



Canadian Mental  
Health Association  
*Mental health for all*



years of  
community

# STRONGER TOGETHER

IMPACT REPORT 2019



CMHA is built on the knowledge that mental health is enhanced by a sense of belonging, community and connection. Our Canada-wide web of members, volunteers, clients and staff, of donors and sponsors and partners—these connections are at our core.

Human beings are social creatures, and connection is also at our core. We rely on connection to thrive. It is one of our fundamental needs and it is programmed into our very human “operating system.” We are wired to connect.

We are also “wired” through today’s technology. So, what do we make of Internet connections? Of Facebook friends and Instagram followers? How will we use advanced technologies to develop true human connections that nurture our mental health? These questions inform our ever-evolving work at CMHA.

In our society, we sometimes draw an artificial—and harmful—line that disconnects us. We talk about the 1 in 5 of us who have a mental illness, and “the rest of us”. But there is no rest of us. There is just us. All 5 in 5 of us. We are a community of individuals, and we all have mental health that requires connection.



**WE CAN'T DO IT ALONE.  
AND WE DON'T HAVE TO.  
THERE IS SO MUCH HOPE  
IN KNOWING THAT.**



# WE ARE HOPEFUL

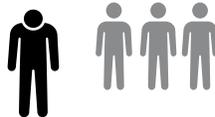
Society is facing a time of division and partisanship that is driving people apart, rather than together. We are facing wildfires and climate change—the psychological effects recently dubbed climate trauma—and wondering what sort of planet we are leaving for the next generation.

**Together, we can support individuals, families and communities in Canada to flourish and thrive.**

This harms us on a personal level, as well as a community level—and Indigenous leaders have long been sounding these warnings for all who would listen. Scientific research echoes these alarms:



**Loneliness** has the same impact on life expectancy as smoking 15 cigarettes a day.



**A lack of social contact** can speed up cognitive decline, and increase heart disease, depression and suicide.



The number of people with **psychological trauma** from a natural disaster outweighs those with physical injury 40:1.

We are hopeful that if we listen, collaborate and learn with humility, we can regain our connection to the earth, to each other, to our past, our cultures and to our communities.

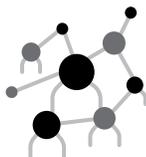
# WE ARE SOLID

We identify and respond to the most pressing mental health priorities in Canada.

As the only national organization dedicated to the full spectrum of mental health and mental illness, CMHA pushes for systems and policy change at the nationwide level. At the community level, Canadians rely on CMHA's extensive grassroots presence.

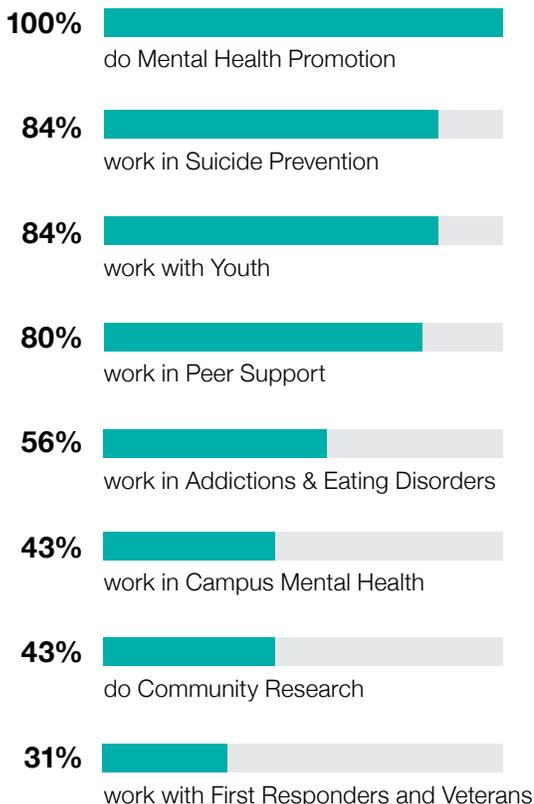


**1** national office,  
**11** provincial/territorial divisions,  
**75** local branches/regions



**5,000** staff and  
**11,000** volunteers  
and **members** in over  
**330** communities

CMHAs in 330 communities offer a range of programs, services, supports and expertise, and work in mental health priority areas:



## Lived experience guides us.

For over 30 years, our National Council of Persons with Lived Experience has been instrumental in providing policy and program development leadership, expertise and perspective of those living with experience of mental illness to all issues and concerns on CMHA's national agenda.

