



2020-21 Annual Report

Courage

**Your courage in the present brings hope
... *for the future***



All About Hope + Me

63,777 Clients served
We restore
Hope and Possibilities
across Ontario!

*Courage doesn't always roar. Sometimes
courage is the little voice at the end of the day
that says - "I'll try again tomorrow."*

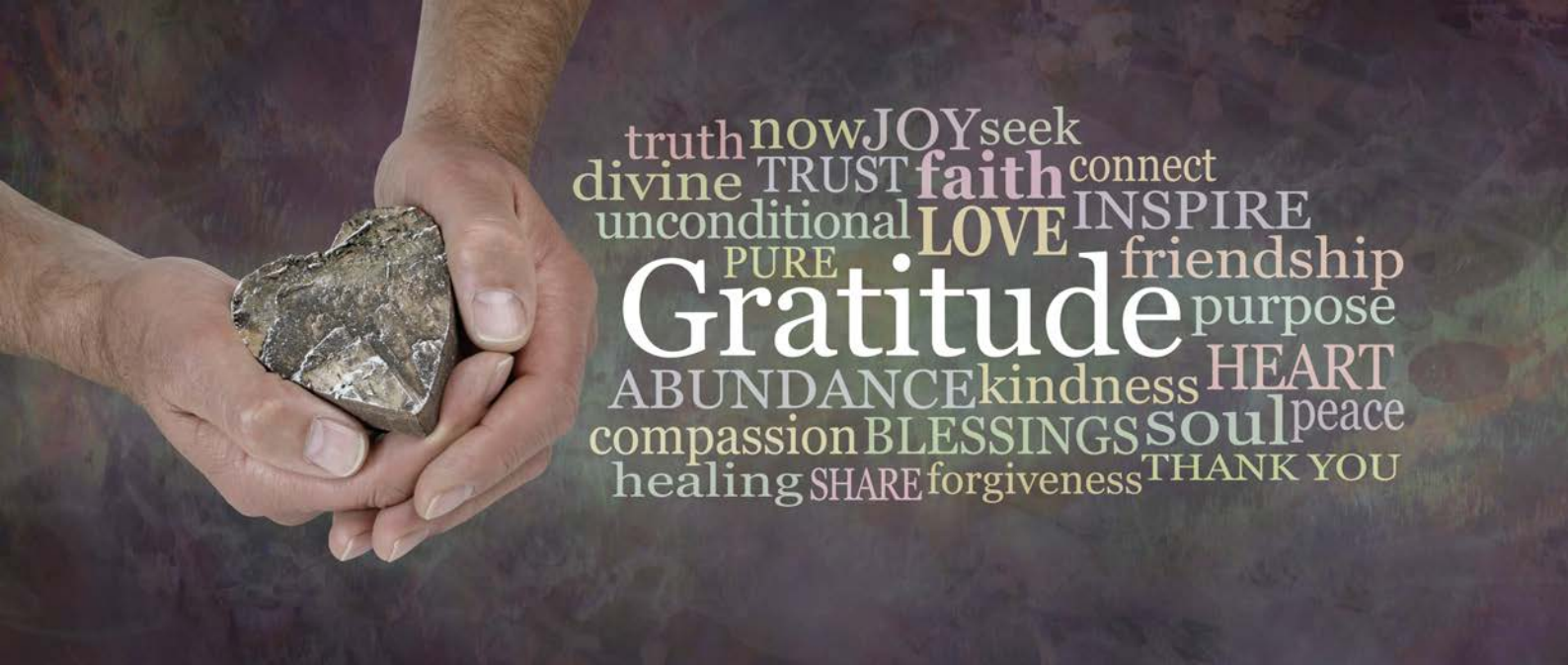
Mary Anne Radmacher

Hope + Me – Mood Disorders Association of Ontario provides excellence in support for recovery in mood disorders to adults and youth, and their families, across Ontario.

We are committed to providing the highest quality of free programs and services developed from personal, lived experience. We greatly value the benefit of our staff and volunteers providing direct, first-hand experience and understanding of mood disorders--including the experience supporting a loved one, family member, and friend.

Our evidence-based services are designed both to support the recovery of individuals and to lessen dependence on acute care in our clients' communities. We are a provincially registered charity.

Hope + Me is a provincially registered charity.
Our charitable registration number is 13097 8570 RR0001.



