mental Health Commission's online consultation to raise the important issue of suicide prevention and the need for a National Suicide Prevention Strategy. The consultation site is:
www.mentalhealthcommission.ca/strategy.

The CASP Board has been involved in several National Think Tanks including a Mental Health Promotion Think Tank in Calgary in November 2008 and more recently a Seniors Mental Health Think Tank in Ottawa in March 2009. These events provided invaluable opportunities to emphasize the need for a national Suicide Prevention Strategy and to identify national organizations who are partners in these efforts.

The Board has been busy supporting the National Office with the change in head office from Edmonton to Winnipeg. The Board of

Directors and the National Head Office have an ambitious agenda for 2009. Here are just a few of the priorities/activities underway:

- Redevelopment of the website
- Strengthening World Suicide Prevention Day Campaign for September 2009
- Revised Blueprint for National Suicide Prevention Strategy
- Complete a national consultation on the Second Edition of the Blueprint for a National Suicide Prevention Strategy

During the Month of April 2009 we will be sending a call to all members for nominations to the CASP Board of Directors. We invite you all to consider participating in this important process either by nominating someone or sending in your ballots. The CASP Board is particularly committed to ensuring the Board of Directors reflects regional representation from across Canada. Currently we do not have Board representation from Newfoundland and Labrador, Nova Scotia, Prince Edward Island, Quebec, Saskatchewan, Northwest Territories, the Yukon and Alberta. We encourage CASP members in these regions to consider nominations so that as Board positions become vacant we can strengthen the regional representation.

The Board of Directors invites you to join us in Beautiful Brandon for the CASP National Conference in October 2009. An amazing conference program is being planned. A call for abstracts has been made and we invite you to submit abstracts on the innovative suicide prevention work occurring in your region. We look forward to seeing you in Brandon.

Marion Cooper
CASP President