

Chapter Three: Securing Resources

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Introduction

When we think of securing resources to help us promote mental health in the community, we generally think primarily of finding - that is, financial backing from government, social service agencies, business and industry, and public and private foundations. In this chapter we will explore various funding sources and ways of approaching them, but we will also look at alternatives to traditional funding sources and relationships -- new places to look for resources and support in your own community.

3.1 Grants

What Are Grants?

A grant refers to a financial award to your group or organization to carry out the mental health promotion project you have proposed. Grants are sometimes given in resources other than cash (e.g. travel expenses, time off work) and occasionally, especially for research, are made to individuals as well as groups. In this section we'll focus particularly on cash grants to groups, because they are the most relevant to local-level mental health promotion initiatives.

Show me the money

There are many reasons why a grant could be helpful to a mental health promotion initiative -- getting a grant may enable you to do work that might never get done otherwise. Mental health promotion projects take time. Receiving funding may allow you to pay salaries and cover expenses that arise as a result of starting a new community venture. In many situations, grants are desirable; in some, they are essential.

There are cases, however, when securing financial resources is not necessary to build an effective community response to a mental health problem. Many local mental health promotion initiatives can and do operate with little or no funding. When you think about it, there are times when you can do a great deal of work to promote mental health with very little money, or no money at all. Organizing a meeting, holding an event, getting local policies changed -- these and other community actions are either cost-free or come with very modest price tags.

Be careful what you wish for

There are also times when having funding can become an actual drawback. Someone has to figure out how to spend the funds, make the payments, keep the records and be accountable for it. Also, when money becomes a part of the equation, the all-volunteer, let's-everyone-pitch-in spirit of the project can become threatened. Sometimes we are better sticking to the non-cash resources that are available to us. We will talk about the benefits of alternative sources of support later in this chapter.

Before you decide to apply for a grant, you should be clear about your reasons for applying. The following questions might help you to clarify those reasons:

- What are my true long-term program goals?
- Can I do the same work as well, or almost as well, without grant money? What will I actually use the money for?
- Am I planning to apply simply because the grant funds are potentially available?
- Is a grant the only way (or the best way) to do what I want to do?
- Are there other (and perhaps better) ways of getting the money I need?
- Am I clear on my realistic chances of success in being awarded a grant?
- Am I prepared to commit the time and energy to producing a top-quality grant proposal?

You should discuss these questions with the members of your group and come to a decision together. Your group's careful and honest answers to these questions will shape your next steps, which might or might not involve grant writing.

When Could A Grant Be Helpful?

There are a number of scenarios where applying for a grant might be your best course of action:

- when you want to start a new mental health promotion project, or expand an existing project, and financial costs are involved;
- when these costs cannot be covered by accessing existing community resources;
- when you know of a granting agency that makes awards to cover the types of costs you envision;

- when you know you meet the eligibility requirements for such awards;
- when you are able to commit the needed time and energy to the grant-writing process.

After considering the above questions and guidelines, perhaps your thinking about funding will change, or you'll decide to support your work in some other way. There may be a number of options besides grants available to you, such as support from local service associations such as Rotary and Lion's Club. It's worth looking into all of the potential sources of support that are out there.

But perhaps, after assessing your resource needs, you'll decide that you want to write a grant proposal after all.

How Do You Apply For Grants?

Grants can be a wonderful way of supporting community mental health promotion work, but obtaining and administering a grant can be a real challenge.

There are two main steps involved in seeking a grant. The first is the preliminary work - preparing and researching, and the second is writing the proposal itself.

First of all you have to find the right source. There are three main sources of grants:

- the government often federal, sometimes provincial and occasionally local;
- private business and corporations;
- foundations.

Before you begin the process of finding the right funder for your mental health promotion project, it's helpful to think strategically about how you are going to proceed.

There are many thousands of potential granting agencies¹ -- how can you find the ones most suitable for your mental health promotion project? It takes some research, but there are many resources you can use to make your search easier. Some of those resources are located in the Tools section of this chapter, where you will find a section covering guidelines for grantsmanship, and a short list of potential funding contacts and helpful fundraising websites.

After completing the preliminary research, you're ready for the second step - writing the grant proposal. You'll find a number of helpful tips ahead in the section called "Tips for writing a proposal".

When the Funder's Perspective Doesn't Not Quite Fit Yours

We may have come a long way in changing our approach to mental health issues from a deficiency focus to one that builds on individual and community capacity, but many funding programs have not kept pace with that shift. Most funders of community activity have traditionally asked that proposals begin with a "needs" or "problem" statement, often reinforced with a "needs survey".

¹ For our purposes here, we will refer to all potential funders as "agencies".

A statement of community need is a value-laden statement. On one hand, it acknowledges people's rights and entitlements as citizens, and contains an implicit notion of what constitutes an acceptable minimum standard of personal and community well-being.

On the other hand, using the language of needs has often obscured the political or ideological nature of the issue. Instead of focusing on the particular problem or issue at hand, discussion of need can divert attention to the more technical (and safer) question of providing solutions. It draws us away from questions about why things are the way they are in our communities, and has often led to the development of more services, without first analyzing the root causes of the problem.

This needs or deficiency-based format is at odds with a capacity-focused approach of mental health promotion, which encourages people to maximize the use of their own skills and resources to solve problems. Because the criteria most funders use to assess eligibility continue to reflect a needs-oriented approach, sometimes we have to "play the game" and frame our mental health promotion initiative in the terms that they set out.

The original funding proposal for the Seniors' Medicine Wheel project differed quite substantially from the eventual project. The funder required that the issue be framed in terms of needs/services, but the staff at the Friendship Centre knew that the issue they were confronting was not one of a shortage of services. The project thus proposed the need to link the Elders to the available but underused community services, rather than creating new services.

Once the funding was received, the project was carried out according to the plan stated in the proposal. The funding also served another purpose however: it supported the Friendship Centre to bring the Elders together on a weekly basis, which resulted in the next stage of the project, where mental health promotion became the focus.

