



Movement is Medicine

Last year Clara Hughes garnered national attention to the issues of mental health and the need for awareness and intervention. In 2014, a County-wide working group was formed to host Deep River's Community Welcome for Clara's Big Ride, as part of the Bell Let's Talk initiative. According to Clara, Deep River's Welcome was one of the most remarkable events on the 108-community tour around Canada.

In debriefing the event, the partners of the Community Welcome working group deemed it necessary to continue their work, and, as a result, a new collaboration has been formed and been branded "Pedal Forward! this, on the wheels of Clara's Big Ride. Beautiful Blue Bikes remain the symbol for Pedal Forward! and its associated events. The bikes signify the importance of mental health priorities; to reduce stigmas and raise awareness for mental health, and to provide support to those who have mental health needs. Blue Bikes featuring crisis support information signage will again be appearing in many locations across the County, as we get ready for Mental Health Week 2015.

Mental Health Week 2015, (May 3 to May 9) will be a time to create, promote and recognize existing County-wide activities and events connected to mental health and well-being. The collaboration of partnering agencies and organizations will result in events that intend to create awareness, raise funds, and provide a forum for conversation and discussion relating to mental health. The possibilities are endless and we anticipate some fantastic efforts across Renfrew County.

We are currently building and growing Pedal Forward! We invite all agencies, businesses, organizations, clubs, families and individuals to join this effort and participate as it fits. You may choose to join the working group and be part of the planning, or offer assistance within Renfrew County communities to promote Pedal Forward! and Mental Health Week 2015. Every team needs good players, we invite you to join the Pedal Forward! team.

The co-chair organizations for Pedal Forward! are KidActive/PAN-RC and The Phoenix Centre, and we will ensure that Mental Health Week in Renfrew County is positive and impactful, this year and for years to come.

If you wish to join Pedal Forward!, as a member and/or to begin receiving information and minutes of meetings please contact email us at pedalforward@phoenixctr.com

Pedal Forward! can be found online at the Physical Activity Network – Renfrew County (PAN-RC) website <http://www.physicalactivitynetwork.ca/pedal-forward>

Sincerely,

Susan Patterson

KidActive/PAN-RC

Greg Lubimiv

The Phoenix Centre