
Career Guidance and Counselling in Canada: Still Changing After All These Years Le counseling et l'orientation professionnelle au Canada : toujours en évolution après toutes ces années

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ABSTRACT

Career counselling has held a significant place in the field of Canadian counselling. This article summarizes the history of career counselling in Canada from the early 1900s to today. Highlights illustrate a shifting focus from the concept of one job for life to managing multiple career transitions, and the consequent professionalism of career service providers through investments in product development, career practitioner competency-based training, and professional associations. Politically, responsibility for public employment and training services has shifted from federal to provincial governments. Throughout the history of Canadian career counselling, career development has clearly emerged as the bridge between managing the complexities of individual career choice and development and the changing Canadian economy and labour market realities.

RÉSUMÉ

L'orientation professionnelle a occupé une place significative dans le domaine du counseling au Canada, et le présent article en résume l'histoire au Canada depuis le début des années 1900 jusqu'à ce jour. Dans ses grandes lignes, il illustre une évolution des points de vue passant de l'emploi à vie vers la gestion de multiples transitions professionnelles et le professionnalisme conséquent des fournisseurs de services d'orientation grâce aux investissements dans le développement de produit, la formation centrée sur la compétence du conseiller d'orientation praticien, et l'adhésion aux associations professionnelles. Sur le plan politique, la responsabilité de l'emploi dans le secteur public et des services de formation s'est déplacée du gouvernement fédéral aux gouvernements provinciaux. Tout au long de l'histoire canadienne de l'orientation professionnelle, le développement de carrière s'est clairement démarqué en tant que pont entre la gestion des choix complexes et du développement de la carrière individuelle et l'évolution des réalités de l'économie et du marché de l'emploi au Canada.

The purpose of this article is to provide a retrospective look at how career counselling has evolved within Canada, examining what has changed within the field and how it has remained true to its social justice roots. Following a summary of historical milestones, evolutions in theory and practice, training, professional associations, certification, research and evaluation, and policy are described. It is

important to note that, because this review primarily shares the perspectives and experiences of three career development leaders from English-speaking Canada, there is limited coverage of the very rich and relevant history of career counselling within the province of Quebec and the francophone community.

HISTORICAL CONTEXT

Career counselling has a long history in Canada. This history was documented in a comprehensive book by the Counselling Foundation of Canada (CFC, 2002) and, more recently, in the first section of the Canadian Education and Research Institute for Counselling (CERIC) textbook, *Career Development Practice in Canada* (Shepard & Mani, 2014). A few significant milestones are highlighted here.

Career counselling has social justice roots. In the early 1900s, lobbying began for employment offices within the community, specifically by the Salvation Army and the YMCA-YWCA. Their focus was on assisting people to find accommodation, as well as training and work. As early as 1912, Etta St. John Wileman argued for employment bureaus across Canada. She also lobbied extensively for career guidance and counselling in schools. Her provocative questions still ring true today: “What sustained coordinated effort is made throughout the Dominion to ascertain the abilities and natural bent of the child to fit for occupation after school?” and “What knowledge do parents secure as to conditions of trades and occupations, rates of pay, training necessary to give a child a fair start in the Industrial World?” (as cited in CFC, 2002, p. 15).

Although it can be challenging to imagine Canada prior to the safety net of employment insurance (originally called unemployment insurance [UI]), UI was only first legislated in 1940. During the same decade, the YMCA-YWCA introduced vocational counselling, and these services continue to be offered across Canada today. Parallel supports (in schools and in the community) were particularly important post-World War II, when the federal government also began to fund postsecondary vocational counselling to support war veterans (Neault, Shepard, Hopkins, & Benes, 2012). “Fitting the person to the job” became a crucial economic imperative both during and following World War II. This led to what is now often referred to as the “test and tell” movement in career counselling. It was an era in which many standardized assessment instruments, several of which remain in use today, were developed, normed, and validated.

As early as the 1950s, the field of career counselling became identified as an extension of applied psychology, specifically counselling psychology. Although the roots of career development and career counselling theory and practice are within psychology, it can be argued that this positioning has created significant challenges for the evolving identity of the field as a distinct discipline. Especially since the 1990s, the field of career development has clearly emerged as the bridge between managing the complexities of individual career development and choice and the changing Canadian economy and labour market realities. At the university level, career counselling training has traditionally been housed within postgraduate education and/or psychology departments. Faculties of education offered mas-

ter's degrees in guidance with very strong concentrations in psychology and very little, if any, focus on labour market understanding. In counselling psychology programs today, courses focused on the demand side of the labour market remain very sparse. Professor Norm Amundson of the University of British Columbia (UBC) is quoted as saying,

I ran the other way [when being approached about career counselling]. In the field of psychology, there is a hierarchy and career and vocational psychology was the lowest form. I wouldn't touch it with a ten-foot pole. For most people in psychology, it didn't have much appeal. (CFC, 2002, p. 109)

The appeal of career and vocational psychology has grown significantly, and Norm Amundson himself has been a key career development contributor over many years. However, the debate over the distinction between career counselling and career development is still ongoing. It is now common practice in Canada for those professionals specializing in career and employment services to use the title "Career Development Practitioners" and to leave the term "Career Counselors" to those with, at minimum, a master's degree in counselling psychology. It is recognized that these two titles reflect distinct but overlapping scopes of practice, training, and professional competencies.

