



# **CAPACITY BUILDING THROUGH THE MENTAL HEALTH LENS**

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# Newcomer Serving Staff Trained on Mental Health Fundamentals



# AGENDA

BACKGROUND

THE NEED

THE PROCESS

THE DELIVERY

SUMMARY



# THE BACKGROUND

- ❑ The social determinants in the post-migration context are consistently identified as the most important factors **affecting the mental health** of immigrants and refugees.
- ❑ As a service provider, it is important to acknowledge the impacts of social determinants and to inquire about such factors as housing, income and socioeconomic status, experiences of racism and discrimination, among others.  
(CAMH)



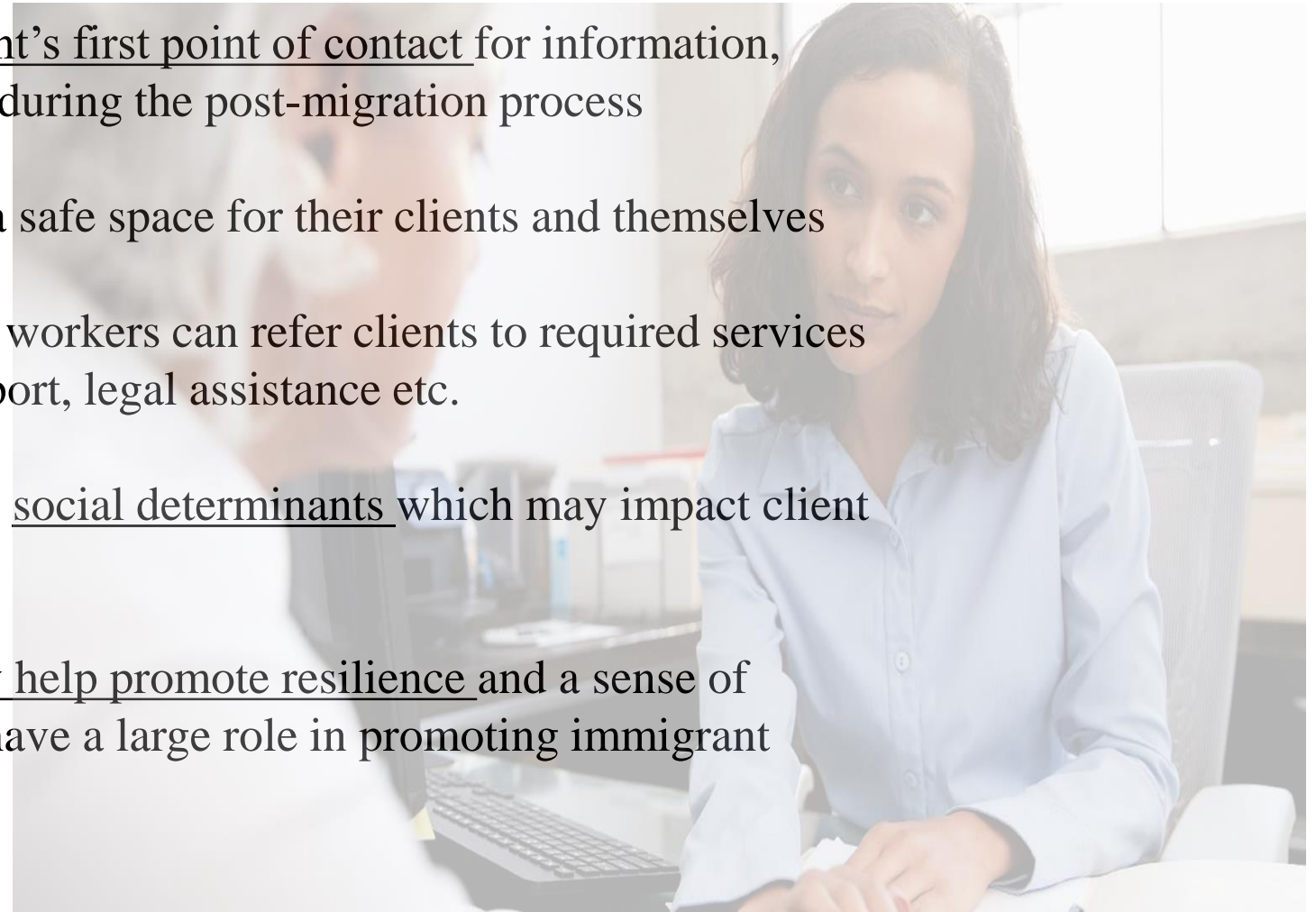


Newcomers' histories before coming to Canada, their migration journey to Canada, and their postmigration and integration experiences, as well as other factors, create unique situations that may influence mental health problems and illnesses for some immigrants and refugees more than others (MHCC, 2016).



