**Speakers’ Bios & Panel Project Descriptions**

**Uzma Shakir – Keynote Speaker**

Uzma Shakir is the Director of Equity, Diversity & Human Rights Division at the City of Toronto. She has been a community-based researcher, advocate and an activist. She is the past Executive Director of Council of Agencies Serving South Asians (CASSA) and the South Asian Legal Clinic of Ontario (SALCO). From 2008-2010 she was an Atkinson Economic Justice Fellow and an Adjunct Professor, Department of Geography and Programme in Planning, University of Toronto.

Uzma received a B.A. degree from Karachi University, Pakistan; a B.A. Honors degree from Sussex University, England; a Master of Law and Diplomacy degree from the Fletcher School of Law and Diplomacy, Tufts University, Boston, USA.

Her work focused on issues of race, erosion of civil liberties and critical multiculturalism. She has been an advocate, organizer/facilitator, writer and lecturer on diverse issues facing racialized communities.

Uzma was the recipient of the J. S. Woodsworth Award in 2010, the Outstanding Asian Canadian Award, (2008), the Jane Jacob’s Award (2003), and is a past President of the Ontario Council of Agencies Serving Immigrants (OCASI).

**Rahim Thawer – Panel Speaker**

Rahim Thawer is a registered social worker who works as a Mental Health Counsellor on the Newcomer Health Team at Sherbourne Health Centre. Rahim works from a cognitive behavioural, psychodynamic and anti-oppressive approach. His experience includes working in children's mental health, LGBTQ services, addiction and trauma treatment, and with people living with and affected by HIV. In each of these areas, Rahim has worked to bring attention to the unique needs of racialized and newcomer populations.

* **Presentation: The Mental Health Collaborative**

Women’s Health in Women’s Hands (WHIWH) leads the "Mental Health Collaborative" in partnership with Sherbourne Health Centre, Canadian Centre for Victims of Torture (CCVT) and the Centre for Addictions and Mental Health (CAMH) focused on a coordinated model of service delivery for Immigrant Refugee and Racialised Populations (IRR) in Toronto. The project leverages culturally adapted CBT tools and resources produced by CAMH; increases access to culturally appropriate and trauma-informed therapies (both group and individual counselling) and improves mental health system navigation for IRR populations. The collaborative takes advantage of organizational expertise around gender-based services, trauma-focused work, newcomer focused work, LGBTQ-competence, and mental health capacity building resources. The partnership has focused on strengthening cross-referrals and agency updates, better understanding internal processes of partner agencies to support system navigation for clients, developing measurement tools for interventions, and creating a space to think about ways to adapt clinical interventions and services to meet the needs of immigrant, refugee and racialized populations.

**Maria A.Y. Choi – Panel Speker**

Maria Choi, BWS(Hon.), MHSc., RSW, is the Program Manager of the Wellness Centre. She is a registered social worker in Ontario and completed her social work education in Hong Kong followed by a Master of Health Science degree in Health Promotion from Department of Public Health Sciences, the University of Toronto. With twenty years of social work experience in both Hong Kong and Toronto, Maria has extensive experience working with the Chinese-speaking community and her practice includes clinical work in senior mental health, health promotion and community development. As one of the four founders of Chinese Mental Health Network, Maria is aware of community needs and strengths.

Currently, she is the convener of the Chinese Mental Health Network and the co-chair of the Chinese Caregiver Network. In an ongoing contribution to education for professionals, Maria supervises social work students from the University of Windsor, University of Hong Kong and Hong Kong Polytechnic University. In 2008, she received the Patient Program Award from The Kidney Foundation of Canada, Central Ontario Chapter.

* **Presentation: Mount Sinai Hospital Wellness Centre: A community mental health program for seniors and caregivers**

The Wellness Centre is the realization of an innovative model of care, which addresses the mental health needs of ethno-cultural seniors with an emphasis on Wellness. This Centre is designed to meet the needs of the Chinese community for more efficient and timely access to the mental health system by providing information, assessment and treatment in a comfortable and accepting environment.

With a focus on early identification of serious mental disorders, the Centre offers an array of culturally and linguistically appropriate services, including clinical services, education, health promotion, and traditional and western health care. The inter-professional team comprised of psychiatrists, social workers, psychotherapists, nurses and health promoters. *Services are offered in Cantonese, Mandarin and English.*

**Clinical Services:**

* Psychogeriatric assessment
* Treatment – including pharmacotherapy and psychotherapy
* Psychoeducation
* Supportive counselling to families and caregivers
* Outreach
* Shared care and referrals
* Skills training for families and caregivers
* CARERS Group for caregivers
* Group therapy

**Wellness Programs:**

* Mental health education and promotion
* Relaxation and stress management
* Holistic health
* Traditional Chinese exercises and traditional Chinese medicine
* Adjustment to aging /Positive aging

**Target Population:**

* Members of the Chinese community aged 55 years and above
* Caregivers who experience stress and difficulty taking care of a Chinese senior

**Terence Williams – Panel Speaker**

Terence Williams was born in Cape Town South Africa and lived the first part of his life in the United Kingdom. Terence arrived in Toronto in June 1959 with most of his family. He attended school and college in Toronto until December 1971, completing a 3 year Business Administration Program. He then served with the U.S. military for over 10 years, attended school part time and created art work on assignment.

Since 2002, Terence has been very involved with the Parkdale Activity Recreation Centre (PARC). He is currently a Peer Community Outreach Worker. Terence is very involved with music, has a love of cats and animals, and maintains a good life balance. He has built up an excellent network of contacts and friends within my community, and has very meaningful relationships with many persons, young and old, from many walks of life.

* **Presentation: Community Based Peer Outreach Program**

The Community Based Peer Outreach Worker Program at Parkdale Activity Recreation Centre is a program funded by the Toronto Central Local Health Integration Network (TC LHIN). Peer workers work in drop-in settings to offer peer support related to health care and assist clients in understanding as well as navigating the health care system.

Community Outreach Workers

* Accompany clients to and from primary/psychiatry appointments
* Visit clients in the hospital or at home (for those clients who are socially isolated)
* Offer support by listening to clients and providing empathy
* Offer support by assisting some clients to fill out forms for OW/ODSP
* Offer support by making telephone calls to the clients’ workers and general advocacy

Community Outreach Workers do not counsel clients, do not clean homes, do not perform personal support care duties and they do not move, transport carry or lift heavy objects for clients.