

COHI Bulletin

BULLETIN No. 5, WINTER 2009

Suite 500A – 970 Lawrence Avenue West, Toronto, ON M6A 3B6

☎ 416-239-2448 • 📠 416-239-5074 • ✉ mail@cohi-soci.ca

www.cohi-soci.ca



COHI Strategic Planning: At the Crossroads

In the spring of 2009, COHI will be reviewing and revising its strategic plan for the next three- to five-year period.

Facing new challenges

There are many changes happening in the community health field that impact accountability and accreditation. While the number of community health centres (CHCs), community family health teams and aboriginal health access centres in Ontario may be growing, they are faced with new financial, political and accountability pressures as they come under the jurisdiction of the Local Health Integration Networks (LHINs). With an increasing emphasis on accountability and performance measures, it appears that accreditation will become even more important for publicly funded organizations into the future.

As we proceed further into this era of regionalization and increased accountability, COHI is thinking strategically about how best to ensure that Building Healthier Organizations (BHO), our community-based accreditation program originally developed by CHCs to support the CHC Model of Care, can be kept current, relevant and resilient.

At the crossroads

There are significant decisions that need to be made about emerging opportunities and challenges. We welcome your thoughts about these.

COHI is considering three possible directions and is open to hearing about others. They are:

1. **Enhancing what is there** - COHI remains an entity as we are, promoting ourselves as a community-based accreditation

alternative for health and social services. Adaptations to how we deliver our service would likely be made to achieve efficiencies and be relevant for the sectors we serve.

2. **Partnership and rebirth** – COHI joins with partners in the next few months and transforms itself into a new, larger non-profit that accredits health and social services in the community sector. This is a time-limited opportunity to join with several partners (Children's Mental Health Ontario, Family Service Ontario and Canada, Ontario Association of Credit Counselling Services, Association of Ontario Children's Aid Societies and Big Brothers/Big Sisters Association of Canada) to create a combined community-based

...see *Crossroads*, page 2

COHI News

What's New at COHI

Changes at the Board

In November, Carla Palmer resigned from her position as Executive Director of Barrie CHC and also from the COHI Board. We will miss her and wish her well in her new position as Director of Community Programs, Partnerships and Alliances at York Central Hospital in Toronto. We are pleased that she continues to be involved as a volunteer on COHI's Governance Committee (previously Board Development Committee) and with our upcoming strategic planning.

In December, the Board was very pleased to appoint Michelle

COHI AGM – Celebrating Ten Years

The COHI AGM is set for Wednesday, June 3, 2009, 4:30 pm at the Holiday Inn Select, 970 Dixon Road, Toronto, in conjunction with the annual conference of the Association of Ontario Health Centres.

This AGM marks COHI's tenth anniversary! We welcome your ideas for how best to celebrate our many achievements together.

Hurtubise, Executive Director at the London Inter-Community Health Centre, to fill the vacancy. Michelle's board appointment will be brought forward for ratification by the membership at the AGM.

Call for Board Nominations

At the upcoming AGM, there will be at least three vacancies to fill on the COHI Board. COHI member

organizations are invited to nominate interested candidates.

This year, the Board is seeking individuals with skills and knowledge in the following areas: managing organizational change, business development, marketing, communications and public relations. In terms of perspectives, we are especially seeking candidates

...see *Board Nominations*, page 2

Crossroads, from page 1...

accreditation approach under a transformed COHI.

3. **Affiliation** - COHI affiliates with, or possibly is folded into, another accreditation organization.

Strategic consultations

COHI's strategic planning process includes an environmental scan, a Board planning retreat in April, and consultations with members as well as stakeholders beyond the CHC sector to obtain feedback concerning the three options that are before the COHI Board. Consultations have included a February session with community health centre executive directors.

As part of this process, COHI will also be considering different options for delivery of BHO and for assessment of fees. The adaptations that COHI is examining include:

- Further streamlining BHO content and processes.
- Changing to a four-year review cycle.
- Creating a sliding fee scale reflecting organization size.
- Using volunteer Team Leaders.

As we consider longer term organizational directions, we continue

Board Nominations, from page 1...

who reflect a northern perspective, ethno-racial diversity, a rural perspective and an executive-director background. In terms of affiliations, the board is particularly inviting individuals who may have experience with and linkages to the sectors to which we are currently reaching out (community support services, community mental health and addictions) and to sectors represented on the accreditation coalition (family services, children's mental health, Big Brothers Big Sisters and credit counselling). In order to stand for the board, individuals must be affiliated with one of our member organizations and in addition may bring this broader experience from their other roles.

