**Canadian Mental Health Association**

*Mental health for all*

# Why we need universal mental health care

**Mental health care needs to be available to everyone. That's what we mean by universal.**

We all have mental health and to ensure we can live meaningful lives, manage life's stressors, and foster healthy relationships, we need access to universal mental health care.

Universal mental health care means the services you need are available to you, they are free and funded through our public health insurance plans, and they are the same – no matter where you live or who you are, they meet your needs.

At the same time, universal mental health care recognizes that people from different communities have specific needs.

It covers services that range from keeping people well, and out of crisis, to helping them on their path to recovery. And everything in between.

It covers services provided by not-for-profit organizations in our communities as well as those delivered in hospitals and by doctors.

# Universal mental health care is essential for our well-being

**Just like physical health, mental health is important to living a fully engaged life. Yet, getting services can be difficult and they are not available to everyone.**

Many of the services and supports we need aren't currently covered by public health insurance plans.

Many of us can't afford to pay for services like counseling, psychotherapy, eating disorder treatments, substance use and addictions treatment. And only some people have access to these services through private health insurance plans.

Cost shouldn't get in the way of care.

Everyone should be able to get the supports they need. Whoever they are, wherever they live, whatever they need.

Universal mental health care would not only reduce overall healthcare and other social costs, but it is essential for our well-being.