



## SYNTHESIZE: Overview

*Implementing Evidence-Based Practices in Mental Health and Addictions* – Waypoint Research Institute’s fifth annual conference sought answers to some difficult questions.

- What are the reasons for a gap between research and practice?
- How do we mobilize research findings to make real impact?
- How do we transfer and apply research results into practice and policy?
- How do we change an organizational culture that has not relied on research evidence for policy and practice?

Waypoint Centre for Mental Health Care, Penetanguishene ON, in partnership and as an affiliated community hospital with the Department of Psychiatry, University of Toronto, hosted an impactful conference from May 15 to 17, 2017, in Barrie ON. The conference was generously supported by the Social Sciences and Humanities Research Council (SSHRC), the Canadian Institutes of Health Research (CIHR), and by Waypoint itself. We also were delighted to have sponsorship from Janssen Pharmaceuticals, HealthTech Consultants, and Sysco Canada.

The overall goal of the conference was to highlight and explore ideas on how to best bridge the gap between what we, as mental health and addictions researchers, know and what we actually do in practice and policy. An important component of conferences like ours is that they serve to advance the dissemination of research findings so policy, funding and clinical decision-making are more apt to be based on what research says works.



## Contents

Overview .....	1
Keynote Speakers .....	2
Workshops .....	3
Presentations .....	4
Attendees .....	5
Students .....	6
Exhibitors .....	7
Thank You .....	8
Moving Forward .....	8
Contact Information .....	8

Inspired by the energy of the speakers, presenters, facilitators, and attendees at Waypoint’s conference this year, we are excited to announce we have a new moniker:

**MOMENTUM**  
**Research Realized**

## INSPIRE: Keynote Speakers

Attesting to its steady growth and increasing profile, the Waypoint Research Institute Conference attracted two well-respected keynote speakers. Day 1 opened with Nicholas Watters of the Knowledge Exchange Centre, Mental Health Commission of Canada (MHCC), who, with a touch of wit and deep sincerity, explained the struggle of mobilizing knowledge into practice and policy. He highlighted that:

“Almost 90% of papers that have been published in academic journals are never cited... as many as 50% of papers are never read by anyone other than their authors, referees and journal editors.”

Watters’ take home message: we need to be deliberate and planful in why, when, how and with whom we implement research. Whether addressing knowledge, attitudes or behaviours, a knowledge translation plan is key. Watters took us through MHCC’s 7-step framework for translating knowledge into action: [Innovation to Implementation Guide](#). The I2I is practical, accessible, and broadly usable. [HEADSTRONG](#) is a great example of how I2I can be used. The MHCC also provides KT training through programs, such as the [SPARK Training Workshop](#).

On Day 2, keynote speaker Nadine Wathen from Western University captivated the audience with her research on the “wicked problem” of violence against women and children. She spoke to challenges of moving research to the real world when multiple professional, structural, social, and cultural issues intersect. Four key points:

- 1) “research evidence” is only one kind of knowledge helpful for practitioners and policy-makers
- 2) partnerships require communication, trust, and time
- 3) moving research into practice and policy is messy, non-linear, and depends on timing, fit and context
- 4) academic culture needs a shift in understanding the research process to have real-world impact

Throughout, Wathen shared how her work has made the transition into research that creates impact in practice and policy. She highlighted two important projects that do exactly that: firstly, [Violence Evidence Guidance Action](#) (VEGA), a public health response to family violence; and, secondly, [Preventing Violence across the Lifespan](#) (PreVAil) Research Network. **\*\*Note: all web addresses and social media links can be found on the last page.\*\***



Nicholas Watters, MHCC



Nadine Wathen, Western University



**Next Steps:** Our keynote speakers reflect clinical and policy, research and practice. As we continue to grow, we will target international speakers and perhaps add a third keynote – journalist, media personality or politician. And just as research integrates gender and sex, we aim to ensure a balance with our keynote speakers and all aspects of our conference.

### WRI Interview Series

Want to learn more? Check out our YouTube channel for exclusive interviews with our keynotes and other speakers!



New this year, we incorporated two full-day workshops, both with a focus on issues facing First Nation, Métis, Inuit (FNMI) youth. Particularly impactful in one workshop, the *Canadian Centre on Substance Use and Addiction* explored evidence-based strategies that had been proven effective and provided practitioners with concrete approaches to help prevent the devastation of drug abuse in remote FNMI communities. Concurrently, *Feather Carriers* training brought knowledge and experience of the FNMI community into practice, highlighting how suicide prevention – or “life promotion” – can be improved by giving FNMI youth a closer connection to their culture and history.

