
MEETING THE INFORMATION NEEDS OF CONSUMERS/SURVIVORS IN THE TORONTO AREA

Sound Times Support Services—The Consumer / Survivor Information Centre of Toronto

280 Parliament Street, Toronto ON, M5A 3A4

NEW EMAIL • bulletin@soundtimes.com

NEW WEBSITE • www.soundtimes.com/bulletin

Newsletter sign-up: soundtimes.com/bulletin-sign-up

Our Mission is evolving

The Bulletin will spark dialogue and share information and resources for the consumer survivor community. This community includes people with mental health, addiction issues and/or experiences of mental health and addictions systems.

April Actions:

Sign-up for the e-Bulletin and do surveys

Learn: ODSP Action Coalition, New TTC Pass

Participate in Police Racism Inquiry, National Housing Strategy Consultation

Celebrate CSIRC and Empowerment Council

What information and resources do you need?

For example, information about services, housing, employment, justice, social connections, advocacy, or how to get info?

When you have questions where do you go?

Google, Facebook, doctors, bulletin boards, friends or the Bulletin?

What barriers do you face getting information and resources?

For example: confusing forms, difficult language, time, cost, energy, not enough help, previous disappointment, support for follow-up?

We would love to hear from you to focus the future of the Bulletin: bulletin@soundtimes.com

And fill out the survey at soundtimes.com/bulletin.

How can we understand and change mental health and addiction systems?

Many of us have lots of experiences from institutions like hospitals, jails, agencies, peer groups community agencies, and waitlists!

But to understand and change systems, we need to know how they work and how to participate. The systems are so complicated that it is hard for any individual to know enough to contribute or be credible. This is why the Bulletin will try to explain and connect you to resources and tools.



CSIRC joins Sound Times

For the past 25 years, CSIRC has been providing valuable resources including a tax clinic and information for the consumer survivor community. CSIRC has also created the Bulletin.



Sound Times and CSIRC are both interested in looking at new, more effective ways to reach community members. In order to do that, Sound Times and CSIRC have merged. This means that CSIRC's services will be part of Sound Times as of April 2018.



With changes in technology and the demographics of our community, people's information needs are changing. We know that the information that is out there about mental health and addictions, including the Bulletin, doesn't reach many in our community who need support.

By joining together, we will be in a position to reach more people in our community with information and support with their personal health and other needs such as housing, employment, and education. For example, we will look at better ways to bring meaningful information directly to individuals in shelters, drop ins, and other locations as well as through our web site and other digital formats.

The CSIRC's current tax clinic will be provided by Sound Times for the 2017 tax season. Going forward, Sound Times will look at ways to combine our current tax support services with CSIRC's tax services and to provide people with tax support either directly or by linking them with other free tax services that are available in the community.

We acknowledge the incredible hard work of publishers and editors including Glen Dewar, Helen Hook, and Christine Miranda. The survivors who began the Bulletin created a space to gather information that was hard to access before the internet. We will build on this work!

We welcome your submissions that will strengthen the consumer survivor community. We will try to include consumer survivor run, focused and relevant events. Inclusion of an announcement is NOT an endorsement of the views of any organization or individual. The Bulletin reserves the right to edit submissions.

We encourage electronic event submissions and subscriptions. You will have to opt-in to continue receiving the bulletin.

Thanks & Contact us:

bulletin@soundtimes.com

soundtimes.com/bulletin

Moment in C/S

Bulletin History 2006

Page 1 of 10, Bulletin 320, April 1, 2006 — Helen Hook:

The pittance of a 2% increase for people on ODSP that came down in the Ontario Budget in March is appalling. For a single person on ODSP, it will mean a difference of about \$19 a month. For a single parent with a child, it will be about \$30.

Since the province just found \$3 Billion in surplus, the argument that there is no money for more of a raise is specious at best. Sarah Blackstock, research and policy analyst at ISAC (Income Security and Advocacy Centre) says, "The money to alleviate poverty is there. What's missing is the political will – that's always been the missing ingredient with this government. Clearly, poor families are still not a priority for the current government."

In fact, we all know that while the major damage was done over the years of the Harris Tories, in real terms, ODSP rates will be lower at the end of the government's mandate than when the Liberals

took power. The Liberals say they are creating opportunities for people living on OW and ODSP. Insultingly small increases like this one give us the opportunity to continue to go hungry and the opportunity to continue to remain in sub-standard housing.

