

Stigma Busting on Eating Disorders

Organization: Eating Disorders Nova Scotia (Dartmouth, NS)

Lead Participant: Shaleen Jones



Eating Disorders Awareness Week | February 1–7, 2016

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Many people living with eating disorders do not receive care. The Stigma Busting on Eating Disorders project focussed on increasing physician understanding of eating disorders, detection and referral. Work was done to engage our target group and develop partnerships. A survey of family physicians was undertaken to better understand their needs and preferences in receiving information. The survey indicated the majority of respondents preferred online information from a dedicated website that included treatment algorithms, lab work requisitions, referral forms, peer support information and more. A multi-sectoral partnership was then developed to create an online portal and Community of Practice and funding proposals were developed. While we were waiting for funding we developed a project to encourage people to seek help.

We identified barriers to seeking support from a literature review, developed key messages, and organized the equipment, filming, and editing to produce nine 3-4 minute videos, as well as promote them through social media and our new website (eatingdisordersns.ca).

An essential component of this project was engaging a variety of people with lived experience, creating a safe space for them to share their story, and honouring their voice.

“Connecting with people passionate about Knowledge Translation and Mental Health – at all levels – was such a positive experience. Being a part of SPARK made me see the opportunities for Knowledge Translation. The knowledge, insights, strategies, and support I had gained through SPARK was incredibly valuable and made our project a success.”

- Shaleen Jones, Executive Director, Peer Support Canada

Shaleen Jones is now the Executive Director at Peer Support Canada. She was formerly the Coordinator of Eating Disorders Nova Scotia, where she carried out this project. Having recovered from an eating disorder, Shaleen is passionate about recovery and the transformative power of peer support and has been working in the fields of peer support and mental health for over 20 years.

For information about this project or the SPARK program, please contact spark@mentalhealthcommission.ca.