

**Re-affirming City of Toronto as a Nuclear Weapons-Free Zone
City of Toronto Board of Health Public Hearing
Monday, April 16, 2018
Submission by Frank G. Sommers, MD, FRCPC, DFAPA, DFAPA
Honorary & Founding President, Physicians for Social Responsibility
Past President, Ontario District Branch, American Psychiatric Association**

Thank you, members of this Board for the opportunity to once again express our strong support for re-affirming City of Toronto as a nuclear weapons-free zone, as we did with your predecessors in 1982. I am Dr. Frank Sommers, honorary and founding president of Physicians for Social Responsibility (PSR), today known as Physicians for Global Survival, which began in 1979 in Toronto, became countrywide and the Canadian affiliate of International Physicians for the Prevention of Nuclear War in 1981. Our work was honored by the Nobel Peace Prize in 1985.

- 1) Contemplating the finality of our own life is painful
- 2) There are limits to our thinking. How on earth do we really think about the imminent demise of ourselves, our wives, our husbands, our children? How do we conceptualize an event without parallel in human history – the cataclysmic extinction of our institutions, the vaporization of our homes, offices, hospitals, the extinction of life as we know it? Our need for a sense of linkage to the future is very important- through our work, our art, our children. The doomsday potential threatens the extinction of all these that carry on our efforts for the future. The exertion of effort in the present must be somewhat related to a sense of its being worthwhile. The finality of death of the self, of one's loved ones, and of one's culture puts this sense at grave risk.
- 3) Furthermore, there is the system of denial which as a psychiatrist I often see used, an unconscious defence mechanism whose purpose is to dampen an aspect of external reality or actually to reject it. Confronting the reality of the nuclear threat is depressing, to say the least. The chances are that people who have not explored the facts will not be keen to hear those who have. Coping with the vicissitudes of daily life places sufficient burden on most of us. There is a tendency to not hear, to dismiss, or worse, to label as naive, or idealistic, or one sided, the bearers of uncomfortable facts. Since the psychological mechanism of denial is working, each of us needs consciously to work at overcoming our own personal denial, and then to alleviate the ensuing danger of possible depression, by becoming active in the search for solutions.
- 4) Another crucial consideration is the effect of the threat of nuclear war on children. A task force of the American Psychiatric Association on the "Psychosocial Impact of Nuclear Advances" (Dec. 1981)

reported on interviews with hundreds of students: "The teenagers have not submerged or camouflaged their feelings of helplessness about the nuclear threat as most adults have learned to do. They may be showing us that growing up in a world dominated by the threat of imminent nuclear destruction is having an impact on the structure of personality itself. We may be raising a generation of young people denied a basis for making long-term commitments and serviceable ideals, given over, of necessity, to doctrines of impulsivity and immediacy in their personal relationships and their choice of activities, behaviours and occupations. How can we help our young people grow into some promise of certainty and fulfillment unless we adults address the apathy and helplessness we experience in the fact of the arms race and the threat of nuclear annihilation."

- 5) Our local Toronto study (Children in Fear of Nuclear War, 1984 (circulated)) showed youngsters age 12 to 18 felt the threat of nuclear war to be their greatest worry with future employment prospects also a significant concern. Subsequent studies in other countries echoed these findings.
- 6) In 1983, during lunch at 24 Sussex, in Ottawa, Prime Minister Pierre Trudeau, leaned closer and said to me "Frank, on this issue we cannot lead, you have to push us". He was referring to the nuclear threat. Shortly after he left to take little Justin to judo class.
- 7) As the organizer of next weekends' inaugural training course in disaster psychiatry, I've learned that the most important element is preparation. We call Nuclear War the ultimate epidemic, for which prevention is the only cure. Your work here today can contribute to that prevention by resoundingly sending the message that Toronto chooses to affirm its status as a nuclear weapons free zone.
- 8) In 1982 the Board of Health, the Mayor, and Toronto's City Council listened to our plea and chose to become active against the forces of nuclear annihilation. The information before you is proof of that. Today, you have an opportunity to re-affirm that choice, thereby affirming life, over death.

Thank you.



DISASTER PSYCHIATRY
CANADA

FACULTY

PSYCHIATRIC DIMENSIONS OF DISASTERS

INAUGURAL TRAINING COURSE

PETER COLLINS, CD, MD, MCA, FRCPC
Operational Forensic Psychiatrist, Criminal
Behaviour Analysis Unit, OPP, Associate Professor,
Division of Forensic Psychiatry, University of
Toronto

COLIN JOHNSTON, LLB, LLM
Counsel, Lenczner Slaght

EDWARD KANTOR, MD, DFAPA
Chief of the South Carolina Psychiatric Association
Disaster Response (SCPA) Crisis Team & Senior
Member of the GAP Committee on Disasters
(expert advisor, offsite)

CRAIG KATZ, MD, DFAPA
Co-Founder, Disaster Psychiatry Outreach (DPO);
Clinical Professor of Psychiatry and Medical
Education, Icahn School of Medicine, Mount Sinai;
Co-Author: *Disaster Psychiatry*

SANDER KOYFMAN, MD
President, Disaster Psychiatry Outreach (DPO);
Behavioral Health Medical Director, WellCare of
New York

