



Mental Health  
Commission  
of Canada

Commission de  
la santé mentale  
du Canada

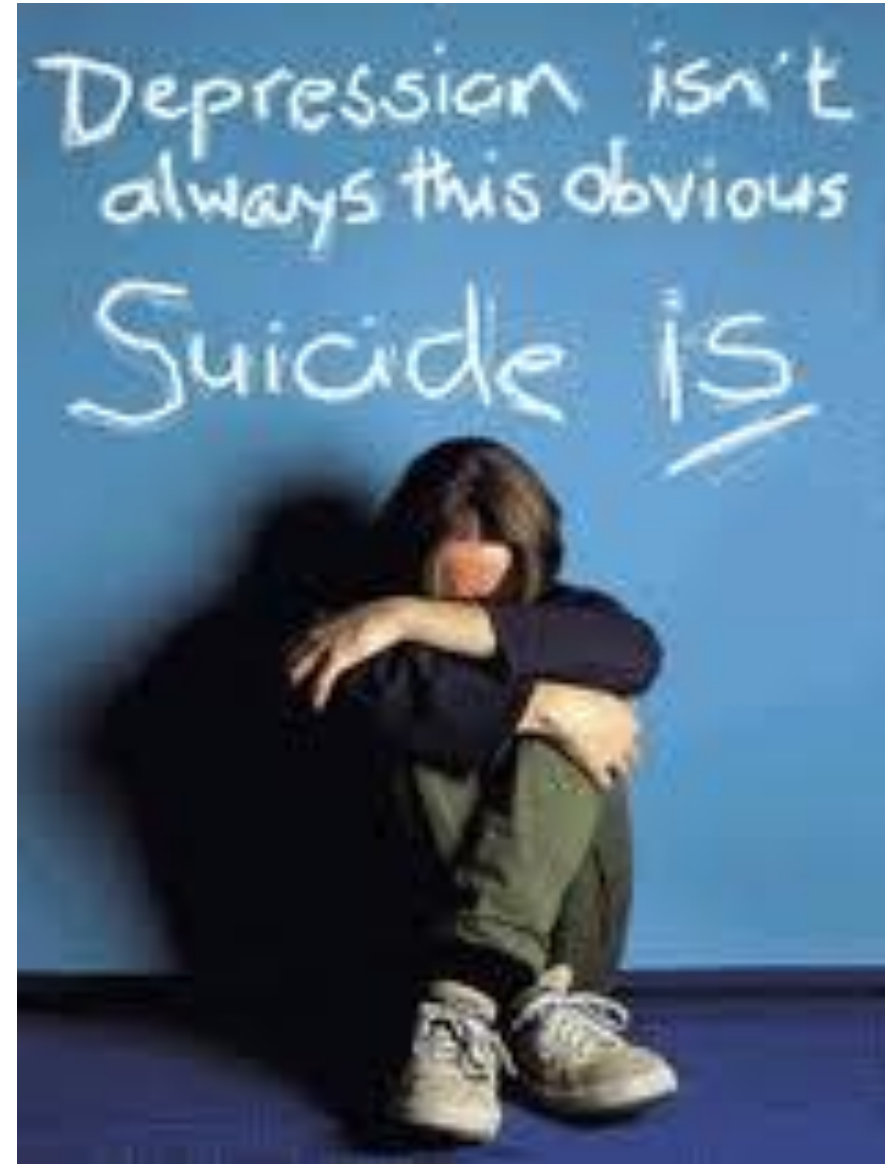
## Suicide

A personal perspective!  
Are we doing enough?