We want to hear how you are coping on ODSP, how you make ends meet. Do you have any peer support / self-help advice for others in our community that you can pass on? Yes, dear readers, it's another request to send in submissions !!!!! Write or email to one of the addresses above. Or send us a rant about ODSP and the rates and we may publish it, as well. You know that we are always looking for your ideas and your experiences. Helen Hook

Compare with 2017 where there was a less than 2% increase for Ontario Works and ODSP. You can learn more about these financial support issues at [ISAC site](http://incomesecurity.org/public-education/ow-and-odsp-rates-and-the-ocb): <http://incomesecurity.org/public-education/ow-and-odsp-rates-and-the-ocb>

...part of the consumer survivor ongoing timeline...stay tuned

ODSP Action Coalition

Lots of survivors who receive ODSP are isolated and face barriers accessing the system. This makes it harder to advocate for better rates and accessibility. The [ODSP Action Coalition](http://www.odspaction.ca/) (<http://www.odspaction.ca/>) works to meet this need by working with ODSP recipients, allies and organizations. This spring is a great time to ask election questions about ODSP, which is administered by the Ministry of Community and Social Services, Minister Michael Coteau. Provincial Election date is June 7, 2018.

Raise the Rates

ODSP and OW and other social supports are not just about economic equity they are also social determinants of health. Financial security helps recipients work on their health and other social issues. You might consider, getting involved in the project to Raise the Rates (<http://raisetherates.ca/>).

NEW: Low Income TTC Presto Card and Monthly Pass

(Note: City has approved a pass. But details may change. We need to continue Advocacy, call, show up.)

- ⇒ Hopefully in April apply for a new free Presto Card /monthly pass
- ⇒ You are eligible if you receive OW or ODSP (low income pass may expand if there is enough funding and advocacy)
- ⇒ Apply for the pass at Toronto Employment & Social Services (TESS) offices w/ OW worker.
- ⇒ Each ride will cost \$2.00 with new Presto
- ⇒ Monthly pass will cost \$115.50

Note: If you receive a transport amount from ODSP, OW, you should check with your worker before applying to make sure you don't lose funding.

The Fair Fare Coalition has advocated for lower cost and greater accessibility since 2010.

Work continues ensure accessibility, save single use tickets to replace the token, make sure that the pass applies to low income people not on OW and ODSP.

Want to get involved in the Fair Fare Coalition Contact: fairfarettc@gmail.com.

Have you faced discrimination on the TTC in regards to fare evasion or because of your psychiatric disability? The Toronto Drop-In Network, which is part of Fair-Fare, needs research input. Contact: manager@tdin.ca



Advocates for Safe, Secure, Affordable Supportive Housing

Do you believe that all people have the right to safe, secure and affordable housing?



Are you a current or past supportive housing tenant?

Are you passionate about social justice?

Are you willing to publicly share your story in order to fight stigma and discrimination?

If being a part of our team interests you, contact us!

We strive to represents the diversity of people living with mental health and/or addiction issues in Toronto. We are currently strengthening our organization by actively recruiting:

- **Youth/people 18-29**
- **People of Colour/racialized people**
- **Members of the LGBTQ+ community**
- **Indigenous peoples**

Contact: coordinator@thedreamteam.ca

We welcome all applications, but individuals from the equity-seeking groups will be prioritized for membership.

Contact: coordinator@thedreamteam.ca



Consumer Survivors can participate: National Consultation on a Human Rights-Based Approach to Housing

Housing is very important for survivors so make your voice heard. There is a chance to contribute to the National Housing strategy. Highlights below.

Proposed Strategy

1. New legislation that would require the federal government to maintain a national housing strategy.
2. Appointing a new federal housing advocate to **identify barriers to housing and provide support to Canadians**. This job posting is set to open this spring.
3. Establishing a new National Housing Council before the end of 2018 to help promote more Canadian participation in the evolution of the strategy.
4. Implementing a community-based tenant initiative that would **build inclusiveness** within communities and support people in need.

The government also committed to “a public engagement campaign in 2020 to inform the public about the different types of available affordable housing, and support the development of more socially inclusive housing projects.”

