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CHAMPIONS FOR POSITIVE MENTAL HEALTH SINCE 1918

# Canadian Mental Health Association, Ontario 2015 Pre-Budget Submission



Canadian Mental  
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*Mental health for all*

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## CMHA ONTARIO 2015 PRE-BUDGET SUBMISSION

### About CMHA Ontario

The Canadian Mental Health Association (CMHA), which operates at the local, provincial and national levels across Canada, works towards a single mission: to make mental health possible for all.

The vision of CMHA Ontario is a society that believes mental health is the key to well-being. We are a not-for-profit, charitable organization which is funded by the Ontario Ministry of Health and Long-Term Care.

Through policy analysis and implementation, agenda setting, research, evaluation and knowledge exchange, we work to improve the lives of people with mental health issues and addictions and their families.

As a leader in community mental health and a trusted advisor to government, we actively contribute to health systems development through policy formulation and by recommending policy options that promote mental health for all Ontarians. We provide support to the 31 local Branches of CMHA across the province that provide comprehensive mental health and addictions services to approximately 50,000 individuals annually in diverse communities across Ontario.

In keeping with our past provincial budget submissions, we hope this submission for the 2015 Ontario budget consultation process provides useful input to help ensure mental health and addictions receive an appropriate allocation of provincial healthcare spending.

In this document, Canadian Mental Health Association, Ontario will advocate for appropriate spending levels in three areas:

- **Affordable Housing**
- **Income Security, Access to Education And Employment Supports**
- **Increasing Access to a Core Basket of Services**

Investments in these key areas align with the strategic pillars of the second phase of *Open Minds, Healthy Minds: Ontario's Comprehensive Mental Health and Addictions Strategy* (the Strategy).

In 2014, the government expanded the focus of the Strategy to improve transitions between youth and adult services, and to invest in improved services and care for Ontarians of all ages who have mental illness and addictions. The expanded Strategy will help to ensure Ontarians and their families have better access to quality services and supports for their mental well-being. It will achieve better value for these investments by linking funding directly to the quality care that is needed<sup>1</sup>.



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## COSTS OF MENTAL HEALTH AND ADDICTION



**ANNUAL ECONOMIC COST  
of mental illnesses in Canada:**

**\$50 BILLION**

The World Health Organization defines mental health as “a state of well-being in which an individual realizes his or her own abilities, can cope with the normal stresses of life, can work productively and is able to make a contribution to his or her community. Mental health and well-being are fundamental to our collective and individual ability ... to think, emote, interact with each other, earn a living and enjoy life.”<sup>iii</sup>

While the above paragraph strikes an optimistic tone, the reality is that right now more than 6.7 million Canadians are living with a mental health condition. In this province, an estimated one in five Ontarians will experience a mental health problem at some point in their lives, and one in 40 Ontarians will have a serious mental illness.<sup>iii</sup> Mental health conditions don’t discriminate. They occur across the life span, regardless of gender, race, sexual orientation or geography.

The Mental Health Commission of Canada (MHCC) states that the economic cost to Canada is at least \$50 billion per year, which represents 2.8 percent of Canada’s 2011 gross domestic product (GDP)<sup>iv</sup>. According to the MHCC, over the next 30 years, the total cost to the economy will add up to more than \$2.5 trillion<sup>v</sup>. Given the mounting evidence, mental health and addictions

has become an issue that can no longer be ignored.

And while the Commission on the Reform of Ontario’s Public Services, led by Don Drummond, stated that 75% of mental health care happens outside the formal health care system, community mental health and addictions in Ontario remains chronically underfunded. For example, in 2013-2014, the Ministry of Health and Long-Term Care’s estimated total spending on health was approximately \$49 billion<sup>vii</sup> yet the total funding for community-based mental health and addictions programs was just over 2 percent, or \$997 million<sup>viii</sup>.

Given the growing social and economic costs and needs associated with mental health and addictions in Ontario, as well as the critical role played by the community mental health and addiction sector in addressing these needs, it is essential not just to maintain but to enhance the funding base for community mental health and addictions programs.

