



**ACCESS** OPEN MINDS  
ESPRITS OUVERTS

# 2017-18 Annual Report



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## A message from...

### Dr. Ashok Malla

*The ACCESS Open Minds Nominated Principal Investigator*

Dear Readers,

On behalf of the ACCESS Open Minds (ACCESS OM) network, it is with a sense of achievement that I invite you to read our first public annual report.

The 2017-18 fiscal year was another successful year for ACCESS OM. We saw both the **expansion and consolidation of all aspects of the project**, which promote the improvement of youth mental health services across Canada.

One of the most exciting developments over the previous year was the launch of our **online data collection system**, which marks an innovative next step in implementing data collection and evaluation in the real-world settings of integrated youth mental health services across the country.

The year was also marked by doors officially opening at 4 new sites: Edmonton, AB (April 2017), Sturgeon Lake First Nation, SK (May 2017), University of Alberta, AB (September 2017) and Eskasoni First Nation, NS (November 2017), as well as the provincial launch of the three sites in New Brunswick (P.E.E.R. SJ, Centre de Bénévolat de la Péninsule acadienne, and Elsipogtog First Nation) (May 2017). All of our sites continued to deliver **innovative, high quality, barrier-free services** and we hope that you will enjoy the site updates that provide a unique look into our very diverse partner communities.

ACCESS OM has also been leading the development of a national standardized evaluation framework for integrated youth services with partners including Frayme, Foundry BC, and Youth Wellness Hubs Ontario. We hope that this new **collaborative effort** will help improve youth mental health services across the country by overcoming provincial and jurisdictional boundaries.

Another key achievement is the extensive participation of our pan-Canadian network in many national and international **knowledge exchange** opportunities such as conferences, meetings and training sessions. Based on our learnings to date, and co-created with youth, families/carers, service providers and decision makers from across the country, several evidence-based practical guides have also been published this year (Early Identification Guide and Community Mapping Guide), which are available on our website.

We are also particularly proud of our **National Youth, Family and Carers, and Indigenous Councils**, which have grown in membership over the past year. All three councils have been very active and have made invaluable contributions to our network and all aspects of the ACCESS OM project. We hope that you will enjoy their updates.

On behalf of our central office and the entire ACCESS OM network, I thank you for your interest and support. I sincerely hope that you will enjoy this annual report filled with updates and success stories from the 2017-18 year!

Sincerely,

Ashok Malla



# A Brief Introduction

ACCESS Open Minds was the result of a ground-breaking process called **Transformation Research in Adolescent Mental Health (TRAM)**, which set out to transform the field of youth mental health care in Canada, by changing systems and improving care. The ACCESS OM network has been operational since 2014 and in just 3 short years has transformed both **youth mental health care** and **research** across Canada. Across 14 participating service sites, located in 6 provinces and 1 territory, teams of mental health service providers are using a common research and evaluation program that was co-developed with youth, families/carers, and service providers, to evaluate how they provide their services, and the outcomes for youth. ACCESS OM is generating **new knowledge** about Canadian youth mental health services and we are continuously working towards ensuring youth and their families/carers have access to the best care that meets their needs.



ACCESS Open Minds is:

- **Generating new knowledge** about Canadian youth mental health needs and services
- **Transforming youth mental health services** and building capacity across sectors
- Creating a **pan-Canadian network**
- **Engaging** youth, families/carers, communities, community organizations, service providers, researchers, funders, policy makers and decision makers in the delivery of youth mental health services and research



## VISION STATEMENT

ACCESS Open Minds will transform and improve youth mental health care in Canada.



## MISSION STATEMENT

ACCESS Open Minds will generate new knowledge and foster innovation in youth mental health care in Canada.



## Project Components

- **Service Planning:** ACCESS OM builds on a community's existing resources to transform youth mental health services.
- **Service Delivery:** Youth are offered an initial assessment within 72 hours of seeking help and if needed, referral to external services within 30 days.
- **Service and Program Evaluation:** ACCESS OM provides relevant information to clinicians and other professionals providing front-line services to youth, to administrators, and to policy makers.
- **Research and Advancing Knowledge:** ACCESS OM is creating a national data set that will help fill current gaps in knowledge about what works in youth mental health care in Canada.