**Hamilton**  
**October 25, 2011**

***For those who understand,  
no explanation is necessary.***

***For those who don't,  
no explanation is possible.***



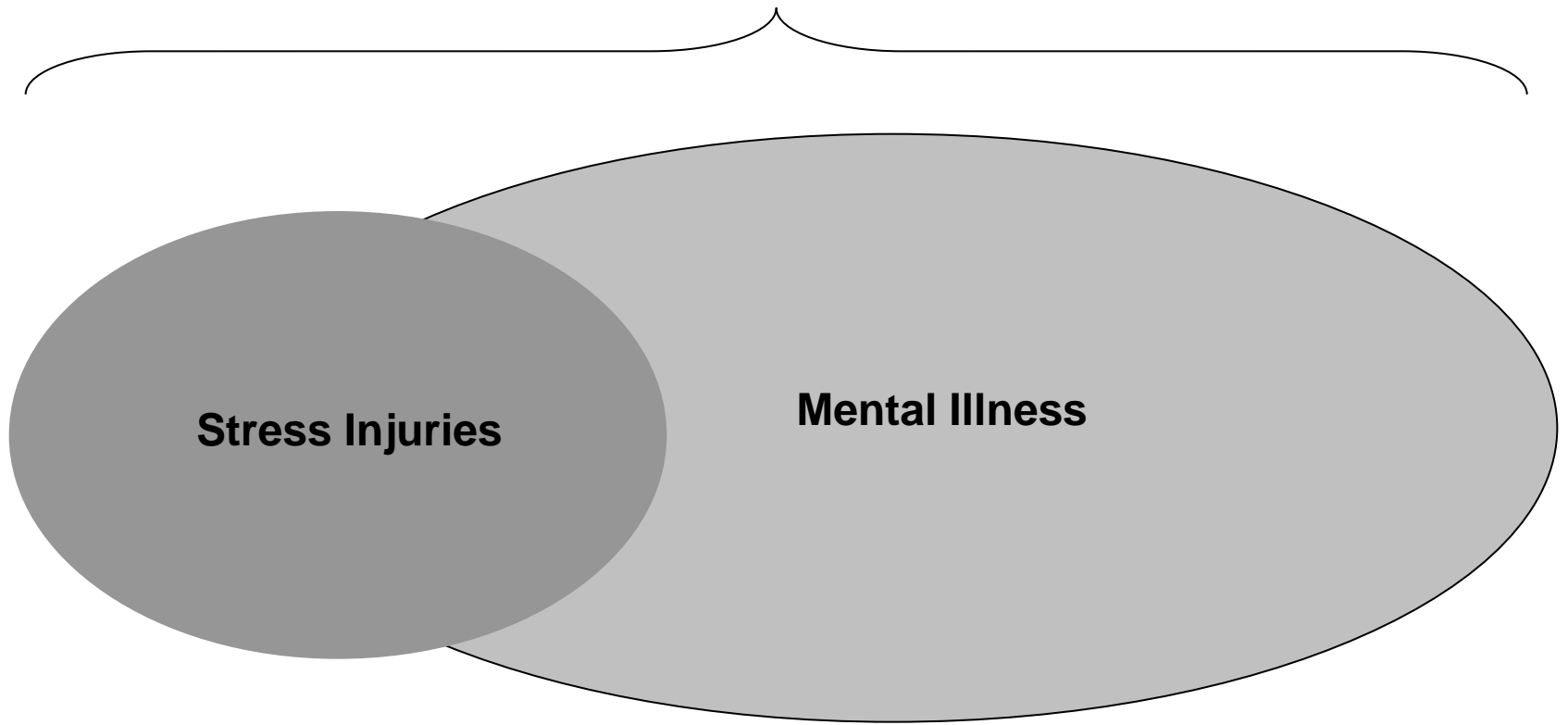


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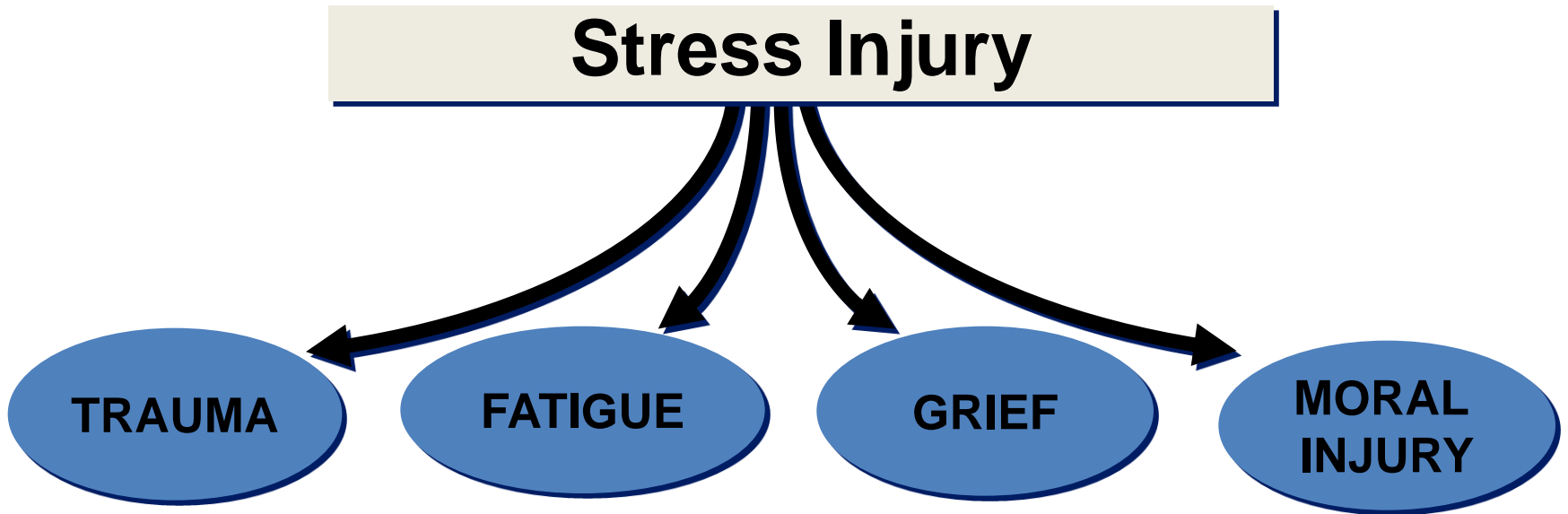
# **My new PARADIGMS**