## We are committed to advancing the goals of the Truth and Reconciliation Commission.

With our Indigenous Elders Advisory Council and other allies, CMHA is committed to learning from and working with Indigenous partners, through a process of mutual respect and cultural humility, to ensure our programs are culturally safe and meaningful. At CMHA locations across Canada:

- | **69%** have staff and volunteers participate in Indigenous Cultural Awareness Training
- | **67%** have Indigenous staff
- | **38%** offer Indigenous-led programs or services

## We ask youth to lead the way.

Our new national youth advisory council will be an authentic means of youth engagement and will further align CMHA's programs, services, communications, operations, research and policy priorities with the needs of Canadian youth. The 10-15 council members, aged 15-30, will represent the diversity of youth in Canada.

- | **87%** of CMHA staff who lead work with youth consider a CMHA youth council beneficial.

## CMHA is the go-to source for accessible, reliable mental health information and resources to help all people in Canada stay mentally healthy.



Over **7,250,000** website users in the past year (up 33%).

More than **119,000** educational brochures printed and downloaded.

Over **89,000** social media followers (up 37%).

Over **19,000** news stories across Canada (up 125%).

Over **2.8 billion** earned media impressions (up 69%).

 @CMHA.ACSM.National

 @CMHA\_NTL

 @cmhanational

 Canadian Mental Health Association

[www.cmha.ca](http://www.cmha.ca)  
[info@cmha.ca](mailto:info@cmha.ca)

# WE ARE HERE



This week, let's all speak up and raise our voices for mental health. Mental Health Week, led by the Canadian Mental Health Association, encourages everyone to talk freely about what mental health means to us and listen compassionately to the stories of others."

— Prime Minister Justin Trudeau



After 68 years, CMHA Mental Health Week is a Canadian tradition. It is celebrated by communities, schools and workplaces. By children and adults. By leaders and influencers. Our popular #GetLoud message resonated like never before in 2019. We asked everyone to #GetLoud about what mental health really is. We shared the key insight that mental health is something that we all have. It is a state of well-being. We might have a mental illness, and we might not. Either way, we all can—and *deserve to*—feel well. We can all have good mental health.



#GetLoud and #MentalHealthWeek trended in the top spots in Canada



Over 700 million hashtag impressions (up from 300 million)



Over 2,279 news stories (up from 1300) and 147 million media impressions (up from 113 million)



Over 260,000 visits to mentalhealthweek.ca (up from 151,000)



Over 25,817 toolkit downloads (up from 13,500)



The Carry It Toolkit is an educational toolkit aimed at students, administrators, staff and faculty to help prevent and respond to opioid overdose on post-secondary campuses and create a plan or “protocol” that could help save lives.

- ▶ Will be distributed to campuses nationwide.
- ▶ Youth aged 15-24 have the fastest-growing rates of hospitalizations from opioid harms in Canada.

## The Workforce Mental Health Collaborative

Training • Resources • Support

CMHA's Workforce Mental Health Collaborative, with the support of Canada Life, provides employers and unions with in-depth training, practical resources and valuable support to address and improve psychological health and safety in the workplace.

- ▶ Has certified **662 Psychological Health and Safety Advisors** since inception in 2015
- ▶ Because of their training, certified advisors have been able to:

**Educate** and **inform** employers



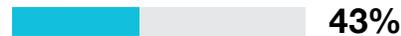
**Support** existing mental health initiatives



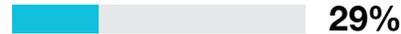
**Engage** leaders in discussion and planning



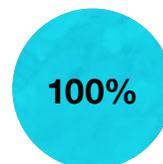
**Support** organizational assessments of psychosocial risk factors



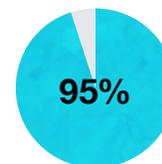
**Develop** a plan to improve psychological health and safety



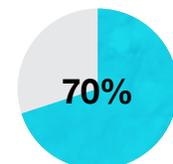
The collaborative supports workplace mental health innovation at the grassroots level, funding the enhancement of two local CMHA programs over the past year: *Working Minds Together* in New Brunswick and *Resilient Minds* in BC, designed specifically for First Responders. In the first cohort of *Resilient Minds*,



of trainees reported lower work-related stress



learned how to better deal with stress



used what they'd learned in their personal lives



Not Myself Today is a proven, practical initiative that helps employers transform mental health at work. Through attention-getting materials like mood buttons, turnkey activities, tools and resources, the program educates about mental health, reduces stigma and fosters safe and supportive cultures in public, private and not-for-profit organizations, big and small.

