

CMF Educational Conference 2016
The Right to Believe: Understanding Creed, Religion & Accommodation
Sayeda Khadija Centre, 7150 Edwards Boulevard, Mississauga, Ontario
April 18, 2016

CONFERENCE PROGRAM

- 8:00 AM** **Registration Opens**
- 9:15 AM** **Opening Remarks** Pandit Roopnauth Sharma, CMF President
- 9:20 AM** **Smudging Ceremony** Cat-Mark Criger, Indigenous Aboriginal Elder
- 9:30 AM** **Plenary Session: Understanding Creed in Ontario**
The Ontario Human Rights Commission (OHRC) provides an overview of the Policy on the prevention of discrimination based on creed, the importance of Human Rights Legislation for Faith Communities and Practice in Canada. (*Renu Mandhane, Chief Commissioner, OHRC; Shaheen Azmi, Director, Policy, Education, Monitoring & Outreach, OHRC.*)
- 10:30 AM** **Break**
- 10:45 AM** **Workshop A: Duty to Accommodate**
This workshop will provide a detailed look at the section 'Duty to Accommodate' in the OHRC newly released Policy on the prevention of discrimination based on creed. This section provides guidelines for policies and procedures in response to accommodation requests based on creed.
(Bob Sherman, Senior Policy Analyst, *Ontario Human Rights Commission*)
- Workshop B: Faith Response to Syrian Refugees**
This workshop will provide panel presentations on the response by faith communities to the the settlement of Syrian refugees in Canada. (*Habeeb Alli, International Development Relief Fund; Peter Goodspeed, Lifeline Syria; Dr. Mohammed Baobaid, PhD, Muslim Resource Centre for Social Support and Integration*)
- Workshop C: Understanding Religious Diversity & Interfaith Dialogue**
This workshop will be a presentation on the best practices and learnings from an annual symposium held in Maple, Ontario between the Ahmadiyya Muslim and evangelical Christian communities.
(*Charles Hermelink, Moderator, Mission Canada; Jayakar Johnson Prathipati PAOC; Farhan Iqbal, Bai'tul Islam Mosque*)
- 12:00 PM** **Networking Lunch**
- 1:00 PM** **Workshop D: Accommodation of Indigenous Spirituality**
This workshop will provide an overview of the inclusion of Indigenous Spirituality in the OHRC Policy on the prevention of discrimination based on creed. Focus will be on understanding the unique characteristics of Indigenous Spirituality within the context of requests for accommodation.
(Shaheen Azmi, Director, Policy, Education, Monitoring & Outreach, *Ontario Human Rights Commission*)
- Workshop E: Physical and Health Curriculum in Ontario**
Understanding the Ontario Ministry of Education updated Health and Physical Education (HPE) Curriculum. This workshop will involve an overview of the updated HPE Curriculum introduced into Ontario schools in 2015/16. The workshop will provide an overview of the curriculum documents and related resources
(*Ministry of Education, Government of Ontario.*)
- 2:15 PM** **Break**
- 2:30 PM** **Plenary: Accommodation of Symbols & Religious Attire**
Panel presenters provide personal and professional experience in requests for accommodation of the wearing of symbols and religious attire in the workforce. (**Moderator:** Shaheen Azmi, Director, Policy, Education, Monitoring & Outreach, OHRC; **Speakers:** Punita Lumb, Global Citizenship & Equity Research & Education Strategist, Centennial College; Rabbi Ron Weiss, Jewish Family & Children Services.
- 3:30 PM** **Closing Remarks** Dianne Algera, CMF Board Member