As in previous years, we also had several one-hour workshops. Topics were wide ranging, including a dynamic new approach to addressing workplace bullying that powerfully challenged participants to put themselves in the shoes of an employee trying to navigate their organization’s process, and what they might experience by bringing the problem out in the open. To illustrate the power of process-mapping to understand user experiences, workshop participants were able to engage in a fun, hands-on exercise, creating their own maps. Other workshops gave attendees concrete skills to enhance research (e.g., how to improve grant applications) and practice (e.g., how to engage youth to discuss mental health issues).



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When people feel safe,  
they can perform better.  
- Anneliese Poetz
}



*Next Steps:* We are exploring the idea of hosting one pre-conference workshop focused on implementation science, and another workshop on clinical concerns within mental health and addictions. An important objective of a clinically-focused workshop would be to offer Continuing Medical Education and Continuing Education credits for attending, particularly appealing to physicians and psychologists. An implementation science workshop would complement and augment the overall focus of the conference, allowing participants to more fully explore and study methods essential to promoting the adoption and integration of evidence-based practices, interventions, and policies into routine healthcare.



Workplace Bullying Workshop—Anneliese Poetz; Workplace Nirvana

In addition to the keynotes and full-day and 1-hour workshops, this year's conference program featured 43 high-quality presentations. Each session had a strong grounding in research, while being applicable to the daily work of clinicians and policy-makers.

Presentations covered a wide range of topics, including issues around access to care, medications, addictions, trauma, suicide, reducing violence in the workplace, improving employee wellness, and mental health services for women and children. In one session on Medication Decision-Making, attendees reported finding two talks particularly inspiring: the first by Liam Marshall and Lauren Wright from Waypoint, discussing the complex issues around capacity to consent and medication refusal among forensic patients; and the second by Karishma Jivraj – a PhD student from the University of London in the UK – on the benefits of establishing a positive therapeutic relationship between physicians and patients.

Both of these talks focused on clinicians and the clinical environment, while others focused on systems-level issues. For example, Thomas Ungar spoke on behalf of the Mental Health Commission of Canada and the need to create a tool that could assess structural barriers to accessing care for individuals with mental illness who need health care services, and the quality of care they receive.

Picking up on the theme of access to care, Jaime Charlebois from Orillia Soldiers' Memorial Hospital discussed the need for improving services for pregnant women and new mothers, showing the gap in services for women experiencing mood disorders (including depression) from conception to two years postpartum.

### Conference Core Areas

- Evidence-Based Practices
- Moving Research into Practice & Policy
- Improving Mental Health Care

### Presentation Themes

- Engaging the Public
- Collaboration & Partnerships
- Employee Wellbeing & Wellness
- Trauma & PTSD
- Suicide
- Drug Abuse & Addiction
- Medications
- Culture & Gender Specific Issues
- Children's Mental Health

**“Trauma is everyone's problem, not just the victim's.”**

*- Elisabeth Jensen, presenter, speaking on the wide-ranging impact of trauma*



Elisabeth Jensen, York University



Candace Zylak, CIHI



Bob Bruer, OSMH



**Next Steps:** Feedback from attendees demonstrated their

desire to have more talks at future conferences on:

- trauma and trauma-informed care; addictions and concurrent disorders; employee wellness; and, inter-professional collaboration.