## The Facts

### Research



#### **Innovative data collection platform**

launched in May 2017

#### **Increased recruitment**

Research recruitment more than doubled in 2017-18 compared to the same period last year

#### **Youth engagement**

Research recruitment campaigns co-created with youth

### Sites and Services

14

sites have opened their doors located in six provinces and one territory

75%

of youth were offered an initial appointment within 72 hours once sites were able to contact them

93%

of youth responded that ACCESS OM staff responded to their needs and concerns

1000s

of youth have received services at our sites since 2014

99%

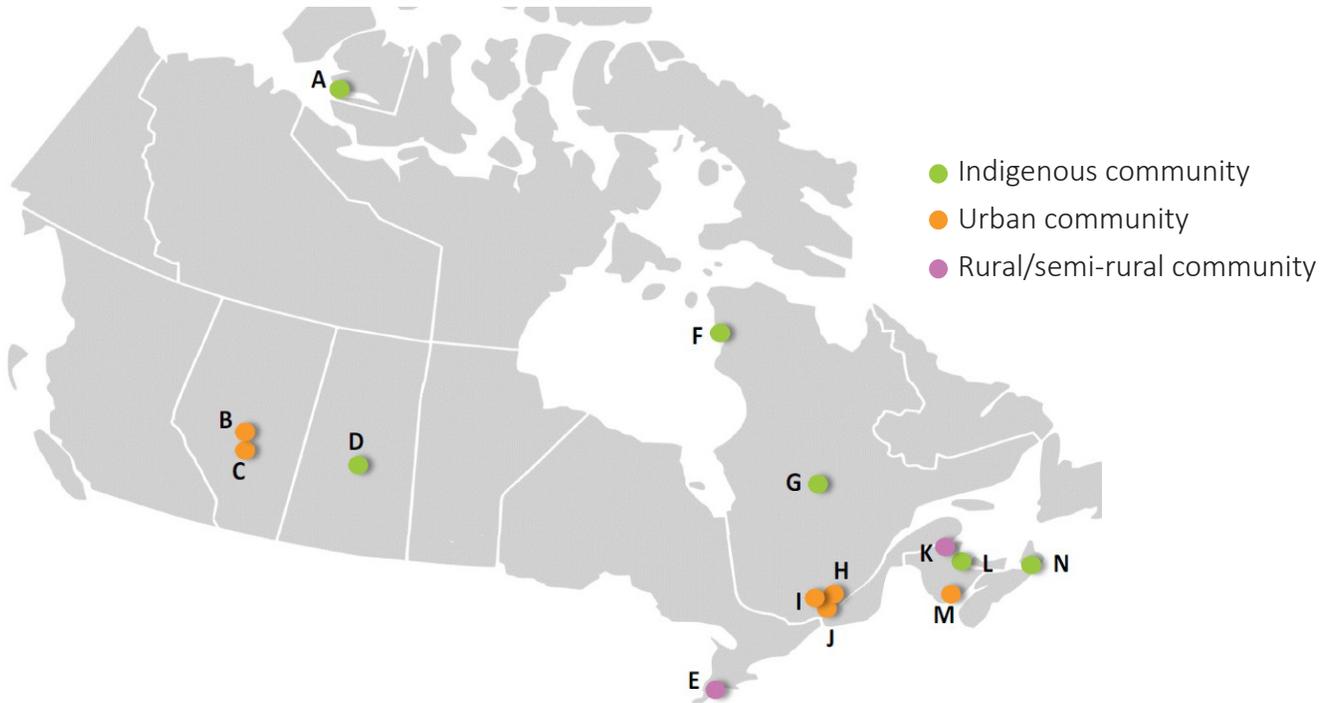
of youth would recommend the service to a friend in a similar situation

82%

of youth said that the wait times were reasonable



# Site Updates



## Ulukhaktok, Inuvialuit Settlement Region, NT (A)

With an entire year under their belts, the two ACCESS OM Youth Workers – as well as the entire site team and community – have a good deal to celebrate. A number of programs that encourage youth wellness, including Youth Empowerment and Youth/Elder programs, as well as on-the-land initiatives and in-town cultural activities, have taken place with the ACCESS OM team at the helm. The site team themselves have learned a great deal this past year, taking part in a number of different training programs that help support the community's youth. They



continue to work closely with their community and regional partners, too, (such as the school, RCMP, health centre, and others) to learn and support others in knowing how to best meet the needs of their community's youth and families.