By the 1950s, person-centred and developmental approaches were beginning to impact career counselling. A focus on finding meaning through career activities emerged (CFC, 2002).

Throughout the 1960s, the baby boom began to impact the economy. Large numbers of young people entered postsecondary education while others sought to enter the labour force directly. However, schools and postsecondary institutions provided very little career counselling, and students were graduating with limited career direction. The federal government began to be much more involved in labour market policies, programs, and adjustment. Increasingly, investments were made in helping people access employment consistent with their training, education, and interests.

By the 1970s, the Department of Manpower and Immigration was hiring "manpower counsellors," who were recent university graduates, mainly in the social sciences. Their primary role was to help people transition from unemployed to employed. Most were generalist university graduates. To some extent this trend has continued. In the *Pan-Canadian Mapping Study of the Career Development Sector* (Bezanson, O'Reilly, & Magnusson, 2009), fewer than 15% of existing career development practitioners were between the ages of 21 and 30; the majority were over 40 and had been in the field for nine years or less, indicating that they entered with a wide range of work experience, usually in a related social service field. Close to 60% were university graduates and 22% had postgraduate degrees, overall a highly educated workforce but weakly specialized in career development (Bezanson et al., 2009). It must be noted that the mapping study had weak participation from Quebec and did not adequately capture data on practitioners in that province.

By the 1970s, thought leaders like Stuart Conger (CFC, 2002, pp. 71–74) were advocating for the importance of a "whole person" approach to career counselling;

life skills curricula were developed and integrated into career preparation programs across the country for a wide range of struggling clients (e.g., single mothers, immigrants, First Nations, women returning to the workforce, and youth). Several programs targeted youth during this decade and beyond, including Canada Manpower Centres for Students, Opportunities for Youth, and Outreach programs. For some, clients, these positions opened the door to long-term careers.

Toward the end of the 1970s, the federal government began to form partnerships with community-based not-for-profit agencies to offer training and supports for the unemployed. They also began to produce assessment tools and labour market publications to support the delivery of career and employment services. Although graduate degree programs for counsellors were available, there was little specialization for career counsellors in English-speaking Canada. Quebec, by contrast, embraced career counselling as a distinct specialization very early on. Currently, Quebec is one of very few jurisdictions in the world to regulate vocational and guidance counsellors (Shepard & Mani, 2014, p. 35). Use of the title is protected by a professional code and requires a master's degree to practice. As a result, the majority of Quebec universities offer postgraduate programs specializing in career counselling.

Stuart Conger, by that time working as Director General with the Canada Employment and Immigration Commission of the federal government (formerly Manpower and Immigration), convened a national consultation on career development (NATCON 1975) with representatives from across the country. Conger's original vision was that NATCON continue to be an annual think-tank consultation, but its popularity and reach spread and it quickly transformed into an annual career development conference. In 1987 NATCON became a partnership between the Counselling Foundation of Canada (CFC), Human Resources Development Canada (HRDC), and the University of Toronto Career Centre (CFC, 2002). This partnership endured until 2002.

In 2007, the Conference Board of Canada assumed responsibility for continuing NATCON, but the conference focus changed from career development to workforce development. The CFC recognized the importance of an annual conference specifically devoted to career development and began Cannexus, which is now Canada's largest conference for the career development sector. Cannexus celebrated its 10th year in 2016.

As early as the 1980s, the workplace was changing quite dramatically with corporate downsizing, restructuring, acquisitions, and mergers that resulted in a large number of midcareer workers being laid off or displaced. It became increasingly important to better equip career counsellors and other career practitioners to provide effective services. What had become the Canadian norm of one job for life was being replaced by a career trajectory with multiple transitions across a variety of nonstandard positions that were temporary, part-time, or project-based. Corporate consulting firms began to offer outplacement services, and unions also offered career and labour market adjustment services to their members. Once again, such services were offered by individuals with little or no specific training

in either counselling or career development, drawing instead from the ranks of managers, union leaders, and human resource professionals. At the same time, youth unemployment remained a concern, so initiatives such as Canada Career Week were introduced to encourage students to stay in school and career fairs were designed to help students expand their options. These initiatives were concentrated in the education sector and supported by all levels of government.

The 1980s and 1990s saw further significant federal investment and provincial collaboration in national career development initiatives, such as Stay-in-School (a five-year national strategy aimed at helping students see the relationship between education and labour market opportunities), Canada Career Consortium, WorkInfoNet, and the Career Information Partnerships. These were all federal and provincial partnership arrangements focused on building a national labour market information system and pan-Canadian partnerships to share good practices related to youth and labour market issues (CFC, 2002). The *Blueprint for Life/Work Designs* (Haché, Redekopp, & Jarvis, 2006) was also funded and developed to provide a comprehensive national framework of competencies, from childhood to adulthood, for Canadians to manage their work and lives more effectively. It offers a systematic process for creating, implementing, and evaluating products and services supporting life/work development (Haché et al., 2006).

As Canada moved into the 21st century, the focus on supporting diverse workers with specialized services expanded. During the same period, emerging technologies (e.g., computer-based assessment tools such as CHOICES) also facilitated more self-directed career activities in schools, government offices, and community-based resource centres (Van Norman, Shepard, & Mani, 2014).

