

Welcoming an Accessible, Proactive Education System Designed to Meet Future Workforce Development Needs

*Addressing Barriers and Issues for
Further Education in Social and
Community Services Through Online Offerings*

WINNIPEG, MANITOBA, CANADA, November 28, 2021 /EINPresswire.com/ -- In the area of mental

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Dr. Sunday Olujoku

health, it is important to explain the context. The Canadian Mental Health Association (CMHA) in their July 2021 fast facts informed Canadians that “everyone has mental health and will experience challenges regarding their mental well-being”, although “not everyone will experience a mental illness”. However, CMHA also reveals that “mental illness indirectly affects all Canadians at some time either through their own experience, or that of a family member, friend or colleague”, and that “in any given year, 1 in 5 people in Canada will personally experience a mental health problem or illness.” In fact, “by age 40, about 50% of

the population will have or have had a mental illness.” While CMHA identifies “a complex interplay of genetic, biological, personality and environmental factors” as the cause of mental illnesses, it also discloses that “the economic cost of mental illnesses to the Canadian healthcare and social support system was projected as \$79.9 billion for the year 2021”, among others.

The above fast facts call for action, and this is especially true now that “one-third of Canadians aged 15 or older who report having a need for mental health care say those needs were not fully met” according to CMHA. The urgent need for a timely intervention to fill a precarious gap in the mental health and wellness area has led to the emergence of LINKS Institute, a further education institution whose curriculum is fully focused on this issue. In a fast-paced world of never-ending activities and interactions powered by social media, many people are yearning for emotional stability and mental equilibrium in their day-to-day expectations, roles, and responsibilities. More than ever before, many people are forced to multi-task today, given their intersecting programs, recreational, work and family schedules, as well as survival needs. It has therefore become necessary to train support and crisis workers in mental health and harm reduction, and whose major role would be to help the increasing number of those prone to mental health

issues.

As a new institution based in Brandon Manitoba, LINKS Institute's easy accessibility through program delivery that is fully online is one great advantage that can accelerate training of both working adults and high school graduates in rural areas or cities across Canada. Working and studying at the same time becomes easy. Learning via an online platform from the comfort of one's home eliminates the trouble of commuting, parking, and/or tight time scheduling that could create lateness or anxiety. The advantage of a fully online program delivery also includes a relatively low cost, despite being a highly effective, high-quality program. Completing a highly needed certificate program via an online platform further

protects students from COVID-19, that is transmittable via physical proximity. It is also pertinent to mention that LINKS Institute's programs expose students to current practices as well as relevant and recent theories in the field of psychosocial mental healthcare, harm reduction and prevention.



Dr Sunday Olukoju

LINKS Institute emphasizes a delivery approach that places high premium on good interaction of hands-on skills with deep industry experience. It adopts a balanced approach that connects the head, the heart, and the hand of students in the learning process. The curriculum is comprehensive and student-centered. It is also job-market relevant as it addresses the shortage earlier identified by the CMHA. Seasoned practitioners who are highly trained as qualified instructors with PhDs and master's degree in relevant fields have successfully positioned LINKS Institute as a further education institution with a difference – dynamic, relevant, and current in today's challenges, and completely future-ready in training mental health workers of repute.

Furthermore, LINKS Institute has a reputation for a rigorous, intentionally planned short but intensive duration suitable for working adults and/or newcomers looking to acquire a job-ready certificate in mental health. What's more, this program leads to jobs that are in high demand across the nation. Acquiring a certificate in mental health or harm reduction within six months of intensive training has now become achievable through LINKS Institute's programming. Flexibility through on-going cohort intake guarantees a greater leverage for prospective students to plan and adjust their priorities without having to wait for a whole year to start school. The cohort approach also ensures the high frequency of interaction of a small class size, the fair share of

student to instructor ratio that enables a more one-on-one student-instructor connection. Students are not treated as figures but known by their first names, and this approach guarantees a deeply enriching learning experience.

While Canada has no accrediting body for workers in social and community services, the Manitoba government is the constituted authority that recognizes and authenticates vocational institutions in Manitoba. LINKS Institute is a registered private vocational institution. LINKS Institute is one of the very few institutions in Canada offering a diploma program in mental wellness and harm reduction. It is also one of the few further education institutions offering all its approved programs online. LINKS Institute has become a game-changer as students now have the best option possible. In addition to having a strong, nimble, and creative leadership, LINKS Institute's instructors are highly trained, patient, reasonable, student-centered, and completely selfless in ensuring that their students flourish. As a change agent organization, our graduates are not only market-ready but are also change agents in the community. They are trained to change their world for good!

Equipping and empowering support workers in the areas of mental health and harm reduction will go a long way in reversing the tide of the rising "economic cost of mental illnesses to the Canadian healthcare and social support system". While it could be more preventative than curative, the goal of training more support workers in this area cannot be overemphasized. LINKS Institute has emerged on the scene and is here to continue making good things happen in training and equipping helping professionals whose main priority is to help Canadians who are struggling to overcome their challenges and become productive members of society.

John Jackson
LINKS Institute
+1 204-573-2768

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