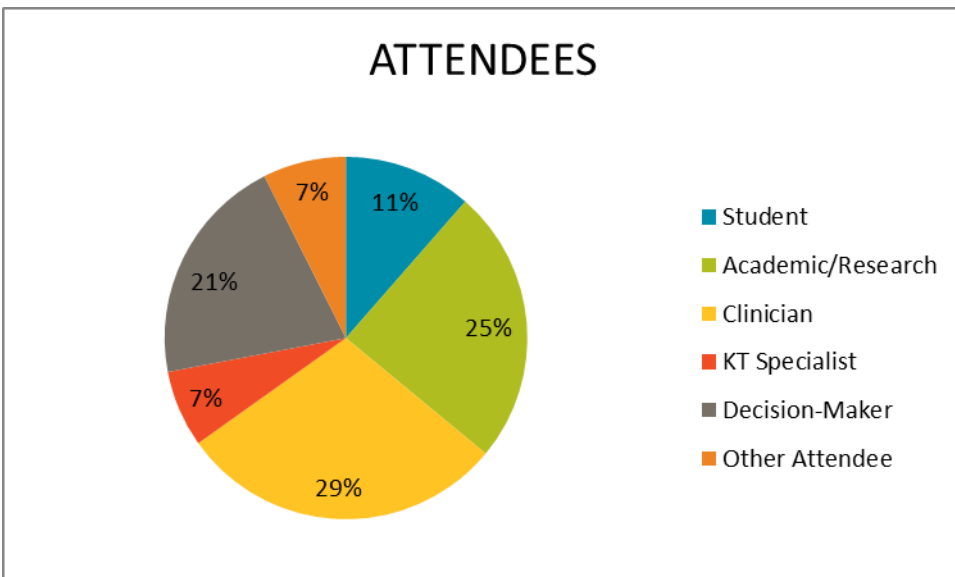
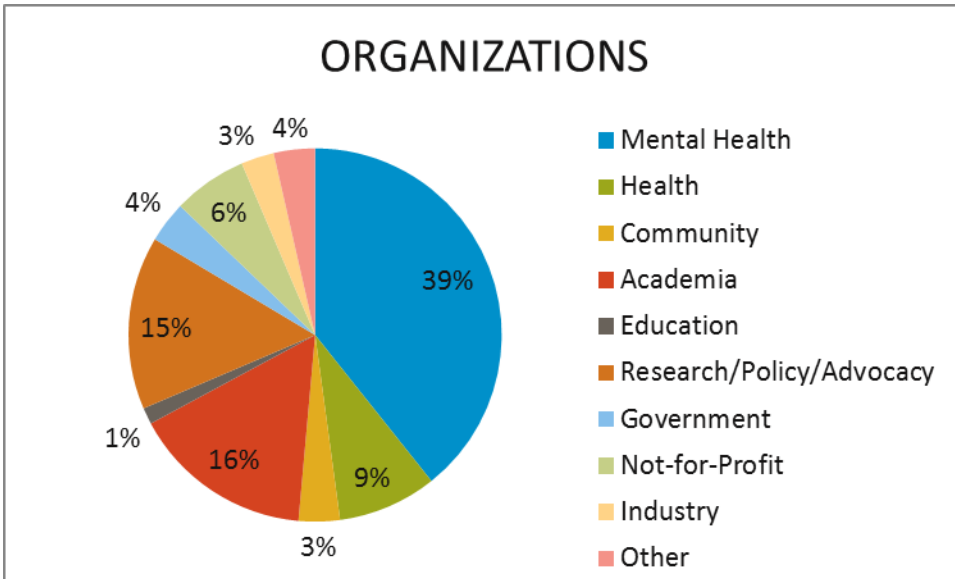

We aim to continue featuring presentations especially on these topics, as well as other areas featured this year. Ensuring the conference is highly relevant and current, we also plan to add talks on topical issues as they arise. Topics our attendees told us they would like to see in future include:

- sexuality, physician-assisted suicide, and living in the community with schizophrenia or other complex disorders.

Once again, this year's conference attracted attendees from a wide diversity of professions from knowledge translation experts to psychiatrists, psychologists, nurses, and social workers, as well as a Dean of a Faculty of Continuing Education.

The reach of the conference extended afar with attendees coming from Whitehorse in the Yukon (Registered Nurse), London, England (PhD Candidate), and PEI (Professor). An Elder, Chief, and Healer from the Berens River First Nation brought an FNMI perspective to the lively pre-conference workshop on *Starting conversations with First Nation youth about fentanyl and other drug use*.

We are pleased to report that many of the conversations held among this diverse group have led to collaborations, plus knowledge exchange and networking opportunities.

**Next Steps: The Waypoint Research Institute Conference** attracts a breadth of mental health and addiction professionals, experts, and caregivers. Our trajectory is one that will see continued growth in numbers of attendees, as well as an even greater representation from the mental health and addictions healthcare system to include more:

- Physicians
- Students
- Decision- and policy-makers

Waypoint and its conference are pleased to encourage and support student involvement in the mental health and addictions healthcare field. This year, we were delighted to attract undergraduate, graduate, and post-doctoral student presenters from the University of Toronto, Ryerson University, and McMaster University. We even had a student travel across “the pond” from the University of London UK to present. Students gave cutting-edge presentations on models of care, health promotion, knowledge translation, and medication decision-making – all topics important to the future of healthcare. Student presenters were integrated into the full programming, ensuring excellent exposure for their research as well as important presentation experience.