Vocational- and career-related issues were also the longstanding interest of the Canadian Guidance and Counselling Association (now the Canadian Counselling and Psychotherapy Association [CCPA]). At the first meeting of the association in 1965, the focus was very much on vocational guidance. Originally the priority was on helping students better prepare for their transition from school to work. As the work of the association evolved to encompass a broader range of counselling issues, the continued importance of career-related issues was evident in the formation of the Career Counsellors Chapter in 1995. As indicated on the CCPA website, the chapter has seven aims:

- to promote the practice of career development in Canada;
- to promote a forum for discussion of issues important to the field of career development;
- to provide professional development in the area of career development;
- to provide a forum for mentoring practitioners, researchers, and policy makers new to the field of career development;
- to provide a means by which practitioners, researchers, and policy makers working in the areas of career development can assist one another in developing new programs, methods, or research proposals pertinent to career development;

- to serve, with full collaboration and consultation with [CCPA], as a means to interact with government departments and/or groups for the purpose of promoting career development;
- to serve as a link with CCPA thereby providing for the presentation of mutually sought aims and objectives. (<https://www.ccpa-accp.ca/chapters/career-counsellors/>)

Today, youth employment continues to be a significant national issue, with underemployment for youth hovering around 30% and youth unemployment close to 14% (Canadian Labour Congress, 2014), twice the adult rate. Many Canadian youth are not finding work for which they trained, not finding full-time employment, making dramatically less than youth did 20 years ago, and taking longer to make the transition from graduation to work (Canadian Teachers' Federation, 2014).

Quite unlike the 1980s when the federal government played a very significant policy and funding role in supporting career and employment services for youth and young adults, the last 20 years have witnessed devolution of the field to the provinces, municipalities, and community agencies. However, the Canadian Career Development Foundation (CCDF) recently received an announcement from the Forum of Labour Market Ministers (FLMM) indicating that there will be a renewed emphasis on improving the labour market information system in Canada. This may signal a renewed focus on more proactive labour market involvement across both provincial and federal levels of government.

Despite the development and evolution of employment/career services in Canada and internationally, challenges remain regarding perceptions of their value and importance. Tony Watts, founder of the Careers Research and Advisory Centre in the United Kingdom in the 1960s and one of the most internationally influential leaders in career development in the last 50 years, said in the 2014 Annual Lecture of the University of Derby:

It [career development] is such important work. Where it is done well, it can transform people's lives. Yet it is too often derided, usually by people who have made no effort to discover what it is or what it comprises. The roots of this derision are complex: they may have had poor career guidance themselves; or they may want to take full credit for their own successful careers—which good career guidance would of course have encouraged them to do. But the arguments for serious attention to career development are, in my view, incontrovertible. And while useful career conversations can be had with many people, the contributions of careers professionals are distinctive. Their role is not only to deliver services, but also to build the capacity of others. (Watts, 2014, p. 2)

EVOLUTION IN THEORY AND PRACTICE

In 1937, the National Vocational Guidance Association defined vocational guidance as “the process of assisting an individual to choose an occupation, prepare

for it, enter upon it, and progress in it” (as cited in CFC, 2002, p. 54). For today’s reader, it is immediately apparent that this definition was appropriate for a labour market in which one chose an occupation and essentially remained there over a working life. This approach was focused on “fitting the person for the job” and was in some ways a kind of medical model, placing the career counsellor very much in an expert role of administering psychometric testing, interpreting, and advising. The Canadian influence of these historical theoretical perspectives, as well as many of the emerging ones, has been summarized in key publications previously cited (Bezanson & Hiebert, 1995; CFC, 2002; Neault, 2014). Only brief highlights of these theories and models will be presented in the following paragraphs in order to provide context for some of the current perspectives in theory and practice.

John Holland’s RIASEC model (realistic, investigative, artistic, social, enterprising, and conventional) in the 1950s and 1960s was based on the concept of both individuals and environments having unique characteristics and traits; the more these were matched, the better the outcome for both the individual and the occupation (Holland, 1997). The Holland typology continues to be widely used today as the basis for many tests, inventories, and interventions.

At approximately the same time, the work of Donald Super began to transform the concept of vocational guidance and to introduce career planning as life planning (Super, 1980). Super saw people’s careers as occurring in somewhat predictable stages over a lifespan. He also saw people’s characteristics as different and broad and that each person could qualify for many occupations. Occupational decisions are processes that continue over the lifespan. People do not remain static; they change over time as do their occupational choices and directions. Self-concept development and career development were inseparable, and Super asserted that, without career satisfaction, there is limited life satisfaction. Super’s work was transformative, introducing the inseparable connection between career satisfaction and life purpose and satisfaction.

In the 1960s and 1970s, another transformation occurred. The model shifted to focus less on “choosing” and more on “constructing” a career through many decisions made over a lifetime. The work of Carl Rogers had a huge influence on the practice of career counselling, bringing a focus on the quality of the relationship developed between the counsellor and the individual (CFC, 2002). The relationship was seen as essential to promoting a client’s self-awareness and ability to recognize strengths and limitations in making well-considered career and career-related decisions.

John Krumboltz built strongly on the importance of learning in career development. He introduced social learning theory in which he stated that four main factors influence career choice: genetics, environmental conditions, learning experiences, and task accomplishments. Positive role models and good observational learning along with reward and reinforcement were seen to have powerful influences on career decisions, making some occupations more attractive than others. Krumboltz, Mitchell, and Jones (1976) posited that an important role of the career counsellor was to help individuals expand their life experience so they

could reframe old learning that may be limiting their view of themselves and what is possible.