3.2 In-Kind Support

Besides applying for grants, you might also want to look at other available resources. For example, you may want to explore the use of non-cash contributions, or "in-kind" support.

What is In-Kind Support?

In-kind support refers to the resources other money that are available to you. In-kind resources might be the things you would otherwise pay for with dollars, or they might be the things that money can't buy. When a member of the community offers to give you a service, supplies or volunteers their time, you're receiving in-kind support. This kind of resource should not be seen as inferior to dollars, but as an equally important part of the resource pool available.

You are probably already familiar with some of the forms of in-kind support. From your experience working in your community, you have most likely already received some free photocopying from a local organization, free meeting or office space or goods donated for a fundraising raffle.

These are all examples of in-kind support, which you may or not be counting as contributions to your initiative. When you think about it, you'll probably be able to come up with dozens of things that you could ask for, rather than pay for.

Seeking in-kind support should be an integral part of your plan for action and sustainability. In order to succeed in promoting mental health in your community, you'll need more than just

financial support, you'll need people, goods and services. Let's look more closely at the three basic types of in-kind resources.

Goods are just about anything that isn't money - for example, paper equipment, furniture, food, etc. Donations of goods are often made by businesses, governments, civic groups and even private homes.

Services refer to the things that people do for you. The donation of services, or the provision of services for a reduced fee, can happen in many ways throughout the community. Examples include transportation, public relations and promotional activities, construction and renovation, printing facilities, etc.

People are the key to all resources in most mental health promotion activities. People who volunteer their time, or provide assistance for a small fee, can be very important resources for your project. But volunteers are not the only people resources that can contribute to your project; some employers may 'loan' their paid employees to work on community efforts.

A few examples of the resources people can provide include clerical assistance, legal advice, and people who volunteer their time to sit on the steering committees that guide local mental health promotion efforts.

Why Should You Solicit In-Kind Support?

- Many groups and individuals can't donate cash, or feel uncomfortable about doing so, but if asked would be happy to give supplies, space or time. Since mental health promotion initiatives often need these kinds of resources, this can be a great match.
- Generating in-kind resources helps to build community support for your work. When someone donates a computer or some staff time, their connection to your project grows stronger. They have more of a stake in seeing you succeed. In the end, it's not only goods and services you are receiving; you're also fostering good will and developing new allies.
- In-kind supporters can also steer you to other sources of in-kind support sources that you might not have been aware of. By using their connections, you might be able to acquire that support as well. In this way, both your in-kind supporters and overall community support can grow.
- Although you might be uncomfortable at first asking businesses and organizations for donations, remember that seeking in-kind support is generally easier than asking for cash. Many businesses and corporations are looking for groups and projects to donate to, because they can use it as a tax write-off, and because it shows their involvement in, and generosity to, the community.
- Many grants require that your group raise a certain number of matching dollars. Often you'll be able to count in-kind donations as part of that sum. Even if your grant applications don't ask for matching dollars, in-kind contributions are an impressive demonstration of community support.

How Do You Solicit In-Kind Support?

- First, during a meeting of your steering committee, discuss your non-cash resource needs. Then brainstorm to determine which members of the community might be able to donate some or all of the resources.

- Set clear goals for your group's campaign.
- Plan ways to approach various members of your community. Do people involved in your project have good relationships with particular businesses, companies, institutions, or individuals? Have those people approach the businesses where they are known and respected.

In-kind donations received in the project were varied. In the Timmins site, the editor of the local newspaper offered to supply meals for the participants who came to the lunchtime planning meetings held at the Inclusion beginning of the project. Other in-kind donations included professional services such as computer training and teaching role-playing, as well as office space and photocopying.

Summary

- Securing resources for your project can involve applying for grants and other sources of financial support, but may also include a campaign to raise in-kind resources.
- A great deal of community-based mental health promotion work can be done with little or no money. Thinking creatively about how to use the resources that are already present in your community helps to increase community participation and support
- Applying for a grant is a two-part process that involves both preparation and research as well as the proposal writing itself.
- Before they applied for funding, the people responsible for each project were able to demonstrate evidence of significant investments of resources and time by local residents and organizations. This helped to ensure that their proposals were successful.
- Many granting agencies require that grantseekers express their proposal in terms of “needs”. Although this format is not in keeping with a capacity building approach, it is possible to express your mental health issue in such a way that it meets the funders requirements.
- In-kind support forms an integral part of the resource base for mental health promotion projects.
- Seeking in-kind resources will help you to expand the community networks that are essential to supporting and maintaining your project over the long run.
- Each project operated with limited financial resources, and made the most of available community assets and in-kind resources. Funding covered some start-up costs, but most of the resources used to carry out the projects were contributed directly from the communities themselves, in the form of people's time and energy, as well as material resources such as computers, photocopying, etc.

Tips For Raising In-Kind Resources

- **Keep track of your successes and failures** in obtaining in-kind support, and measure your progress in reaching your goals.

- **When you receive an in-kind donation, put a dollar value on it.** When a local organization agreed to type and photocopy your newsletter, estimate how much it would have cost you to have paid someone to do it. You just generated that amount, rather than having spent it!
- **Keep a careful accounting of the dollar value of your in-kind solicitations.** This will be important for your project if you decide to apply for grants and when you compile your annual financial records.
- **Make sure to send thank-you notes to your donors!** Remember to explicitly acknowledge your appreciation for the contributions you receive. If people feel appreciated, they are more likely to contribute towards your initiative again in the future.

For Writing A Proposal

What do funders like to see in a proposal? The following list suggests principles to keep in mind as you proceed:

Frame your project as an innovative and unique initiative

Does your proposal reflect that your project is unique, cutting edge and innovative? Or could you project simply be an extension of a local agency that already has a budget to provide similar services to community members? The funder's perspective is that they can only make a perceptible difference by reserving their support for programs or projects that might not be undertaken or completed without their assistance.

Fit the funder's mandate, not yours

Funders prefer to support projects that are expressed in simple terms, and which meet a clearly identified need. Proposals that appeal to funders will speak to your needs and their interests, and will be based on a complete review of the funder's printed and published materials.