Since all construction and renovation equipment and building materials are brought to Ulukhaktok from the south by barge, the site team and the community are looking forward to autumn 2018, when they can begin construction on the community's old curling rink into a new ACCESS OM youth space. Read more below about the Ulukhaktok team's travels to the other side of the country to connect with their Mi'kmaq partners in Eskasoni First Nation, NS.

## Dorval-Lachine-LaSalle, QC (H)



Over the course of the 2017-18 year, the Dorval-Lachine-LaSalle site team has continued to meet with youth seeking mental health services through the CLSC and their other institutional partners. Due to the large numbers of youth seeking support, the site team has grown to add more research and clinical support, and the site's uptake of data collection is among the highest across the ACCESS OM network.

Another development this past year has been the planning, development, and opening of a new youth drop-in space at the CLSC Lachine. This space, opened in late winter 2018, provides youth with easier and more rapid access to mental health help, in a friendly and non-clinical environment. Transformation is in the air in Dorval-Lachine-LaSalle!

## Cree Nation of Mistissini, QC (G)

The 2017-18 year was one of growth for the ACCESS OM Mistissini site team. To begin, the site team adopted the name Aaschihkuwaataauch, meaning "providing help urgently when people are in need" in Cree. Settled in their new home at the Family Resource Center, adjacent to the community's Youth Center, the Aaschihkuwaataauch team has also brought together many of the other service providers in the community. From the mental health community worker at the Mipupimaatisiin Health Centre, to teachers and educators in the community's schools, to psychologists, social workers, and nurses working with the community's youth – have come together with the common goal of improving youth wellness, providing appropriate and rapid access to care when young people are in need, and evaluating this transformation to serve as a model for how integrated services might look in other Cree communities.

These various service providers came together in October 2017 to learn about the ACCESS OM protocol and discuss how to implement it at their different service sites. Youth groups, as well as family/carer support groups, have begun, and young participants in the project continue to receive care and contribute their ideas about the care they are receiving.

To properly finish off this amazing year, the site team and various partners from the Cree Health Board and ACCESS OM came together on March 2017 to celebrate the public launch of the Aaschihkuwaataauch project.

## Edmonton, AB (B)

After striking a partnership with Alberta Health Services in 2016 and transforming how youth mental health and addictions



services are provided in their city, the ACCESS OM Edmonton site team kicked off this past year with a successful launch event in April 2017. Diverse local stakeholders, as well as visitors from further afoot, came together to highlight and celebrate the work that has been taking place towards transforming youth mental health services. A youth-friendly and accessible space has been established at the Bill Rees YMCA, where young people and their families can walk in, can access many services including: peer supporters, clinicians, psychiatry services, as well as other programs. The site team is also mobile and can meet youth anywhere; they are connected to inner city schools, libraries, and will meet youth anywhere from a coffee shop, to a park, to a skate shop.



Photo credit: Reggie Tomatuk

## Puvirnituk, Nunavik, QC (F)

Local leadership has been identified as one of the key aspects to the ACCESS OM project's success – and because of this important factor, the 2017-18 year was ground-breaking for the Puvirnituk team, as the site team grew and started their work on the ground. The ACCESS OM project has partnered with Saqijjuq, which means “a change in wind direction” in Inuktitut. The aim of ACCESS-Saqijjuq is to reconstruct social regulation by bringing together the resources, programs, and organizations that provide support to youth, families, and communities, and help how these services and organizations relate to community members and those in need.

The Puvirnituk team has made significant steps in putting this into practice. In August 2017, the ACCESS-Saqijjuq team hosted an All-Organizations Meeting in Puvirnituk, bringing together partners from the entire community, and from around Nunavik, to discuss the services they provide, and how to best make use of each other as collaborators. Participants from a host of organizations attended the two-day event, including individuals from Nunavik Health and Social Services, Kativik Police Force, treatment programs, Makivik justice department, the Director of Youth Protection, and many more. The team started to get their physical space settled, and in the following months, the ACCESS-Saqijjuq Educators began providing support to youth in the community, through on-the-land programs and trips, skills building, and mentoring. The site team wishes to reach out to those youth who are otherwise not receiving support – they are from the community, and known for their support and their commitment. As identified by the site team, one of the most important aspects of supporting Inuit youth is to know their lived reality.



