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Host Organization

Mouvement Santé mentale Québec (SMQ) consists of 13 non-governmental organizations (NGOs)

- Focus on improving the mental health of Quebecers
- Rooted in health promotion
- Mission to promote and support mental health

Background



Mouvement SMQ offers an umbrella campaign comprising seven “tips to improve mental health”

- 2022-2023 campaign on theme of “Making Choices” for better mental health

Theoretical framework for campaign:

- **Rooted in Self-Determination Theory:** autonomy, competence, and relatedness are at the forefront of positive mental health

“Making Choices” Campaign: emphasis on the importance of making autonomous choices for well-being

Practicum Goals and Learning Objectives

Overarching goals for practicum:

1. Work in an applied area of public health
2. Contribute directly to knowledge synthesis, translation, and dissemination
3. Learn about campaign planning and creation
4. Gain insight on the running of an NGO and be actively involved in program development
5. Develop leaderships skills and build partnerships by engaging directly with public health experts, external stakeholders, and knowledge end users

Public Health Issue and Campaign Objectives

The public health issue addressed by this practicum was the **promotion of positive mental health among Quebecers**, through the creation of a series of tools offering practical information and exercises for **increasing autonomy and choice in daily life**, which is linked to improved well-being.

Key Tasks

Four-Part Practicum Project

Part I: Identification of the key themes, concepts, and target demographics for the campaign

- Theme: Making choices for better mental health
- Key concepts: autonomy, autonomy support, intrinsic motivation, value identification
- Target demographics: youth, employees, older adults, general population

Part II: Literature search and summary of findings

- Ovid Medline® and PsychInfo

Part III: Identification, contact, and meeting with relevant advisors to present ideas and receive feedback

- Meetings with research experts in *Self-Determination Theory*
- Collaborative sessions with youth, workplace, older adult, and general population representatives
- Consultation and feedback from Quebec-wide campaign members in affiliated Mouvement SMQ organizations

Part IV: Creation and elaboration of tool content, and writing first draft of an article

Following research synthesis and discussions with advisory committees:

- Proposal and development of tool content: information sheets and exercises
- First draft of article “L’une des 7 astuces pour se recharger du Mouvement SMQ” to be published in *Spiritualitésanté* (now in press)

Barriers and Facilitators Related to Practicum Placement

- Challenge of translating scientific findings and psychological concepts into accessible information for colleagues and lay people
- Benefit of supportive colleagues and French language proficiency

Conclusion and Lessons Learned

Through this practicum I:

- Gained valuable insight on the operations of an NGO and the challenges that exist working within this setting
- Learned about campaign development and promotion of mental health at the delivery end of public health
- Developed understanding of the role of autonomy and intrinsic motivation in making choices that align with values

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