Funders must balance competing interests through their funding decisions. Whereas funding agencies used to have general categories of support such as social sciences and humanities, today the divisions reflect a more mission-oriented approach to grant support with the current trend toward narrowing the parameters of grant support, you should make an extra effort to relate your project to the interests and aspirations of the funder.

Express your ideas clearly and thoughtfully

If the mental health promotion project you are proposing is well planned, the application should reflect that. Agencies fund projects that build on logical arguments. They don't fund good ideas; they fund projects they can defend.

Watch your language

Write your proposal using simple and understandable language. Where appropriate, use the terms used by the funding agency, and change your language to match the purpose of each section of the application. Every sentence should be calculated.

Build community support

Most organizations that make grants will want to know that your ideas have community support. This is because, generally speaking, part of a funder's mission is to serve the community. If you can build support before you start, that can be a big point in your favour.

” One thing I find compelling is some indication of community support or involvement in programs we are being asked to fund. I would encourage anyone who has newspaper articles about the importance of the organization or a special program, or unsolicited letters of praise, to send us copies of those”²

There are several ways of generating community support for your project. If you've followed the steps outlined in the previous chapters of this tool kit, you've undoubtedly already got a great deal of community support, from organizations and individuals in the community.

Identify your group's contribution to the project, and demonstrate this support to the funder through a detailed account of in-kind and other resources promised or already contributed to the project.

Keep track of the time you and others have spent researching and planning your mental promotion project. If you are working for an organization that supports your work, your hours will count as donated staff time. If you are volunteering, think about how much it would cost to purchase your time, and include this dollar figure as your group's contribution to the project.

Circulate an outline

Circulating an outline of your proposal as a rough draft, and seeking feedback will help build community support for your ideas, and will also serve to:

- validate (or occasionally, fail to validate) community interest in the idea;
- get others actively interested in the project;
- make it easier to obtain formal letters of support in a full-scale application, if they are needed;
- provide useful corrective feedback about your idea - others may think of points you hadn't thought of before.

Seek the input and advice of others

Most of the time, you'll want to gather the input of others in planning your grant application. Even if those people aren't experts in proposal writing, they may have interesting content ideas, good strategic thoughts, and often bits of specialized knowledge which one person alone will rarely have. And even if they don't provide input on any of those areas specifically, they can provide you with the support you need to get the job done.

When you do have a proposal draft, perhaps you know of a person with expertise in the area who would be willing to review your draft and give advice. Their expertise could take several forms - knowledge of the field of mental health promotion, a general understanding of how funding agencies work, or a particular familiarity with the funder you're applying to.

Tell them a little bit about yourself

Funders are very interested in finding out about you, the people responsible for carrying out the proposed mental health promotion project. They want to know if you have the experience and competence necessary to carry out the project. It's important, therefore, to describe the 'human

² Quote from a grants officer of a funding agency, from the CTB, Chapter 28, Section 8: Applying for a grant - the general approach. See annotated resource list for more info.

element' of your project - the background and accomplishments of those individuals who will play a leading role in the project.

Identify organizational commitment

While it may not always be possible, or even preferable, for mental health promotion projects to be affiliated with a certain institution, funding agencies tend to prefer to support projects that have some measure of organizational or institutional commitment

This commitment can take several forms. It may mean that the project is actually housed within a certain organization³, (such as Inclusion in Community and Helping Skills projects, which were housed within CMHA). Or it may simply mean that you have established a relationship with local institutions and organizations that will lend your project conceptual credence and some material support.

Either type of commitment provides funders with evidence of your project's accountability, as well as an indication that the activities of the project will be sustained after the initial funding runs out. Make sure to refer to in-kind support you have received for examples of concrete kinds of organizational commitment.

Include a budget

Funders need to have a clear understanding of what they are being asked to support and what others (both additional outside sources and, if there is one, the sponsoring organization) will contribute. That's why it's important to include a simple line item budget along with your proposal, to show how you intend to spend the funds you are requesting.

What financial or in-kind contributions (such as staff hours, administrative assistance, goods and services) are being made from other sources? Provide a detailed account of any other funds or resources you have accessed. Putting a dollar value on these resources demonstrates that you have already raised both funding and community support for your initiative.

Although the kind of items that will appear on budgets will vary greatly across projects, there are a few helpful rules of thumb and new ideas to help you set up there are a few helpful rules of thumb and new ideas to help you set up your budget:

- A minimum of 10% of the total financial resources should be allocated to evaluation;
- You might want to include an amount for honoraria, to recognize the hard work put in by your volunteers - especially those with limited incomes;
- Many funders will support the development of internet-based resources, such as a project web page. This will help you to publicize and disseminate the learnings of your project, and the funder will appreciate the publicity they will receive by having their name on your website.

Include an evaluation plan

The ability to critically assess the value of the process and the outcomes of your project is crucial to its overall success, and funders want to see that you have a well-thought-out plan for doing so. Your proposal should include a detailed breakdown of the procedures you will use to evaluate the success of the project.

³ If your project is housed within a specific organization, you should provide an overview of the needs served by that organization, and what it does, much like we provided in the introduction to this Tool kit.

Have a plan for spreading the word

It's important to address how the results and learnings from your project will be disseminated. Funders are increasingly interested in finding ways in which the results of their funded activities can be shared with a larger audience than just those receiving the grant. They want to see how you can generate broadly applicable themes, wide participation and meaningful impact from the thoughtful use of scarce resources.

Funding agencies often want to support projects that can serve as models or examples that could help other communities and organizations achieve similar goals. Try to articulate why you are in a good position to take a leadership role in mental health promotion, how your project has evolved, and its potential to contribute innovations well beyond your immediate community.

Ensure sustainability

Just as crucial as providing a clear explanation of the importance of your project is including a discussion of how your project will be supported when the funding period ends. Funders prefer that community mental health promotion initiatives be an activity that they may have helped launch.

Tell them if you're applying for other sources of funding

Funders are interested in knowing if you are submitting requests for funding to other agencies, or if you have other parallel fundraising strategies on the go. Try to show them that you are thinking creatively about how to leverage funds from a variety of sources.