More recently, Krumboltz (2009) has introduced *happenstance learning theory* in which he postulates that indecision is not only inevitable, it is desirable. People have limited control over their career experiences, and unpredictable and unplanned events more often than not have the strongest impact on career decisions. A key role of the career counsellor is to foster in clients both specific learned skills such as networking, feedback, and commitment to learning as well as attitudes of curiosity, persistence, flexibility, and optimism.

It is apparent that the more modern theorists are congruent with a very altered labour market that is changing and shifting constantly, is unpredictable, and demands very different skills and attitudes to manoeuvre successfully. Krumboltz's (2009) focus on happenstance and Parsons's (1909) method of matching traits and factors could not be more different with respect to the labour markets they were helping people to navigate.

Recent influential approaches draw from constructivism, systems theory, and chaos theory. In constructivist theory, individuals create their own meaning through their lived experiences, career is highly subjective, and the individual is seen to have more power than external influences (Peavy, 2004; Savickas, 2011). By contrast, in systems theory the individual is recognized as a complex system that does not live in isolation but, rather, within a broader contextual system (McMahon, 2011). Chaos theory extends this notion of systems by recognizing that disorder, unpredictability, and lack of control are part of the normal process of career development (Bright & Pryor, 2011).

Guylaine Michaud (as cited in Michaud, Bezanson, & Renald, 2011) noted that "most of the time, counsellors do not identify with one particular approach but rather use concepts, models, strategies, and activities from different approaches that their experience has led them to believe to be effective. This is eclecticism" (p. 23). Michaud noted that a risk of eclecticism is the loss of a theoretical consistency to guide a professional counsellor's approach to interventions. She instead suggested an integrative approach in which counsellors identify a preferred approach and then "integrate in a coherent manner the strengths of other approaches while remaining consistent with the fundamental vision" (p. 23). Michaud suggested that this integration may be the most promising current trend in career development theory and practice.

Looking into the future, we can anticipate a much stronger emphasis on cross-cultural theories (Arthur & Collins, 2011; Leong, 2011). It is clear that in many cultures, First Nations being one strong example, career choice is less an individual decision than a decision at the family or community level. How this translates into theory and practice demands more study and attention. The work of Peter Plant (2001) in Denmark draws attention to "Green Guidance," which questions the ethical roles of career counsellors in supporting educational and occupational choices whereby damage is done to the environment. Finally, it is increasingly clear that the entire career development field has been more strongly focused on

the supply side of the labour market than on the demand side. Although this may represent more of a shift in practice than in theory, to remain relevant in today's economy there needs to be a stronger balance between supply and demand in the professional preparation of career counsellors and in service delivery.

EVOLUTION IN TRAINING

In the late 1980s, the Canada Employment and Immigration Commission (CEIC) began to place much greater emphasis on providing services to people who were then called "special needs clients" (i.e., clients with one or more employability challenges). It became increasingly evident that career counsellors and other career practitioners needed to be better equipped to provide effective services to more challenged clients.

Interestingly, the push to invest heavily in counsellor/practitioner training for government career counsellors/practitioners across Canada originated with a complaint to the CEIC from the Canadian Psychological Association (CPA). They argued that administering and interpreting standardized tests, including the General Attitude Test Battery (GATB) and the Canadian Occupational Interest Inventory (COII), required specialized training and certification. Their preference was that only psychologists with a minimum of a master's degree could use these tests ethically and appropriately. This started a long negotiation process, resulting in the beginning of the Competency-Based Training Program in Employment Counselling.

The first course developed was "Using Tests in Employment Counselling, Theory, and Interpretation" (Bezanson, Busque, Jean, & Monsebraaten, 1980). This was an in-service workshop of 3.5 days preceded by 30 hours of required reading (verified by a multiple-choice examination prior to the training). After the training, participants submitted a taped interview of a GATB interpretation session with a client; this tape was evaluated externally by a cadre of qualified psychologists. Graduates of this program received certification in the use of GATB and COII and the blessing of the CPA.

This course was very successful, and graduates from the program began to develop a new sense of professional accomplishment and professional identity. This first "spurt" launched the development of a five-module competency-based training program that was implemented across Canada (Bezanson et al., 1980). The modules were developed by internal federal staff and a team of some of the most reputable career counselling educators in Canada. These included Drs. Norm Amundson, Bill Borgen, and Marv Westwood (UBC); Dr. Bryan Hiebert (University of Calgary); Dr. Vance Peavy (University of Victoria); Dr. Conrad Lecomte (Université de Montréal); and Dr. Phil Patsula (University of Ottawa). The courses ranged from three to five days and always included prestudy, an entrance examination, course attendance, and taped interview evaluation. Regional Counselling Consultants were trained as trainers and, by the mid 1990s, CEIC had developed a professionally trained and qualified career development practitioner

staff from coast to coast. Staff who recall this period of intense development and professionalism refer to it fondly as the “golden age” in career and employment services nationally.

Between 1996 and 2010, responsibility for public employment and training services was devolved from federal to provincial/territorial governments (Wood & Klassen, 2011). Whereas the former centralized system afforded the opportunity to deliver consistent competency-based training to career and employment service providers nationally, the years following devolution saw inconsistent and, in some cases, minimal government investment in career practitioner training.