ROBERT MAUNDER, MD, FRCPC
Professor and Head of Research, Department of
Psychiatry, Mount Sinai Hospital, University of
Toronto

LAURIE MAZURIK, MD, FRCPC, MBA, EMDM
Critical Care Transport and Emergency Physician,
Sunnybrook Health Sciences Centre; Lecturer,
University of Toronto

BENOIT H. MULSANT, MD, FRCPC, DFAPA
Professor and Chair, Department of Psychiatry,
University of Toronto

JOSEPH NAPOLI, MD, DLFAPA
Co-Director, Resiliency; Assistant Clinical Professor
of Psychiatry, Columbia University

ANTHONY T. NG, MD, DFAPA
Assistant Professor of Psychiatry, Uniformed
Services School of Medicine; Chair, Psychiatric
Disaster Committee, American Association for
Emergency Psychiatry

CLINT SHINGLER, MPA
Director, Health System Emergency Branch,
Ministry of Health and Long-Term Care, Ontario

FRANK G. SOMMERS, MD, FRCPC, DFAPA,
DFCPA
Program Chair
Past President, Ontario District Branch, American
Psychiatric Association; Adjunct Lecturer,
Department of Psychiatry, University of Toronto;
Honorary and Founding President, Physicians for
Global Survival

FREDERICK STODDARD, MD, DLFAPA
Chief of Psychiatry, Shriners Hospitals for Children,
Boston; Professor, Harvard Medical School; Senior
Editor: *Disaster Psychiatry: Readiness, Evaluation and
Treatment*

Psychiatric Dimensions of Disasters

INAUGURAL TRAINING COURSE

SATURDAY

APRIL 21, 2018

TORONTO AIRPORT

MARRIOTT HOTEL



Registration and information:

<https://www.oma.org/sections/news-events/event-calendar/psychiatric-dimensions-of-disaster/>



DISASTER PSYCHIATRY
CANADA (DPC)

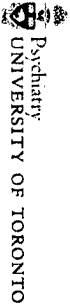
Mission/Vision Statement

To develop and maintain a well trained committed team of psychiatric specialists able to serve the mental health needs of people and communities affected by disasters, in coordination with emergency and public health responders. Reduction and prevention of post-disaster mental illness, and fostering of resilience, are also our goals.

Learning Objectives: By the conclusion of the program, attendees will be able to:

- Develop a basic familiarity with the special clinical and research issues surrounding the psychiatric and emotional effects of disasters on victims and relief workers;
- Identify the major psychiatric symptoms and syndromes, which follow a disaster;
- Identify the various clinical options available in treating disaster victims; and
- Identify the complexities of working at a disaster site.

Endorsers:



ONTARIO PSYCHIATRIC ASSOCIATION
Ontario District Branch
American Psychiatric Association

University of Toronto Faculty of Medicine,
Department of Psychiatry; Ontario Psychiatric Association; Ontario District Branch, American Psychiatric Association

Funding Support: Ontario Medical Association

Planning Committee: Frank Sommers, Benoit Mulsant, Sanjeev Sockalingam, Ted Bober, Jennifer Csamer, Rachelle Drok, Melissa McGinnis, Nicole Centoro, Nazlene Shivcharan

PSYCHIATRIC DIMENSIONS OF DISASTERS
INAUGURAL TRAINING COURSE



DISASTER PSYCHIATRY
CANADA

SATURDAY, APRIL 21, 2018

8:00 am	Registration & Breakfast	1:30 pm	Preparing Hospital Staff for Disasters Robert Maunder, MD, FRCPC
8:30 am	Introduction & Welcome Frank G. Sommers, MD, FRCPC, DFAPA, DFCPA, Program Chair Benoit H. Mulsant, MD, FRCPC, DFAPA, Professor and Chair, Department of Psychiatry, University of Toronto	2:00 pm	Psychiatric Consultation with Law Enforcement Peter Collins, MD, FRCPC
8:40 am	Overview of Disaster Mental Health and Psychiatrists' Involvement Anthony T. Ng, MD, DFAPA	2:30 pm	Break
9:10 am	Acute Intervention and Needs Assessment Craig Katz, MD, DFAPA	2:45 pm	Health Emergency Management, Ministry Of Health, Ontario Clint Shingler, MPA
9:40 am	Post Acute Phase-Adult and Risk Communication Sander Koyfman, MD	3:30 pm	Legal and Ethical Aspects CMPA - Colin Johnston, LLB, LLM
10:10 am	Break	4:00 pm	Panel Discussion and Closing Remarks Frank G. Sommers and Speakers
10:30 am	Psychological First Aid-Practice and Pitfalls; Self Care Joseph Napoli, MD, DLFAPA	5:00 pm	Adjourn
11:00 am	Children and Families; Trauma and Grief Frederick Stoddard, MD, DLFAPA		
11:30 am	Morning Speakers' Panel Discussion; Q&A		
12:15 pm	Lunch		
1:00 pm	Greater Toronto (GTA) Mass Casualty Review Laurie Mazurik, MD, FRCPC, MBA		

"This event is an accredited group learning activity (section 1) as defined by the Maintenance of Certification Program of the Royal College of Physicians and Surgeons of Canada, and approved by the Canadian Psychiatric Association (CPA). The specific opinions and content of this event are not necessarily those of the CPA, and are the responsibility of the organizer(s) alone."