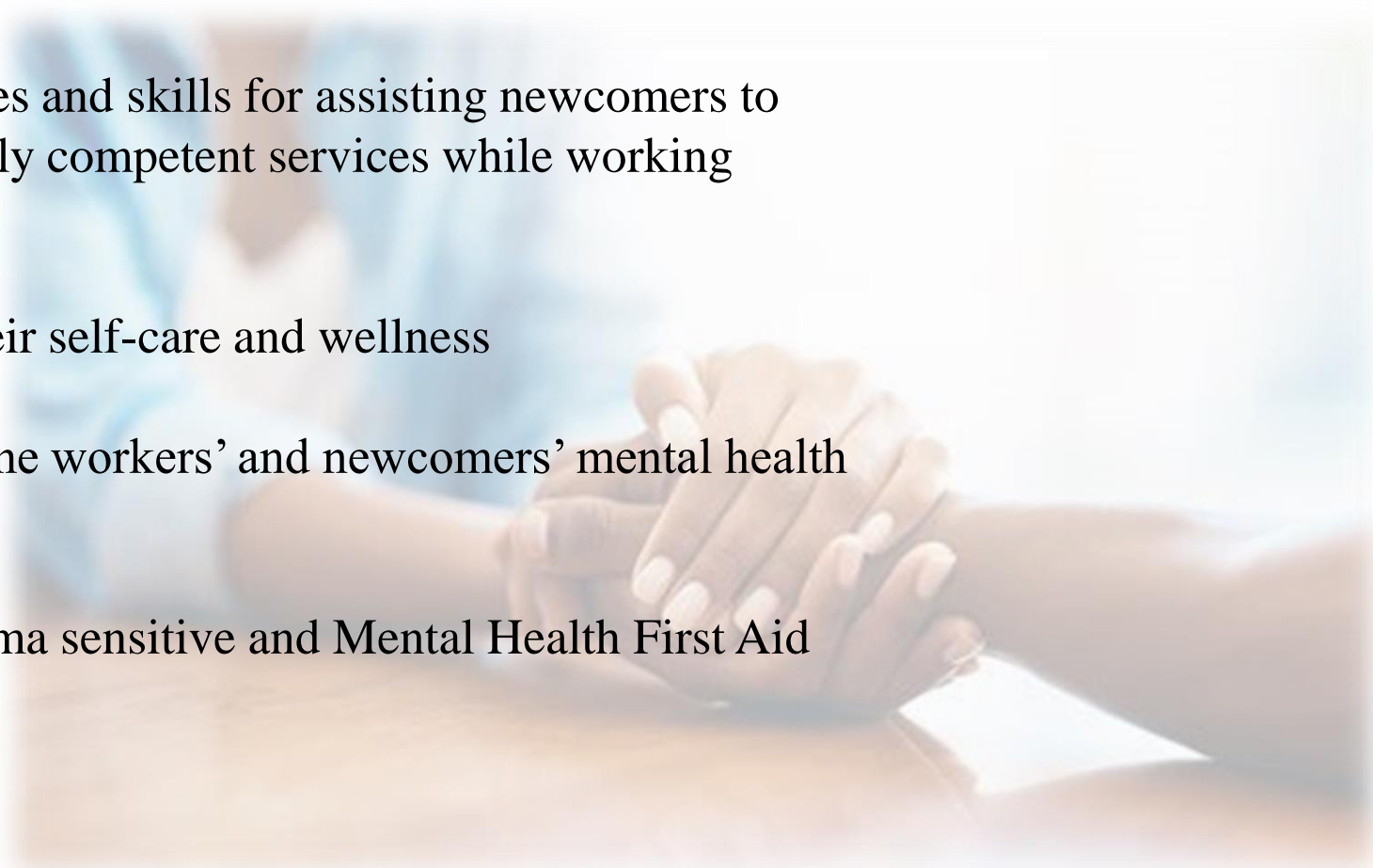
# THE ROLE OF FRONTLINE WORKERS IN PROMOTING CLIENTS' MENTAL HEALTH

- Frontline workers are often the client's first point of contact for information, orientation, referral, and assistance during the post-migration process
- Crucial for frontline staff to create a safe space for their clients and themselves
- Once needs are identified, frontline workers can refer clients to required services like counselling, mental health support, legal assistance etc.
- These services help address various social determinants which may impact client mental health
- Connection to support services may help promote resilience and a sense of belonging; thus, frontline workers have a large role in promoting immigrant mental health