## Sturgeon Lake First Nation, SK (D)

For a project that aims to be “for youth, by youth,” the youth-oriented nature of ACCESS OM is especially strong in Sturgeon Lake First Nation, where their ACCESS OM Youth Space was renovated entirely by the community's high school woodworking class, and continues to be staffed by youth from the community. Over the first few months of 2017, the site team saw the expansion of their service to this newly renovated youth space and drop-in centre next to the school.



At a launch event in May 2017, the ACCESS OM Sturgeon Lake First Nation site team hosted a launch attended by more than 100 community members, as well as local and regional leaders, officially opening its doors and launching their transformed youth mental health service.

A drum group and Powwow dancers performed at the opening ceremony, which concluded with a cutting of the hide to open the youth space.

Throughout the year, the site team has continued to support youth in the community in accessing care, and in particular has initiated a number of successful efforts in reaching youth who otherwise might have been isolated, or who otherwise might not have sought services. Working in conjunction with traditional healing services in the community, the ACCESS OM Clinician meets with young people and their families at school, in the community, in their homes, and anywhere else the young person requests for accompaniment.

## Caraquet, Péninsule acadienne, NB

The ACCESS OM Péninsule acadienne team began providing their transformed service in the spring of 2017, and have been



continuing the transformations since. Located in the Centre de Bénévolat de la Péninsule acadienne in Caraquet, the interdisciplinary team consists of clinicians, workers, and a research assistant as well as peer supporters. Given their rural location, the team is mobile and meets the needs of youth ranging in age and need, and who at times are geographically quite distant. Central to their work is meeting youth where they are at, including programming outdoors and other



non-clinical events that attract young people who might not otherwise reach out for support (mobile services).

This past year in June 2018 this inspirational team celebrated their first birthday with over 100 guests including youth, families and many members of the community.

## University of Alberta, AB (C)

The University of Alberta site team has grown over the past year, expanding to include two ACCESS OM Community Brokers – who serve to help students navigate the care system at the university, as well as receive the mental health support they need, – as well as a Research Assistant to meet with students and help evaluate this newly transformed service. In the development of ACCESS OM spaces, the University of Alberta team listened to students about where help-seeking happens. Students are differentially knowledgeable of the services available to them, and despite the available services, note that sometimes they are difficult to access. To meet this need, the ACCESS OM site team and the university have partnered with WellTrack, a platform that offers University of Alberta students easy (on their phone or computer) and confidential access to a self-help tool that – depending on their answers to simple questionnaires – can help guide them towards the support they need. Still in development, the team hopes that the tool will be ready for the 2018-19 academic year. Stay tuned!



## P.E.E.R. SJ, New Brunswick (M)

Holding true to the recovery-oriented philosophy of ACCESS OM, the programming at P.E.E.R. SJ (Peers Engaged in Education and Recovery in Saint John) encourages involved youth to build community, make friends, meet goals, and pursue healthy lifestyle choices. The site is currently located in an historic building in Saint John's uptown neighbourhood and is within walking distance of three schools. Co-located in the same building is an Integrated Service Delivery (ISD) site to meet the needs of youth who require additional mental health support, the P.E.E.R. SJ team has grown to include an ACCESS OM Clinician, two Human Service Counsellors, and two Peer Supporters. They offer an array of programming, from arts, musical instruments, gaming, cooking, and trips outside of the city. A centralized lounge area contributes to the feeling of P.E.E.R. SJ as a comfortable meeting spot for youth. True leaders in the field of peer support!



The local site team has made efforts this past year to reach out to youth who might be struggling, making connections with the local alternative school, Woodlawn Learning Centre, and participating in a monthly lunch and learning session. Additional plans include connecting with the local university's counselling services, hosting comedy nights, and expanding on their music programming.

The team is very much looking forward to the upcoming move to a storefront location where they will share a space with Saint John's Teen Resource Centre. Stay tuned!

