



**Canadian Working Group on HIV and Rehabilitation**

**Groupe de travail canadien sur le VIH et la réinsertion sociale**

## **Positive Outlook – Strengthening depressed clients with HIV and other episodic disabilities**

### **Introduction**

Many professionals feel intimidated and powerless when assisting a client weighted down with symptoms of depression. This interaction often leaves both the worker and the client feeling helpless and hopeless.

Research shows that depression is often present in those living with episodic disabilities. Episodic disabilities include illnesses like multiple sclerosis (MS), lupus, Crohn's disease, arthritis, diabetes, hepatitis C, HIV and some forms of cancer and mental illness. Additionally, other symptoms such as stress and anxiety often accompany the impact of depression and can limit the effectiveness of therapeutic interactions.

### **Description**

This lively workshop uses practical real-life experiences to help participants learn powerful assessment tools and treatment techniques to ease the burden for both client and professional alike. Interactive exercises, case studies and role-play training will ensure that all participants are comfortable and understand how to improve the quality of client care.

This dynamic and interactive workshop will:

- Deliver effective tools to assess mild, moderate and severe depressive symptoms, and
- Teach evidence-based techniques to positively impact the client's mental state, no matter how short the interaction may be.

This workshop will assist anyone person who works with clients that suffer from depressive symptoms including: Rehabilitation professionals, front-line workers at AIDS Service Organizations and Mental Health Workers.

Participants will learn how to apply elements of:

- Motivational Interviewing
- Solution-Focused Therapy

- Cognitive Therapy
- Working with the challenging client
- What does depression look like and how does it affect the client and self
- The impact of marginalization and stigma
- Professional self-care
- Screening tools to assess depression

Both peer and professional supervision will be provided in a safe, confidential space that allows the participants to share and learn in a non-judgmental environment.

The workshop will be delivered over two days for small groups (maximum 16 people) and may be eligible for continuing education points through various professional associations.

Each participant will gain greater confidence in handling situations of depression. Participants will be able to work with more clients in a streamlined method which will reduce the likelihood of the worker 'taking home' the daily stressors that work can often present.

Successful participants feel that they not only have learned tools to enhance their practice, but also the skills necessary to make a positive, lasting change for their clientele.

## **Post-Workshop Supports**

To facilitate integration of newly acquired skills, professional consultation sessions are offered by the instructor to participants for several months after completion of the workshop. Consultations can be provided either through email, telephone or in person, depending on needs and availability.

Successful participants are encouraged to online peer-led and instructor moderated forums will ensure that the participant will retain the practical education and be able to discuss real-life efficacies of their work.

## **Contact Information**

For additional information contact Jordan Lewis at [jlewis@hivandrehab.ca](mailto:jlewis@hivandrehab.ca) or 416-513-0440 x249

## **Biography:**

**Jordan Lewis, MSW RSW** had worked for over ten years as the social worker in the HIV team at St. Michael's Hospital in Toronto. Over the years he has experience working with marginalized populations that include homelessness, mental health, palliative care, addictions and HIV. He has taught both at College and University levels for several years and continues to teach annual workshops at various institutions. He has lectured at national conferences as well as been a key member of research initiatives. Jordan has won the "Education Excellence Award" at St. Michael's Hospital in 2007 and again in 2010. Jordan also maintains a thriving private practice.