



Ontario Peer Development Initiative

Dear Members,

Recently I had shared our news of Laura Pearson's departure, this week. As we all wish Laura well at Street Health, our Board of Directors has been deeply committed to ensuring that OPDI's work continues uninterrupted with the necessary and steadfast leadership, that our peer support sector and members deserve.

I am very pleased to announce that Allyson Theodorou has agreed to accept the role of Interim, Managing Director!

You already know Allyson as an extremely talented administrator, with her calm, organized way of working through many OPDI-led and sector initiatives over the years. She may currently serve as our Operations Manager, but has been the friendly and steady first point of contact for our members for several decades. Allyson first started with the former CSDI, back in 1993, as an administrative assistant. Over the decades (with a bit of a break in between), she has progressively taken on greater responsibilities for OPDI: in shepherding our finances, acting as Annual Conference Lead, and in getting certified with Peer Support Canada, to support the evolution and delivery of OPDI's Peer Support Core Essentials™ Program.

When the Board's primary role is to guarantee the long-term success of an organization, it didn't take much deliberation to recognize that Allyson's administrative and leadership skills have been instrumental in the Ontario Peer Development Initiative's success, over the years. She rounded out the dynamic duo, led by Laura, as they worked so closely and effectively together.

"I have unbridled confidence that Allyson is the right person to guide our organization through this period of change. I was fortunate to have her counsel and institutional knowledge, every step of the way during my tenure as Executive Director. And Allyson has the vision and demonstrated skills, necessary for the next chapter of OPDI's advocacy and education work." ~ Laura Pearson ~ OPDI's Outgoing Executive Director.

Allyson has in effect strategically advised numerous Directors, Board Chairs, EDs, and member organizations through much change and transitions. Who better to take on the next phase of OPDI's transition? Allyson has grown tremendously, and we look forward to her continued leadership as Interim, Managing Director.

The Board looks forward to working with Allyson, and know that OPDI will continue to thrive under her leadership. Please join me in welcoming Allyson in her new role with OPDI!

Sincerely,

Andrea Schaefer
OPDI President/Chair of the Board of Directors