

S RTP - Project Description Form #207

PART I:

Name of Schulich faculty member who will supervise the project Cheryl Forchuk

Supervisor's Schulich, Western, Hospital or Lawson Email cforchuk@uwo.ca

Schulich Department Psychiatry

PART II - Project Description

Title of Project Preventing Discharge to No Fixed Address- Youth (NFA-Y) and P2PEP

Background

The NFA-Y project builds upon several successful projects testing a potential best practice for preventing hospital discharge into homelessness for adults. The strategy will make housing and financial resources more accessible to you (aged 16 to 24) admitted to inpatient wards at London Health Sciences Centre (Victoria Hospital) and St. Joseph's Health Care London - Parkwood Institute Mental Health. A Community Liaison and Income Support Caseworker will be brought directly into the hospital and provide remote access to housing and social assistance databases. Youth ages 16 to 24 at risk of becoming homeless upon discharge will be able to access the services by drop-in, appointment and/or referral. Youth under the age of 16 will be warm transferred to the Children's Aid Society (CAS). Transitional caseworkers will provide post-discharge wrap-around supports for youth in order to assist with housing, financial and related needs.

With regard to P2PEP, the program aims to build off of the current Peer-2-Peer project by expanding its reach to outlying communities in Chatham-Kent via harm reduction satellite sites. These satellite sites will increase access to and uptake of harm reduction and overdose response services in hard to reach areas of Chatham-Kent for People Who Use Substances through building peer capacity, establishing peer-led Harm Reduction Satellite Sites, and expanding outreach services. The needs of the community will first need to be explored to ascertain what services should be provided followed by an evaluation phase of the services adopted within the satellite sites.

Hypothesis

The specific objectives of the study are to customize the NFA strategy for youths ages 16-24 and to implement and evaluate the NFA-Y strategy to develop a best-practice for hospitals that addresses the needs of vulnerable youth. The P2PEP study consists of the following goals: 1) Increase access to and uptake of harm reduction and overdose response services in hard to reach areas of Chatham-Kent for People Who Use Drugs through building peer capacity, establishing peer-led Harm Reduction Satellite Sites, and expanding outreach services. 2) Demonstrate the positive impacts of peer engagement and service delivery models that meet people where they already are.

Proposed Methodology

The NFA-Y program has been established in London hospital units at Parkwood Institute Mental Health Care and London Health Sciences Centre (Victoria Hospital) allowing youth to access services via drop-in, referral, or appointment. Youth ages 16-24 can meet with:

- an Ontario Works Caseworker (financial assistance for basic needs, housing, and/or replacing identification);
- a Housing Stability Bank Worker from Salvation Army (financial assistance with rental arrears, utility arrears, or first/last month's rent);
- a Community Liaison from Youth Opportunities Unlimited (assists with house finding if a unit cannot be obtained before discharge, and/or to maintain housing and achieve other life goals);

- Children's Aid Society will connect with youth under the age of 16.

A one group, 3-time point, repeated measures design is being conducted with 77 youth to capture data related to the main study outcomes (i.e., participant remains 'housed'; health and service use; quality of life; community integration). Two years of retrospective quantitative data will help generate insights related to housing stability. Administrative data from staff implementing the intervention will be assessed to determine change in the rates of discharge from hospital to homelessness. The service providers will track total numbers served and duration/intensity of support required.

P2PEP consists of baseline mixed-method interviews with up to 65 clients and focus groups with up to 16 staff members. These responses will shape the services offered in phase 2 of the study which will be assessed using the same method as baseline. Interviews with clients will consist of a demographics questionnaire and open-ended questions

Both studies will collect qualitative data using interviews and focus groups, and analyzed using thematic and matrix analysis methods. Descriptive analysis and related statistical inference will be sought where meaningful.

Expected Outcomes

The outcomes of the NFA-Y project include:

- Reduction in rates of discharge from hospital to homelessness for youths ages 16-24
- Housing and financial stability for vulnerable youths
- Improved quality of life and community integration
- Reduced duration/intensity of health and supportive services
- Tailored intervention to prevent discharge into homelessness for hospitals that addresses the needs of vulnerable youths based on feedback from youths, hospital and service provider staff, and the literature.

Academic publications in peer-reviewed journals to add to the literature on homeless prevention.

The outcomes of the P2PEP study include:

- Services needed to be provided by satellite sites.
- The effectiveness of these services.
- What did not go well and what can be improved.

Academic publications in peer-reviewed journals to add to the literature on addiction on harm reduction

Research Environment - Description of the number of research personnel, primary location of research, size of lab, etc

The Mental Health Nursing Research Alliance (MHNRA) is part of Parkwood institute Research and Lawson Health Research Institute. Led by Dr. Cheryl Forchuk, the MHNRA conducts research focusing on mental health, homelessness, and addiction. The lab is located at St. Joseph's Health Care in London, Ontario, Canada at the Parkwood Mental Health Care building. The research team is comprised of more than 30 personnel which include research coordinators, research assistants, graduate research assistants, and undergraduate students. Many of the projects involve work with other hospitals, community organizations, hospital staff, patients, and community members.

Names and titles of other individuals who will be involved with the research project?

Anne Peters - Project Coordinator NFA Y

Jonathan Serrato - Project Coordinator P2PEP

Can this project be done remotely? Yes

Duration of Project Two Summers

Expected Objectives/Accomplishments for Student for Year 1?

Participating in project activities including data collection in hospital and the community.

Expected Objectives/Accomplishments for Student for Year 2?

Participating in project activities including data analysis, presentations, and writing for journal publication.

PART III - Certifications

If the project will require any certification - Human Ethics approvals from one or more of the following offices, please check the appropriate box below.

Human Ethics: If you have the protocol information, please enter it below (or enter the status of the approval). Approved (HSREB 115779)

Note: certification approval should be obtained prior to the start of the summer. Projects without this approval will not be a priority for funding.