For an extra copy of the nominations form, contact the COHI office. ■

to work with other sectors to explore the application of BHO to their accreditation needs. Specifically:

- We are piloting BHO with one or more Canadian Mental Health Association branches in Ontario. BHO is now among the three preferred accreditation models endorsed by the Ontario Federation of Community Mental Health and Addiction Programs for its members in the province.
- Two BHO pilots are underway with Ottawa-based community support agencies as part of discussions with

the Ontario Community Support Agencies.

- COHI held a BHO workshop for the Association of Ontario Community Legal Clinics, which has expressed interest in potentially collaborating with BHO.

More information

At this important time in the life of our organization, we welcome your thoughts about where COHI and BHO are heading. Contact Executive Director Barbara Wiktorowicz . ■

Update on COHI Projects

Work proceeds on two projects COHI is conducting with financial support from the Ministry of Health and Long Term Care.

The BHO Roadmap to a Healthier Organization

COHI is developing a guide to support new community health organizations in their healthy development, and to help established organizations prepare for, and get the most out of, BHO. This resource is expected to be ready for piloting in spring 2009.

Resources for Effective Governance and Strategic Leadership

This project, funded by the Ontario Ministry of Health, will develop resources to support new and existing community health centres to strengthen their organizational systems, and in particular their governance and strategic leadership capacities.

A learning needs assessment was conducted last summer and fall where CHC board members, executive directors and senior managers made their interests known. Since then, COHI has compared this with findings from a literature review of best practices, as well as an inventory of resources and tools available to the sector through web sites, books and courses. The following are subject areas that were prioritized for development by the project's Advisory Committee:

- Thinking and acting strategically throughout an organization
- Board membership – community governance, inclusive organizational practices, diversity
- Community engagement and strategic alliances
- Quality oversight and accreditation
- Organizational performance monitoring and management
- Planning for organizational transitions (includes succession planning)

Over the coming year the project will develop resources and tools in these priority areas as project funds allow. In addition, the project will highlight and package numerous existing resources that were identified on the topics of basic board operations and basic management functions.

To learn more about this project and to access the Learning Needs Assessment Report, Inventory of Resources Report, Annotated Bibliography and Analysis of Themes and Gaps in the Literature Report, visit the Members Only section of COHI's Web site.

Thanks again to all the board members, executive directors and senior managers who participated in the Learning Needs Assessment surveys, focus groups and interviews, and to the Project Advisory Committee.

Preparing for your BHO Review

Beyond the Database: Preparing Your Documents and Evidence for BHO

Documents are not the only evidence used by BHO to review and accredit organizations. Yet, many BHO indicators require documents to be submitted as evidence that policies, procedures and practices are in place in the organization being reviewed.

While the BHO Organization Database is the tool you use to submit documents and respond to indicators, document preparation involves much more than simple data entry. It is a process that should begin at least a year ahead of your on-site review with a plan and a deliberate approach to organizing yourself and the evidence you want to provide to BHO.

Tips on preparing documents as evidence

Know your timeline.

- In the year following a BHO review, set your preparation for the next one in motion.
 - Review the areas for development identified in your BHO Final Report and set priorities and steps to address them.
 - Familiarize yourself again with BHO's standards, ensuring you make note of the ones which will require you to demonstrate a "track record" of good or mandatory practice. Some indicators, for example, require three years of evidence.
- Start concerted preparation efforts no less than a year ahead of your on-site review.
- Share and refer to the Deadlines Letters you receive from COHI to identify key due dates.
- Create a BHO preparation work plan or timetable.
- Plan on having more than one person attend a BHO Preparation / Database Training session.

Get people involved.

- Establish a joint board/staff or management/staff BHO committee to oversee preparation.

- Clearly assign key roles and responsibilities (preparation oversight, BHO content coordination, technical coordination, back up, data entry, etc.)
- Ensure your whole BHO team is aware of important milestones and due dates.
- Have a senior manager stay closely in tune with the process.
- Engage staff and board members in the process. For example:
 - Develop a communications plan to keep all staff and board informed throughout the BHO process.
 - Assign small teams a BHO checklist or set of standards against which to do a self-assessment. Use the results to develop a plan to address key areas for growth and development.
 - Review BHO standards at board and staff meetings over a number of months.
 - Have small tasks groups that can draw from their varied experiences read a set of indicators carefully and think about how best to demonstrate that the indicator has been met, with real-life examples.