Key pillars of the strategy:

- "Inclusiveness" by helping those in the greatest need;
- "Accountability" by requiring regular reporting to Parliament about national housing efforts;
- "Participation" through the creation of a national housing watchdog;
- "Non-discrimination" to work to eliminate systemic issues that prevent people from finding a home.

Participate By June 1, 2018:

Send an email with the subject line “**Human Rights Based Approach to Housing: Feedback**” to placetocallhome@cmhc-schl.gc.ca

<https://www.placetocallhome.ca/>

What's the difference between a Human Right to Housing and a Human Rights-Based Approach to Housing?

= "Our government believes housing rights are human rights. That's why we've committed to anchoring the National Housing Strategy in a rights-based approach," said Ministry spokesperson Filion.

But don't get too optimistic:

"The government is manoeuvring around using the term the 'right to housing.' If you read the consultation paper closely, they don't actually recognize that housing is a human right unto itself," said Leilani Farha, the UN special rapporteur on adequate housing.

Bottom line: A right is something that is enforceable. You can go to court. A human rights-based approach is a description.



A place to call home

Nothing is more important than home. Canada's first ever National Housing Strategy is a 10-year, \$40-billion plan that will strengthen the middle class, fuel our economy and give more Canadians across the country a place to call home.

Have you worked as a **peer researcher** on a study about **drug use, mental health, LGBTQ2S+ &/or racialized communities?**

Participate in PEERS!



Peers Examining Experiences in Research Study (PEERS) is a community-based project that aims to understand how peer researchers experience their involvement in research with four different communities:

- communities of people who use drugs
- consumer/survivor/mad/mental health service user communities
- lesbian, gay, bisexual, trans, queer, and two-spirit (LGBTQ2S+) communities
- racialized communities

We hope to learn about what research practices can best support meaningful involvement of peer researchers, within and across these four communities.

Have you worked on a research project for which your lived experience with one or more of these communities was a requirement for the job?

Were you paid or compensated for this work?

If so, then you may be eligible to participate!

Participating in PEERS will involve taking part in a one hour interview. Compensation of \$30 and return transit fare will be provided.

For more information, please contact us:

peers.dlsph@utoronto.ca or 647-857-9780

All inquiries are confidential.



Call for participants: Public interest inquiry into racial profiling and discrimination by the Toronto Police



[Bulletin: This is a chance for Black consumer survivors to participate in an important inquiry. If you do end up taking part, please let us know at the Bulletin. It would be great to know if the consumer survivor voice was listened to and appreciated.]

On November 30, 2017 the [OHRC announced its public interest inquiry](#). Using our legislated inquiry powers under section 31 of Ontario's *Human Rights Code*, we have called for the TPS, the Toronto Police Services Board (TPSB) and the Special Investigations Unit to provide a wide range of data and documents.

We are inquiring into particular practices and activities of the TPS between January 1, 2010 and June 30, 2017, to assess whether they are consistent with racial profiling and racial discrimination against the Black community. We will also examine police culture, training, policies, procedures and accountability mechanisms relating to racial profiling and discrimination.

We are currently conducting research, consulting with key stakeholders, and receiving information from affected individuals, groups and organizations.

Call for participants

We are looking for Black people to provide first-hand accounts of their experiences with the Toronto police that fall within the scope of the inquiry:

Do you feel that you have experienced racial profiling and/or racial discrimination by the Toronto police in the following areas?

- Stop and questioning practices, or carding
- Use of force
- Arrests and charges, and forms and conditions of release for offences such as:
 - ◊ Out-of-sight driving offences (for example, driving without a license or insurance)
 - ◊ Simple drug possession
 - ◊ Obstructing a police officer, assaulting a police officer, assaulting a police officer to resist arrest, and uttering threats against a police officer
 - ◊ Loitering, causing a disturbance and trespassing
 - ◊ Failing to comply with a bail condition or condition of release required by a police officer.

Did your experience happen between January 1, 2010 and June 30, 2017, or more recently? ...

Contact us

If you, or someone you know, would like to take part, contact our team at legal@ohrc.on.ca or 416-314-4547 by June 30, 2018. Follow, share and engage with us on [Twitter](#), [Facebook](#) and [Instagram](#) and use [#TruthBeforeTrust](#).