OUR CEO'S STATEMENT

**We are the bridge
to
Hope and Possibilities**

We began our fiscal year in April 2020 in a state of perpetual change and discovery. While many were still adapting to the new, fully remote work environment, we excelled in offering all of our programs online, creating Hope for recovery and a healthy future for Ontario.

At Hope + Me, our mission is to deliver accessible, evidence-based Peer Support and clinical programs and services developed through the lens of lived experience. We offer Hope to those living with mood disorders and their families, and empower their recovery. In 2021, we were a success with both!

We met the challenge by brainstorming new programs and initiatives that focused on our new virtual reality ... and to go beyond expectations for our clients, participants, and stakeholders.

Our spirit of working collectively and leveraging expertise was demonstrated with excellence in this year's partnerships with—to name but a few—Sunnybrook Hospital, University of Toronto, St. Michael's Hospital, Hong Fook Foundation, and CAMH.

It is my pleasure to thank you, the Hope + Me staff, volunteers, board members and funders, who work so hard to create a collaborative, agile organization with an ever-stronger voice in the mental health sector. As we head to 2022, please know that **your efforts are a success**—for Hope + Me is positioned better than ever to champion mental health in Ontario.

***Ann Marie Mac Donald,
Executive Director and CEO***



Family and Youth Counselling Early Intervention Program

**1,489 Families and Youth
Served**

1,238 Group Sessions

384 Group Participants

2,897 Visits

Short-term family and Youth counselling at Hope + Me is a strengths-based and goal-focused service that involves ongoing assessment over eight structured sessions. The emphasis is on working towards goals both in and out of sessions.

The Early Intervention Program provides support to people ages 14 to 35 who are experiencing early symptoms of psychosis, or who have been diagnosed with psychosis. Formal diagnosis is not required to access services.

Counselling involves approaches such as CBT, solution focus, and mindfulness, all depending on the client's needs.

Testimonial

"This is such a valuable service for families. I have learned something new, [and] felt challenged and supported every time I come. Everyone has a story and I have learned so much from the other members of the group. It has also been great to share my story and give hope to others on their journey."

Open Family Forum Participant



Pathways to Care

Hope + Me - MDAO's **Pathways to Care** assesses clients' needs and responds with accessible, timely, and safe programs and supports.

With our client-centered approach, thousands of individuals and families find their path to recovery and wellness. By helping them find specific support, we help them learn about their illnesses, which allows them to cope better while on the journey to recovery and healing.

Why did you come to Hope + Me?

"They have helped me along my mental health journey with support that was useful. The most unique support as I was helped by people with lived experiences. The only time I felt understood."

"I realized the potential these programs have to help me realize my own potential and overcome fears, answer questions, and especially find peer support as I find knowing I'm not alone an important part of my healing."

"I needed to be in a group where people heard my voice and could relate with my experiences. Also, to be in a safe inclusive group where mental health wasn't stigmatized and rather welcomed instead."

Group
One-on-One
Virtual
Telephone



Peer Support

Our extended program of evidence-based **Peer Support** services provides assistance to individuals and families in the community while lessening acute care utilization.

In 2021, our Peer Support programming including our webinars served **49,323 clients** across Ontario!

Testimonials

"It helps with loneliness; giving and receiving empathy is powerful, hearing other people's problems helps give perspective on your own. I like to help people and get in discussions."

"Anyone can participate. The guiding principles or rules are very good. The leadership is there but doesn't interfere or talk too much. The continuity builds confidence."

"I can learn more from other people's experiences. There is no judgement during discussion. While some of them feel that there is progress, it gives me hope that there is a light at the end of the tunnel."

Our Numbers at a Glance

Virtual Peer Support drop-in groups **384 sessions and 4,578 participants**

One-on-one Peer Support sessions **1,361 sessions**

Drop-in one-on-one Peer Support **89 sessions**

Warm Line telephone Peer Support **2,243 calls**

Mindful Awareness Stabilization Training



Front line workers took part in workshops managing stress and mental health during the COVID-19 pandemic. Hope + Me provided a two-day virtual recovery program on psychoeducation and tools from mindfulness as coping strategies. Registration and assessment were required to access the program.

9 Front Line Health Care Workers Workshops

Front line workers took part in workshops managing stress and mental health during the COVID-19 pandemic. Hope + Me provided a two-day virtual recovery program on psycho-education and tools from mindfulness as coping strategies. Topics discussed included The Window of Tolerance, Mindfulness and the Brain, Managing Emotions, and Self-care.

Testimonial

"The MAST workshop allowed me to get out of my head and empathize with other front-line workers - not to be alone with the daily stress. I learn new ways of thinking about the issues involved and contemporary techniques for coping and managing."



