

What the Career Development profession offers on PEI & across Canada

by Gloria Welton & Heidi Riley

The Career Development Association of PEI (CDA of PEI) recently held a conference which brought together a variety of professionals in the career development field to share information and raise awareness of the profession on PEI.

All of us need career planning help at some point in our lives, and there are people who work on PEI who can give us much-needed employment-related services and guidance.

Recently, a report was done through CDA of PEI to identify career development professionals, uncover details about what they do, what their profession offers, and much more.



Some job titles of people who work in this field and where they work:

- **Career Practitioner and Job Coach** - Career/employment services provider funded by government
- **College/University/Secondary School Educators and School Counsellors** work at Holland College, private colleges, UPEI career services, K-12 career-related subjects and support
- **Employment/Career Counsellors** work at agencies funded by government and private employers
- **Project/Program Officers** work at government and government funded agencies
- **Human Resource Professionals** work for private and public service employers
- **Information and Resources Officers/Facilitators** work for government and government funded agencies
- **Co-op Educators/Coordinators** work for secondary and post-secondary education

More job titles:

- Site/Program Manager
- Executive Director
- Career Consultant
- Employment Advisor
- Workforce Development Officer
- Vocational Rehabilitation Specialist
- Labour Market Information Specialist



From left: Kim Murphy and Lisa Chaisson, Career Development Association of PEI, Donnalee Bell, Canadian Career Development Foundation, and Chérine Stevula, CDA of PEI.

The role of the career development professional

The report stated that PEI's economy is in the midst of a transformation.

Similar to other parts of the globe, the province is experiencing an increasingly knowledge-based economy, technological change, demographic shifts, ongoing industrial restructuring, an influx of immigrants, and mounting labour market demands, as well as a growing shortage of both highly skilled and entry-level workers across all sectors. Also, many historically secure and stable careers have been diminished and/or replaced with multifaceted, complex, and more precarious ones.

An increasing number of Islanders are in need of assistance to adapt with changes that affect our labour force. The research done by CDA of PEI aims to better understand those who provide career-related services to individuals who are preparing to enter, adjust to, or exit the dynamic labour market on PEI.

For a look at the **2018 Career Development Professional Labour Force Profile** report, visit www.cdapei.ca
For a list of many services/agencies/organizations programs that offer help with employment search and planning, visit www.employmentjourney.com/resources-services-for-job-seekers/



Shedding light on the career development profession across Canada

The keynote speaker at the CDA of PEI annual conference was **Donnalee Bell**, Managing Director of the **Canadian Career Development Foundation (CCDF)**. She spoke about enriching and rejuvenating the career development profession.

“As career development professionals, our work is about helping others. Our capacity to help the public in a sustained way depends on our capacity to keep ourselves well, balanced and grounded.”

“That is not always easy. In today's labour market, we and the clients we serve are being asked to regularly maneuver, flex, change, adapt, and reinvent ourselves as occupations are changing quickly. We need to be experts in labour market information and see opportunity in very limited landscapes.”

“We need to know how to use all social media channels for marketing ourselves and our clients. And we need to know about all the digital skill profiles of all occupations, and help clients and students develop management skills, employability skills, and essential skills.”

“We are doing all this in the context of shoestring budgets and uncertain and ever-changing funding levels, which is a tall order.”

“The work we do every day matters to your clients and students, to their families, their community, and to the health of our country. We help people along the road to their preferred future, and the contribution deserves to be cherished and celebrated,” says Donnalee Bell.

For more about the **Canadian Career Development Foundation**, visit www.ccdf.ca/ccdf/

For the full article, visit www.employmentjourney.com and search **career development profession**.



Funding for the Career Development Labour Force profile was provided through the Canada/PEI labour market agreements.

Mental health in the workplace

by Heidi Riley

“Mental health is how you feel about yourself, your relationships with other people, and about the world around you,” says **Tayte Willows**, the Community Development Manager for the **Canadian Mental Health Association-PEI Division**.

“One common misconception is that people equate mental health with mental illness. But you can be in great mental health and feel great about your life and still be living with a mental illness such as schizophrenia or depression. It’s important to recognize that there are ways for people with mental illness to grow and thrive and find ways that work for them.”

Other misconceptions - true or false?

1. **One in five Canadians will experience mental illness.** Technically true. But that number is likely a lot higher because many people don’t come forward to get help.
2. **Mental health is the tenth-leading cause of disability and premature death in Canada.** False. Mental health is the second-leading cause.
3. **Each week, at least 500,000 Canadians are unable to work because of mental health problems.** True. Each week, there are approximately 355,000 disability cases due to mental illness and behavioural disorders. Another 175,000 full-time workers are absent from work due to mental illness. Those numbers do not include the people who go to work even though they are not able to do the tasks needed to do their job because of mental illness.
4. **Seventy percent of people report that they or their family member experienced stigma after discussing their mental illness.** True. Stigma makes people feel ashamed instead of wanted and valued, and makes them afraid to reach out for help.

How can stigma be challenged?