Make a visual impact

Your proposal should be clearly laid out and double-spaced, with an introduction, a statement of need, and a plan of action. Appropriate headings and sections should be included so that the reader can easily identify each major point that is being made.

The proposal should be submitted with a cover letter⁴ highlighting the main points of the proposal, and most importantly, indicating why the project is a priority and has the support of the community. A statement such as this is important because it calls the funder's attention to the significance of the project and implicitly, suggests that the proposal should be reviewed with the same amount of attention that went into the preparation.

Follow up with the funder

It's a good idea to work with a grants officer at the funding agency as much as possible through the entire process of developing your request. Your proposal will have a much better chance of being considered for funding if it has been preceded by contact with staff of the agency and/or an inquiry letter.

In the Inclusion project, a CMHA staff member met with grants officer at the Trillium Foundation after having sent a letter of intent. They learned what was important to the funder (e.g. letters of support) and what was not allowed in the budget (e.g. rent).

Keep in touch with the potential funder to answer any questions they may have and update them on any new developments relevant to your proposal. Build in a strategy to seek the funder's advice and assistance in locating other funding sources, especially if your request is declined.

⁴ from a highly regarded member of the community who supports your project, or a senior member of your sponsoring organization

Checklist

Before submitting your proposal, make sure you covered all the important steps. Your proposal should address the following basic questions:

- a statement of why the project is necessary;
- a plan for implementing;
- a specific timetable;
- a statement of how your project is unique, or groundbreaking in the field;
- the skills, capacities and assets which local residents will contribute to the project;
- a statement of how the project will be administered;
- a statement of how the project will be evaluated;
- a budget that is related closely to the proposed activities;
- all the elements required by the funder's guidelines.

Tools

You will find the following tools in this section:

1. Sample Funding proposal of the Helping Skills Project;
2. Guidelines for grantsmanship;
3. Potential funding contacts;
4. Helpful fundraising websites.

1. Sample Funding Proposal

Here is a copy of the successful funding proposal for the Helping Skills project It was developed by Moyra Buchan, Executive Director of the Newfoundland and Labrador Division of the CMHA.

Building Helping Skills Executive Summary

1. Applicant

The Canadian Mental Health Association, Newfoundland Division. Established 1964, incorporated May 11, 1984.

Mission: To promote the mental health of all people, through public education, advocacy, service, research and community development.

2. Project Partners

CMHA will be working in collaboration with Community Health Boards in two health regions, partner agencies involved in the provision of mental health services (mental health units, public

health nurses, social services offices, school guidance counselors) and with volunteers from various groups within communities (e.g. Women's Institutes, displaced workers, parent-teacher associations, retired teachers) who are interested in becoming peer counsellors.

3. Purpose and Reason

To build partnerships between the formal and informal sectors in the area of mental health; via a mentoring and skill transfer process, to increase the knowledge, skills and involvement of community members in supporting their peers and addressing the health needs of their communities.

The health care restructuring process in Newfoundland is taking place at a time when many individuals, families and communities are under unprecedented stress as a result of the failure of the fishery. Community health boards are seriously under-resourced, existing helping services are stretched to breaking point, and there is an urgent need to develop alternative support networks.

4. Benefits

The "Train-the-Trainers" and skill transfer process will develop understanding of the basic human skills of helping and clarify areas where professional intervention is needed. By mobilizing and strengthening informal helping resources, professional helpers will develop a network of alternatives and increase the efficient use of scarce services. Peer helpers will expand the knowledge and skill base within the community, increase the sense of community responsibility for and participation in health issues, and enhance the community's ability to identify and advocate for its needs. The process of collaboration between sectors will help to increase understanding on the part of all partners of the kinds of role shift required of them in the changing health care system.

5. Continuity

The support network established among local professional and non-professional helpers in the course of the project will be self-sustaining by its completion and the continued involvement of the peer counselors and the repetition of the training program for new recruits as required. The model and Resource Manual will enable the process to be replicated in other regions.

Sponsoring Organization

The Canadian Mental Health Association, Newfoundland Division, is a voluntary, charitable organization established in 1964, Registered Charity # 0008144-11. Its mandate is to promote the mental health of all Newfoundlanders through public education, advocacy, services, research and community development. It has local branches in Gander, Trinity-Conception and Labrador West which are represented on the 16 person provincial Board of Directors. Membership includes consumers, family members, service providers and members of the community.

The CMHA Division Office in St. John's serves as a mental health resource centre which provides information and referral services for the province at large. Through special projects, CMHA carries out research and community development and pioneers new responses to mental health needs. In the present environment of rapid social and economic change in the province, the Division is working to develop new ways for people to cope with the stresses of daily living, such as unemployment, family problems and illness.

Since 1990, CMHA has developed a province-wide self-help network for consumers of mental health services and a support network for family members and caregivers; has sponsored self-help initiatives in other areas including gambling addiction and sexual abuse; has completed a Community Needs Assessment which gathered information about the effects of the fishery crisis

on people in rural communities; and has published a Directory of Counselling Services and a Directory of Self-Help Groups for the St. John's area.

The present proposal responds directly to information gained through the above activities. CMHA's "Needs Assessment for Community Self-Help" (1994), an earlier project supported by the Health Promotion Contribution Program, documented the tensions and anxieties caused by the collapse of the cod fishery, the stresses of financial hardship and loss of occupation, the conflict within communities between those who are on "the package" and those who are not. We have heard from community members, professional and non-professional alike, about the need for social support networks and helping resources (see Appendix A). The lack of available, affordable counseling services has been demonstrated through the Directories we have compiled, as well as by many of the over 3000 inquiries received in the last year. As the restructuring of health care services progresses, the need for a range of community alternatives becomes increasingly urgent.

CMHA Newfoundland Division is well placed to sponsor an innovative response to these issues. The Division has had substantial experience in the development of the informal sector and the processes through which individuals become empowered to assume responsibility for their own health issues, through self-care, mutual aid and advocacy. The proposed project represents an extension of previous initiatives in that it aims to mobilize informal resources and facilitate skill development within communities to address the emotional and social problems that people are experiencing.