MAST workshops and Front-line Peer Support

5 Mindful Awareness Stabilization Training workshops

These **MAST** workshops were tailored to caregivers, older adults, the LGBTQ community, volunteers, and the general community workshops.

Front-line Workers Peer Support

We created a drop-in group for front-line workers. This group is for those who work in a direct health care setting and looking to meet with a group of empathetic peers.

It's a place to receive or offer support and share resources as we navigate the current health crisis.



Benefits of One-on-one Peer Support

Hope + Me - MDAO peer supporters 'get it'.

Our Peer Support workers have the lived experience and training required to be knowledgeable, empathetic, and highly effective Peer Support workers who convey hope to the people we serve.

We work to honour others' experiences and strive to understand their needs.

Testimonials

"The tips and suggestions my support worker made were also helpful to me while I started putting together a self-care plan. Finally, just having some structure of making and keeping appointments helped mobilize me at a time where it was very difficult to leave the house."

"One-on-one peer support is vital of my mental health well-being and Hope + Me - MDAO has been a great support as they are the only place I can receive individual peer support."

"The understanding and wisdom that comes from a lived experience with mental illness, outside of a clinical setting. **Peer Support** can best answer how to put work in therapy into practice in everyday life, and how to manage the day to day with self-care and compassion."



What does Peer Support mean to you?

Testimonials

"Peer support means not only being listened to... but being understood. It means knowing I am not alone in my thinking, moods and emotions, and even the physical pain that can come with depression, for example."

"It means not feeling alone, and being heard and understood. Being heard by people other than your friends, family or therapist has been helpful. Meeting new people that also struggle with mental health issues makes me feel less alone and isolated in my struggles and can give me a different perspective."

"Peer support means different meanings in different context. For me my goal is to move from the action words 'able to' / 'possible' / 'could' towards 'deserve' / 'choice' and 'choose' or at least having choices and being able to choose a life that is wholesome and good for myself, and graciously accept others in a mutual exchange without losing our unique identities and sameness."



Why did you decide to attend a Peer Support group?

Testimonials

"Because I am new in Canada and I am looking for all the help I can get in order to adapt and to keep my condition under control, in order to make adaptation a bit less difficult and overwhelming."

"Mental health is where my passion lies and I could talk and listen for a long time on this topic. It is more authentic and enriching to listen to others and speak to others who have a deeper understanding of mental health issues and experiences."

"People who fight to stay well may be more empathetic and supportive than those who do not understand or those who actually have an insensitivity to the struggle of mental health issues."

"The virtual online groups are safe and I can attend more regularly from the comfort of my home."



In Memoriam: Gianluca Primucci



1987 – 2021

Gianluca was a dedicated, talented, and greatly respected colleague at Hope + Me - MDAO.

In 2009, he designed and launched our "Learn to Paint- Paint With someone Who's Been There" program, growing it from a single class to five different art workshops for youth and adults. Programs included Learn to Draw, Mixed Media, Intermediate Acrylic, and Mixed Media and ran for five years.

Gianluca used every opportunity to encourage students to be creative through art by learning to paint and draw. With his innate good humour, he guided students to discover their creativity and courageousness by learning new expressive skills and unique aspects of themselves. This work built self-esteem and a more apparent identity in students as each 'inner artist' emerged. The classes also provided participants a sense of belonging by connecting them with other students.



*Our new Peer Support art program **Paint With Someone Who's Been There** will be re-launched in **November 2021** to honour Gianluca Primucci 's memory and legacy.*



"Art has always been and will always be a tool for self-expression and release. Art must always be for art's sake but, more importantly, for the artist's sake."

Gianluca



The Primucci family is grateful to all those who inspired Gianluca's curiosity and imagination, and above all, to those who supported him on his journey.



CHANGING MINDS WITH YOUTH

60 Youth trained in Peer Support

**15 Families and Caregivers trained
in Peer Support**

Changing Minds With Youth is our evidence-based Peer Support and recovery program for young people living with anxiety and depression. With our personal support services, youth ages 14 to 29 learn healthy lifestyle strategies and academic skills that help them toward self-determination. Our program provides services in community settings, colleges, and universities. By learning to take control of their mental wellness, our youth clients can better their lives and contribute to their communities.

