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April 23, 2018.

To Whom It May Concern,

I'm writing in support of Barka Canada Social Integration Society who in my opinion offer invaluable services to the Polish-Canadian community and in particular those suffering from addiction.

As a physician specialized in the area of Addiction Medicine daily I meet with patients who struggle with illicit substances, alcohol, and other compulsive behaviours. They describe the significant health and social consequences of their addiction, impacting not only themselves but their families as well. Many of them describe social isolation as a contributing factor in their addiction and a barrier to their recovery. These are precisely the issues that Barka addresses.

In fact, several of my patients have found needed support through Barka and have then, in turn, worked with the organization to offer help to others. This includes assisting individuals and families find needed community resources, employment, and social connections within the Polish-Canadian community. This culturally sensitive, community-based, peer-support approach is the vital ingredient so often missing in other social services. In my experience it is primarily with the support of strong communities that people with addictions are able to embark on the road to recovery.

Please accept this letter as a sign of my heartfelt support of this organization and the incredible work they do.

Sincerely,



Dr. John Koehn
Addiction Medicine Specialist
Royal Columbian Hospital