**SHORT SUMMARY OF CCPA’S FIRST NETWORK MEETING\_Whitehorse- October 30, 2025 / Hybrid meeting**

**NEEDS**

* *Mental Health Access and Training Needs*
* *Government, Association and Union Collaboration*
* *Building Community and Accountability*
* *Connecting Counsellors and Addressing Isolation*
* *Website and Social Media Strategies*
* *Advocacy and Government Support*
* *Next Steps and Collaboration*
* *Agreement to establish network*

**KEY QUESTIONS**

* *How can the CCPA and local counselling professionals collaborate to educate the public on the differences between qualified, credentialed counsellors and those without formal training?*
* *What strategies can be implemented to better connect and support counsellors working in rural and remote Northern communities?*
* *How can we effectively involve more counsellors and psychotherapists in the universal mental health care movement?*

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**Inaugural Meeting of the Northern Network March 14th 2025**

**Present:**

Carrie Foster, Northern, Québec Nunavik

Andrea Fougere-Chou, Yukon Territory, Northern BC

Jill Northcott (Whitehorse, YT)

Neil Huestis, Northwest Territories

Harpreet Kaur Bhan (St John's NFLD)

Lauren O'Keefe- Yellowknife/Chief Drygeese Territory NWT

Angela Grier (Blackfoot Territory) Piikani First Nation residing in Calgary

Faith Bolton Transitioning from Portland Oregon to Chilliwack BC

Jeffrey Hosick, Nova Scotia (Mi'kmaq territory)

Stefan M. Dunn, CMS Coordinator, NS left early

**Summary**

The meeting discussed the situation of regulation for counsellors in the northern territories and northern regions. In Yukon Psychologists just got their college, Counsellors and Psychotherapist were not included in the college. The Northwest Territories is focusing on traditional knowledge and wellness programs, hindering the establishment of a regulatory body. There were no members present from Nunavut. The CCPA is supporting indigenous recruitment strategies to address mental health needs in northern communities. The meeting highlighted the need for monthly meetings, community building, and funding opportunities for northern members. Angela Greer emphasized the importance of indigenous therapists and the challenges of working in isolated communities. The next meeting is proposed for the second Friday of each month, time to be decided by doodle poll.

**Outline**

**Regulation of counselling therapy in Yukon, Northwest Territories & Nunavut.**

* Questions about the potential for regulation in the Yukon and how northern BC will fare with BC regulation. There is currently no movement in that direction in Yukon.
* Clarification of how the CCPA's national guidelines impact regulation in BC, and believes that their standards are good standards that are recognized across Canada by all provincial governments.
* Discuss lack of regulation for counsellors in Northwest Territories and need for integration of First Nation and Inuit was of healing into the regulation strategies.
* Discussion of government push for wellness-style counselling over clinical counselling, highlighting indigenous knowledge and reconciliation.
* Question re: CCPA's role in supporting non-registered psychotherapist and counsellors in small communities, given lack of registered psychologists and insurers accepting CCC registration.
* Question : How can we effectively involve more counsellors and psychotherapists in the universal mental health care movement?

**Indigenous education and services in Canada, with a focus on northern regions.**

* Discuss CCC/CCPA efforts for indigenous communities, potential for funding opportunities for Northern Network members to attend CCPA conferences.
* Faith shares her background and experiences as a registered member of the Stolo Nation, born and raised in Vancouver, and currently working with a nonprofit in Oregon while pursuing education in Canada.

**Indigenous mental health support in Canada, particularly in the North.**

* Faith shares her journey in counselling and psychology, working towards a master's degree and wanting to bring their skills back to their home province in Canada.
* Inuit speaker advocates for more indigenous psychotherapists to address mental health crisis in traditional territories.
* Angela speaks to her work and the need for more it : Advocating for Inuit and First Nations mental health, increasing indigenous representation in the field.
* Carrie expresses excitement for the addition the new president, George Maringapasi, who will take over from her in May. George works in northern Labrador.

**Forming a network for northern communities, with potential for official structure and funding.**

* Need for community building and structure for the Northern network, with 55+ members signed up so far.
* Suggestion of formalizing the network's structure, including bylaws and annual funding, but leaves decision to group when more people are present.

**Supporting mental health in Indigenous communities.**

* Group discusses recruiting more indigenous therapists and improving quality of care in remote communities.
* Discuss the importance of the inclusion of non-members individuals and organizations to strengthen the voice and need to invite community members to describe landscapes and political contexts.

**Closing and next meeting in northern regions.**

* Meeting closes, Carrie expresses gratitude and looks forward to future collaboration with northern region community members. Notes to be sent to all.

**Action Items**

* Schedule monthly meetings for the northern network through doodle poll.
* Explore strategies for recruiting and supporting indigenous therapists and counsellors in the northern territories.
* Send out notes from this meeting to all 55+ members of the northern network.

Bonus Track : 

**Summary Question** : What steps can be taken to increase the representation of indigenous psychotherapists in northern communities.

Based on our conversation, today and at the previous meeting here are key steps to increase indigenous psychotherapists in northern communities:

* Develop targeted recruitment strategies specifically for indigenous people in the north, focusing on:
* Supporting indigenous students like Faith in their educational journey
* Creating pathways for indigenous people to enter counselling and psychology fields
* Offering bursaries and financial support for education
* Recognize the importance of indigenous-led mental health services:
* Prioritize hiring indigenous therapists who understand cultural nuances
* Create programs that value traditional knowledge alongside western education
* Develop two-stream regulation pathways that respect indigenous approaches
* Address systemic barriers:
* Challenge colonial interference in mental health systems
* Support indigenous-led mental health initiatives
* Create culturally cognizant approaches that prevent appropriation
* Build capacity through:
* Mentorship programs
* Funding opportunities for conference attendance
* Supporting indigenous mental health leadership development
* Highlight the benefits of indigenous therapists:
* Emphasize instant rapport and reduced harm when clients work with indigenous practitioners
* Showcase successful indigenous mental health professionals as role models

**The goal is to increase indigenous representation by creating supportive, culturally respectful pathways into the counselling and psychotherapy professions.**

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| Steps | Details |
| Develop targeted recruitment strategies | Supporting indigenous students like Faith, creating pathways for indigenous people, offering bursaries and financial support |
| Recognize the importance of indigenous-led mental health services | Prioritize hiring indigenous therapists, create programs that value traditional knowledge, develop two-stream regulation pathways |
| Address systemic barriers | Challenge colonial interference, support indigenous-led initiatives, create culturally cognizant approaches |
| Build capacity | Mentorship programs, funding opportunities for conference attendance, supporting indigenous mental health leadership development |
| Highlight the benefits of indigenous therapists | Emphasize instant rapport and reduced harm, showcase successful indigenous professionals as role models |