Testimonial

"I knew zero people who had anxiety or depression, and especially growing up in a very, loving and passionate South Asian family, it was very difficult to have feelings of depression because I often felt kind-of in a corner and very restricted. I know how beneficial The Peer Support Program is for both the Peer Support Worker and the Peer. There's a lot to learn from one another and so I wanted to contribute to that, and it's always a mission of mine to advocate for mental wellness and I thought it was a good way to do that."

Please see our website at changingmindswithyouth.ca!



**RBC
Royal Bank**





Peer Support Training at Hope + Me

Peer Support Training Program

Hope + Me - MDAO uses sophisticated evidence-based programs to train Peer Support workers in community organizations, clinical settings, and workplaces. All our training programs follow the Mental Health Commission of Canada's guidelines while employing community-of-practice approach.

- Fundamental Training: 4 modules, 8 sessions, delivered virtually
- Focus: principles and values of peer support, complementary recovery approaches, communication and facilitation skills for group, one-on-one and complex settings
- Shadowing and practicum
- Community of Practice
- Audiences: staff, volunteers, affiliate, partners, and external candidates

Additional Services to Our Training Package

- Complementary training: safeTALK, trauma-informed, de-escalation, intersectionality
- Supervisory training
- Youth specific training
- Train-the-trainer

See our *Peer Support Training* Video Testimonial: [Jonathan](#)



Our Community Impact

173 Volunteers

11,122 Volunteer Hours

Volunteer Speakers Bureau: *Peer Talk*

Our **Peer Talk** speakers are diverse, dynamic, and authentic. Through their speeches and presentations, they raise awareness and convey hope in schools, workplaces, and communities. Peer Talk utilizes the Toastmasters International program to provide training. This program empowers members to gain the skills they need to share their stories.

Testimonial from a Peer Talk member

"I am very happy I joined Peer Talk. Not only does it foster development of public speaking skills, it is also a home to the community of sharing. It allows me to give back to the community by doing speaking engagements. I really like the energy in the club. Everyone is welcoming, supportive, and encouraging."

Please visit our Peer Talk website at peertalk.ca!

Community Engagement Committee

The **Community Engagement Committee (CEC)** is a group of volunteers responsible for creating and executing effective community events representation for Hope + Me. The CEC is responsible for developing new and engaging display material, interactive and engaging activities, and creative ways to represent the organization within the community.

Lit
From
Within



Jason Webster
2021 Winner
Karen Liberman Lit From Within Award

Since 2012, **Jason Webster** has been with Hope + Me working as LGBTQ Peer Support facilitator, WRAP™ facilitator, and Warm Line volunteer.

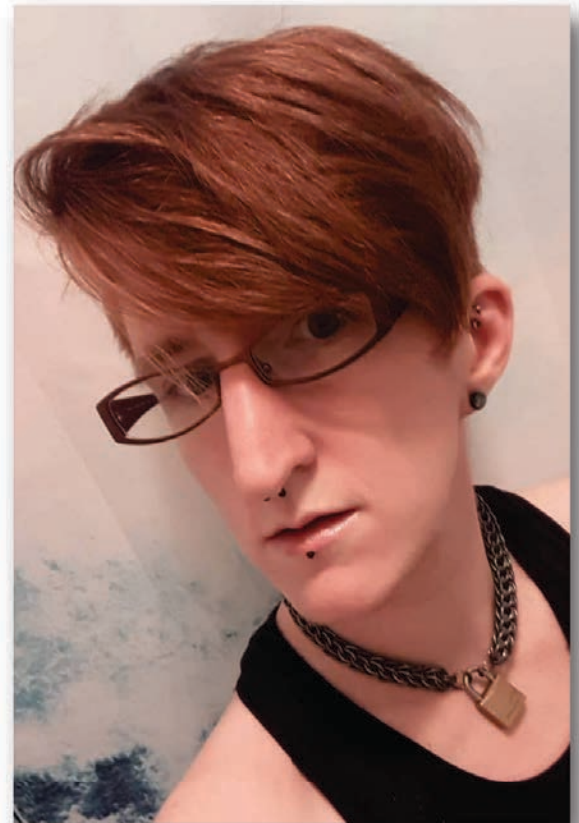
In particular, Jason makes significant and dedicated contribution to our LGBTQ-tailored programs. His work there exemplifies our mental health recovery concept of hope, diversity, empowerment, self-advocacy, and safe and accessible space for all our clients.

