



“ON THE JOB”:

ADVANCING VOCATIONAL OPPORTUNITIES FOR PERSONS WITH AUTISM SPECTRUM DISORDERS

INNOVATIVE PRACTICES, EVIDENCE AND NEXT STEPS. FOR INDIVIDUALS WITH ASD, FAMILIES, VOCATIONAL SERVICE PROVIDERS, ADVOCATES, EMPLOYERS, POLICY DEVELOPERS, AND RESEARCHERS

For registration and more information visit:

www.sickkids.ca/cme

CONFERENCE ANNOUNCEMENT:

**“On the Job”: Advancing Vocational Opportunities
for Persons with Autism Spectrum Disorders**

www.sickkids.ca/cme

featuring...

***Thorkil Sonne** from Denmark-based Specialist People Foundation which employs persons with ASD in software testing;*

***Randy Lewis** who has transformed the distribution centers of US-based Walgreens to an integrated workforce for persons with disabilities; and*

***Dr. Susan Bryson** from Nova Scotia who has focused on ASD vocational issues in a Canadian context.*

This conference will explore key vocational issues for adults with autism spectrum disorders (ASD). It will address the following aims:

- reflect on current practices including resources, challenges and opportunities for vocational development
- consider priorities for capacity building
- examine key considerations for measuring vocational outcomes
- identify components of a proactive, integrated provincial/national vocational ASD strategy.

When

Thursday and Friday, February 2 - 3, 2012
8:30 AM - 4:00 PM

Where

Hart House at the University of Toronto
7 Hart House Circle
Toronto, Ontario M5S 3H3

Website

www.sickkids.ca/cme

*-After entering the website, look for the conference title, “**On the Job: Advancing Vocational Opportunities for Persons with Autism Spectrum Disorders**”, and click to enter.*

Learning Objectives

This conference will address successful transition into adulthood for persons with ASD – with a focus on vocational opportunity and experience. Specifically, the conference will explore key vocational issues for individuals with ASD, and reflect on current practices including resources, challenges and opportunities for vocational support and development. We will identify innovation in community capacity among employers and other vocational resources, and examine components of a proactive, integrated provincial and/or national vocational strategy. The conference will examine current vocational programs and their outcomes, and evaluate individual and family experiences and service needs. This includes identifying the gaps that limit vocational service delivery and how these gaps can be addressed.

We expect to inform next steps in this under-developed field of vocational services for individuals with ASD. Conference outcomes include evidence-informed dialogue and research priority setting among key stakeholders. It is expected that this conference will increase attendees’ understanding about vocational needs, opportunities, resources and priorities in Canada.

Educational Credits

Educational credits have been applied for this CME program. Please check back for updates. USA pediatricians can claim the credits under AMA PRA Category 1 credit.

Keynote Speakers



Thorkil Sonne turns the so-called “handicaps” of ASD into a competitive advantage in businesses and opens up new opportunities for adults with ASD. He created Specialist People Foundation, a for-profit software testing company that assesses and employs high-functioning adults with ASD and uses their special skills to out-perform the market. After his son was diagnosed with autism, Thorkil recognized that many persons with ASD have unique skills, such as attention to detail, precision and an unerring focus. With this insight, he is turning a world where 90 percent of people with ASD are unemployed into one where they can succeed. By the end of 2008, Specialist People Foundation had 60 employees, of which around 75 percent have ASD. The ‘fault rate’ in testing among the foundation’s employees is significantly lower compared to typical employees in other firms engaged in software testing. One client who hired workers from the Specialist People Foundation to do data entry found that they were five to ten times more precise than other contractors. The foundation now serves clients like Microsoft and CSC. Through building an office culture that caters to the particular needs of people with ASD while boosting independence, confidence, and cognitive development, the employees begin to identify themselves as “specialists”.