Canada was the first country in the world to formally articulate the competencies (knowledge, skills, and attitudes) that career development practitioners need in order to practice effectively and ethically. The Canadian Standards and Guidelines for Career Development Practitioners (S&Gs) were initiated in 1996, following an extensive national consultative process with the career development community (Bezanson, Hopkins, & O’Reilly, 2014). They were launched in 2001, then revised and updated in 2004 and again in 2011 (CCDF & Canadian Council for Career Development [CCCD], 2011). They became the basis for career development training programs, job descriptions, and certification in Canada. They were also the basis for the international competency framework underpinning the International Association for Educational and Vocational Guidance (IAEVG) certification.

As responsibility for counselling the unemployed shifted to the provinces, specialized training at a certificate or diploma level was introduced by English-language postsecondary institutions in some provinces to meet the demand for skilled career practitioners in schools and community-based settings. The earliest programs were in Ontario (at Sir Sanford Fleming College), Alberta (Centre for Career Development at Concordia University College), and British Columbia (Douglas College). However, it was not until 2004, with the support of emerging technologies, that the launch of the fully online Career Management Professional Program by Life Strategies, originally partnering with ACCESS Employment Services and now in partnership with Yorkville University, made such training accessible to career practitioners Canada-wide, in rural as well as urban settings.

In 2007, New Brunswick was the first province to invest significantly in the training of career and employment service providers provincially. The New Brunswick Department of Post-Secondary Education, Training, and Labour conducted a province-wide training needs assessment using the S&Gs framework. Based on competency gaps, this department launched a province-wide training strategy. Seven courses were originally delivered face-to-face by CCDF, covering a range of key content including theory, practice, common delivery challenges, ethics, assessment, labour market information, facilitating learning, and work search. Between 2010 and 2015, five additional courses were developed for front-line staff and their managers, and the training, in blended and online formats, was opened to social development staff, third party community-based providers, and private practitioners.

Since 2010, the training has been adapted and tailored for career and employment service providers by provincial/territorial governments in the Yukon, Alberta,

Saskatchewan, Manitoba, Quebec, Nunavut, and Newfoundland and Labrador for delivery in-house, in universities and colleges, or online (Bezanson et al., 2014). The training has been customized and delivered in diverse First Nations and Inuit communities with considerable success. Although the core program has been preapproved as eligible for key international and provincial certifications, it is targeted primarily to career practitioners who do not necessarily have specialized training in counselling. In another initiative, the Life-Role Development Group was contracted in 2013 by Aboriginal Affairs and Northern Development Canada to customize and expand career practitioner training for First Nations' Social Development departments within Alberta. This successful training continues to expand to other First Nations communities.

University-based counsellor-training programs in English-speaking Canada continue to be housed primarily within education or psychology faculties, with a primary focus on personal and relational counselling. In many cases, the only career course is an elective; as a result, many professional counsellors have minimal or no specific training related to career development issues and challenges unless they access the career practitioner training previously described for career practitioners (CCPA & CCDF, 2014). Again, Quebec is the exception.

EVOLUTION IN PROFESSIONAL ASSOCIATIONS

As already noted, the Canadian Guidance and Counselling Association (now the Canadian Counselling and Psychotherapy Association) was formed in 1965 to provide leadership to the counselling profession. Discussions held by the Board of the association in 1995, when it established the Career Development chapter, reflected a number of issues related to the organization and delivery of career development services in Canada.

Concerns raised at that time which set the direction of the chapter included the wide variety of practitioners whose training was diverse and from differing service mandates, no organization to monitor or influence professional development needs of this group, the quality of service delivery, training standards, and ethics. (CCPA, 2015, para. 1)

Now renamed as the Career Counsellors Chapter, today the chapter serves a modest membership by promoting career counselling practice, research, and professional exchange.

In the 1990s, the field of career development was establishing its own professional identity. Specialized career development training programs were in place and those working in career-related areas increasingly identified themselves as career development practitioners.

In 1997, the first provincial association for career development practitioners was established in Alberta. Other provinces followed suit and, by 2015, every province had a career practitioner association. In 2007, the Canadian Council of Career Development Associations (now the Canadian Council for Career Development)

was formed (Bezanson et al., 2014). This self-initiated and self-funded umbrella group for career development associations and related stakeholder groups from across Canada provides a national advocacy voice for the career development field and promotes provincial/territorial collaboration on common issues such as certification, training, practitioner mobility, quality service indicators, and building the career development evidence base.

EVOLUTION IN CERTIFICATION

Counselling has long been a regulated profession in Quebec while the rest of Canada has been slower to embrace regulation (Bryce et al., 2005). The CCPA, at a national level, and a variety of provincial associations (e.g., BC Association of Clinical Counsellors) have filled the gap by providing voluntary certification and registration options such as Canadian Certified Counsellor (CCC) and Registered Clinical Counsellor (RCC). Associations have collaborated to develop a national entry-to-practice competency framework for counsellors (Task Group for Counsellor Regulation in British Columbia, 2007) and, in recent years, several provinces have established regulatory Colleges to oversee the counselling profession (e.g., the College of Registered Psychotherapists of Ontario and the Nova Scotia College of Counselling Therapists).

Just as professionalism of counsellors has resulted in certification, registration, and regulation, so too has certification of career development practitioners become important (Hiebert & Neault, 2014). In 2005, Alberta launched certification for career development practitioners. By 2015, five provinces (Alberta, British Columbia, Ontario, New Brunswick, and Nova Scotia) had certification based on the S&Gs in place.