## Parc-Extension, Montreal, QC (I)

With their Espace Jeunesse up and running, the ACCESS OM Parc-Extension site team was proud to celebrate the launch of their transformed service in October 2017. The launch took place at the renovated youth space at CLSC Parc-Extension, and gathered together youth, service providers, community members, and key governmental representatives to highlight the talents and accomplishments of the young participants, but also to underscore the youth-oriented vision of the ACCESS OM project. Rap, visual art, multimedia video, and music performances punctuated the event, and it concluded with a tour of the drop-in space and food provided by community members. Youth and clinicians proudly displayed to their visitors the space that they have co-created through the ACCESS OM project; those in attendance got to see where and how the site team is meeting youth where they're at, and how they have created a warm and welcoming environment for the youth of Parc-Extension to receive rapid access to care and support when it's needed.

As the Parc-Extension team moves into this new year, their next hurdle will be expanding their learnings from the past two years to three new YMH teams under the umbrella of a unified youth mental health service in their larger host institution, the CIUSSS du Centre-Ouest-de-l'Île-de-Montréal. With integrated youth mental health hubs on the radar of many across Québec, this system-wide integration could prove to be a useful model for other service hubs in coming years.



## Chatham-Kent, ON (E)

As one of the first teams to have launched their ACCESS OM site back in May 2016, the Chatham-Kent team is no stranger to engaging youth and families in designing change – and this opportunity arose this past year. The site team spent part of the past year in a temporary location, as work on their permanent youth space in downtown Chatham was being finalized. Local youth and families, as well as the integrated Chatham-Kent site team, lent their opinions to the creation of a space that



truly will meet the needs of the community's youth. The team was happy to launch their new space in June, a celebration that included community members, service providers, and many others. Congratulations! This past year was also notable for the Chatham-Kent team as they were named one of the 10 Youth Wellness Hubs Ontario (YWHO), an initiative funded by the Ministry of Health and Long-Term care that aims to bring the right services to youth and their families at the right time and in the right place.



## RIPAJ-Montréal, QC (J)



Having launched at the end of 2016, the RIPAJ-Montréal team is transforming the delivery of youth mental health services to those most in need in Mon-

tréal, specifically youth who might be experiencing homelessness. Being connected to the well-known and reputed Dans la rue, the RIPAJ team has made significant headway in creating a network within a network: the ACCESS OM project has brought together service providers from various community organizations working in the same neighbourhood, towards the same goal. These partners, including DLR, Le Refuge, GIAP, and En Marge, are also working with institutional partners providing mental health services such as the Clinique des jeunes de la rue, the Faubourgs and Hochelaga CLSCs, CHUM, and ÉQIIP SOL, among others, to best meet the mental health needs of the youth they serve. The next step is continuing the evaluation of this transformation; the ACCESS Clinician and Research Assistant continue to recruit participants, encouraging youth receiving services to tell their story and support change for others who follow them.

One particular highlight of the past year was the Mental Health Fair hosted by the RIPAJ-Montréal team in November 2017. To celebrate one year of being a network, the ACCESS OM RIPAJ team hosted a mental health fair, in which a number of different services and organizations set up kiosks to educate the general public, as well as other service providers, about what they had to offer in support of youth wellness. As always, the RIPAJ team supplied delicious food and facilitated a great show following the fair to highlight the musical and artistic talents of the youth in their community.

## Eskasoni First Nation, NS (N)



The ACCESS OM Eskasoni First Nation team first opened their doors in the summer

of 2016, with a full complement of clinical and research team backed by an experienced and committed mental health service.

This past year, however, ACCESS OM Eskasoni celebrated the grand opening of their new youth space on Castle Bay Road on November 9, 2017, displaying their new space as well as the transformational work the team is taking as their mission on a daily basis. With remarks and speeches by the community's Chief Leroy Denny, youth, ACCESS OM team members, supporters, and others, the gathering was a time to acknowledge the positive transformation of youth health and wellness in the community with art, song, food, and celebrations.

Building from the community's strong tradition of supporting those in need, the ACCESS OM youth space continues to be open every day, and on weekends for special events or programs, including movie nights, cultural events, fishing and archery, and baking and arts workshops.

ACCESS OM Eskasoni has their sights set on sharing the concept and practice of Two-Eyed seeing with others, in Canada and around the world; representatives from Eskasoni have presented at conferences both across Canada and internationally. The site team also hosted visitors from several other ACCESS OM sites from as far away as the NWT, to share their progress and exchange knowledge.