When people are more aware, they know what to do and how to get help. When open conversations happen in the workplace, people know there are avenues they can follow and people they can talk to.

“Training ourselves how to respond to mental health situations is helpful. Treat everyone with respect. Ask for forgiveness if you use words that minimize the experience of people who suffer from mental health conditions.”

Tayte says it is important to reach out to other services available in the community. “If someone says they are thinking about suicide or hurting someone else, do not keep it to yourself. You are legally required to report that to the proper authorities.”

Challenge stigma when you see it. “It is important to set an example. Learn the facts about mental illness. The more you know, the easier it is to act appropriately.

“We need to take care of our own mental health before we can take care of others. Do things that make you happy, and connect with a community of like-minded people.”

Some of the many training opportunities available through CMHA

- **Mental Health Works** is a national program that can be delivered in workplaces on PEI. It gives supervisors and managers the tools to manage performance when mental health is involved.
- **safeTALK** is a three-hour alertness training program that helps people recognize the signs when people are thinking of suicide, and how to help.

• **ASIST (Applied Suicide Intervention Skills Training)** is a two-day suicide first-aid course to give people the tools to recognize when someone is considering suicide, keep them safe, and give them the help they need to move past those thoughts.

• **Mental Health First Aid** is two days of training to learn to recognize and move through mental health issues you may encounter.

• **Clubhouses** in Charlottetown, Summerside, and Alberton offer a variety of supports, including housing, employment, education, life skills, and social supports.

“A US study found that 15 percent of those living with mental illness are employed, but for folks connected to a Clubhouse, the employment rate is 40 percent. This support works.”

• **Transitional Employment program** offers work opportunities that allow people to start moving back into the workforce. It allows people to explore their skills and strengths so they can decide what they want to do and what work environment is best for them.



Tayte Willows, Canadian Mental Health-PEI Division.

To find out more about the programs delivered by **Canadian Mental Health Association-PEI**, call 902-566-3034. Visit www.cmha.ca/branches/prince-edward-island-division



Social enterprise for community agencies can provide a road map to prosperity

by Stacy Dunn

Marcia Carroll, Executive Director of **PEI Council of People with Disabilities (PEICOD)**, attended world forums in Calgary and in Scotland to learn more about how social enterprise can support non-profit organizations.

“There is more competition for government funding, and community organizations need to be innovative in their approach to sustainability. Social enterprise is a model that involves business, community, and government. Dividends earned from the business go to the community.

“Our three programs, the Snoezelen Room, Summer Tutoring Program, and Designated Parking Permit Program, are good examples of the social enterprise model.”

The Snoezelen Room offers relaxation therapy through the gentle use of aromas, tactile, audio and visual stimulation. In 2017-2018, about 730 people with physical and intellectual disabilities, autism, PTSD and mental illness visited this place.

“Also last year, 150 school-aged children completed the Summer Tutoring Program and 7,500 designated parking permits were issued.

“The revenue made from our programs allows the Council to balance our budget, keep our non-profit charitable status, and give money to vulnerable people who don’t fit into existing government programs.”

Advice on starting a social enterprise

“My advice to organizations considering social enterprise is to look at your existing operations,” Marcia says. “Identify your strengths, analyze the gaps, and come up with a business plan. Figure out how to make money from your existing programs and services and invest that money back into the organization.”

Examples of social enterprises worldwide

“Scotland is a leader in social enterprise because their government invested in the model early on, and removed some regulatory barriers. By acting proactively, they supported people before they slipped through the cracks.”

Marcia described a temporary employment staffing agency in Hastings, BC funded by the BC government. The organization was about to run out of money and shut down when a member of its board of directors came up with a business plan.

“They chose to charge employers a fee for staffing services, and in one year, they recorded \$10 million in earnings. Hastings is in a poor part of Vancouver where many residents have mental health or addiction issues. During a recent construction boom in that city, the agency matched some residents with contractors, helping them to get clean, and provided work boots, lunches and transportation to the work site.”

Problem solving

“Very often people raising money for the most vulnerable in our society have to go through many layers of government or to foundations. Social enterprises generate money, solve problems, and build community. They help clients with life skills, job readiness, and education planning. We can make a difference in the way we build community and solve some of the huge problems we have on PEI through a social enterprise model.”

Future plans

The federal government is looking into investing in a social enterprise framework. “I have spoken with government representatives about how charities can become a business to achieve their goals.”

PEICOD at a glance

- Non-profit organization formed in 1974.
- 12 full-time employees
- Serves over 10,000 Islanders with disabilities annually.
- 579 Islanders living with disabilities served through their Community Access Team.
- 628 Islanders living with disabilities assisted with CPP-Disability applications and appeals process.
- \$1,187,034 in CPP disability benefits secured for Islanders.



Marcia Carroll, Executive Director.

For more about **PEI Council of People with Disabilities**, call 902-892-9149 or email peicod@peicod.pe.ca. Visit www.peicod.pe.ca

To learn more about the **Social Enterprise World Forum**, go to www.sewfonline.com.