The Division is grounded in the principles of community development that are needed in a mentoring and skill transfer process. As well, it is known for its work in self-help development, and will be a credible facilitator for a cooperative effort between the formal and informal sectors.

Because of its limited resources and the wide range of issues and concerns that come within its mandate, collaboration is a basic mode of operation for Newfoundland Division. It has a web of working partnerships with other organizations and agencies in both the formal and informal sectors, which enable resources to be maximized and duplication of effort avoided (e.g. Coalition of Mental Health Partners, CMHA Coalition for Families, Women's Health Network). CMHA is thus attuned, from hands-on experience, to the key concepts governing the restructuring of health care services.

Issues To Be Addressed

The restructuring of health care services is taking place in the context of particular needs in Newfoundland and Labrador. The shift to a community-based, health promotion perspective is happening in the midst of a painful transition resulting from the cod moratorium and the reduction in transfer payments. This pain is felt at every level - individual, family, community, region and province.

The community health boards charged with the responsibility to implement the health promotion mandate are seriously under-resourced. In the area of mental health, the coordinators recently appointed in three regions are reporting social and emotional distress in communities to which they have no means of responding. Affordable counseling services are desperately lacking in this province and are virtually non-existent in rural areas. The priest, the family doctor and the public health nurse are the local overstretched resources, and people wait up to a year to see psychiatrists and other mental health professionals.

There is an urgent need to develop the capacity of communities to respond to their immediate needs and in so doing identify the issues which have to be addressed at a systemic level. When people have an opportunity to deal with their immediate distress, it becomes possible to mobilize energy to address the larger advocacy issues.

Isolated Newfoundland communities have historically been extraordinarily resourceful in dealing with their own human problems and survival issues. Helping skills, indeed, are natural human abilities possessed by many individuals and readily recognized by those who turn to them for support. In recent decades, however, such skills have been defined and taught by professions such as social work, psychology and nursing, and developed to a high level of sophistication by psychotherapists and counselors. This "professionalization" of helping, and the placing of ultimate trust in the expert, have in many ways undermined the role of informal resources. There exists a kind of mystique about professional counseling that engenders lack of confidence for many people in their own helping abilities. As a result there is great anxiety about the changes in service structures and reduced access to institution-based services.

Just as, at the macro level, institutions are returning to communities the responsibility for maintaining health, so at the micro level individuals will have to reassume some of the knowledge and control over their health issues that have been vested in professionals and "experts". The purpose of this project is, therefore, via a mentoring process, to regenerate and develop the informal human resources existing within communities for peer helping and supportive counseling.

Project Rationale

Rural communities are facing unprecedented challenges in dealing with the emotional and social problems people are experiencing as a result of the fisheries disaster and the consequent stresses on their finances, relationships and morale.

The helping resources that exist are limited and overburdened -TAGS employment counselors, public health nurses, social services workers, school guidance counselors. Many of these helpers are feeling overwhelmed by the range and intensity of the personal and family problems that people are bringing to them, and they need additional human resources and a network of support.

Effective supportive counseling involves skills which can be taught and learned. Within Newfoundland communities, there are individuals with the time and interest, along with a natural aptitude and experiential knowledge, who can be recruited as peer counselors - for example, retired teachers, former fisheries workers, volunteers with the Women's Institutes. Local helping professionals have the background, together with knowledge of the current situation, which provide a strong basis for modeling helping skills and passing these skills on to potential peer-counselors. The process of skill transfer also provides the basis for the development of a support network and access to informal helping resources for those providing the front-line response to social and emotional needs.

Project Description

Over an 18 month period, this project will establish a corps of community trainers in two health regions, and provide training, consultation and guidance to these individuals in developing and sustaining a network of peer counselors within their regions. Using a process of skill transfer and mentoring, the project will create and pilot a model for skill development in the informal sector, and will also build networks of support for those involved in dealing with emotional and social problems in communities where few other resources exist.

The project will be divided into three phases. In the first six months, contacts will be established with the Community Mental Health Co-ordinators and candidates sought from partner agencies in the region which will be asked to commit a portion of their employee's time to this project. Consultation will be carried out with the Co-ordinators as well as with the ten counsellors selected as trainers regarding their learning needs. The training program will then be prepared, along with a Resource Manual for the trainers' use. The ten trainers will spend two weeks in full-time learning with the consultant. They will then return to their regions and, over a period of ten weeks, recruit interested and appropriate people from the community to become peer

counselors. Teleconferences will be held twice during this recruitment period for consultation and discussion of issues arising.

During the second six months, the focus will be on the transfer of skills by the trainers to the peer counselors within their area. This will be accomplished through 20 weekly group sessions, using the teaching and mentoring methods modeled by the consultant in Phase I. Back-up will be provided by the consultant throughout this period via teleconferences, individual contact as required, and two visits to each of the ten areas to attend a group session. In the final month of this phase, the ten trainers will again spend three days full-time with the consultant, to evaluate the training process and plan ahead for the monitoring and maintenance of the peer counseling network.

In the final six months, the peer counselors will receive referrals from various sources, including self-referrals. Consultation will be carried out via monthly support meetings, facilitated by the trainers. During this time the project consultant will be available for problem-solving and guidance, and will make two further visits to each area. At the end of this period a comprehensive assessment of the effectiveness of the skill transfer process will be carried out by an independent evaluator.

Participation Of Target Population

The project will involve the building of active partnerships between the formal and informal sectors in the area of mental health. The cooperation of agencies in the areas of health, social services and education will be enlisted to commit a portion of selected employees' time to being community trainers of peer counselors. Volunteers from the community at large will be recruited as peer counselors. At the project's completion, there will be five trainers and fifty peer counselors active in each participating region.