## Elsipogtog First Nation, NB (L)

In Elsipogtog, the ACCESS OM Safe Space/Drop-in centre is a hub for youth to participate in activities such as drum making and beading, board games, and homework help, as well as seek counselling services or support if youth feel like they need someone to talk to. The ACCESS OM team includes an ACCESS OM Clinician, Research Assistant, and Peer Supporters. They have set up various ways for youth to contact them, including telephone, in

person, as well as connecting through Facebook, which the site team reports as very effective in communicating with youth. The site team is actively recruiting community members to participate on the Youth Advisory Council as well as the Family Advisory Council, so that they can represent their interests locally, at the provincial level, and at the national level within the ACCESS OM network and beyond.



The 2017-18 year was a year of firsts for the ACCESS OM team in Elsipogtog First Nation: their first full year together as a team, the first year as a transformed service, the first integration of data collection under the ACCESS OM protocol into the care of youth in their community... and so many others!

The Elsipogtog team hosted their community launch on June. This well attended launch even made it on CBC News-congratulations!

## Council Updates

One of ACCESS OM's key objectives is "patient engagement", which consists of involving youth and their family/carers in their own care, design of services, and quality improvement efforts. One way in which we implement "patient engagement" is through our three councils: the National Youth Council, the Family and Carers Council, and the Indigenous Council. Here are their updates:

### INDIGENOUS COUNCIL

#### Creation of the ACCESS OM Indigenous Council

The ACCESS OM Indigenous Council was created in September 2017, connecting Indigenous leaders from within the ACCESS OM network. Elders, youth, and site leads from Elsipogtog First Nation (New Brunswick), Eskasoni First Nation (Nova Scotia), Aschiikuwaadaauch (Mistissini, Quebec), Sturgeon Lake First Nation (Saskatchewan), Purvirnituk (Nunavik, Quebec), and Ulukhaktok (Inuvialuit Settlement Region, Northwest Territories) initiated the creation of this Council, which meets quarterly to share knowledge and provide leadership on matters affecting or pertaining to Indigenous communities.



#### Council Activities

Indigenous Council members share strategies to shift youth mental health service delivery towards culturally competent care. Intergenerational land-based programming, culture camps, and inclusive youth spaces are offering opportunities for local youth and family members to receive better care. The Council discusses ways to implement the ACCESS OM research and evaluation protocol with and for Indigenous communities, ensuring that OCAP® principles on data ownership are respected. The Council strives to create more opportunities for Indigenous researchers. Local youth and family engagement strategies are shared in order to empower and support the next generation through intergenerational teachings. The Council is currently exploring external partnerships and funding opportunities to sustain its activities beyond ACCESS OM.

## NATIONAL YOUTH COUNCIL



What a great year – we continued to speak up about what we want the youth mental health system to be, and we're seeing changes!

ACCESS OM youth spaces are open! We've been involved in the creation and design of spaces that are welcoming to youth who access services, highlighting the importance of accessible locations. We've helped plan and host site launch events across the country, sharing the story of youth at each site. As a council, we also shared our experiences with each other so that we could learn from one another.

We want to be sure that ACCESS OM sites hire the right people, since they are the first people who youth meet when they come to a site. This first encounter, and how it makes a young person feel, can have a huge impact on whether or not a young person comes back. We have participated in interviews across the network to ensure that all candidates value and promote youth engagement.

As a council, we presented at the 2017 IAYMH conference in Dublin, and introduced ACCESS OM through our youth lens to service providers and researchers from around the world. By sharing our belief that future-proofing youth mental health services starts with empowering the voice of youth with lived experience, we hope that our presentation was an international inspiration for youth, and all stakeholders, to get involved in changing the field of youth mental health. We also attended a Wisdom2Action event on youth-led suicide prevention initiatives in Vancouver in February. We also contributed to the development of the ACCESS OM Peer Support Guidelines.

Our council has doubled – from 14 members to 28! – and this increased membership has helped increase diversity within our council. We started to use Facebook to connect as a council, and we're continuing to create and maintain safe and brave spaces for youth engagement within ACCESS OM. Stay posted in the coming year: we're also working on sharing what we've done and what we've learned so that others can learn from our experiences.