# New paradigms

**Mental Health**



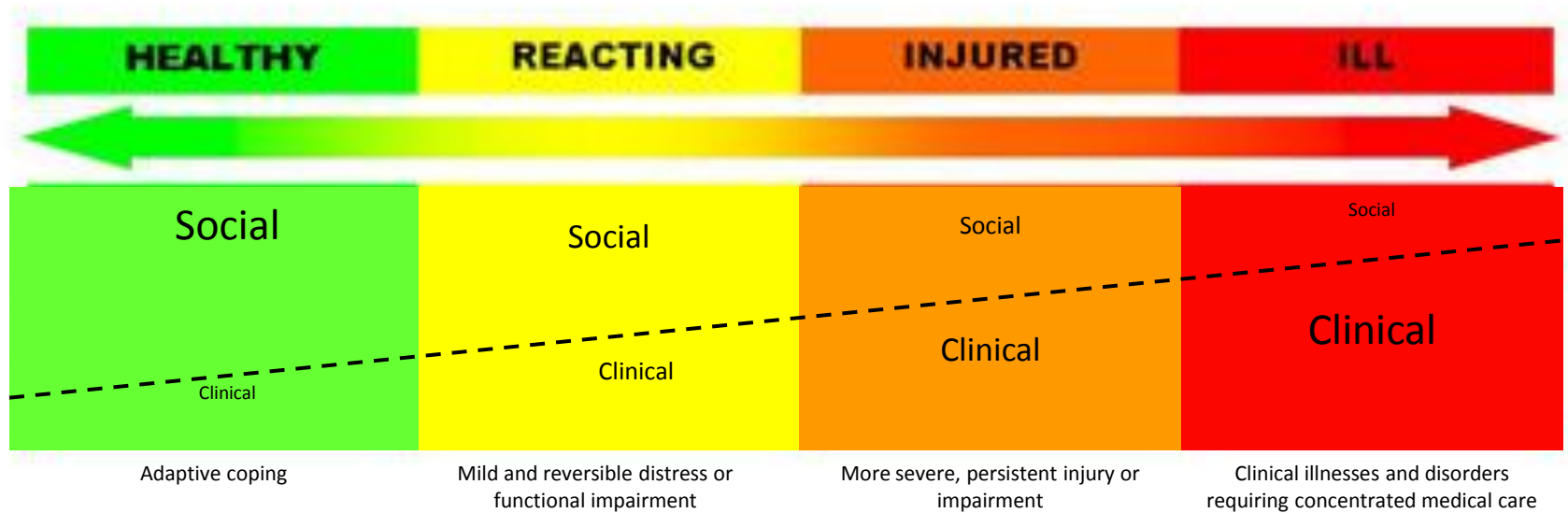
# New paradigms



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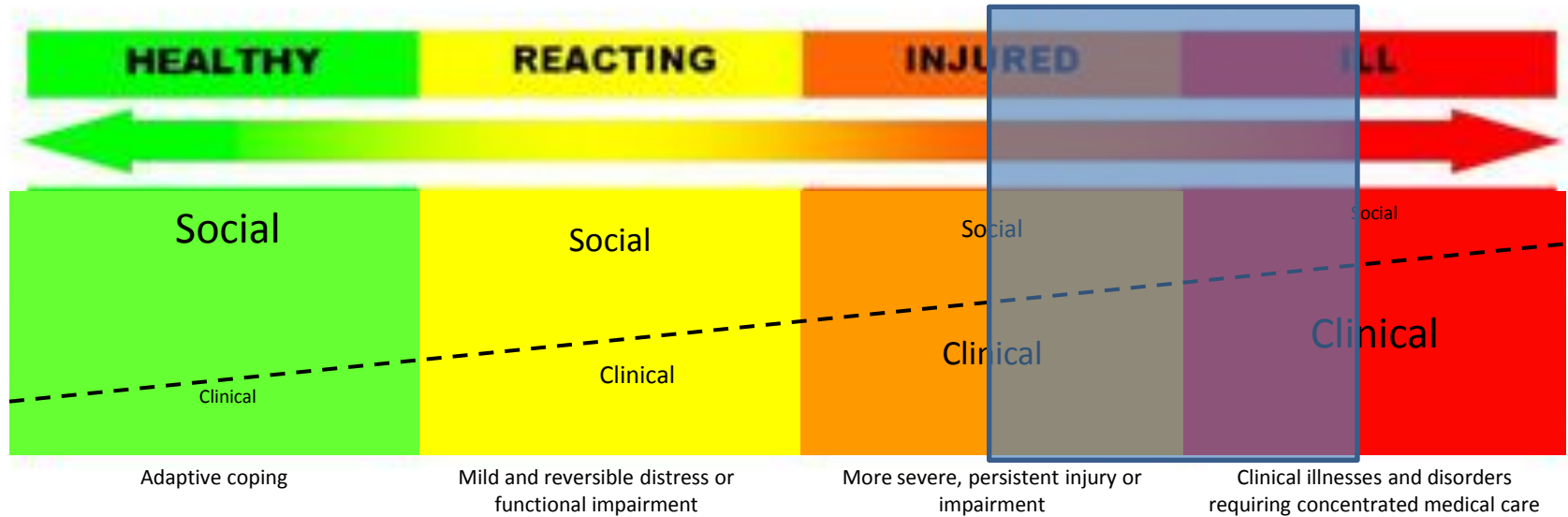
# Value and Leverage Lived Experience

***De medicalize! Normalize