A Hope + Me client attests to Jason's ability and dedication:

"Being with my fellow peers like Jason and feeling safe and supported made this such a success for me. We not only shared our personal experiences with our mental health challenges but it was from the lens of identifying as LGBTQ which is key. I didn't have to explain things to people or feel like I couldn't talk or make jokes about my identity. This is incredibly important in the recovery process and we not only helped ourselves with self-stigma, but helped to reduce stigma in the community."

Jason's compassion, persistence, advocacy, and creativity are all in the best spirit of the Lit From Within award and Hope + Me. Please join us in congratulation to Jason Webster for his excellent work with us!

Lit From Within was created by the Board of Directors as part of former Executive Director Karen Liberman's legacy when she retired from the organization. Our award recognizes volunteers who demonstrate outstanding leadership, creativity, and innovation in contributing to Hope + Me programs and activities.



Community Partnerships and Collaboration

Partnership and collaboration are the cornerstones of the Hope + Me strategic plan. We look continuously for opportunities to expand our collaborative efforts with new health care providers, research institutions, and our government partners.

Our collaborator **Hong Fook** shares our priority in spreading awareness of mental health peer support approaches, communication, and training as essential element to our community and its development.

Hope + Me has partnered with Hong Fook since 2018 to provide evidence-based Peer Support for both adults and youth. The Foundation's trained Peer Support workers joined in a focus group to help with the translation of our Peer Support training program material. Translations to Cantonese and Mandarin Chinese are underway.



CAMH: Understanding Mental Health and Well-Being in Later Life

Since 2019, Hope + Me has been at work with Canadian Association of Mental Health on a project to facilitate twelve workshop webinars for older people across Ontario. These workshops are designed for older adults from immigrant, refugee, ethno-cultural, and racialized groups (IRER) and welcome Indigenous older adults.

All workshop material is culturally adapted and translated, in addition to English and French, across five languages including Simplified and Traditional Chinese, Punjabi, Italian, and Spanish. Facilitator guides feature information on cultural sensitivity and inclusion, health equity, and racism issues.



Hope + Me is also on the CAMH advisory committee.



Outcomes: Sessional Support

221 Direct psychiatric sessions with our clients

702 Visits

Our accomplishments at Hope + Me – MDAO are made possible through meaningful partnerships with the mental health community. The Department of Psychiatry at **Sunnybrook Health Sciences Centre** is one of our most important strategic partners.

In collaboration with Sunnybrook, we provide short-term, episodic psychiatric care and follow-up to clients actively engaged in other Hope + Me programs. Referrals come from our Counselling and Peer Support teams. Sunnybrook staff psychiatrists prioritize care for patients and clients who do not currently have their own psychiatrist. As such, our staff does not see patients who are already accessing psychiatric care elsewhere and do not provide second opinions as to diagnosis or treatment.

Features of the initiative are:

- We provide senior psychiatry residents experience within our community organization that demonstrates a pivotal role in education, advocacy, and peer support for people with mood disorders;
- We provide direct and indirect support for Hope + Me clinicians who assess and treat the psychiatric problems of our clients who had limited access to a psychiatrist;
- We enhance the quality of psycho-education provided to clients at Hope + Me;
- We improve the experience of Hope + Me clients through access to direct psychiatric expertise;
- We educate Hope + Me staff and build capacity to manage psychiatric difficulties experienced by our clients.