▶ **631 companies** with **649,174 employees** so far in 2018 and 2019

▶ **2018 participants said Not Myself Today:**

**Increased** employees' awareness and understanding of mental health **89%**

**Prompted** dialogue about mental health in the workplace **94%**

**Helped** to create a more supportive work environment **94%**

“ Learning to not be intimidated to wear the emotion pins and [show] how I feel—this has been important to express myself and how I’m feeling to my teammates.”

— Not Myself Today employee participant



We collaborated with the Mental Health Commission of Canada (MHCC) on a toolkit that offers best practices and activities drawn from the MHCC’s 2018 Case Study Research Project (CSRP) on how 40 workplaces have implemented the National Standard for Psychological Health and Safety in the Workplace. It guides workplaces to help put the Standard into practice.

▶ **Over 25,000 toolkit visits** and **6,000 helpful tools** downloaded.



## Peer Support Canada

The evidence-based practice of peer support happens through the development of a therapeutic relationship by an individual who has lived experience of a mental health or addiction issue. Peer Supporters follow national standards of practice using validated competencies and safety protocols. They are trained to provide support to others leveraging their experiential knowledge, empowering and inspiring hope through deep mutual understanding and trust. Peer Support Canada is the nation's certifying body for peer support, connecting peer supporters and organizations, helping exchange knowledge and build capacity for peer support. Peer Support Canada has:

- ▶ **79 peer supporters** in the process of earning their mentor, family and general certification.
- ▶ **Designed and launched a new Certification Management System**, which streamlined processes and reduced certification time by up to 50%.
- ▶ **Seen a significant increase in collaboration opportunities** with other organizations, government agencies and stakeholders to advance Canadian peer support research, e-mental health and digital peer support development and national peer support networks and knowledge exchange.



Many Canadians do not access resources or services to support their mental health and well-being due to barriers such as stigma, lack of programs, geographic location, lack of information and lengthy wait lists. CMHA is collaborating with national and global partners on a Canadian e-mental health strategy and digital mental health ecosystem that will:

- ▶ **Transform** the way Canadians take care of their mental health and well-being.
- ▶ **Inspire, support and empower** citizens to achieve greater positive mental health.
- ▶ **Inform, complement and support** the diverse array of programs and services currently available through CMHAs and community partners.



A Recovery College is more than just a place to learn about mental health and recovery. It's a place where I am accepted, not judged... a place where I can connect with others that share similar experiences. In a word, Recovery College is family.”

— Recovery College student

CMHA Recovery College and Well-being Learning Centres are innovative learning environments where any Canadian with lived experience of mental health issues, peers, family members and mental health professionals work together to co-produce and co-deliver courses that support well-being and recovery.

- ▶ **8 Recovery Colleges operating to date, with 14 in planning and development across Canada.**
- ▶ **Created Recovery College Toolkit and led nationwide CMHA 22-branch Community of Practice.**
- ▶ **Presented a 2-day workshop on best practices in Recovery College Co-Production methodologies at the International Initiative on Mental Health Leadership (IIMHL) in Washington DC.**
- ▶ **Plans for an innovative Virtual Recovery College are underway to launch first online well-being course in 2020.**



An evidence-informed nationwide youth anti-stigma initiative created by the Mental Health Commission of Canada (MHCC) in 2014, HEADSTRONG is transitioning to CMHA in early 2020. Using a summit-style model of engagement, the program brings together youth and school leaders to develop mental health champions, who then return to their schools and communities with action plans. With the support of RBC Foundation and in close collaboration with the MHCC we will:

