

DECEMBER 2025

FREEDCAN NEWSLETTER

The logo features the word "FREED" in a large, bold, white sans-serif font, slanted upwards to the right. Below it, the word "CAN" is written in a smaller, bold, white sans-serif font, also slanted. The text is set against a solid red circular background. This red circle is centered within a larger white circle that has a subtle drop shadow. A thick red curved line sweeps across the left and bottom of the composition, partially overlapping the white circle.

**FREED
CAN**

In this Issue:

- FREEDcan Pilot Site Update in Grey Bruce
- Level 2 Training Highlights
- FREEDcan Tools: ODES-Y Availability
- Knowledge Mobilization- FREEDcan Learning Event October 2025
 - October 2nd Presentation Highlights
 - October 3rd Presentation Highlights
 - FREEDcan Youth Advisor Reflections
 - Event Evaluation Highlights
- Psychoeducation Resources for the Holiday Season

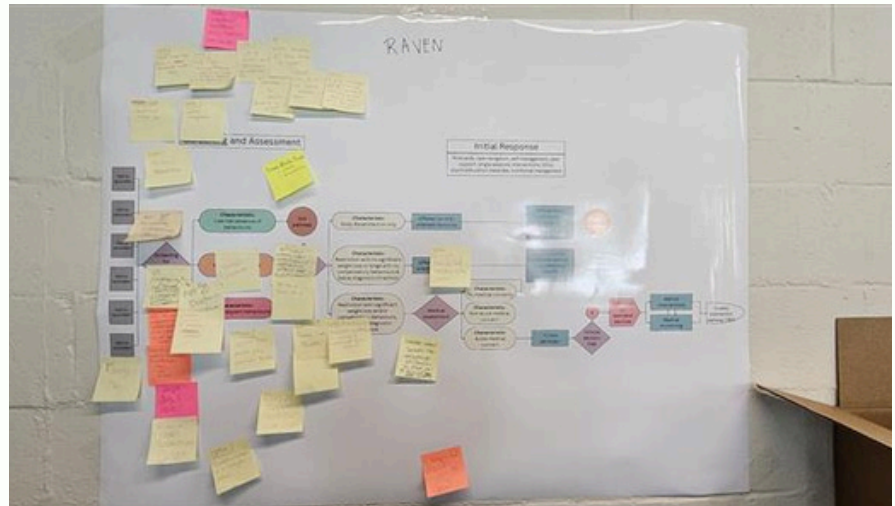
Update on FREEDcan Pilot in Grey Bruce

SEPTEMBER PILOT SITE IN-PERSON WORKSHOP

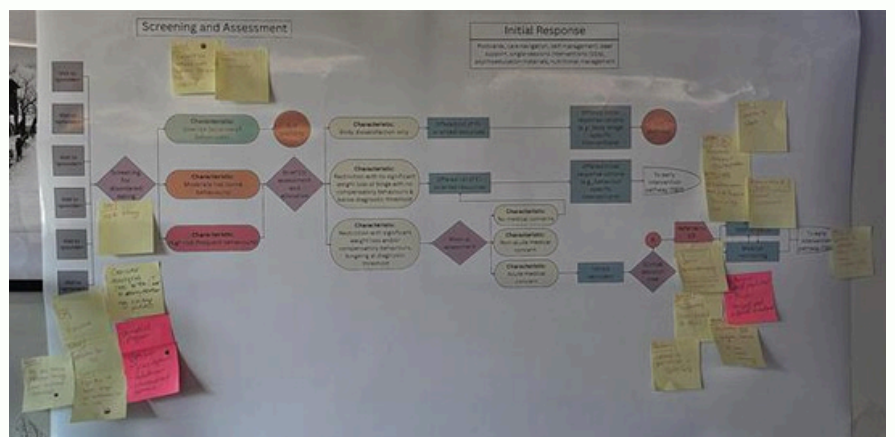
WorkShop Overview

The FREEDcan Grey Bruce Pilot site hosted an in-person workshop with the FREEDcan Team. The purpose of this meeting was to co-develop a Grey Bruce FREEDcan care pathway for young people (8-25) with disordered eating or eating disorders with a focus on early detection, rapid response, and provision to timely early-stage interventions.

In addition to the FREEDcan team and Pilot site members, 12 sector partners attended the workshop to together map and understand care pathways for youth with eating disorders in Grey Bruce. These maps are helping to standardize referral and care pathways for community staff when an eating disorder is suspected.