Project Goals And Objectives

Goals:

- To create a model for developing informal helping resources
- To build partnerships between the formal and informal sectors in the area of mental health
- Under the direction of an experienced mental health professional, to pilot a training program and learning process involving mentoring, skill transfer and consultation; to establish a corps of trainers who are helping professionals in two health regions; and to develop a network of rural peer counselors with the skills to appropriately refer or otherwise assist people with serious emotional or social needs
- to develop a network for support, referral and on-going consultation for helping professionals and peer counselors

Objectives:

- To develop and pilot a "train the trainers" program for a selected group of professional To develop and pilot a "train the trainers" program for a selected group of professional counselors from two health regions, which will enable them to facilitate the learning of effective counselors from two health regions, which will enable them to facilitate the learning of effective helping skills by peer counselors helping skills by peer counselors

- To use, and teach how to use, a mentoring model in transferring learned skills in the following areas:
 - recognizing and dealing with people’s anger, frustration and despair
 - helping people express their feelings in a way that prevents them from getting “stuck”
 - helping people to keep moving on emotionally so that they can make appropriate decisions for themselves
 - dealing with the lack of other helping resources
 - dealing with “casualties”
 - making conscious use of one’s own responses in helping others
- To provide support and consultation during the skill transfer period and develop a network for on-going support and consultation, addressing issues such as:
 - dealing with the counselor’s own anger and feelings of helplessness
 - creating a safe environment in which counselors can get and give support to each other and reduce burnout

Work Plan

Method

Mentoring is a process whereby a person with expertise and experience enables others to learn through a combination of direct teaching, modeling behaviour and providing support to the learners in their development. In this case, a professional counselor with extensive experience in teaching the skills of helping to non-professionals, will share the modeling and skill-transfer process with the group of trainers, including the struggles, risks and difficulties, and provide support to the trainers in carrying through this process.

The Project Consultant will work with a group of approximately ten counselors (five from each of two regions) who will be selected by the Community Health Board Mental Health Co-ordinators on the basis of demonstrated aptitude for the skill transfer process. The issues the counselors are facing will be identified through group discussion. They will then identify and practice skills in responding to these issues, using a combination of role-playing, observation, feedback, modeling, case consultation, and group and individual problem-solving.

Skills focused on will include:⁵

- active listening;
- reaching for feelings;
- sitting with discomfort ;
- problem solving:
- partializing (breaking problems down into components that can be tackled);

⁵ These are based on the model described in Lawrence Shulman, *The Skills of Helping*. Peacock Publishers: Illinois 1979.

- reaching for strength;
- recognizing and trusting people's ability to get through setting mutual boundaries of responsibility;
- confronting effectively;
- self-care.

The training program will also deal with:

- the process of assessment and referral;
- how to use the range of resources available:
- recognizing and avoiding "rescuing";
- recognizing and avoiding "victimizing";
- how to make helping contracts;
- how to deal with the pressure to find solutions in a situation where there are no solutions.

Throughout the training the emphasis will be on modeling and teaching these skills to peer counselors without the same professional background. The community trainers will be provided with a resource manual, consistent follow-up and consultation as they implement the training with peer counselors in their areas.

Roles and Responsibilities

The project consultant will be responsible for orienting partner agencies to the project and developing the "Train-the-Trainer" program and Resource Manual in response to learning needs identified. This person is the pivot of the learning and skill transfer process.

The community trainers will be responsible for recruiting peer counselors, for implementing the skill-transfer process over a series of 20 sessions, and for facilitating follow-up support sessions for the peer counselors.

Model

The project would serve two health regions in the province via the following model, with a view to replicating the process in other regions of the province or country:

Timetable

PHASE I: TRAINING THE TRAINERS

Month 1

Contact with Mental Health Co-ordinators and partner agencies (Mental Health Units, Social Services Offices, Guidance Counseling Program)

Selection of trainers

Consultation re: learning needs

Month 2-3

Preparation of Training Program and Resource Manual

Month 4

2 weeks full-time "Train the Trainer" program

(20 half-day units)

teleconference follow-up

Month 5-6

Recruitment and orientation of Peer Counselors

Two teleconferences and individual consultation as needed

Evaluation of Phase 1

PHASE II: TRANSFERRING THE SKILLS

Months 7- 12

20 weekly group training sessions (trainer and ten peer counselors)

One teleconference per month for trainers with consultant; individual contact and consultation as needed

Two visits to each area by consultant; attend group consultation sessions; individual sessions with trainers

Evaluation of Phase II

Three day planning session (consultant and trainers)

PHASE III: MAINTAINING THE NETWORK

Months 13 - 18

Peer counsellors in action

Monthly support sessions with trainer

Monthly teleconferences (consultant and trainers) and individual contact as needed

Two visits to each area by consultant Comprehensive evaluation

Opportunities For Collaboration

This project provides the opportunity for innovative partnerships between different parts of the formal sector involved in responding to mental health needs (hospital mental health units; school

guidance counselors; social services, etc.) and individuals with various backgrounds in the community women's Institutes, churches, service groups, parent-teacher associations, etc.) Mental Health Advisory groups which bring various agencies together already exist in several areas, and with the support of the Regional Mental Health Co-ordinators, these would be an avenue for securing the involvement of local professionals in the project. This will also be an arena where commitment to involving members of the community in meeting health needs could be developed and engaged.

Dissemination Of Results

The Final Report and evaluation of the skill transfer model will be circulated to all health boards and their mental health advisory bodies within all five health regions of the province, and to all Ministries of Health and CMHA Divisions across the country. The Resource Manual will be made available to jurisdictions wishing to replicate the process of developing the informal sector.

Evaluation

The evaluation will address the following components:

1. Training Program
2. Trainers evaluation of skill transfer process
3. Peer Counselors evaluation of skill transfer process
4. Consumers response
5. Community response
6. Partner agencies perspective

The evaluation will take the form of questionnaires and personal interviews, administered to the trainers at the end of Phase I and to the trainers and peer counselors at the end of Phase II. The questionnaires will address both content and process. There will also be an oral evaluation during the three-day meeting at the end of Phase II. In the final months of Phase III, information would be gathered from all participants, including consenting consumers, members of the community and partner agencies about the overall effectiveness of the skill development process and the use of peer counseling resources in rural communities.

The responsibility for administering the evaluation would be sub-contracted.