The CCCD has an active Certification Working Group with membership of all provincial professional associations for career development practitioners. Current priorities include promoting coherence and practitioner mobility through harmonization of certification requirements across Canada.

In 2014, the Certification Working Group formally requested that *career development practitioner* be added to the National Occupational Classification system and initiated efforts to trademark Certified Career Development Practitioner/Professional (CCDP) nationally. It maintains a “Certification at a Glance” document outlining certification requirements, preapproved programs and training providers, reciprocity arrangements, and membership and certification fees for each province (CCCD, 2015). The Certification Working Group promotes the value of certification and supports provinces seeking to launch certification as part of the CCCD’s broader effort to strengthen and promote the profession across Canada.

On the horizon, efforts are currently underway to launch the first English-language graduate-level program specifically focused on career development. As the labour market becomes increasingly complex and challenging, government and public demand for services may create, in time, greater demand for consistent, high quality training, standards, and associated certifications. Building greater national

collaboration, consistency, and cohesion with respect to training, professional associations, and certification is a priority moving forward.

There is also an opportunity to extend training and certification to reflect a much more multidisciplinary approach to practice, emphasizing not only the counselling skills needed to support the supply side (clients), but also knowledge, skills, and strategies associated with the demand side of career development, including socioeconomic, political, business, labour market, and technology domains. There is also an opportunity to create stronger ties between the research and practice communities, ensuring practitioners benefit from research and can integrate results into their work.

The field is at an exciting juncture. It is still relatively new and emergent, yet now has some of the key underpinnings (professional structures, standards, and research) to support major strides in quality and innovation. As Bryan Hiebert, a Canadian career development researcher, academic, trainer, and leader, noted:

There's been this increase in the esteem of the field ... but also in the pride that people feel working in the area. I think it's because now we've got a critical brain pool. And so we've got a certain amount of synergy happening. And when creative people get together, magic happens. (Hiebert, as cited in CFC, 2002, pp. 140–141)

EVOLUTION IN RESEARCH AND EVALUATION

In Canada, most research in career development until the 1980s focused on theories, tools, and methodologies. Very little research was focused on cost-benefits and outcomes. Stuart Conger played a pivotal role in initiating and accessing government funding for such projects as Borgen and Amundson's (1987) research on the dynamics of unemployment in the 1980s. However, perhaps Conger's largest contribution began with contracting research by career specialists Peavy, Borgen, and Lecomte in the 1990s to develop a working paper to promote "career-focused research and development in the academic community" (CFC, 2002, p. 110). The result was CAMCRY (Creation and Mobilization of Counselling Resources for Youth), supported by \$7.4 million in federal government spending and matched by an additional \$8 million from research partners. The CCDF was selected to manage the CAMCRY project. This was the beginning of CCDF leadership in the field of career development. Under CAMCRY, 41 projects were undertaken at Canadian universities, colleges, hospitals, and community organizations. There were strict requirements for project approval including a clear evaluation methodology and a demonstration of the potential for transferability of learning/outputs to other service delivery settings. CAMCRY "elevated the status of the field in Canada and gave career counselling and guidance a higher profile" (Peavy as cited in CFC, 2002, p. 111). Under CAMCRY, four centres of research excellence were established across Canada (University of Victoria, Queen's University, Memorial University, and Université Laval) and large numbers of researchers became newly

engaged with a focus on career development as an important domain for applied research. The Centre at Université Laval (CRIEVAT) remains a vibrant centre of applied research today.

Canada became internationally recognized as a leader in career development, in part because of these federally funded initiatives. This was documented in an American ERIC/CASS Digest Collection: *Exemplary Career Development Programs and Practices: The Best from Canada* (Hiebert, 1995). The digest showcased such national programs as the Stay-in-School initiative, federal youth initiatives, CAM-CRY, and the Employability Skills Profile. It also included sections on career counselling with specific populations, including Aboriginal, youth, young offenders, older workers in transition, women, at-risk youth, and career drifters. Innovative programs to support career education in schools were also highlighted, including some that engaged parents and teachers in supporting the career development of youth. The digest concluded with an article by Bezanson and Hiebert (1995), stating that “career development is moving into the mainstream and gaining a greater profile within professional circles” (p. 1).

In 2003, the first pan-Canadian Symposium on Career Development, Lifelong Learning and Workforce Development was held in Toronto, funded by HRDC (now Employment and Social Development Canada [ESDC]) and attended by teams from all provinces and territories, except the Northwest Territories. Senior policy makers from HRDC challenged the community to develop a much stronger evidence base for the impact and value of career development services. In response, the Canadian Research Working Group on Evidence-Based Practice in Career Development (CRWG) was formed (Bezanson et al., 2014). The CRWG is a partnership between researchers at six Canadian universities and CCDF. The mandate of the CRWG is to

- develop an evaluation framework to gather evidence-based data on career development programs and services;
- promote the implementation of an evaluation culture in the career development field; and
- conduct research to test the framework and build a bank of evidence-based data on the impact of career development programs and services. (CRWG, 2003, para 1)

In partnership with the federal government and career and employment services in the provinces of Alberta, Saskatchewan, Manitoba, Quebec, and New Brunswick, the CRWG has studied the impact of labour market information on career decision making, the impact of self-help guides tailored to employability need and practitioner support on client outcomes, and most recently the development and testing of an online system to track a more nuanced range of progress and outcome indicators that are common across diverse service delivery settings and diverse client groups. The framework holds promise for a much more robust and consistent approach to gathering qualitative and quantitative outcome data nationally and internationally. The aim of this project is not only to develop a

practical tool to inform policy makers but, of equal importance, to build evaluation as a supportive tool that informs, guides, and enriches practitioner practice.