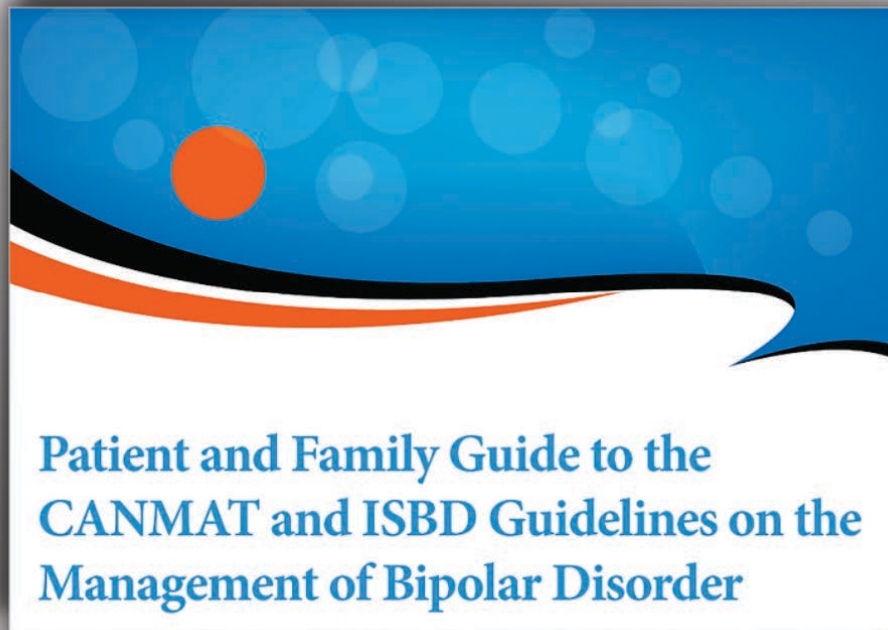
Sunnybrook Family Webinar Series

- **5 webinars** conducted by fifth-year residents
- A total of **270 participants** attending

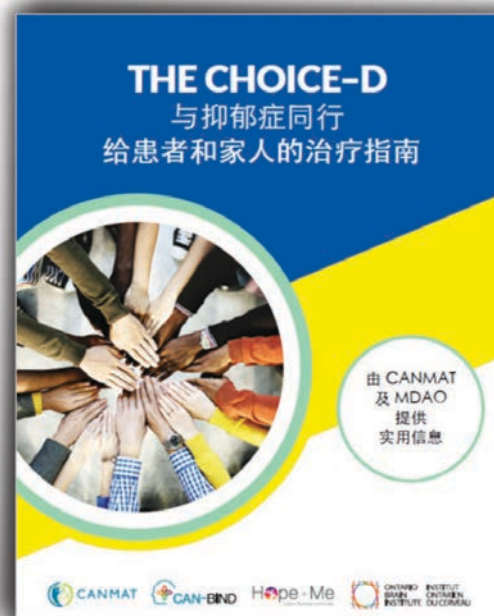
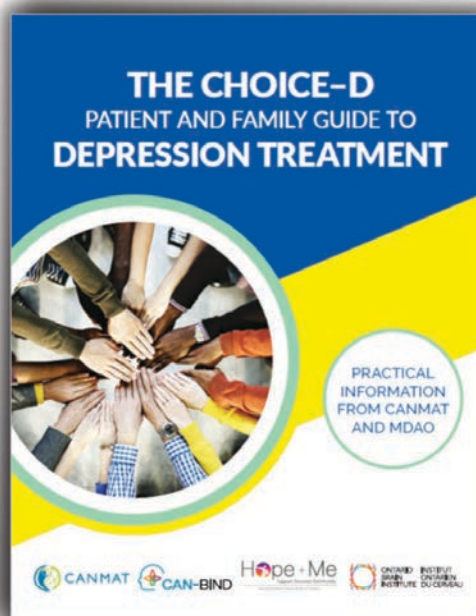
Peer Support Champion Workers at Sunnybrook

As part of Workplace Peer Support at Sunnybrook, **Hope + Me trained 30 employees** in the **STEADY** program: Social Support, Tracking Distress, Education, and Discussion Community. Sunnybrook employees volunteered to become champions of Peer Support for their colleagues to help reduce burnout, depression, and attrition. Front-line workers are all vulnerable to these and other adverse effects of their profession; particularly during the CoVID-19 pandemic.