Get and stay informed.

- Ask COHI to give a presentation on BHO.
- Ensure everyone involved has the latest version of the BHO Manual, database, checklists, etc. and

destroy outdated copies. Up-to-date versions are always available in the Members Only section of the COHI Web site.

- Read and distribute the quarterly COHI bulletin. It often contains tips on preparing as well as topic-specific articles that touch on new indicators and interpretation of BHO requirements.
- Set up clear systems that work for you.
- Decide how you will file or track documents you intend to use as evidence for BHO as they are created or revised. Some organizations create a directory on their network with folders labeled according to BHO Document Numbers 1 to 84.
 - Centralize tools and information to avoid duplication (e.g., avoid multiple versions of the same documents, install and work in the database in one central location).

Assure quality and completeness.

- Use the database's Report Wizard to output useful reports that can tell you the status of what you have entered so far in the database, what is missing, and which indicators are likely to come up in which interview.
- Have a senior manager closely review the inserted documents and links before sending to COHI to ensure the greatest possible accuracy in matching BHO requirements ■

Revised BHO Checklist for Administrative Chart Audits

BHO has a revised Checklist for Reporting Administrative Client Record Audits.

The checklist is more adaptable to organizations that have made or are making the transition to electronic client records and it is easier to complete.

Download the checklist in the Members Only section of the COHI Web site.

We want you!

Become a BHO Peer Reviewer!

BHO is currently looking for candidates to become peer reviewers.

The credibility of any accreditation and quality-review process rests largely on the calibre of its reviewers. People in an organization undergoing a BHO review know they will get a team of excellent, qualified reviewers that are their peers – professionals grounded in the realities of the sector and with direct experience doing what they do. That is why we need you!

Do I need special skills or qualifications?

Reviewers are called on to exercise good judgement, ask good questions

and be good communicators, perform well under pressure, analyze and synthesize information effectively, demonstrate integrity and trust, and work well as part of a team. To qualify for PR training, you must be an executive director, manager, senior staff member or board member at one of COHI's member organizations.

How much work is involved?

Peer reviewer candidates are expected to participate in two days of training and complete two reviews over the two-year period following training. Each review involves three-four days of work at the site of the organization being reviewed and two-three days of work in advance of the review and after (reviewing documents, entering decisions, reviewing reports as a team). Expenses related to reviewer travel, accommodation and meals are reimbursed by COHI.

What are the benefits of becoming a reviewer?

Our reviewers tell us they and their organizations benefit greatly from the experience. They consistently comment on the value of the experience for professional development and as a way to gain insights from the way other organizations do things. Most of all, being a reviewer is a great way to help prepare your organization for its own BHO review.

How do I apply?

The next training is scheduled for May 6-7 in Toronto, so get your application in soon. For an application form or to find out more, go to the Peer Reviewers section of the COHI Web site at www.cohi-soci.ca or contact Barbara Wiktorowicz, Executive Director, at 416-239-2448 x 222, bwiktorowicz@cohi-soci.ca. ■

Training & Development 2009

Coming up

- Team leader meeting – March 30
- Peer reviewer training (English) – May 6 – 7
- BHO Preparation and Database Training, Southwestern Ontario – spring 2009 TBD
- BHO Preparation and Database Training, Ottawa area – spring 2009 TBD

Editors: Isabelle Patenaude and Barbara Wiktorowicz

For further information, please contact:

Community Organizational Health Inc. Santé des organismes communautaires

Offering the Building Healthier Organizations Accreditation Program

Suite 500A – 970 Lawrence Avenue West, Toronto, ON M6A 3B6

☎ 416-239-2448 • 📠 416-239-5074 • ✉ mail@cohi-soci.ca

Barbara Wiktorowicz, Executive Director

Ph: 416-239-2448, ext. 222

E-mail: bwiktorowicz@cohi-soci.ca

Isabelle Patenaude, Accreditation and Education Specialist

Ph: 416-239-2448, ext. 224

E-mail: ipatenaude@cohi-soci.ca

Saraj McCormack, Administrative Coordinator

Ph: 416-239-2448, ext. 221

E-mail: smccormack@cohi-soci.ca

www.cohi-soci.ca