Pathway Mapping and Development From Workshop



FREEDcan Level 2 Training in Grey Bruce

HIGHLIGHTS

Summary

FREEDcan Level 2 Training: Screening, Assessment and Rapid Response was delivered on September 24th, 2025. We want to thank Dr. Michele Laliberte, Ph.D., C.Psych for providing this training and for all of the participants from Grey Bruce for attending.

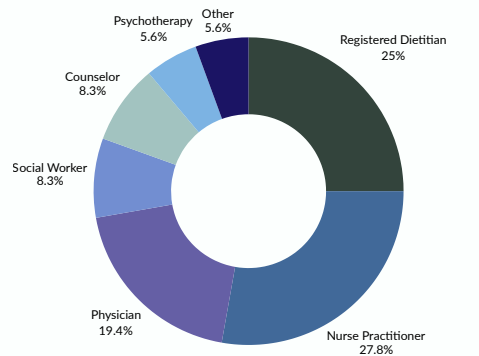
Overview of Attendees

38

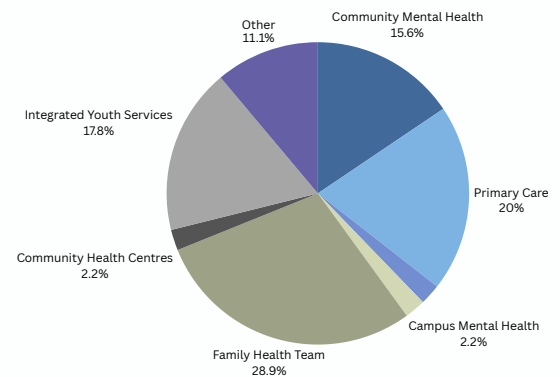
Individuals attended
Level 2 Training

6+

Organizations represented,
including family health teams,
and mental health community
organizations



Attendees reported being from
diverse roles and backgrounds



Attendees reported being
from diverse sectors

Shift in Knowledge and Skills

Participants were asked to rank their level of agreement with statements on a Likert scale from (1=Strongly Disagree to 5=Strongly Agree).

Pre-Training



44% of participants disagreed with the statement that they knew the appropriate process to refer someone to ED treatment



53% of participants disagreed with the statement that they are comfortable using ED assessment tools

Post-Training

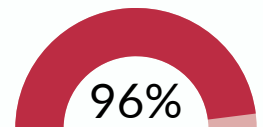


78% strongly agreed and agree that after participating in the training they know the appropriate process to refer someone to ED treatment



89% of participants strongly agree and agree that after participating in training they are comfortable using ED assessment tools

Future Interest



Of attendees would
recommend training to their
peers



All attendees expressed
interest in future training

FREEDcan Tools

ODES-Y AVAILABILITY



CHEO RESEARCH INSTITUTE
INSTITUT DE RECHERCHE

ODES-Y

Instructions: The Ottawa Disordered Eating Screen for Young People asks questions about food, bodies, and eating. Please circle the option that best describes how often this may have happened in the last 4 weeks.

In the last 4 weeks, how often did you...						
worry so much about your weight, shape, or muscles that you couldn't get it out of your head?	Never	Rarely	Sometimes	Often	Always	
not eat, or eat in a way to change your weight, shape, or muscles?	Never	Once or twice	Once or twice each week	3 or 4 times each week	5 or 6 times each week	Daily or almost daily
binge on food (eaten what other people would say is an unusually large amount of food such as a whole litre of ice cream, in a few hours?)	Never	Once or twice	Once or twice each week	3 or 4 times each week	5 or 6 times each week	Daily or almost daily
feel like you couldn't stop eating or couldn't control how much you ate?	Never	Once or twice	Once or twice each week	3 or 4 times each week	5 or 6 times each week	Daily or almost daily

The FREEDcan Team is excited to share that the ODES-Y is now available on our Website in the *Tools for Practice Section*. The links to our website can be found below:

[View English ODES-Y](#)

[Voir l'ODES-Y en Français](#)

Knowledge Mobilization

PROMOTING EARLY ACCESS, CARE AND WORKFORCE EXPANSION FOR EATING DISORDERS

On October 2–3, we co-hosted an event at the University of British Columbia on the theme of early intervention for eating disorders (EDs). There were 70 invited in-person registrants and 600 online registrants from across the country. Discussions on Day 1 centered on workforce development and innovative strategies—such as task shifting, upskilling community providers, and peer support—to improve access to early-stage ED care across Canada’s complex geography.



Day 2 focused on FREED and FREEDcan, featuring considerations for implementation and scale-up. Participants learned about strategies for successful implementation in complex healthcare landscapes, including considerations for planning, piloting, iterating, and scaling-up. The event was underscored by a commitment to centering lived expertise and tailoring innovations to unique community contexts.