Resources: Guides

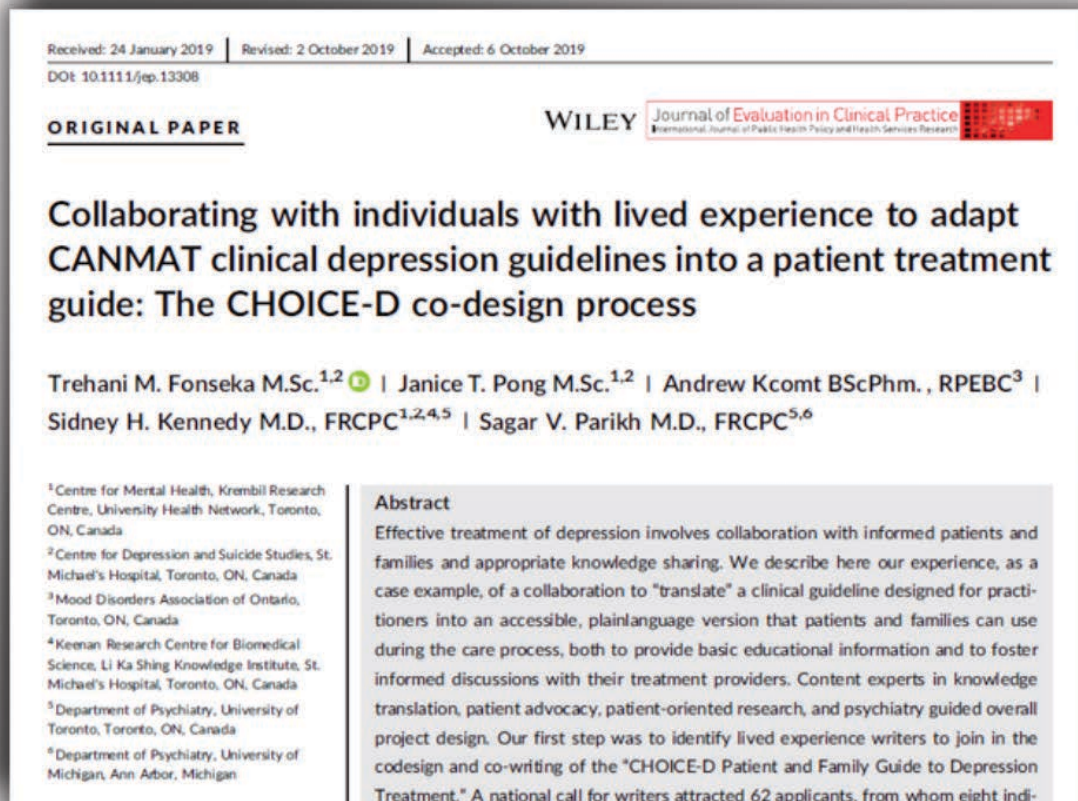


We thank our Sunnybrook partners that took their great knowledge and research of bipolar disorder to create a clear-language guide published in English and French. The *Patient and Family Guide on the Management of Bipolar Disorder* is free to the public at bit.ly/bipolarguide.



We offer the *CHOICE-D Guide to Depression Treatment* in three languages: English, French, and Chinese. This resource is available via Peer Support facilitators using our train-the-trainer model. This guide is also available to health care providers. Download here: bit.ly/guidinghope

Resources: Collaboration and Research



We published this paper in the *Journal of Evaluation in Clinical Practice* on the collaboration with those with lived experience and the co-designed process. This was presented at the ISBD conference earlier in 2021. [The study may be accessed online here.](#)



This is an important study from Wilfred Laurier University. It's one of the first of its kind to examine the effect of Peer Support on well-being and occupational recovery. We're looking forward at results our promotion of this study will yield. Please see the study at bit.ly/powercontactus.