<http://ohrc.on.ca/en/public-interest-inquiry-racial-profiling-and-racial-discrimination-tps>



EMPOWERMENT COUNCIL * 25 YEARS OF PATIENT ENGAGEMENT *

Conference and Celebration

♦ Keynote: DR. AMITA DHANDA

Professor of Law at the National Academy of Legal Studies and Research, Hyderabad & Head of the Centre for Disability Studies (NALSAR)

Panel Discussion

**EMPOWERMENT & ENGAGEMENT
MEANS POWER & PARTNERSHIP**

> CHRIS HIGGINS

Ministry of Health – Reflections on Forensic Mental Health

>BRENDA LeFRANCOIS

Why Mental Health Services Need Mad Theory

>ZOË DODD

Advocacy and Toronto Harm Reduction

WEDNESDAY, APRIL 18, 2018

1001 Queen St. West, Bell Gateway Building, Gym

2:00 pm Reception to follow at 4:30 pm FREE

<https://www.facebook.com/events/1567125963382810>

More info: 416 535-8501 Ext. 33013

This space is wheelchair accessible and ASL interpretation is available upon request. Please contact beth.jacob@camh.ca by April 3rd

CONSUMER/SURVIVOR
INFORMATION CENTRE AND
SOUND TIMES COMMUNITY SUPPORT SERVICES

Celebration Tea

THURSDAY, APRIL 12, 2018

12:00 NOON TO 1:30

C/S INFO OFFICE

1001 QUEEN STREET WEST (CAMH – BEHIND THE OUTPATIENT PHARMACY)



The CS Info Centre has integrated with Sound Times Community Support Services at the end of March, and we will be closing our CAMH office. To mark the occasion we are inviting all of our community members for tea/coffee and light snacks to celebrate our past and learn about the future of the Bulletin, Tax Clinic and other services.

Please visit our website for additional information: www.soundtimes.com/csinfotea or www.csinfo.ca **EVERYONE WELCOME!**

FOR MORE INFORMATION PLEASE CONTACT: 416-595-2882 OR
CSINFO@CAMH.CA OR BULLETIN@SOUNDTIMES.COM

Did you know? You can get Naloxone for free from most pharmacies (with health card) and at mental health and addiction agencies.

- ⇒ Get it today for you and your friends. Save a life.
- ⇒ Get trained at many agencies including city locations, some pharmacies.
- Safe injection sites: Toronto Public Health (The Works), Queen West-Central Toronto Community Health Centre, South Riverdale Community Health Centre. Fred Victor at 45 Queen Street location.
- Moss Park Overdose Prevention site by the [Toronto Overdose Prevention Society](#), which demonstrated and advocated successfully for safe injection spaces.



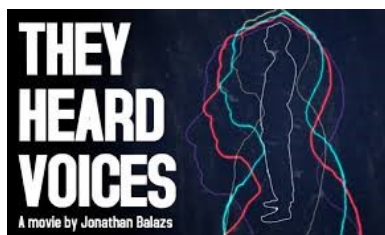
Film: They Heard Voices

Independent films exploring different perspectives on human experiences clinicians like to call "serious mental illness", "psychosis" but you don't have to.

Thursday, April 5, 7:00-9:00

Screenings followed by Q & A with invited guests. Robarts Library, U of Toronto - Media Commons 130 Saint George Street.

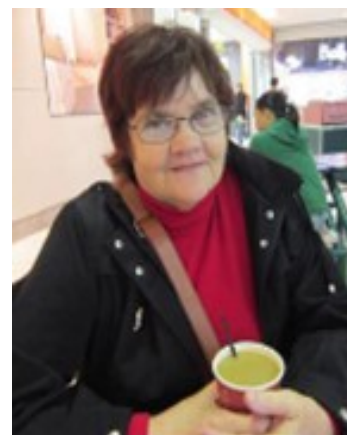
Free More <https://recoverynet.ca/2018/01/05/three-movies-one-dialogue/>



Computer Help!

Martha Gandier (gandier47@hotmail.com) offers fellow consumers/survivors free over-the-phone or remote online computer advice and support with computer repairs, upgrades, installations, networking, virus and spyware scans as well as clean-ups, coaching in MS Office, etc.

Check out how "Windows updates can cause problems—settings and devices" in the e-newsletter version.



Accessibility Statement

((C/S Information also provides a High Contrast and Large Test version of The Bulletin for those with visual disabilities.

Access provided for people with disabilities. Please call (name, your department, address,

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www.soundtimes.com/bulletin.

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Disclaimer:

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