Randy Lewis is senior vice president of Supply Chain and Logistics for Walgreens in Deerfield, Illinois. Walgreens is the nation's largest drugstore chain with fiscal 2010 sales of \$67 billion. Mr. Lewis is responsible for the design and operation of Walgreens supply chain network including operations, engineering, IT systems, and inventory management. He has been instrumental in introducing a new concept to Walgreens that has transformed the company’s distribution centers and employment opportunities. Walgreens’ two most recent distribution centers employ an inclusive and integrated workforce composed 40% of persons with disabilities who are held to the same work standards and earn the same pay as “typically-abled” fellow workers. As a result of this success of serving both shareholders and the community, Walgreens has set a goal of employing 1,000 people with disabilities (approximately ten percent of the workforce) in its distribution centers by 2010.



Dr. Susan Bryson holds a PhD in Clinical Psychology from McGill University. Currently at Dalhousie University and the IWK Health Centre in Halifax, Dr. Bryson is the first holder of the Craig Chair in Autism Research. She was formerly Head and Clinical Director of the graduate program in Clinical-Developmental Psychology at York University, and Associate Scientist at The Hospital for Sick Children. She is Founding Director of the Autism Research Unit at The Hospital for Sick Children, and more recently, the Autism Research Centre at the IWK Health Centre. She also spearheaded the recent establishment of the Provincial (Nova Scotia) Autism Library and Resource Centre for families and professionals. Dr. Bryson is a leading authority on mechanisms of attention, emotion and cognition in ASD, and on the early detection and treatment of ASD. She also has expertise in the epidemiology of autism. She has served as consultant to Health Canada and the U.S. Centers for Disease Control, she is one of the Founding Directors of the Canadian Autism Intervention Research Network, and she is on the editorial boards of the Journal of Autism and Developmental Disorders and the Journal on Developmental Disabilities. She recently received the Queen's Golden Jubilee Medal for serving various community agencies.

Panel Members & Discussants

Dr. Ellen Badone, McMaster University, Hamilton, ON

Dr. Deborah Barrett, Autism Society of Edmonton Area, AB

Dr. James Bebko, York University, Toronto, ON

Robin Brennan, Woodview Children's Mental Health and Autism Services, Hamilton, ON

Heather Brown, PhD Candidate at The University of Western Ontario, London, ON

Dr. Susan Bryson, IWK Health Centre, Halifax, NS

Dr. Margaret Clarke, Sinneave Family Foundation, Calgary, AB

Cynthia Carroll, Operation Pearl, Halifax, NS

Frank Gavin, Canadian Family Advisory Network; Centennial College, Toronto, ON

Penny Gill, Cooking with Autism, Hamilton, ON

Dr. Terri Hewitt, Surrey Place, Toronto, ON

Jenny Hope, Common Ground, Toronto, ON

Sandy Keshen, Reena Foundation, Thornhill, ON

Suzanne Lanthier, Autism Speaks Canada

Paul Malette, CBI Consultants, Burnaby, BC

Jason Manett, University of Toronto; The Redpath Centre, Toronto, ON

Wendy Mitchell, PhD Candidate at the University of Alberta, Edmonton, AB

Dr. Pat Miranda, University of British Columbia, Vancouver, BC

Dr. Barbara Muskat, University of Toronto; The Hospital for Sick Children, Toronto, ON

Dr. David Nicholas, University of Calgary, AB

Dr. Glenn Rampton, Kerry's Place Autism Services, Toronto, ON

Thorkil Sonne, Specialisterne, Denmark

Margaret Spoelstra, Autism Ontario, Toronto, ON

Margot Stothers, PhD Candidate at The University of Western Ontario, London, ON

Dr. Lindy Zaretsky, Geneva Centre for Autism, Toronto, ON

Dr. Lonnie Zwaigenbaum, Glenrose Rehabilitation Hospital, Edmonton, AB

CONFERENCE SCHEDULE

Thursday, February 2, 2012

Vocational Options for Individuals with ASD and their Families

7:30 AM - 8:30 AM

Registration & Breakfast

8:30 AM - 8:45 AM

Welcome and Introductions

8:45 AM - 8:50 AM

O Canada

8:50 AM – 9:30 AM

Keynote Presentation: Vocational Experiences of Youth & Adults with ASD

Susan Bryson, IWK Health Centre, Halifax, NS

9:30 AM – 10:15 AM

Keynote Presentation

Thorkil Sonne, Specialisterne, Denmark

10:15 AM – 10:30 AM

Break

10:30 AM – 11:00 AM

Autism Care Ontario Research Presentation

Wendy Roberts, The Hospital for Sick Children, Holland Bloorview Kids Rehabilitation Hospital, Toronto, ON