Event Recording can be found here: <https://www.freedcan.ca/en/news-stories/freedcan-events/>

Password for Recording: EatingDisorders

OCTOBER 2

PRESENTATION HIGHLIGHTS

1 | CONNECTING AND CREATING: IMPROVING EARLY INTERVENTION FOR EATING DISORDERS VIA WORKFORCE DEVELOPMENT, TASK SHIFTING AND TASK SHARING (KEYNOTE: DR. KARINA ALLEN)

- Presented the FREED model, showing strong outcomes for early intervention in eating disorders, especially anorexia nervosa.
- Emphasized task shifting and workforce development to expand access, including training non-specialist staff and exploring peer support.
- Advocated for brief, programme-led treatments (e.g., guided self-help) to reduce therapist time while maintaining effectiveness.
- Highlighted the need for implementation science to adapt proven models like FREED to local contexts efficiently.



2 | A PATH FORWARD FOR WORKFORCE BUILDING FOR EARLY INTERVENTION FOR EATING DISORDERS: OPPORTUNITIES FOR INNOVATION

- Over 600 people registered, showing strong national interest in building workforce capacity for early intervention.
- Introduced FREEDcan, promoting integrated care across youth-facing sectors.
- Stressed the need for early help and better support for the workforce delivering ED care.
- Called for meaningful inclusion of lived experience to reduce stigma and support recovery.

3 | INTERNATIONAL AND NATIONAL LEARNINGS OF GUIDELINES RELEVANT FOR EARLY INTERVENTION AND WORKFORCE DEVELOPMENT

- **Prof Stephanie Bauer (Germany):** Emphasized the need to reduce reliance on inpatient care and improve early access through digital tools like ProYouth
- **Prof Sebastien Guillaume (France):** Shared efforts to build specialized ED centres and integrate screening into youth community services
- **Dr Gina Dimitropoulos (Canada):** Highlighted the importance of early intervention for transition-aged youth, focusing on identity development alongside ED treatment



OCTOBER 3

PRESENTATION HIGHLIGHTS

1 | THE JOURNEY FROM RESEARCH TO SUSTAINABLE IMPLEMENTATION OF FREED: CHALLENGES, SURPRISES AND LEARNING (KEYNOTE: PROF. ULRIKE SCHMIDT)

- FREED was created to provide early intervention for youth with EDs, reducing wait times and improving outcomes; it has strong clinical outcomes and reached over 14000 patients in the UK from 2020-23, saving over £65 million
- Key lessons included adapting to complex systems, learning from early psychosis models, and using real-world data to overcome skepticism.
- Innovations like FREED-Mobile and EDIFY aim to engage youth earlier and personalize care through digital tools and interdisciplinary approaches.



2 | THE FREEDCAN SERVICE MODEL AND IMPLEMENTATION ROADMAP

- FREEDcan expands early ED care for youth aged 8–25, using flexible tools like the ODES-Y, decision aids, and training to support community providers.
- Implementation follows a phased, adaptable model based on active implementation science, with pilots underway in regions like Grey Bruce.
- Future plans include expanding pilots, advancing digital tools, and applying research to improve access and sustainability.

3 | FREEDCAN PILOT IN GREY BRUCE: EARLY LEARNINGS

- Grey Bruce launched FREEDcan to improve early ED care in a rural region with limited services.
- Training and workshops built local capacity, with strong engagement and positive feedback.
- Environmental scans revealed care gaps and system barriers, guiding next steps.
- The next phase in 2026 includes a pilot of a screening strategy, community of practice, and expanded rapid response care options.



4 | VIRTUAL SUPPORT PROGRAM (VSP): INITIAL RESPONSE AND DIGITAL HEALTH OPPORTUNITIES

- Body Brave's online RSP program has helped 6,000+ Canadians with EDs through accessible, on-demand support.
- FREEDcan adapted the RSP program for youth, co-designed with lived experience advisors to support early intervention.
- The Virtual Support Program offers youth-driven tools to guide help-seeking and build confidence early on.
- Youth advisors shared personal stories, highlighting the need for inclusive, stigma-free, and timely support.

Youth Advisor Reflections

PARTNERSHIP AND IMPACT



"I've attended many conferences, but FREEDCan was different. I truly felt comfortable speaking in front of hundreds of people. Why? I was welcomed with open arms, my voice was validated and I was actively involved in every strategic conversation and group activity. Our October FREEDCan conference gave me so much hope for the work we have ahead"

SEASON ESSENTIAL

"It was so empowering to see professionals and folks with lived experience from all over the country (and world!) come together with a shared desire to collaborate and improve eating disorder care in Canada!"



