



MPA – Motivation, Power & Achievement Society

Empowerment in Mental Health since 1971

TO: All Members and Staff
FROM: David MacIntyre, Executive Director
DATE: March 24, 2021
RE: MPA Society Celebrates 50th Anniversary

MPA Society Celebrates 50th Anniversary

“MPA Society – Empowerment in Mental Health since 1971.”

Empowerment: having the knowledge, confidence, means or ability to do things or make decisions for oneself. The process of becoming stronger and more confident, especially in controlling one’s life and claiming one’s rights. MPA Society.

The past 50 years have borne witness to significant changes regarding societal attitudes, approaches, and understandings of mental illness and MPA Society has been at the forefront of many of these efforts. Talking openly and honestly about mental health and increasing efforts to destigmatize mental illness have experienced progress and efforts have translated to an increase in community support and funded services. At MPA Society, our growth and expansion of programs offered make us almost unrecognizable from the organization we were in 1971. The attached graphic offers a snapshot of some of the supports MPA Society offers today. We have come a long way.

The past 50 years are also a story of what has not changed; most importantly, our organization’s commitment to remaining true to the principles and approaches that unified our founders and we proudly continue to embrace and ensure these guide us as we move forward.

Community – MPA has always been committed to not only being *in* the community but being *of* the community. Our Members, since our inception, embrace genuine community participation and involvement in everything we do. We welcome these inclusive relationships and are enthusiastic partners. This has always been and will always be our way. Whether we are meeting with members of a Community Advisory Committee regarding one of our housing sites, displaying our member’s art in a local commercial gallery, celebrating an annual picnic at Stanley Park with our members or building community with neighbouring tenants in one of our apartment blocks, participatory inclusion is one of our fundamental beliefs.

Accountability – While our founding movement was based out of protest, there was then (and remains today) an emphasis on accountability and personal responsibility. This is true at all levels of the organization. Accountability is ingrained in how we operate, both informally and formally. Our members are aware of the consequences of attracting negative attention and the reality that our structured presence in any community rarely goes unnoticed. To that end, they are motivated to hold themselves and each other accountable and work especially hard to be good neighbours. The organization regularly invites local area law enforcement to offer feedback about any impacts they identify as a result of MPA programs being present in a community and we are regularly advised there



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are none. MPA Society achieved CARF accreditation in 2015 and has maintained the highest level since that time. In addition, we receive a clean audit every year, acknowledging our excellence in financial stewardship. Our Board and Leadership detail risk management and governance plans and update these as part of a regular schedule.

Empowerment – MPA was founded on many of the principles of psychosocial rehabilitation, even if we didn't call it that back then. Our Members are much more than their illness and they are encouraged to choose their own recovery path and make decisions for themselves. The role of MPA staff continues to be to present options, identify consequences and advocate for increased opportunities. Involving people with lived experience is encouraged at every level of organization, including as recipients of service, members of staff, as volunteers and as members on our Board. Member's suggestions translate to activities and services offered at MPA programs. Member's identified needs and demographic profiles guide strategic directions and inform operational plans.

Over time, almost all non-profit organizations face the temptation to stray from their mission in pursuit of funding opportunities that facilitate growth. Our organization is grateful for the stakeholder input we have enjoyed over the past 50 years, which has guided us to stay true to our purpose and walk away from temptations that did not fit our mandate. Our evolution and growth have been purposeful, thoughtful, considerate, and significant.

Any anniversary that celebrates half a century of excellence achieved through continuous quality improvement deserves celebration. Although COVID-19 has interrupted a formal celebrated gathering for now, there are so many partners who are part of the MPA community that we invite to share in our milestone:

- MPA Members – we celebrate your courage, perseverance, and willingness to speak up!
- MPA Staff – we celebrate your creativity, dedication, and enthusiasm! You are our “work family.”
- MPA Leadership – we celebrate your vision and detailed attention to opportunities and influences that guide decision making.
- MPA Board of Directors – we celebrate your generosity and the expertise you provide as you guide our governance.
- Community Partners – we celebrate the relationships we enjoy that work towards our mutual goals.

Our celebration is only possible because of you.

As we pause to recognize the tremendous accomplishments of MPA Society's past 50 years, we know our work is far from done. The power of our shared commitment and the depth of the relationships we enjoy energize us to keep moving forward so we can continue to celebrate the journey and our achievements together.