

City of London - Application for Appointment to a City of London Board or Commission

Application

Please choose the Board or Commission you are interested in serving on: **London Police Services Board**

Contact Information

Name: **Gita Canaran**

City: **London**

Province: **ON**

Postal Code: **N6C 5E8**

Experience and Qualifications

1. Serving on the Police Services Board requires monthly, full-day meeting attendance; each meeting requires 4-6 hours of reading in advance. Can you describe your ability to participate and contribute this minimum amount of time monthly?:

I am a Clinical Psychologist in the community and manage my own schedule. I am committed to providing a valuable contribution to this Board and as such, will make this a priority and be able to participate fully.

2. What skills, education, community involvement and/or experience (including lived experience) do you have that will assist you in a role on this specific board?:

I am a trauma therapist in the community and a Clinical Psychologist who focusses on the treatment of first responders. I entered this field because of my experience as a trauma therapist, having worked with police and wished to be a part of reducing the high suicide rate amongst our officers. Since being engaged in this work, I realized that there was a service gap for police officers with suicidal thoughts having nowhere to go. They were expected to be admitted to a ward with people they had arrested, which was not an acceptable. I have since been working towards an acceptable solution within our community and have been advocating for increased strategies to prevent occupational stress injuries, rather than solely focussing on intervention and treatment of PTSD with our officers. I have also been fortunate to have been involved in two videos in conjunction with the London Police Association and the London Police Wellness Centre in this endeavour. Prevention strategies have implications to both recruiting and retention of our officers.

Prior to moving my practice to the community, I worked for over 20 years in a mental health hospital with the seriously mentally ill, the majority of which had concurrent trauma, addiction and legal issues. Through the years, I have witnessed how policing has changed for the better towards our mentally ill. However, there is still much work to be done. As such, I feel I can provide a unique perspective on the juxtaposition of both policing and mental health issues facing our community and can advocate for both in a fiscally responsible way.

3. If you have experience on a Board, Commission or Committee (in London or elsewhere), please provide the details. If you have not previously served on a Board, Commission or Committee, please describe why this appointment is of interest to you.:

I have chaired and participated in various committees over the course of my career at the hospital as described in my attached CV. Additionally, I served on the Board of Directors of my professional association for a number of years, the former Ontario Association of Psychological Associates. I have been an active participant in how policing can work together with the mental health community to provide a more effective and trauma-informed approach. More recently, through my involvement in the treatment of police officers, I have come to understand the various struggles our officers face when having to deal with increasing mental health calls with limited resources. This has provided me

with a unique understanding of both perspectives and a deepening fiduciary responsibility to both.

While various programs including the COAST program has made admirable advances in the interactions with our mentally ill and has helped reduce the burden on policing, there are many static and dynamic factors contributing to the current issues facing our community, and as such, there is still much work to be done. I feel my blend of knowledge in both policing and mental health can be of benefit in addressing these issues.

I wish to make a difference in how addressing the mental health of our police officers and our community can improve staff recruitment, retention, reduce injury and interactions with our mentally ill.

4. We value the contributions of Londoners with diverse experiences and welcome applications from individuals who share our commitment to reconciliation, equity and inclusion. Please describe how your work, community or lived experience will enhance these efforts through Board and Committee work. (max. 3000 characters):

I was fortunate enough to grow up with a favourable view of police officers. My uncle was the Chief of Police in Mumbai and my father knew many of the local officers growing up in St. Thomas. However, as I entered my career, both as a graduate student up in Thunder Bay and during my work at the Crisis Unit in St. Thomas, my opinion began to shift. I became uncomfortably familiar with police interactions with the Indigenous in Thunder Bay and how the police would treat our mentally ill when they were brought into the psychiatric hospital in St. Thomas. To be fair, we too had a long way to go within the hospital to becoming more trauma-informed and I was pleased to have been a part of initiating that movement. This would not have been possible without the strong support from the managerial level.

I held this somewhat negative view for many years, until I began working with police officers during my work at a trauma specialty clinic at LHSC and bore witness to their struggles. It was cemented years later when I myself was a victim of a violent assault. The OPP went above and beyond in a very compassionate and skilled way at the time and I saw again that positive changes were possible. I saw it again during my work on SJHC inpatient units where we were able to work more collaboratively with the police and see it now with the new COAST program. It is my sincere hope that I will be able to contribute to the ongoing commitment towards reconciliation, equity and inclusion for all peoples.

Attach resume or other document here (optional): **CV2020.pdf**

Attach more files here, if needed:

Confirmations

I declare the following: **I am at least 18 years old.; I am not a City employee or Council member.; I understand that my application and any attachments will be included on a public agenda that is published on the City website.**

To help inform our outreach activities, please tell us how you heard about this opportunity: (optional): **Professional or community organization**

If you selected 'Other', please specify:

Submitted on: **3/13/2023 5:24:37 PM**

GITA CANARAN, M.A., C. Psych. Clinical Psychologist

Archways Centre for CBT
Springbank Medical Centre

PROFESSIONAL

- Clinical Psychologist - College of Psychologists of Ontario.
- Adjunct Faculty – Dept. of Psychiatry, Western University, London ON
- Allied Scientist - Lawson Health Research Institute, London ON
- M.A. (Clinical Psychology) – Lakehead University, Thunder Bay ON.
- B.A. (Honours Psychology) – McMaster University, Hamilton ON.