# THE NEED FOR CAPACITY BUILDING

- Frontline workers need tools, resources and skills for assisting newcomers to provide trauma-informed and culturally competent services while working with newcomers
- To equip frontline staff to work on their self-care and wellness
- To raise awareness concerning frontline workers' and newcomers' mental health and well-being
- To provide culturally competent, trauma sensitive and Mental Health First Aid services to newcomers



# PUNJABI COMMUNITY HEALTH SERVICES (PCHS)







- Established in 1990 by Baldev Mutta (now former CEO) upon his graduation as a Social Service Worker
- PCHS is a culturally and linguistically competent settlement service provider to newcomers at no cost
- Settlement Services at PCHS are offered in more than 12 languages
- One of the **rare service providers** that offers services in mental health and settlement.

#### Programs offered:

- Mental Health Program
- Addictions Program
- Geriatrics Program
- Better Families Program
- Community Development Program

# THE PROCESS



- Why **PCHS**?
- PCHS officially initiated the Capacity Building Program in 2020 (funded by IRCC), but had been facilitating trainings already for frontline workers for many years
- The program runs across 9 regions in southern Ontario
- The program runs in collaboration with LIPs across all regions
- LIPs are highly integral to the delivery of this program:
  - channel of communication
  - networking amongst frontline staff
  - promotion of the program
  - creation of opportunities around PD

# THE DELIVERY

## Regions

Simcoe,  
Kingston,  
Peterborough,  
Brantford,  
Hamilton,  
York,  
Durham,  
Halton, and  
Peel

In the region of Peel and Halton, PCHS collaborates and works closely with **PNSG (Peel Newcomer Strategy Group)** to promote and deliver trainings

**PNSG** has been instrumental in the flow of program information to various agencies across Peel and Halton

**PNSG and PCHS** collaborate from time to time on activities and events related to mental health and well-being of the frontline staff

# CAPACITY BUILDING PROGRAM

The program has 4 components

- 1) Trauma Informed Approach
- 2) Cultural Competency



Facilitated as direct training

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- 3) Compassion Fatigue: TEND Academy
  - 4) Mental Health First Aid: Mental Health Commission of Canada



Facilitated through the Train the Trainer Model



# TRAINING DELIVERY

THE DIRECT TRAININGS ARE DELIVERED BY THE TRAINER TO A GROUP OF FRONTLINE STAFF, WHO CAN THEN IMPLEMENT THE TOOLS AND RESOURCES SHARED IN THEIR SERVICE DELIVERY



THE TRAIN THE TRAINER MODEL IS A METHOD IN WHICH A SELECTED FEW STAFF ARE TRAINED IN EVERY BATCH OF THE TRAINING AND THEN BECOME CERTIFIED FACILITATORS.

THE TRAINED STAFF DELIVERS TRAININGS ACROSS THEIR OWN REGIONS TO EVENTUALLY CREATE A NETWORK OF TRAINERS AND TO CREATE A POOL OF TOOLS AND RESOURCES FOR ONE ANOTHER

## BENEFITS OF ATTENDING

- No cost to the trainers
- Help frontline staff to navigate the challenges newcomers face in a more informed and competent manner
- Train the Trainer trainings come with a certificate to the facilitators from the MHCC(MHFA) and Tend Academy (Compassion Fatigue)
- Trainers can help train other frontline staff and promote wellness and self-care in their regions
- Trainers can participate in and represent their organizations at various PD forums



# TRAUMA INFORMED CARE

- The training includes concrete strategies to guide the professional work of service providers assisting clients with mental health and substance use concerns.
- To have a better understanding regarding the guiding principles for incorporating a trauma-informed approach while working with newcomers
- To have awareness regarding steps for creating safer work settings for both service providers and clients
- To have an action plan for trauma-informed goals in service delivery and program planning



## MENTAL HEALTH FIRST AID

- MHFA focuses on the four most common mental health disorders including substance related, mood related, anxiety and trauma related, and psychotic disorders.
- Participants who take this course are well prepared to interact confidently about mental health with their family, friends, communities, and workplaces.
- Frontline staff (preparing to be MHFA facilitators) are offered the course so that they are better prepared to help clients/family/friends by offering the best course of action.