These projects of the CRWG, as well as other applied research projects, were supported by an initiative of the federal Policy Research Directorate at ESDC (formerly HRSDC), the aim of which was to unravel what really works in labour market information and in career and employment services. This initiative ended in 2013, and research support has since come largely from provincial governments. Ongoing support for applied research at both federal and provincial levels is needed.

The CFC launched CERIC in 2004; CERIC has also funded and continues to fund a variety of research projects. They also created a dedicated peer-reviewed journal, the *Canadian Journal of Career Development* (CJCD). Launched in 2002, CJCD has showcased a significant body of relevant Canadian and international research. In 2012, a 10th anniversary compilation of selected articles was published as a single edition (Shea & Joy, 2012). The focus of many of the articles is situated at the intersection of career and personal counselling—the domain of career counsellors. Relevant topics include looking at the impact of contextual factors on career decision-making, cultural considerations, the impact of negative thinking, emotional intelligence, bullying, surviving abuse, and social justice. An important feature of the journal is that many articles are available in both French and English, helping to bridge the gap between research conducted in the area of career development in each of Canada's official languages.

Other significant funding dedicated to career-related research in recent years includes that received by Dr. Nancy Arthur of the University of Calgary, while she was a Canada Research Chair in Professional Education, Educational Studies in Counselling Psychology. Much of her research has had relevance for career counsellors. Dr. José Domene, at the University of New Brunswick, has been Canada Research Chair in School-to-Work Transitions, another important topic. In British Columbia, the provincial government has funded a Centre for Employment Excellence, and the government of Ontario recently released a Request for Proposals for a similar centre. CERIC also funded a textbook for career development practitioners and career counsellors that finally provides a much needed Canadian perspective for training in the sector (Shepard & Mani, 2014).

Strengthening the evidence base has also emerged as an international priority. A working group of the International Centre for Career Development and Public Policy (ICCDPP) focuses its work on international exchange of promising practice, evaluation results, and policy impacts. The European Lifelong Guidance Policy Network (ELGPN), a Member State network of European Union (EU) countries, published *The Evidence Base on Lifelong Guidance: A Guide to Key Findings for Effective Policy and Practice*, specifically aimed at policy-makers (ELGPN, 2014).

Looking back, it is clear that significant progress has been made in both applied research and evidence-based practice. Thinking has changed, and demonstrating value has become an expectation for good career development practice. This shift in thinking is another indication of increased professionalism across the career

development sector. However, significant impediments to progress remain. The lack of common language in the career development field has been lamented for a very long time and remains problematic (Bezanson et al., 2014). It continues to be in the way of increased policy development and analysis, as well as public understanding of the field and its contributions. Tony Watts, in his University of Derby Annual Lecture, stated, “My proposal is that we embargo the usage of ‘career guidance’ and adopt ‘career development’ as the generic term, and ‘career counselling’ for the one-to-one professional interventions” (2014, p. 7). Language needs to become a higher priority for the field going forward.

Across adult career and employment services, provinces are reporting a change in clientele seeking services. Clients are presenting with increasingly significant employability challenges. If this is an enduring trend, it will require changes in the scope of practice and has definite implications for training practitioners, the evidence base for effective practice, and outcome expectations of policy makers and funders. With respect to the evidence base for good career education practice, public education systems are especially challenging. There is often little consistency across schools within a single district, let alone between provinces, as to what career education and services are delivered and what outcomes are measured. This career development sector would benefit strongly from an evidence-based revolution.

There is much to be learned from international best practice. In the Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD) report for 2004, the following was said of career services in the United Kingdom:

Compared to many other countries, the UK has a strong knowledge base for its services. It has specialised centres for research and policy analysis ... and research staff with a particular interest and expertise in career guidance ... Research is characterised by a focus upon policy analysis and evaluation, not simply on processes and techniques ... The government frequently commissions research and this research is subject to healthy and informed debate between policy-makers and practitioners. (p. 130)

These are directions in which career development in Canada must continue to move.

EVOLUTION IN POLICY

Career services in Canada are largely delivered free of charge to the public through schools, career and employment centres, and community-based organizations with the support of government funding. A much smaller proportion of services are delivered by private career practitioners and counsellors on a fee-for-service basis (Pickerell & Neault, 2012). This means that career and employment services are largely dependent on public funds and the priorities of politicians and senior policy makers (Shepard & Mani, 2014).

Recognizing the need to more actively engage policy makers, the CCDF partnered with career development leaders from the UK and New Zealand to host

the first International Symposium on Career Development and Public Policy (IS) in 1999 (Bezanson et al., 2014). The intent was to increase the dialogue and reciprocity between career development research, practice, and policy.