Project Consultant

The Project Consultant will be Susan McConnell M.S.W. Ms. McConnell is a practicing psychotherapist with many years of experience in counseling, teaching and consulting on a wide range of social/emotional issues. She has extensive experience of teaching helping skills to people who do not have a formal background in counseling, and served as consultant and trainer for a CMHA project on self-help for survivors of sexual abuse. Ms. McConnell's resume is attached.

The position will be full-time for a total of 20 weeks (eight weeks for consultation and development of training program and resource manual; two weeks for training program; ten weeks travelling, covering five visits each to two regions and five areas within each region). Follow-up consultation and teleconferences are estimated to require an average of six hours per week for the other 58 weeks of the project's duration.

2. Guidelines For Grantsmanship

The following are some general guidelines and steps to consider when you're ready to approach funding agencies for grant support.

We hope this section provides you with a realistic idea of the work that is involved in applying for a grant, and guides you away from some of the potholes on the road to getting funding for your project. We focus here on general principles of grant writing, so that the information is relevant to a variety of different sources.

Find out who the agencies are:

Before you even consider applying to a granting agency, learn as much as you can about it. How can you find out? The simplest way is to contact the agency directly, either by visiting their website (an increasing number of granting agencies are on-line) or calling and asking for information. They probably have a standard package of information that they send out to those who are interested in applying for funds. It will probably include: basic application guidelines, an application form, and an annual report and/or grants list, which will tell you more about the agency's goals and organization, to whom it has made recent grants, and so on.

Another good reason to call is to make personal contact with staff at the granting agency. In some cases you may find someone who can tell you if your plans fit generally with their criteria, and they may even provide tips for the application process. If you're lucky, you'll be able to stay in touch with an individual who will continue to answer your questions and guide you along the way.

“Call first and ask for a copy of our report, which describes previous grants, so people get a sense of what the amounts are, and what kinds of projects we've been supporting”⁶

Narrow the field

Your research may turn up dozens of agencies that could potentially support your mental health promotion project. That's encouraging, but you are probably not going to apply to them all. It's time to narrow the field further through some careful checking:

- Check the fields in which grants are offered. Are you sure you're barking up the right tree?
- Check the purpose of the grants offered. You may want part of the funds to cover staff salaries, but the agency may not fund salaries, and will only provide start-up or seed money.
- Check the size of the grants offered. You may be looking for \$25,000, but the maximum award size of a promising-looking granting agency might be \$10,000. Keep in mind, though, that it is possible to apply to more than one funding agency at the same time.
- Check the locations where grants are offered. Are you sure the agency covers your geographic area? Some have geographic preferences, as well as restrictions.

Through checking and re-checking, you can narrow the field to a manageable number of leading candidates. Now you are ready to do some further investigation of your leading prospects.

Learn the guidelines

Each granting agency does business in a slightly different way. Some agencies will ask for a short one or two page “letter of intent” describing your proposal, and nothing else to begin with. Others prefer to get the whole application upfront. Certain agencies are interested in knowing

⁶ Quote from a grants officer of a funding agency, from the Community Tool Box, Chapter 28, Section 8: Applying for a grant - the general approach. See Annotated Resource List for more info.

your credentials, while others are primarily interested in your ideas. Some want detailed budgets, and for others, the discussion of budget comes later.

It never hurts to write a short letter of intent before embarking on a full proposal. If you're turned down at that point, you're saving yourself a lot of time; if you're given the go-ahead, you'll know that you're on the right track.

“DO your homework, not just in finding out how to apply, but in making the match between your needs and our needs. Although we have a broad giving program, it's very clear in our annual report that we're most interested in funding what's important to us.”⁷

Follow the guidelines

Now that you know what the guidelines for application are, follow them closely. If the agency asks for a two-page letter, make sure to keep it to that length. This brief letter should contain a fairly complete description of the project, with headings pointing out the major points of interest, and a basic line-item budget, if they've requested one.

State clearly the amount of money that is requested and the time period in which it will be spent. Staff at the agency will then read these letters, screen out inappropriate inquiries, and request more information if your proposal is of interest.

If the agency wants the application to be submitted, without first receiving an introductory letter, then read through the guidelines very carefully, and follow them as closely as possible. If there is an area you are not clear on, it's best to clarify it before continuing. This leads us to the next point:

Ask questions, if needed

Even though funding agency guidelines are usually clear, you may still have a few questions. Some issues may not be covered by the guidelines, or you may be puzzled by a certain section of the application. In such cases, the best thing to do is call and ask. The agency will no doubt have someone on staff to respond to calls like yours.

Think before calling, though. A call (or other contact) generally means that you have to identify yourself. Since first impressions are important, you will want to present yourself in the best possible light. Be sure you don't ask questions that are clearly covered in the guidelines.

“Read our guidelines. We have a number of printed materials related to our programs. Study our past history and then contact us with a specific request based on an understanding of our guidelines.” ⁷

However, if you have a good reason to do so, there are advantages to making a personal contact. Discussing the project with the funding agency can be helpful for several reasons. First, the staff person may give you some information not explicitly contained in the guidelines, which may be helpful to you. Also, in the course of conversation, you can ask other questions or check on other guidelines to make sure you're on the right track.

Sometimes it's also possible to set up a meeting with an agency staff person to explore your idea before a proposal is written or delivered. If you see value in a pre-application meeting, and if the guidelines don't tell you otherwise, consider making a request to meet with someone.

⁷ A grants officer of a funding agency, quoted in the Community Tool Box.

If you do arrange a meeting, you can have your questions answered, which will help you either improve your application, or prevent you from wasting your time. You will also have made a personal contact, and perhaps gotten some tips along the way.

3. Potential Funding Contacts

There is a broad range of potential funders for your mental health promotion project. Depending on the particular issue your project focuses on, and where you are located, you will be able to do some more detailed research into your particular area, and contact funders who work in that area.

Because funding agencies change their programs and requirements vary frequently, we cannot provide you with a complete list here; there will no doubt be many changes in the time that elapses between the writing of this kit and your quest for funding. What you'll find here is a very brief list of some potential funding contacts to get you started.

