



Canadian Mental  
Health Association  
Ontario

Association canadienne  
pour la santé mentale  
Ontario

# Canadian Mental Health Association, Ontario

## Pre-Budget Submission 2019

### Addressing Hallway Medicine

Community-based mental health and addictions agencies like the Canadian Mental Health Association (CMHA) are integral components to ending hallway medicine and relieving the pressures on hospital emergency departments and the criminal justice and social services systems. CMHA branches across Ontario offer a holistic approach to care, where clients receive appropriate clinical services as well as supports, such as housing and employment, to address their social determinants of health. Much of our services are offered in partnership with many other service providers and with multiple government ministries.

In 2019, Ontario will have the benefit of tapping into an unprecedented investment in mental health and addictions care. With a record \$1.9 billion commitment from the provincial government, CMHA Ontario is recommending our top five evidence-based, cost-effective priority investment areas for the mental health and addictions sector.

# FIVE PRIORITY INVESTMENT AREAS FOR THE MENTAL HEALTH AND ADDICTIONS SECTOR

1



## Access to standardized core set of mental health and addictions services

Core services should be seamless, across the lifespan and available in each region in Ontario. Core services should focus on enhancing mental health, substance use and addictions treatment programs for Ontarians.

2



## New investments for data infrastructure to enable health quality improvement

Quality improvement initiatives cannot succeed without necessary data infrastructure. A key step is to invest in a data strategy for the entire community-based mental health and addictions sector.

3



## Direct investments in housing

Supportive housing provides an anchor for life and improves outcomes from even severe mental health and addictions conditions. Every \$10 invested in “housing-first” services means an average savings of \$21.72 in other areas of government spending.

4



## Enhanced integration of primary care and mental health and addictions services

Increase support for models of care that address the physical health issues of Ontarians in addition to their addictions and mental health needs. These are cost effective and reduce pressures on emergency departments.

5



## Expansion of Mobile Crisis Intervention Teams (MCITs)

Staffed by uniformed officers and mental health and addictions workers, MCITs are cost effective and evidence-based. Teams respond to a person in crisis and can divert an individual from hospitals and the criminal justice system.