"This has been a healing experience – I have been moved by how willing the FREEDcan team has been to listen to me and make me feel included"



FREEDcan Learning Event

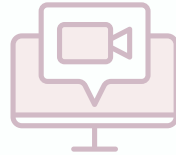
EVALUATION HIGHLIGHTS

Overview of Attendees



572

registrants for
virtual event



290+

virtual attendees



13

intersectoral
disciplines

Province/Territory Representation



Sectors (n=95)

Community mental health (42%)



Family health teams (1%)



Primary care (7%)



Integrated youth services (4%)



Community health centres (6%)



Campus mental health (5%)



Emergency departments (13%)



Private practice (4%)



Research (4%)

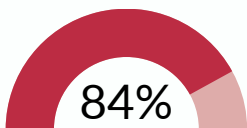


Other (13%)

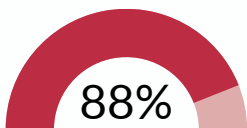


Event Satisfaction

Participants were asked to rank their level of agreement of statements on a Likert scale from (1=Strongly Disagree to 5=Strongly Agree).



84% of participants agreed/strongly agreed that they were satisfied with the learnings of the event



88% of participants agreed/strongly agreed that they were satisfied with the topics and speakers at the event

Advocating for Change



Mean = 4.21

A majority of attendees felt empowered to advocate for change in their community.



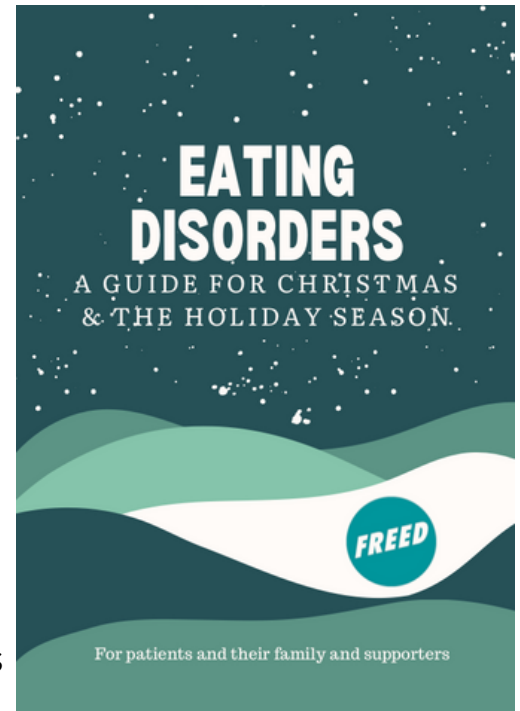
Mean=4.40

A majority of attendees understand the importance of integrating early intervention approaches within current systems of care

Psychoeducation

The holidays can be a really challenging time when someone has an eating disorder, with an increase in social gatherings and food-related events. This guide includes some advice for those with eating disorders and for those who walk alongside them.

This psychoeducation resource includes topics applicable across many religious, cultural, or social holidays that bring families, friends, and communities together, particularly when sharing food is involved



[VIEW IN ENGLISH](#)

Les fêtes de fin d'année peuvent être une période très difficile pour les personnes qui souffrent d'un trouble alimentaire, car les rassemblements et les événements qui tournent autour d'un repas se multiplient. Ce guide offre des lignes directrices pour les personnes aux prises avec des troubles alimentaires et leurs proches.

Ces conseils s'appliquent à de nombreuses fêtes religieuses, culturelles ou sociales qui rassemblent les familles, les amis, et les communautés, en particulier lorsqu'elles comprennent le partage de nourriture.



[VOIR EN FRANÇAIS](#)



Season's Greetings

Wishing you a joyful holiday season and a bright beginning to the New Year!

We're sincerely thankful for your ongoing support. May you enjoy some peaceful time to rest, and we look forward to reconnecting in 2026!

Call for Content and Network Sign-Up!

Share Your Work!

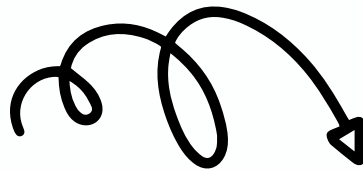
Have articles, insights, or updates related to the FREEDcan model? We'd love to feature them in our quarterly newsletter! Send your content to **freedcan@freedcan.ca**.

Stay Connected with FREEDcan: Our recorded events are located on our website and are available to all network members. Please email freedcan@freedcan.ca to receive the password for our recordings.

Not part of our network?

Join our network to receive our quarterly newsletters!

[FREEDcan Network](#)



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**FREED
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Thank You



Email

freedcan@freedcan.ca



Website

<https://www.freedcan.ca>

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