In preparation for the symposium, countries organized teams comprising a small number of senior policy makers with portfolios related to learning and/or work, leading career development researchers, and practitioner/practice leaders. Teams prepared a country paper in advance, profiling their strengths and needs related to the symposium themes. Following intensive working groups, exchange, and collaboration during the symposium itself, a formal communiqué was published to reflect the collective conclusions and recommendations of participating countries with the intent that this could be used as a policy lever nationally. Each team left with a country action plan, articulating specific priorities for action. CCDF hosted a second IS in Canada in 2001 (IS, 2001).

In 2002, the OECD embarked on an international study of career development policies in 14 OECD countries, including Canada. This study has since been replicated in over 55 countries, resulting in a significant database of career development policies, models, and practices. The study shone a spotlight on the integral connection between career development and public policy imperatives. The OECD (2004) concluded that career development is both a private and public good, serving as a critical foundation for lifelong learning, strong economies, and social inclusion. Yet, almost universally, there was fragmentation and inadequacy in terms of career development policy and funding to support access to quality career services across the lifespan.

The 2003 Pan-Canadian Symposium was inspired by the OECD findings and the IS movement. Key action priorities emerging from that symposium included (a) a coherent vision for an inclusive delivery system; (b) a strategy to infuse career development into education and workforce policy; and (c) positioning career development in the context of social, economic, and community development (Bezanson & Renald, 2003).

In 2004, the OECD published their final *Bridging the Gap Report*, including 10 key features of an effective career development system. These features continue to serve as a quality assurance framework for countries globally. Another important outcome of the 2004 OECD report was the creation of the ICCDPP, established to facilitate policy sharing and learning through international knowledge and information exchange concerning public policy and career development issues. The ICCDPP has partnered with national governments in Australia (2006), Scotland (2007), New Zealand (2009), and Hungary (2011) to host international symposia. The most recent of these symposia was held in the United States in 2015, in partnership with Kuder (ICCDPP, 2015). CCDF facilitated the symposium, served as lead synthesizers, and developed the IS 2015 Communiqué.

With the devolution of responsibility for career education and development services to provincial/territorial governments, the capacity to influence policy has become increasingly complex in Canada. Not only is career development managed separately and differently in each jurisdiction, but there is also considerable frag-

mentation within jurisdictions, as responsibility for career development policy and service provision often straddles multiple government ministries that frequently function as silos. As a result, there are often policy/service gaps and, from the citizen's perspective, cracks through which to fall. Regional and national cohesion with respect to career development policy and services remains a significant issue.

Two intergovernmental bodies serve as forums to discuss policy issues and to strengthen cooperation and strategic thinking. The Council of Ministers of Education Canada (CMEC) and the Forum of Labour Market Ministers are potential vehicles to promote a stronger and more cohesive career development strategy nationally. In 2015, the Council of Atlantic Ministers of Education and Training (CAMET) released *Future in Focus: An Atlantic Career Development Framework for Public Education: 2015–2020* (CAMET, 2015), based on research and recommendations developed by CCDF in partnership with a dedicated CAMET Working Group. The framework outlines the regional direction and specific goals that the four Atlantic provincial governments will follow to support the career development and transitions of students. This is a very promising development; it is hoped that it can be leveraged to secure career development as an explicit priority for CMEC.

The FLMM has an active Labour Market Information Working Group and, until 2011, also had a Career Development Services Working Group. Both have been instrumental in promoting career development initiatives and research nationally. The loss of the latter was a regressive step for Canadians and the career industry in Canada. While several provincial governments actively support career development through investment and partnership, no governmental body now exists to promote much-needed collaboration and cohesion nationally. However, the CCCD is emerging as a strong advocacy voice for the career development industry and offers promise in terms of a representative body to promote career development with politicians, policy makers, the media, and the public.

On the horizon, key issues that emerged from IS 2015 need to be advanced. These include (a) the need for career development policies, systems, and services to attend in a more balanced way to both the supply and demand sides of the labour market; (b) the need for a coherent national framework for career development policies and services, including adequate resourcing; (c) stronger partnerships between career development professionals, educators, and employers; (d) stronger national coordination of ICT-based career information and services; and (e) a deeper commitment to evidence-based policy and practice. Youth un/underemployment is a pressing priority globally; it calls for much stronger policy attention in Canada. It is hoped that the CCCD can not only increase the priority of career development on the policy agendas of CMEC and the FLMM, but also serve as a bridge between these two bodies to improve collaboration and cohesion.

CONCLUSION

In his prologue to the CFC (2002) book, Stephen Lewis summed up the changing thinking about career development:

It isn't enough simply to counsel people into jobs. It's equally important to have entire disciplines, entire professions, entire career lines understand that there is an obligation to speak out against injustice. To take a stand on behalf of those you represent. (p. ix)

The current focus on social justice issues related to career development (Collins & Arthur, 2014) takes us full circle; the roots of vocational counselling back in the early 1900s were motivated by very similar values. Career services in Canada are arguably more important now than they have ever been before. The notion of one job for life has been replaced by a career trajectory characterized by multiple transitions across nonstandard, nonpermanent positions. Youth are struggling in their school-to-work transitions, and older workers are remaining in the workforce longer. The career development field now has many of the essential underpinnings: leadership bodies such as the CCCD, training programs, professional associations, certification, the S&Gs, the Blueprint for Life/Work Designs, the CRWG, and a growing evidence base demonstrating the impact of career development. Career counsellors and career development practitioners are poised to embrace their role as a vital bridge between individual career choices and Canada's complex and ever-changing economy and labour market realities and to be recognized and valued as such by funders, the media, and the public.

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