## FAMILY AND CARERS COUNCIL



The ACCESS OM Family and Carers Council (AFC) has remained actively involved in involving and engaging families and carers in the design and delivery of youth mental health care, research, and evaluation. Over the past year, AFC has led initiatives aimed at increasing knowledge and engaging family and carers in family peer support. The council welcomed two new members, Heather Badder from Chatham-Kent and Karen Pinkoski from Edmonton, and thanks two outgoing members for their contributions; Tom McCarthy and Lucy Trapper both resigned to pursue other opportunities.

The council remains open to new members, the family and carers of loved ones with mental health concerns, to take part in activities that focus on increasing awareness around family engagement and peer support, cultural diversity, council visibility, knowledge exchange, and research.

Over the past year, the ACCESS OM Family and Carers Council was active in spearheading a number of activities and initiatives, including a network-wide survey on family engagement and family peer support, an in-person workshop to build capacity as leaders in family engagement and peer support, as well as the development of a knowledge translation product on that topic; “Quick Tips on Family Engagement and Family Peer Support” has been drafted and shared with network partners and site teams as a step-by-step guide to welcoming families and carers to collaborate with site teams.

## The Highlights

### *“CROSS-CULTURAL CONNECTIONS: EAST MEETS NORTHWEST”*



There is an unequivocal need for mental health care for youth in remote Indigenous communities across Canada; importantly, this need must respond not only to the youth requiring care, but also to the context in which this care is provided. Ulukhaktok is a community of 400 people located on an island in the Inuvialuit Settlement Region (ISR) of the Northwest Territories. The community is accessible by airplane, though most large supplies come by barge. Due to its small population and remote location, there is not always a constant presence of professional service providers, such as doctors, nurses, and social support workers.

Because of this, Ulukhaktok was an ideal location to implement and evaluate a lay health worker model, in which local workers receive training and clinical support, sometimes from a distance, to meet the needs of the youth in their community. Given the unique needs of this community, the improvement of youth mental health services is a priority for community members and leaders, as well as decision- and policy-makers in Ulukhaktok and the ISR, who are looking to support the growth of remote mental health services. All parties want to ensure that their youth have access to appropriate care that meets their mental health need, and in the context of their community and culture. One of the most important steps taken by the Ulukhaktok site team was to recruit local individuals as the ACCESS OM Youth Workers. These workers, an Elder and a young adult from the community, have been able to connect with the community’s youth in a way that no outsider would have been able to; they know the history of their community, the families, the youth, the culture, and the way of life.

As important as meeting the needs of young Inuvialuit in their community, the Ulukhaktok site team has embraced the ACCESS OM project as a true network initiative. While they understand how the transformation of youth services might look in their community, the site team members were invigorated and curious to learn from the success of an ACCESS OM site whose service was further along the pathway of transformation.

To attend to this curiosity, three core Ulukhaktok site team members (the two youth workers and the site lead/coordinator) travelled across the country to Eskasoni First Nation in Nova Scotia in August 2017 to partake in several days of applied, in-person co-learning.

For instance, the Ulukhaktok team was able to observe their Cape Breton partners' conception of the establishment of a youth space and the integration of traditional interventions and peer support into a clinical mental health framework. The Eskasoni site team shared how they have integrated the ACCESS OM project into their delivery of culturally appropriate services to their community's youth. The site teams' collaboration enabled the important transfer of knowledge and sharing of ideas and practices between two very different, but not altogether dissimilar, communities and cultures.

The Ulukhaktok team returned to their community at the beginning of the school year, fresh with ideas and practices learned from their Mi'kmaq partners. Progress has continued throughout the year, and the site team is receiving in-community support from McGill University and IRC affiliates to continue generating new knowledge via qualitative research, as well as practical support in building local research capacities. In sharing the preliminary story of the transformation that is taking place in Ulukhaktok, the IRC is considering how this framework might prove effective in some – or all – of the region's six communities.