- ▶ **Work with CMHA branches, regions and divisions to increase youth engagement.**
- ▶ **Collaborate with community partners to bring HEADSTRONG to more youth in Canada.**
- ▶ **Support 50 youth summits in 2020 from coast to coast to coast.**

# WE ARE LEADERS

As the most established, most extensive community mental health organization in Canada, CMHA is a major voice in the mental health landscape. We have deep subject matter expertise in diverse areas rooted all across the country:

**Mental Health  
Promotion:**

**61**  
experts

**Youth:**

**48**  
experts

**Suicide  
Prevention:**

**51**  
experts

**Peer Support:**

**44**  
experts

CMHA sits at a variety of decision-making tables across Canada and around the world, and is regularly asked to comment, offer testimony and advice to government and partner with other researchers and advocates working on important issues in mental health.

- ▶ Primary lead on 4 research projects
- ▶ Partner on 6 external research projects
- ▶ 3 presentations to Senate Standing Committees
- ▶ 6 responses to federal government consultations
- ▶ Co-chaired 2 national mental health committees and collaborated on 15 committees, alliances or working groups

# connection interrupted

Restoring Mental Health in a Fractured World



Everyone is here!”

— MH4A Conference  
Attendee

The CMHA Mental Health for All national conference is an important place of convergence, where service providers, front-line workers, researchers, funders, policy makers and people with lived experience of mental health problems and illnesses come together to set the agenda. The 2019 theme, *Connection Interrupted: Restoring Mental Health in a Fractured World*, explored how we can shore up mental health by reconnecting with our roots and with each other.

#### At our 2018 MH4A conference:

- ▶ 95% found the conference beneficial
- ▶ 89% said their personal learning objectives were met
- ▶ Federal Minister of Health and Chief Public Health Officer of Canada gave keynotes



Our 2018 paper, *Mental Health in the Balance: Ending the Health Care Disparity in Canada*, called on the federal government to enact a Mental Health Parity Act to address unmet mental health needs and bring mental health care into balance with physical health care.

#### Parity remains a core message:

- ▶ Guided Parliamentary Mental Health Caucus meeting
- ▶ Presented at the first Global Summit for Mental Health Advocates in Singapore



Our policy paper, *Cohesive, Collaborative, Collective: Advancing Mental Health Promotion in Canada*, called for a national mental health promotion strategy to improve Canadians' mental health in the face of rising rates of mental illness worldwide. To be effective, this national mental health promotion strategy must be properly coordinated, well-funded, sustained and monitored.



A really impressive policy paper by @CMHA\_NTL. This brilliant organisation is doing vital work in raising awareness about mental health and the need to ensure parity between physical and mental well-being.”

— Sir Norman Lamb MP, former British Health Minister



- ▶ **7 presentations** on findings booked across Canada in fall of 2019
- ▶ **Over 20 news articles** and **15 million media impressions** at launch

We released *Going It Alone: The Mental Health and Well-Being of Entrepreneurs in Canada* with the support of BDC. The study found that 62% of business owners feel depressed at least once a week but are reluctant to seek services due to cost and stigma-related concerns. It recommends we change the way we talk about entrepreneurs, moving away from the image of the “tireless visionary” to make space for vulnerability.



**sullivan.clinical.psychology** As a business owner, I think this is the most validating post I have ever seen. 🍌🍌

— Instagram follower comment



# WE ARE NOT ALONE



ride don't hide

PRESENTED BY  
*The Medicine Shoppe*  
PHARMACY

Ride Don't Hide is a nationwide fundraising bike ride that brings mental health out into the open. When we hide from each other and from how we're feeling, we don't get the support or help we deserve or need. So, the annual event gives people across Canada the opportunity to connect—to their own mental health, to each other and to their broader communities, while raising critical funds that support CMHA mental health programs and services in their own communities.



- ▶ **\$1.5 million** raised
- ▶ **25 community ride** sites
- ▶ Over **6,000 local riders**
- ▶ **14,264 donors**

## VOLUNTEERS

National Board of Directors

National Council of Persons with Lived Experience

National Youth Advisory Council

## STRATEGIC PARTNERS



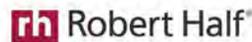
References and financial statements are available at [www.cmha.ca](http://www.cmha.ca).

## FUNDERS + DONORS



Hogan Family  
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