and simplify where***



# New paradigms

## Suicide zone



We need to go upstream





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# The Peer Project

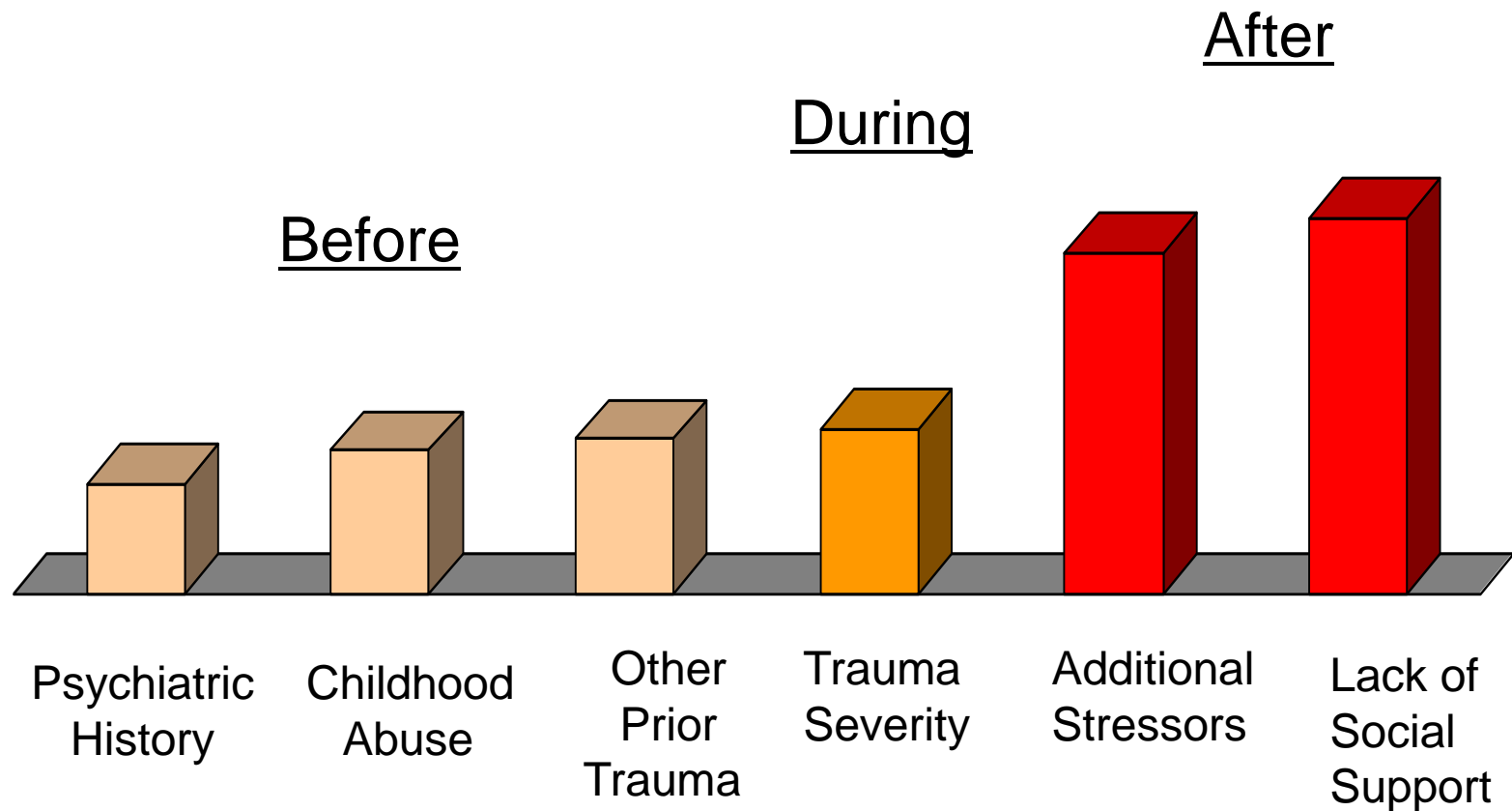
# The Mental Health Commission of Canada