## ACCESS OPEN MINDS DOES IAYMH 2017



From September 24 to 26 2017, the International Association for Youth Mental Health (IAYMH) hosted their fourth conference on youth mental health in Dublin, Ireland. Over 20 ACCESS OM network members, representing eight different sites as well as the several members of the central office team, attended the conference in different capacities, sharing the learnings of the ACCESS OM network thus far and learning from others who are doing similar work in different contexts. The conference proved to be an excellent opportunity for ACCESS OM network members to link with other service providers, youth, and researchers from home and from abroad, and the experience kindled new

connections and ideas for transforming youth mental health. In addition to a number of poster and tabletop presentations, these four presentations highlighted the work of ACCESS OM site teams, and within the ACCESS OM network:

1) **“ACCESS OM: Thriving in a National Youth Council”** (presentation by the ACCESS OM National Youth council)

2) **“Future-proofing timely, high-quality, evidence-informed youth mental health care in Canada”** (panel discussion including Dr. Srividya Iyer, Scientific-Clinical Director of ACCESS OM)

3) **“Implementing data collection for ACCESS OM: Bringing care closer”** (Daphne Hutt-MacLeod, Site Lead for ACCESS OM Eskasoni First Nation)

4) **“Youth voice, community engagement and collaboration with the justice system: Key ingredients in tackling urgent youth-related challenges in remote Inuit communities in Canada”** (Minnie Grey, Executive Director, Nunavik Regional Board of Health and Social Services; representative of ACCESS Open Minds/Saqijjuq Puvirnituuq)



## Knowledge Sharing Sessions

Throughout the year, ACCESS OM network members and interested individuals from across Canada gather via teleconferencing technology to learn about specific topics of interest. These Knowledge Sharing Sessions occur every other month, bringing together experts in the field of youth mental health with teams of service providers to enhance their practice, connect theory to practice, and further connect the ACCESS OM network. The ACCESS OM network hosted 6 (six) sessions during 2017-18 year, including the following:

- 13 April 2017** Topic: Evidence-informed treatment of anorexia and bulimia nervosa  
Presenter: Howard Steiger
- 13 June 2017** Topic: Listening to children's voices: Ethical challenges in child mental health  
Presenter: Franco A. Carnevale
- 1 November 2017** Topic: Stepping up on Queer and Trans youth mental health  
Presenter: Fae Johnstone
- 12 December 2017** Topic: Working with youth with concerning substance use and their families and carers  
Presenter: Joanna Henderson
- 26 January 2018** Topic: Building a strong, effective and collaborative youth serving sector  
Presenter: Lisa Lachance
- 6 February 2018** Topic: Research to practice: International consensus on response to nonsuicidal self-injury  
Presenter: Nancy Heath

## Generation of new knowledge translation materials: Community Mapping Guide and Early Identification Guide

In April 2017, with input from network members across the country, guides were published covering two core components of the ACCESS OM Service Transformation Framework: the Community Mapping Guide and Early Identification Guide. The guides were designed to provide evidence-based practical guidelines for youth mental health services, and included both information as well as practical worksheets to support sites in undertaking the community mapping process and creating a plan for designing and evaluating activities to increase referrals and early identification of youth in need. Available on the ACCESS OM website, these guides have been downloaded over 200 times and have been scooped up at events. Stay tuned for 2 additional guides to be released soon: Peer Support and E-mental Health.



## Data, data, data



### The launch of online data collection

On May 17, 2017 the ACCESS OM web-based data collection platform was launched, enabling real-time data collection and consolidation at all service sites. Using a customized platform hosted on Dacima Software, design of this innovative platform took over 9 months, involving consultation and input from youth, families/careers, clinicians and researchers from across the network. This first-of-its-kind platform was designed to collect data in a user-friendly way and provide clinically relevant information in real-time to those

providing care. This marked a major innovation in integrating and implementing data collection and evaluation in the real-world settings of integrated youth mental health services.

### Creation of a national minimum dataset for youth mental health services

Building on the innovation and implementation success of the ACCESS OM protocol and data collection platform, and the increasing momentum and provincial public investment in integrated youth mental health services, ACCESS OM began a collaboration with Foundry BC, Youth Wellness Hubs Ontario, and Frayme. The initial aim of this collaboration was to help define a minimum common set of indicators to be collected across these initiatives, and ultimately help create a national dataset for integrated mental health services across Canada. This would lead to both the creation of a national initiative that would cut across provincial boundaries (seldom seen in Canada) and help ensure that youth mental health services across Canada are offering evidence-based, quality care.

Initial meetings of this group occurred in December 2017, and work is ongoing, with each partner initiative quickly ramping up their own services at the same time. The ongoing collaboration of this group, while small for the moment, will mark a major shift in health care planning, delivery and evaluation in Canada, moving beyond the typical jurisdictional and professional divides that characterize the Canadian health care landscape.

## GETTING THE WORD OUT!

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