

From: Nancy Saunders
To: D'Angelo, Jamie
Cc: Lovasi-Wood, Andrea
Subject: Re: [External Email] Reducing Mental Illness and Addictions Distress in our HRM Communities
Date: Monday, July 8, 2024 9:39:51 AM

Good Morning Jamie:

September 4 will work for me. On August 7th I am out of the country. If it were September 4th, what is the deadline for sending the presentation and supporting documents in?

Thank you,
Nancy

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On Mon, Jul 8, 2024 at 9:35 AM D'Angelo, Jamie <Jamie.DAngelo@halifax.ca> wrote:

Dear Nancy Saunders

Thank you for your email. This is to confirm that your request has been received by the Municipal Clerk's Office and will be taken forward to the Board of Police Commissioners Agenda Review Committee for their consideration.

The next *Board of Police Commissioners* meeting is scheduled for August 7, 2024, with the following meeting to be held on September 4, 2024. If either of these dates would pose a scheduling conflict, please let me know. Following a decision by the Agenda Review Committee I will reply by email to let you know the outcome of your request to present.

Please note that if your request to present is approved, your below email and any accompanying documentation (i.e. presentation slides, handouts etc.) will form part of the agenda and public record, including being posted on Halifax.ca. Further information regarding presentations is available on our website at <https://www.halifax.ca/city-hall/boards-committees-commissions/a-c/board-police-commissioners/engagement-bopc>

Meetings are audio and/or video recorded for the purpose of creating a record of the proceedings. If you do not wish to be recorded, please withdraw your request to present; you can provide a written submission instead.

Regards,

Jamie

JAMIE D'ANGELO

SHE/HER

LEGISLATIVE ASSISTANT

MUNICIPAL CLERK'S OFFICE | LEGAL & LEGISLATIVE SERVICES

C. 902.266-6071

HALIFAX

Thank you very much. I look forward to hearing from you.

Nancy

On Fri, Jul 5, 2024 at 2:44 PM Kent, Becky [REDACTED] wrote:

Hello Nancy

I am very sorry to hear of your sons passing. I am very interested in hearing your perspective on this. We are all too often facing such tragedies' including within policing. Our process for request to present to the BOPC is to share with our Clerk assigned to BOPC and they will work with you to go forward if approved. I am copying Andrea Lovasi-Wood to begin this process. I trust that she will reach out to you soon.

Good luck with your Advocacy for change. It is a challenging journey that no doubt raises many

memories and difficulties for you, your family and families who have faced this kind of loss.

I hope this helps.

Becky

From: Nancy Saunders [REDACTED]
Sent: Thursday, July 4, 2024 12:08 PM
To: Kent, Becky [REDACTED]
Subject: [External Email] Reducing Mental Illness and Addictions Distress in our HRM Communities

[This email has been received from an external person or system]

Dear Becky Kent, Chair of the Board of Police Commissioners:

In 2023, my son, Ben Brennan, died by suicide. He was a beautiful human with a passion and talent for music and a deep love for his family and community. I grieve the senselessness of my son's death after trying again and again to get him the help he needed and being told that even though I was his mother that 'due to privacy laws' I could not be part of his care.

I have been by joined by other mothers who lost their teenage and young adult children to suicide or have children who have attempted suicide. They too were prevented from helping and advocating for their children due to our province's privacy laws that prohibit the vital role families

can play, as part of a team approach, in the care and healing of their loved ones.

Together, we have requested the following actions be taken:

1. Informed by Canadian precedents and contemporary research, amend the Nova Scotia Personal Health Information Act so that healthcare professionals have the latitude to inform families when they believe a person in their care is or could be at risk to themselves or others and has declined consent to inform a parent or guardian;
2. Have the Circle of Support and Information Sharing Guidelines implemented at the first point of treatment for mental illness;
3. Introduce a public health education program to educate Nova Scotia families on how to detect early signs of mental health issues, how to communicate with their loved ones, and how to access timely, appropriate care and support in their community; and
4. Provide trauma-informed care and communication training to emergency services and health care staff, the public service, politicians, and their constituency offices so that the approaches and language used in communicating with people suffering from mental illness and their families feel respected, heard, and understood.

CBC covered our story on May 30 on radio, TV and Online

News :

[N.S. mothers who lost children say sharing information could save lives | CBC News](#)

I am contacting you, as I believe these requests, if implemented, will benefit HRM and its citizens greatly and all Municipalities, for that matter. The restrictive privacy legislation is perpetuating the stigma against mental health and addictions and is preventing many opportunities for successful early intervention in mental illness and addictions, which would significantly reduce the very common escalation to crisis, which we see daily in our communities and hospital emergency departments. Nova Scotia currently has the most restrictive privacy law across Canada.

As you know much of our homeless crisis is the direct result of people suffering with mental illness and addictions and the difficulty in getting the help they need is largely due to the lack of ability for collaborative care. I know that HRPD and RCMP are involved multiple times daily in calls regarding missing persons who are in mental health crisis or distress calls and police are far too often taking very ill people to our emergency departments and then waiting for many hours until they see someone.

The privacy laws prevent loved ones from providing vital information to the medical system and the medical system to loved ones, when the person is in danger to themselves or others. This results in unnecessarily prolonged illness, increased escalations, crisis and often death. We lose 150-160 people a year in Nova Scotia to suicide and 90% are

due to untreated or mistreated mental illness and addictions. This is the highest rate in Atlantic Canada.

I would like to have 5-10 minutes to present the work we are doing to the Board of Police Commissioners and ask for their support in our work.

I would be pleased to have a conversation with you about our initiatives, and the work we and many stakeholders have done to date on these initiatives.

Attached is a letter that explains our work, and a few supporting documents.

Sincerely,

Nancy Saunders

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

Founding Member of *Caregivers for Collaborative Mental Health Care*

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