CLINICAL

Archways Centre for CBT – 2019 to present. Focussing on treatment of uniformed and non-uniformed first responders, including prevention, early intervention, diagnosis and trauma focussed therapies including EMDR. Listed provider with WSIB, police services and fire services.

Parkwood Institute Treatment and Rehabilitation Program - St. Joseph's Health Care London. 2004 to 2019. Providing assessment, consult, differential diagnosis and treatment of adult psychiatric tertiary populations and Seriously and Persistent Mentally Ill (SPMI). Treatment often involves an Integrated Therapy approach including Trauma therapy (EMDR, TIR, schema-based approaches) as well as Cognitive Behavioural Therapy (CBT, CBTp, MB-CBT), Dialectical Behaviour Therapy (DBT) and Mentalization within a Psychosocial Rehabilitation Model. Specific interest in the treatment of complex traumatic psychosis including provision of supervision and teaching to residents, students and staff.

Also:

Co-Chair and Advanced Practitioner – Traumatic Psychosis Community of Practice, CBT for Psychosis

Director of Communications - OAPA Board of Directors

Lecturer – PTSD, Mindfulness, Personality Disorders, Traumatic Psychosis, Psychosis

Co-Investigator - The Montreal Cognitive Assessment (MoCA): A Validation Study

Chair – Advanced Practitioners Group for CBTp

Co-Chair – Psychology Discipline Council, Psychosis Research and Evaluation Task Team

Team Leader – Dialectical Behaviour Therapy Intensive Training Team

Chair – Specialized Populations Task Team

Project Lead/Research Coordinator – Multisensory Relaxation Room

Member – Psychotherapy Act Working Group; OPA Psychotherapy Task Force Quality Council Committee, Open Team Stations Task Team Shared Leadership Council, Healing Palette Committee, Moods and Anxiety Program Planning Task Team, Psychology Retreat Planning Committee, Ward Milieu Task Team

Excellence in Professional Practice Award – 2018. Excellence in Teaching and Coaching.

GITA CANARAN, M.A., C. Psych.

Clinical Psychologist

Private Practice, London Ontario. 1997 - present. Crisis response, assessment, diagnosis and treatment of general individual adults. Stabilization for traumatic events, integrated trauma therapy, CBT, DBT, EMDR, Mindfulness, Schema Therapy, Attachment Trauma treatment, Mentalization, Interpersonal approaches.

London Health Sciences Centre (South St. Campus). Traumatic Stress Service Workplace Program. 2003 – 2004. Assessed, diagnosed and treated clients who experienced a traumatic incident while working and who suffered with posttraumatic stress disorder (PTSD) and/or related problems. Provided individual and group therapy on an outpatient basis, including trauma-focused therapy, pain management and return to work plans.

Regional Mental Health Care St. Thomas Crisis and Relapse Prevention Unit. 1999 - 2003. Assessed, diagnosed and treated adult inpatients and outpatients. Provided individual and group therapy. Initiated and led Trauma and Personal Growth group for patients experiencing Complex PTSD with Axis II involvement. Liaised with various community agencies and family physicians in a shared-care model. Provided educational in-services and supervision of therapists.

RESEARCH

Prevention and Early Intervention Program for Psychosis (PEPP) – University of Western Ontario (UWO) Department of Psychiatry, London Health Sciences Centre – Victoria Campus. Clinical Research Coordinator. 1998-1999. Coordinated research protocol for the program involving inpatients and outpatients experiencing first episode psychosis, conducted clinical assessments and differential diagnosis using Structured Clinical Interview for DSM-IV Diagnosis (SCID-IV), completed neurocognitive testing and various symptom rating scales, counselled patients at risk for psychosis, and managed database. Supervisor: Dr. Ashok Malla.

Western University (UWO) - Department of Neuropsychiatry, London Health Sciences Centre – University Campus. Clinical Research Associate. Coordinated studies in Magnetic Resonance Imaging (MRI), Magnetic Resonance Spectroscopy (MRS) and functional Magnetic Resonance Imaging (fMRI) for studies in schizophrenia, including recruiting, assessing, completing differential diagnosis (SCID) and neurocognitive testing. Adapted and implemented neurocognitive paradigms and assisted in the development of relevant software for use during fMRI studies. Also coordinated studies in mood disorders, obsessive-compulsive disorder, neuropathological and family studies in schizophrenia. Assisted in preparation of research grants, ethics proposals and journal submissions. Collected and maintained data for statistical analysis. Neuropsychiatry Research Group – member. 1993-1998. Supervisor: Dr. Peter Williamson.

McMaster University Medical Centre - Research Technician in Department of Biomedical Sciences. Coordinated and conducted psychopharmacology research projects involving chronic dopamine receptor stimulation as an animal model for schizophrenia in a behavioural psychopharmacology lab using open field and pool environments. 1987-1990. Supervisor: Dr. Henry Szechtman; Research Assistant in Department of Psychiatry for Positron Emission Tomography (PET) research in Schizophrenia. 1989-1990. Supervisor: Dr. Jock Cleghorn; Research Assistant in Department of Biomedical Sciences. Conducted neurohistological studies in an animal model for Alzheimer's Disease. 1989. Supervisor: Dr. Michele Pisa.