## COMPASSION FATIGUE

- Compassion fatigue training creates awareness around both physical and emotional fatigue resulting not just from chronic use of empathy with people who are recovering from trauma exposure, but also from chronic exposure to seemingly hopeless situations.
- Trainers learned to: Identify risk factors for secondary traumatic stress and empathic strain
- Develop strategies to take stock, reduce trauma exposure, and reset
- Make a plan for sustainable change



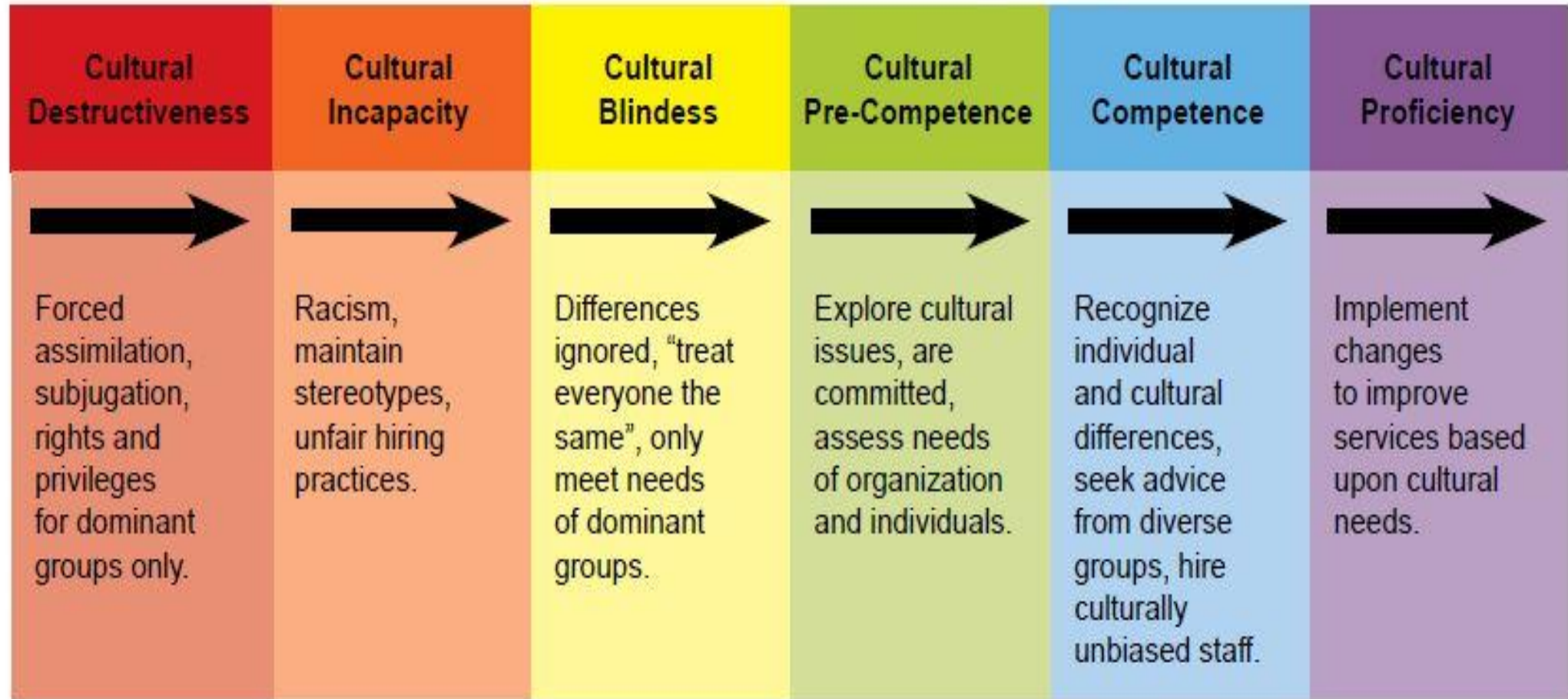
## CULTURAL COMPETENCY

- Cultural competence training provides participants with the opportunity to grow their knowledge of working from an inclusive and culturally competent framework, in an effort to be a better service provider to the clients they serve
- PCHS has developed its own 'Holistic Service Delivery Model' based on the core principles of family centered approach and cultural competence as opposed to an individual approach.



Image courtesy careercliff.com

## Continuum of Cultural Competency



# SUMMARY

- The Capacity Building Program is running successfully across all 9 regions with trainings being organized from time to time.
- Trainers and frontline staff have shared immensely positive feedback after participating in these trainings
- PCHS' collaboration with various LIPs on this program has helped create a network of trainers across these regions, which in turn has helped newcomers in more ways than one



THANK YOU



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