Federal Government:

Population Health Fund

The goal of the Population Health Fund is to increase community capacity for action on the determinants of health. To achieve this goal, the PHF supports projects that facilitate joint planning and co-ordinated actions among voluntary organizations, service providers, governments and the private sector to improve population health. Fund activities focus on addressing the health issues of vulnerable populations.

Eligible applicants include: Canadian voluntary and non-profit organizations, and educational institutions. Requests for proposals (developed by Health Canada) will specify which categories of eligible sponsors will be considered. Projects may be funded for a period of up to 36 months.

For further information on the Population Health Fund, please contact your regional or the national Health Canada office.

7 Population Health Directorate
Health Canada
8th Floor - PL 1908C1
Jeanne Mance Building
Tunney's Pasture
Ottawa, ON K1A 1B4
Tel: (6 13) 957-3507
Fax: (6 13) 952-53 10
Website: <http://www.hc-sc.gc.ca/hppb/phdd/geninfo.html>

Opportunities Fund For Persons With Disabilities - Human Resources Development Canada (HRDC)

The objective of the Opportunities Fund is to assist persons with disabilities prepare for, obtain, and keep employment or self-employment. The fund supports a broad range of employment activities for persons with disabilities who are not eligible for employment benefits under the Employment Insurance Act.

Examples of suitable activities include but are not limited to the following:

- encouraging employers to hire workers with disabilities;

- assisting individuals with disabilities to start their own business;
- providing work experience that can lead to ongoing employment;
- assisting persons with disabilities increase their employment skill level;
- assisting their integration into the workplace through services tailored to meet their special needs;
- providing personal supports required to enable persons with disabilities to participate in employment and employment services.

Persons with disabilities may request assistance at any HRDC office. In many places, community-based organizations may provide specialized employment services and may have information available.

Call 1-800-788-8282 for further information on the Opportunities Fund, or visit the HRDC website at <http://www.hrdc-drhc.gc.ca/stratpol/edd/OFPD>

Helpful Websites

A Canadian Centre for Philanthropy - <http://www.ccp.ca>

This website contains a goldmine of fundraising information, some of which is free, and some of which is available for a reasonable fee. They offer a Directory of Foundations, online databases, foundation search services, further information on proposal writing, etc.

Canadian Municipal Information Service - <http://internov.gc.ca/mun/index.html>

This website provides a listing of all Canadian municipalities that are currently online, and links to their websites. The listings are provided alphabetically or by Province/Territory.

CharityVillage - <http://www.charityvillage.com/charityvillage/main.html>

This website provides a huge array of resources to community groups, not least of all a listing of Canadian grant-giving foundations. Visit their website for detailed information on the eligibility criteria for particular foundations.

In-Kind Canada - <http://www.inkindcanada.ca/inkind/index-e.html>

In-Kind Canada is a national "Gift-In-Kind" program, matching the material surpluses of business to the needs of the non-profit sector. In-Kind Canada is a registered charity, with an innovative program that ensures the efficient, effective donation of goods and services.

The Foundation Centre - <http://fdncenter.org/>

This website covers a massive range of information on foundations, although mostly those located in the United States. They offer information on proposal writing, current trends in philanthropy, grantseeking on the web, etc. Certain information is available free on their website, and they offer publications that can be ordered at reasonable prices.

The Grantsmanship Centre - <http://www.tgci.com>

The Grantsmanship Centre (TGCI), founded in 1972, is a leading source of fundraising training and information for non-profits. TGCI produces a wide range of low-cost publications, including Program Planning and proposal writing, a widely used proposal format.

UBC Office of Research Services and Administration - <http://orsil.ubc.ca/owa/progquery.query>

This website provides an interactive online search of the Office of Research Services database of research granting agencies. The search will give you information on the funding programs offered by those agencies, and also offers an online help service.

Annotated Resource List

A guide to approaching foundations for grant support. Fetner, G. - <http://www.rgo.ualberta.ca/rgodocs/sources/udar.html>

Although this guide was prepared primarily for those seeking support for research or academic programs, it will nonetheless be helpful to a wide variety of grantseekers. It offers some general principles and observations about the interests and preferences of foundations, and guidelines for approaching them for grant support.

A Community Tool box. Chapter 28, Section 8 - Applying for a Grant: The General Approach. By Bill Berkowitz. - <http://ctb.lsi.ukans.edu/ctb/c28/c28s8.html>

In this section of the Community Tool Box, the author provides a realistic picture of the granting process. This information will help people decide if they are prepared and/or willing to put in the work to apply for a grant. Those who decide to apply for funding will benefit from the tips and examples that are provided.

Community Tool box. Chapter 28, Section II - Soliciting In-Kind Support. By Rebecca Wolff. <http://ctb.lsi.ukans.edu/ctb/c28/c28sII.html>

This section of the Community Tool Box discusses the value of in-kind resources, and features some helpful planning tools and worksheets to help others lead a successful campaign to raise in-kind resources.

Program planning and proposal writing. Kiritz, N. The Grantsmanship Centre. 1980. <http://www.tgci.com/>

Program planning and proposal writing contains a widely used format for grant proposals. Many foundation and government grantmakers have adopted it as their official application format.

Program planning and proposal writing includes information on: summarizing your project, writing an introduction, needs assessment objectives, determining methods, planning evaluation, other sources of funding, and budgeting.

A Understanding the funder and the proposal. In Canadian Fundraiser, Nov. 13, 1995. <http://www.charityvillage.com/charityvillage/research/rprop1.html>

A helpful article that provides information on how to prepare yourself in order to write a successful proposal.

Winning grants step by step. Carbon, M. Toronto: Jossey-Bass/Prentice Hall, 1995.

A complete workbook for planning, developing and writing successful proposals, *Winning Grants Step By Step* will help you to improve your ability to turn funding ideas into proposals that merit financial support. Written for all levels of expertise, this book will be especially useful to those with limited experience in the field.

Of special note is the section on Special Resources that covers how to research funders, how to write a letter of intent, and how to evaluate a proposal through the funder's eyes.