

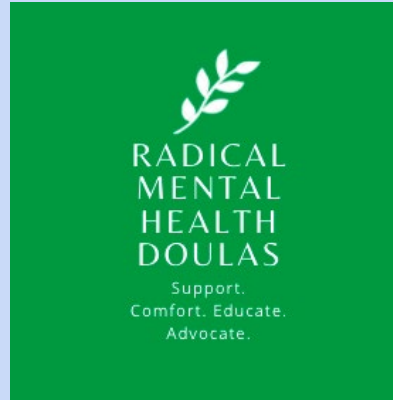
# Welcome!

Prioritizing the Rights and Dignities of Mental Health Service Users:  
Applying the Expanded Radical Doula Model as an Innovative Model  
of Support in Mental Health

## Lunch & Learn

September 16th, 2021  
12:00 PM - 1:00 PM

Project Title: Upholding the Rights and Dignities of Mental Health  
Service Users: Applying the Radical Doula Model as an Innovative  
Framework of Support in Mental Health



Canadian Mental  
Health Association

# Meet Our Team



**Joanna Rankin, PhD.**  
**(Principal Investigator)**

Program Director &  
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Community  
Rehabilitation and  
Disability Studies  
Department of  
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Sciences  
Cumming School of  
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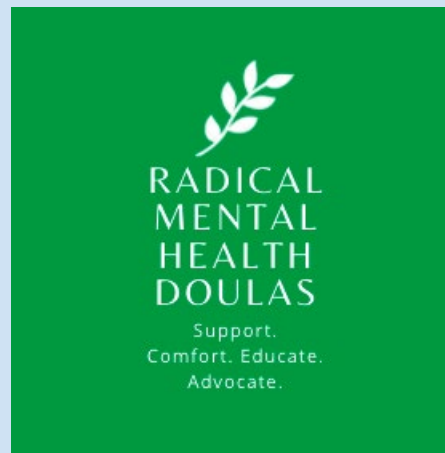
**Tiffany Boulton, PhD.**  
**(Co-Principal Investigator)**

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# Introductions

# Project Description

Examines how the development of a grassroots approach which strives to learn from the radical doula model might allow for people who are experiencing mental health crises to have increased opportunities to have their rights upheld, their needs understood, their dignity and humanity respected, and their voices heard.



# What is a Doula? (Hint: not just for birth!)

A doula is a trained person that provides support, comfort, education and advocates for a person



Today, the role of doulas has expanded & professionalized

Traditionally focused on supporting women during childbirth



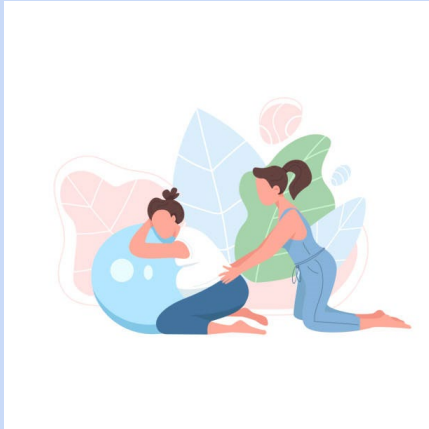
# Types of Doulas

There are now doulas  
working in a variety of  
settings & supporting people  
at different stages in life



- Labour/Birth
- Postpartum
- Antepartum
- Sibling
- Grief/Bereavement
- Geriatric
- End of life/Death
- Abortion
- Prison

# What Does a Doula Have to do with Mental Health? RMHD?





# We envision...

## A Radical Mental Health Doula (RMHD)

- Lived experience with mental illness
- Is aware of an individual's circumstances
- Knows individuals preferences for care
- Can offer emotional, physical, and educational support and enable people
- Upholds an individual's rights and dignities

# Post-Discharge Transition Program

# Methodology & Methods

# Key Findings

# “I had no choice”

- Lack of opportunity to make informed choices
- “they just sent me here” (SU), or that “we had to come here” (SU).
- Choice in the types of food served, recreation activities available or chores completed were also identified as areas lacking choice by service users.
- “well they gave me no choice, so I am stuck here now” (SU)

“Getting support always involved taking some kind of loss”

- Loss of autonomy
- Limited ability to see children & family
- Seeking professional support...a challenge
- “trying for months to find resources on my own” (SU)



# “My mom...is my rock”



- Family support as critical to recovery
- Lack of family support negatively impacts health through feelings of shame and rejection
- Some participants explained that family support had been “a big, big help”, but is not always consistent

“I get excited about  
my own apartment, I  
guess”



- Finding housing options for service users was identified as the “ultimate goal” to transition into independence
- Lack of affordable, safe housing, unemployment, and costs of medication as major barriers to independent living



“What are the real options for a job for me right now?”

- Finding and sustaining employment...a challenge
- Lack of choice and support in finding employment
- Feelings of shame and embarrassment stemming from stigma reported as employment barrier



“Burnout is my  
number one struggle”

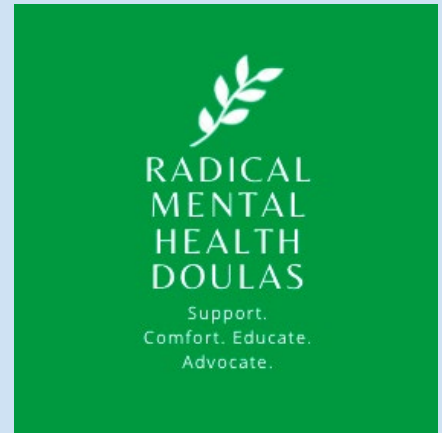


# Integrating Doula Values

- Education
- Advocacy
- Individualized Support
- Comfort
- Continuity of Care

# Next Phase of Research

- 1) Co-create a Radical Mental Health Doula (RMHD) curriculum with our partners (I.e. women with mental illness, service providers, community partners across sectors, and interdisciplinary researchers)
- 2) Train a cohort of RMHDs
- 3) Pilot the implementation of RMHDs within the current system



# Contact Information

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# References




Alternative  
Slide Titles...

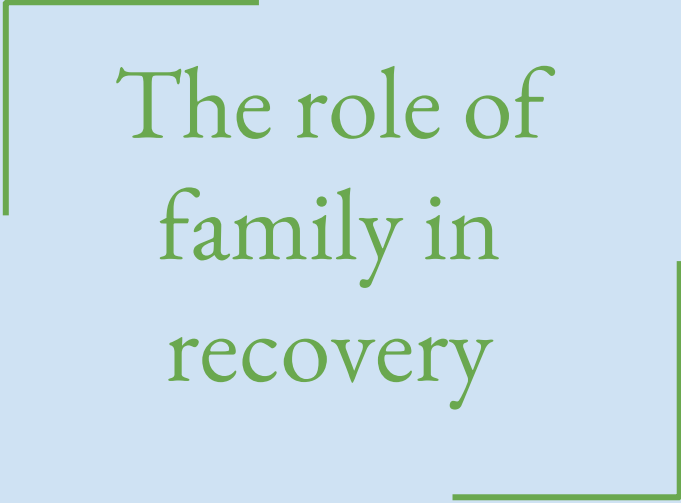
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Lack of  
Choice



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The tax of  
seeking  
professional  
support(s)



# The role of family in recovery

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Affordable &  
sustainable  
housing  
resources



Burnout