I have new perspectives on mental health, and have learned new models and theories that I will be able to apply in my work  
*- Student Comment*

To provide hands-on experience, students were given an opportunity to volunteer for the conference. Also, thanks to SSHRC grant funding, we were able to hire one student on a pre- and post-conference internship. Student volunteers were able to attend sessions they felt would most benefit their education and interests, while still providing immense assistance with the conference work demands. We are confident that the students benefited a great deal from their volunteering experiences in many ways, including learning about conference planning and a conference’s role in knowledge translation, along with having excellent opportunities to network.

[The conference...] provided a great opportunity to meet and connect with others. I learned about areas new to me. As a student, it was a great experience to gain networking skills.

*- Student Comment*

As well, the University of Toronto Scarborough Arts & Science Co-op program was a front-and-centre exhibitor. UTSC Co-op was enthusiastically received by students and potential mentors alike. We suspect that several co-op placements could develop from this networking opportunity.



*Next Steps:* Waypoint appreciates that students are critically important to expanding research and knowledge in mental health and addictions. We thus aim to increase opportunities for students to present their research, which will not only provide attendees with insight into what students are learning and studying, but also will provide a forum for students for their own career development. Next year, we envision offering a:

- Student poster session, best student paper award, and networking event to engage students with potential mentors.

## DISCOVER: Exhibitors

The conference's many and varied exhibitors were extremely well received. Exhibitors were kept busy sharing and discussing their unique information and services or products. In their feedback about this year's exhibitors, attendees were uniformly positive.

- Canadian Assembly of Narcotics Anonymous (CANA)
- Canadian Institute of Health Information (CIHI)
- Evidence Exchange Network (EENet)
- Greenspace Mental Health, Ltd.
- Health and Wellbeing in Developmental Disabilities Conference
- Janssen Pharmaceuticals
- Manticore Books
- Mental Health Commission of Canada (MHCC)
- University of Toronto Scarborough Arts & Science Co-op
- Waypoint Centre for Mental Health Care

Excellent representation.  
Lots of interesting displays.

Made some great  
connections.

- Attendee Comments



*Next Steps:* We will continue to offer attendees access to

informative exhibitors that support their practice and educational needs. We collect data on an annual basis at the conference and, based on the identified needs and requests of our attendees, we will make our best efforts to retain exhibitors that reflect attendee interests.



## PARTICIPATE: The Conference Experience



## **SUPPORT: Partners and Sponsors**

We are thankful for the generous conference support provided by:



We thank the Holiday Inn Barrie Hotel and Conference Centre for their professionalism and creativity. Last but not least, we thank Waypoint staff and the students who kindly volunteered for the conference.



## **MOMENTUM: Moving Forward to 2018**

To continue growing the Waypoint Research Institute's annual conference, we will move towards introducing the following items in coming years:

- Buying poster boards to allow for a poster session in the program
- Increasing student support and involvement
  - Support could include: decreased fees, a travel bursary, Best Student Paper or Poster Awards
  - Student involvement could include: student-research only sessions in program, hosting sessions in the program aimed at student development, hosting a student-mentor networking event
- Bringing in more diverse perspectives for keynote talks
  - Non-academic keynote speakers (e.g., journalist, politician, mental health advocate, person with lived experience, etc.)
  - International keynote speakers
- Offer CME/CE credits for pre-conference workshops

## **CONNECT: Contact Information**

If you would like more information on this conference or any of Waypoint's upcoming events, please contact the Waypoint Research Institute Conference Committee:

[researchevents@waypointcentre.ca](mailto:researchevents@waypointcentre.ca)

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## **Resources**

### **MENTAL HEALTH COMMISSION OF CANADA**

#### **Innovation to Implementation (I2I) Guide**

<https://goo.gl/DSbyZZ>

#### **HEADSTRONG Program**

<https://goo.gl/rMKNXh>

#### **SPARK Training Workshop**

<https://goo.gl/UCKwQC>

### **VIOLENCE PREVENTION PROJECTS**

#### **Violence Evidence Guidance Action (VEGA)**

<http://projectvega.ca/>

#### **Preventing Violence across the Lifespan (PreVAil)**

<http://prevailresearch.ca/>

### **WAYPOINT RESEARCH INSTITUTE Conference**

<https://goo.gl/vKXHKR>

#### **On Twitter**

<https://twitter.com/KTatWaypoint>

### **WAYPOINT CENTRE FOR MENTAL HEALTH CARE**

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#### **On YouTube**

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