## The Mandate

- Non-profit, at arm's length from all levels of government, funding from Health Canada.
- Five strategic initiatives:
  - Mental health strategy for Canada;
    - **NEW - MHCC Peer Support Project;**
    - **NEW** – Workplace Standard for Psychological Health and safety
  - Anti-stigma/discrimination initiative;
  - Knowledge exchange;
  - Homeless research demonstration projects;
  - Partners for Mental Health.
- MHCC - a “catalyst” for mental health system transformation;
- 8 Board Advisory Committees provide expertise.



# Embrace the obvious



**At a time when society is arguably more fragmented than ever before, and technology and social media have overtaken face-to-face communication, the power of human interaction has never been greater!**

**Nowhere can it have more impact than in the lives of people experiencing mental illness.**

## Overview

The use of peer support is founded on the belief that people who have faced, endured, and overcome the adversity of mental health conditions can offer beneficial support, encouragement and hope to others facing similar situations and thereby speed their recovery. Through our Peer Support Project, the Commission is aiming to validate the establishment of peer support as an integral part of the continuum of services offered to individuals with mental health problems and illnesses, as well as increase the availability of peer support services within workplaces.

# Intent

Create the conditions required to leverage, on a wide scale, the acquired skills of people who have lived mental health experience.

Provide a robust enabling framework for organisations and systems to enhance current peer programs or launch new peer initiatives, build capacity and help address the growing mental health needs.