David Nicholas, University of Calgary, AB

11:00 AM – 12:00 PM

Panel: Integration of Care for Adults: Services that Fit Adult Needs

Moderator: Margaret Spoelstra, Executive Director, Autism Ontario

Panel Discussion:

1. Ellen Badone, McMaster University, Hamilton, ON
2. Frank Gavin, Canadian Family Advisory Network, Centennial College, Toronto, ON
3. Glenn Rampton, Kerry's Place, Toronto, ON

12:00 PM - 1:15 PM

Lunch

1:15 PM – 2:30 PM

Panel: Innovative Vocational Programs

Moderator: Margaret Clarke, Sinneave Family Foundation, Calgary, AB

Panel Discussion:

1. Representative, Autism Society of Newfoundland and Labrador, and Supported Employment Program, St. John's, NL
2. Lindy Zaretsky, Geneva Centre for Autism, Toronto, ON
3. Robin Brennan, Woodview Children's Mental Health and Autism Services, Hamilton, ON

Response Table:

1. Tom Jackman, Autism Society of Newfoundland and Labrador, and Autism Society Canada, St. John's, NL
2. Cynthia Carroll, Operation Pearl, Halifax, NS
3. Wendy Mitchell, PhD Candidate at the University of Alberta, Edmonton, AB

2:30 PM – 2:45 PM

Break

2:45 PM – 4:00 PM

Panel: Innovative Vocational Programs

Moderator: Deborah Barrett, Autism Society of Edmonton Area, AB

Panel Discussion:

1. Paul Malette, CBI Consultants, Burnaby, BC
2. Penny Gill, Cooking with Autism, Hamilton, ON
3. Jenny Hope, Common Ground, Toronto, ON

Response Table:

1. Thorkil Sonne, Specialisterne, Denmark
2. Sandy Keshan, Reena Foundation, Toronto, ON
3. Terri Hewitt, Surrey Place, Toronto, ON

4:00 PM – 4:30 PM

Synopsis and Key Program Components

David Nicholas, University of Calgary, AB

Friday, February 3, 2012

Priorities for Advancing Vocational Opportunities

8:00 AM - 8:30 AM **Registration & Breakfast**

8:30 AM - 8:45 AM **Welcome and Introduction**
Suzanne Lanthier, Autism Speaks, Canada

8:45 AM - 9:45 AM **Keynote Presentation**
Randy Lewis, Walgreens, Deerfield, Illinois, USA

9:45 AM-10:00 AM **Break**

Panel: Ministry and Industry/Business

10:00 AM - 12:00 PM Response Table:
1. Susan Bryson, IWK Health Centre, Halifax, NS
2. Thorkil Sonne, Specialisterne, Denmark

12:00 PM - 1:00 PM **Lunch**

1:00 PM - 2:15 PM **Transition to Post-Secondary Success: Fostering Academic Potential**
Moderator: Pat Mirenda, University of British Columbia, Vancouver, BC

Panel Discussion:
1. Heather Brown, PhD Candidate at The University of Western Ontario, London, ON
2. Margot Stothers, PhD Candidate at The University of Western Ontario, London, ON
3. Jason Manett, University of Toronto, The Redpath Centre, Toronto, ON
4. James Bebko, York University Mentorship Program, Toronto, ON

2:15 PM - 2:30 PM **Break**

Next Steps for Vocation and Post-Secondary Advancement

2:30 PM – 3:30 PM

Moderators: Barbara Muskat, Hospital for Sick Children, Toronto, ON

Pat Mirenda, University of British Columbia, Vancouver BC

GROUPS: Vocation, Post-Secondary Education, Service Access Across Needs/Ministries, Family Support, Policy Development Strategies

KEY QUESTIONS:

1. If we were to have the most effective vocational service delivery system for adults, what would it look like?
2. How could success in this area be measured?
3. What are pressing challenges to moving in this direction, and how might these challenges be addressed?
4. What are key ways for moving forward?
5. From a governance perspective, how could this initiative be set up for success?