OUR DONORS 2020-21

Corporations



Funders

Ministry of Health and Long Term Care

Toronto Central LHIN

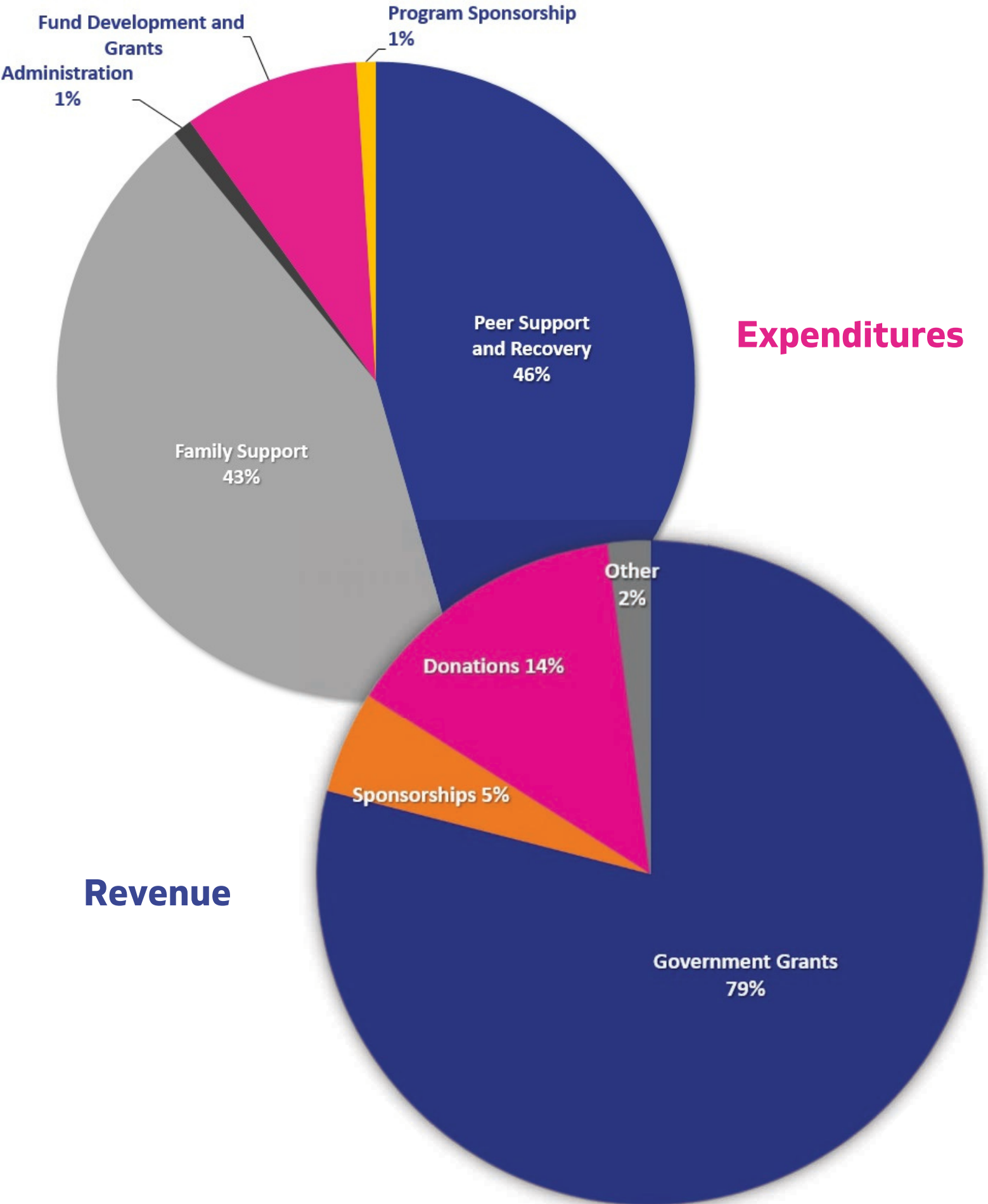
City of Toronto

OUR DONORS 2020-21

Individual Donors

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Neil Murphy
J. P. Presti
Jonathan Resnick
Martin Simons**

***Hope + Me - Mood Disorders Association of Ontario thanks
all our donors for their generous support!***



FINANCIALS

2020-21

Statement of General Operations and Fund Balance

For the year ended March 31, 2021

Revenues		
	Government Grants	761,568
	Event Income	0
	Sponsorships	49,886
	Donation	134,461
	Others	20,279
		<u>\$966,194</u>
Expenses		
	Programs:	
	Peer Support and Recovery Programs	419,486
	Family Support	399,916
	Program Support sponsorships	1,399
	Fund development and grants administration	82,309
	Administration	6,865
		<u>\$909,975</u>
	Excess of revenue over expenses	(57,068)
	Balance, beginning of year	82,410
	Balance, end of year	\$139,478

A copy of Hope + Me's financial statements may be obtained
from our website at www.mooddisorders.ca

Our People 2020-21

Board of Directors

Michael Deane *Chair*
Martin Simmons *Vice Chair*
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Stuart Baltman
Lindsay Cader
Sharon Cohen
Peter Lane
Ann Marie Mac Donald *Secretary,*
Ex-Officio Member of the Board

Staff

Ann Marie Mac Donald *Executive Director and CEO*
Minh H. Tran *Manager of Finance*
Andrew Kcomt *Research Consultant*
Ruston Baldwin *Family Matters Peer Support Worker*
Nicole Schulz *Youth and Family Mental Health Coordinator*
Quang Vu 'QV' Mai *Manager, Program Development and*
Ontario Peer Support Program
Jonathan Kallis *Clinical and Peer Support Program Navigator*
Madeline Surman *Peer Support Coordinator for Clinical*
and Youth Programming
Jeremy Macek *Community Engagement Committee (CEC) Coordinator*
Nicole Zouki *Peer Support and Intake Worker*
Roy Bonadonna *Peer Support Worker*
John Lindblad *Content Editor*

Connect With Hope + Me

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Toll-free: (888) 486-8236

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1-866-363-MOOD (6663)

Internet

Website: www.mooddisorders.ca

E-mail: info@hopeandme.ca

Changing Minds With Youth website:

www.changingmindswithyouth.ca

Peer Talk website: www.peertalk.ca

Our Social Media



twitter.com/mooddisordersON



facebook.com/MoodDisordersAssociationON



instagram.com/mooddisordersassociation



Courage