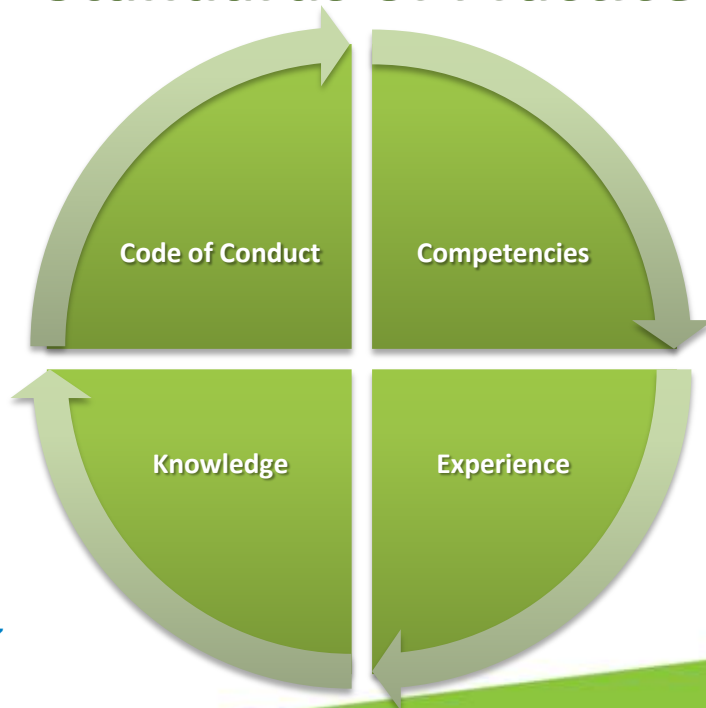
# Peer Support Framework – 3 components

## #1 – Certification Process

Principle of Practice

Core Values

## Standards of Practice



## #2 – Readiness Assessment

**Organizational  
qualities required for  
success**

## #3 – Evaluation Strategy

**Outcomes**

**&**

**Evaluations Methods**

# The Plan

## Phase I

Consultation  
2010 / 2011

**Standards  
of  
Practice (SoP)**

Values

Principle of  
Practice

Code of Conduct

Experience

Competencies

Knowledge

**Organizational  
Requirements**

**Evaluation outcomes  
& Methods**

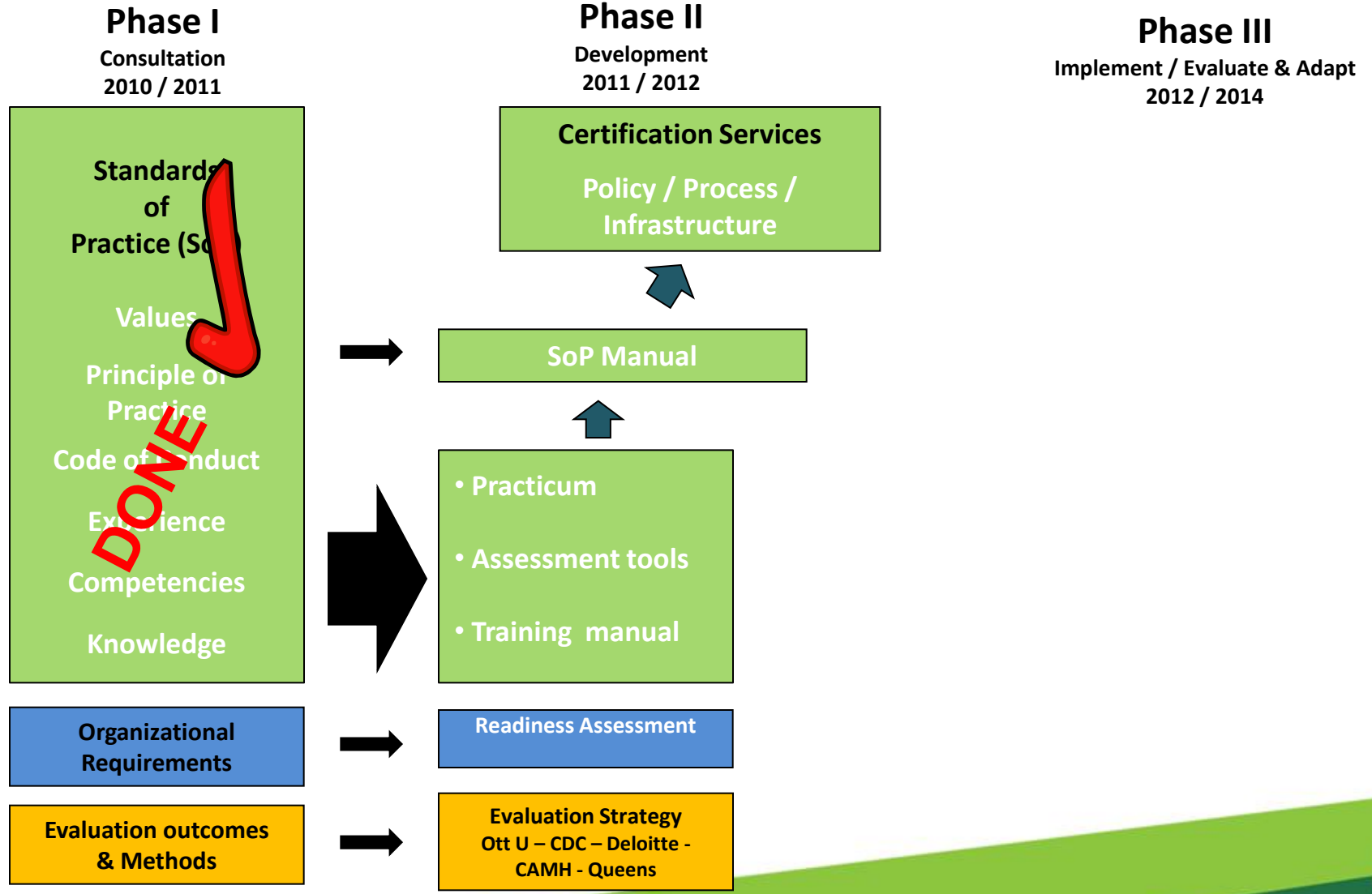
## Phase II

Development  
2011 / 2012

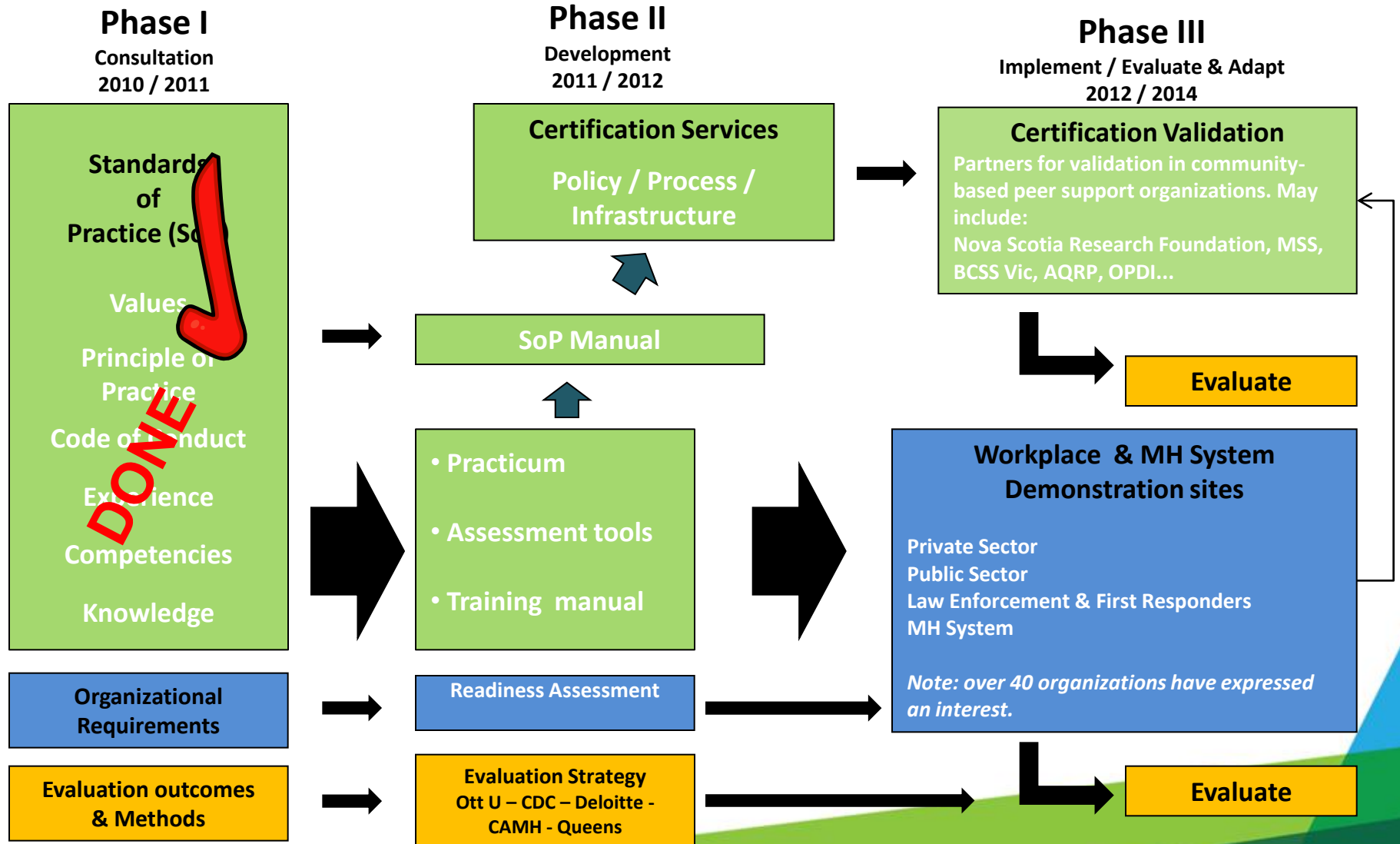
## Phase III

Implement / Evaluate & Adapt  
2012 / 2014

# The Plan



# The Plan



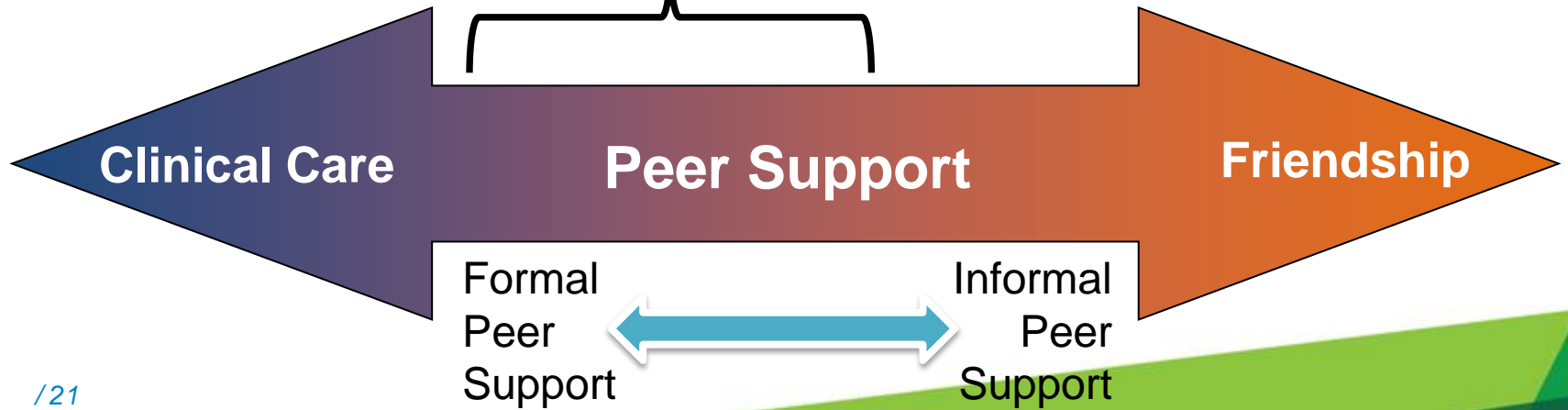


# Targeted segment of the peer support continuum

**Future certified  
peer support  
workers**

**Examples of types of peer support include:**

- Forensic inpatient services
- Acute inpatient services
- Community based NGOs
- Respite services and alternatives to acute inpatient stays
- Peer operated “warmlines”
- Primary mental health care
- Peer led training
- Workplace peer support programs
- Others as appropriate



# Research based project

- The gathering of evidence-based data is required to promote the expanded use of peer support
- A reliably consistent standard methodology (standards of practice) is required to allow the gathering of empirical data based on project evaluation results