3:30 PM - 3:45 PM

Large Group Reconvenes: Action Planning Considerations

Forging Forward

Wendy Roberts, Hospital for Sick Children, Holland Bloorview Kids

3:45 PM - 4:15 PM

Rehabilitation Hospital, Toronto, ON

Lonnie Zwaigenbaum, Glenrose Rehabilitation Hospital, Edmonton, AB

4:15 PM

Thank You's and Farewell

Planning Committee

Wendy Roberts, MD
David Nicholas, PhD
Barbara Muskat, PhD
Irene Drmic, PhD
Shelley Mitchell, MSP
Julia MacDonald, MSP
Lonnie Zwaigenbaum, MD
Pat Mirenda, PhD
Esther Ko, Project Coordinator
Nicole Winters, Conference Coordinator

Partners

We acknowledge our generous partners and anonymous donors, with gratitude:



Fees

Professionals	\$250
Families*	\$150

*Each family attendee must individually register

Registration

www.sickkids.ca/cme

1. After entering the website, look for the conference title, “**On the Job: Advancing Vocational Opportunities for Persons with Autism Spectrum Disorders**”, and click to enter.
2. Please note that registration is limited and is honoured in the order of the date it is received. Registrations received without payment will not be processed. Your confirmation will be emailed. Ensure

your email address is correct when registering online. All prices include course registration, syllabus program, letter of attendance and exhibits. Do not make travel or hotel reservations that cannot be changed or cancelled without penalty until you receive your confirmation. Costs incurred, such as airline or hotel costs, are the responsibility of the individual. The Planning Committee is not responsible for expenses incurred by an individual who is not confirmed and for whom space is unavailable.

Cancellation and Refund Policy

This conference incurs significant non-refundable expenses prior to the conference – please ensure that you read and carefully understand our cancellation policy before submitting your registration. Should you need to cancel, you must do so by email to info.asdconf@sickkids.ca before midnight, January 15, 2012. Once this has been received, you will be refunded a total of \$100. After January 15, no refunds will be granted for withdrawal. However, a replacement can be secured by the registrant as long as you contact us in writing with details.

Location

University of Toronto
7 Hart House Circle
Toronto, Ontario



Main Floor

Registration opens each day at 7:30am at the Great Hall on the Main Floor

Directions

Getting There

The closest Subway stop is Museum Station. Walk south from the Museum Station on west side of University Ave, cross Hoskin Ave and continue south on Queen's Park Circle about 30 metres. Take the pathway leading to the right into the campus. Go down the steps and you are right in front of Hart House. The accessible entrance is located on the west side of the building south of Hoskin Ave.

Accessible TTC route to Hart House:

Before you begin your subway trip, call the **TTC 24-hour Information Line at 416 393-INFO (4636)** and press 5 to confirm whether or not the elevators or escalators you plan to use on your trip are operating or scheduled for maintenance.

Elevators are available at the following subway station near Hart House: **St. George**. The Elevator Service Status Line is 416 539-LIFT (5438). Press 7 for multilingual services.

From St. George, take Bedford Exit:

1. Head south on Bedford Rd toward Bloor St W. 78 meters
2. Turn right at Bloor St W. 77 meters
3. Turn left at Devonshire Pl. 0.4 km
4. Turn left at Hoskin Ave 0.1 km
5. Turn right on Tower Rd. Follow the ramp entrance into Hart House on the west side of the building.

Parking around Hart House

<http://www.parking.utoronto.ca/visitors.htm>

Accommodations

There are several hotels relatively near Hart House. The closest is the Sutton Place Hotel, which is listed below.



[Sutton Hotel Website](#)

955 Bay Street, Toronto, Ontario

416-924-9221

1-866-378-8866

[Map from Sutton Place to 7 Hart House](#)

Contact Information

Esther Ko, Project Coordinator

Autism Research Unit

The Hospital for Sick Children

555 University Avenue Toronto, ON M5G 1X8

416-813-7654, extension 28004

info.asdconf@sickkids.ca

Make cheque payable to: Autism Research Unit Conference

www.sickkids.ca/cme