- Underpinned from the outset with outcomes based performance measurement and evaluation strategies

(Ottawa U, U of T, Queens, Simon Fraser U, Laval U, CAMH, CDC Atlanta Georgia)



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# Questions

Contact us :

[peerproject@mentalhealthcommission.ca](mailto:peerproject@mentalhealthcommission.ca)

# Peer support, EAP and Mental Health

Typically these programs offer the following:

## PEER SUPPORT

- Informal setting
- Peer has a similar lived experience
- As needed
- No predetermined amount of meetings
- No cost to the individual
- Greater stability with one continuous peer
- Is therapeutic but not therapy
- Individuals obtain Peer Certification
- Reaches out to people
- No perceived power differential
- Based on hope

## EAP

- Clinical setting
- Psychologist may not have lived experience
- Once a week
- Determined amount of sessions
- May be costs for the individual
- May need for a transfer to a new counsellor
- Therapy
- Professional credentials (according to Prov.)
- People reach out to the service
- May be perceived power differential
- Based on treatment options
- Addresses issues broader than mental illness

# Peer support, EAP and Mental Health

## Can an organization have both?

**YES, it is not a case of one OR the other but rather, an opportunity to enhance employee health in an multiplicative and dynamic fashion. By using a comprehensive and integrated approach we ensure greater support and more efficient service delivery.**

- Both methods aim to support the individual and respond to the individuals' needs and **complement** each other.
- Coupled **together** this is a **added value** to management and employees in the organization as it contributes to the continuum of integrated confidential services and promotes well-being. stigma by having integrated change agents.
- Contributes to significantly reducing

# The Peer Project - Two components

**Peer Support Practitioners:** enhance the utilization of peer support through the creation and application of national standards of practice & certification process.

**Peer Educators:** encourage a change in societal attitudes towards mental illnesses through peer based education strategies.

# Strategic Timeline includes

- 2010 / 2011 Planning, consultation, framework development;
- 2011 / 2012 Pilot & evaluate the peer support framework, design certification process, create accreditation body;
- 2012 / 2013 Pilot & evaluate certification process;
- 2013 / 2014 Pilot & evaluate accreditation process; and
- 2014 / 2015 Meet Institute for Credentialing Excellence **(ICE)** standards.

# Standards of practice first!

- Standards of practice - required for peer support workers to carry out their responsibilities with due care and skill:
  - knowledge
  - Competencies
  - Experience
  - Code of conduct
- The standards of practice will permit the voluntary certification of peer support workers who meet the standards requirements
- The standards is being established based on a nationwide, comprehensive consultation process tapping into the wealth of knowledge and experience in this field