### What is Community-Based Mental Health?

Community-based mental health is defined as care provided outside of the hospital setting. It includes services and supports provided across the continuum of care, including health promotion, illness prevention, treatment and recovery. It includes not only treatment and crisis response, but also outreach, case management and related services such as housing and employment supports and court diversion programs. Community-based mental health and substance use care identifies the importance of communities in supporting recovery. This philosophy is supported by the fact that individuals receiving care generally prefer to do so within their community, and that for most individuals, formal mental health services are just one piece of the puzzle<sup>x</sup>.



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## INVEST IN AFFORDABLE HOUSING

Housing designed for people with mental health conditions can contribute to significant cost savings for the health system. For example, it costs approximately \$490 a day to keep a person in a psychiatric hospital, and about \$140 to \$460 per day to keep them in jail. Housing a person in the community with supports costs just over \$70 per day<sup>x</sup>.

### What is Housing with Supports?

Housing with supports includes a range of housing including supportive housing and supported housing. Supportive housing provides assistance by staffing housing units with 24-hour supports. Supported housing, alternatively, allows individuals to live in the larger community and have supports, such as homecare and counseling when they need it.

Access to more housing with supports has long been a priority for the mental health and addictions sector because housing with supports are critical components of recovery from mental illnesses and

addictions. With the right housing and supports, people recovering from mental illnesses and addictions gain a renewed sense of dignity and hope and can reintegrate into the community more successfully. There is no recovery without proper housing.

CMHA Ontario was pleased that the next phase of Ontario's *Comprehensive Mental Health and Addictions Strategy*, announced in the fall of 2014, included a commitment to invest \$16 million to create 1,000 more supportive housing spaces over the next three years, as part of the Poverty Reduction Strategy.

Still, demand continues to dramatically outpace available housing supports. As of December 2014, the average provincial wait time to get access to supportive housing for people with mental illnesses was 311 days. In 2013-2014, there were more than 1,700 people – up by more than 300 from 2012-2013 – with mental health issues waiting for service initiation for supportive housing<sup>xi</sup>.

In the area of affordable housing, CMHA Ontario calls on the Ontario government to:

- Continue investing in the implementation of *Ontario's Long Term Affordable Housing Strategy*, with a special focus on providing housing for individuals with mental health and addiction issues.
- Support future investment in the *Housing First* model, where housing is provided as the first step, in combination with supportive services, to people who are homeless and living with mental health and addiction issues.
- Aside from *Housing First*, provide access to a range of housing options such as supportive housing, supported housing, rent supplements and short stay crisis safe beds for vulnerable populations, including those with mental health and addiction needs.
- Increase funding for additional rent supplements across the province. Individuals can use rent supplements to gain greater access to supportive housing. Supportive housing providers can also potentially use rent supplement funding to leverage private capital for new construction and thereby create additional housing stock.

***Increased investment in affordable housing aligns with the third pillar of the government's Mental Health and Addictions Strategy: Expanding Housing, Employment Supports and Diversion and Transitions from the Justice System.***



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## INVEST IN INCOME SECURITY, ACCESS TO EDUCATION AND EMPLOYMENT SUPPORTS

# Lowest Income Canadians are four times more likely to report poor mental health.

Income is an important social determinant of health.<sup>xii</sup> There is a large body of evidence that illustrates the causal effect between income and health.<sup>xiii</sup> Those with lower incomes generally report poorer physical and mental health than those in the higher income quintiles.<sup>xiv</sup> For example, a Canadian Medical Association poll showed that 39 percent of the poorest Canadians report excellent or very good health, compared to 68 percent of the richest Canadians. And according to Statistics Canada, Canadians in the lowest-income bracket are three to four times more likely than those in the highest-income bracket to say that their mental health is fair to poor.

Successfully engaging workers with physical and mental health and addiction issues in the labour market is crucial, not only for improving their own physical and mental well-being, but also for strengthening overall economic growth, equity and social cohesion.

But securing employment can be difficult, especially for those who have come into contact with the justice system. Many individuals face barriers as a result of their criminal record which is disclosed on police record checks even if it is not related to a violent crime. Obtaining stable, quality employment creates a community connectedness and can prevent crime and divert individuals away from the criminal justice system. For example, a study found that one year after release from prison, individuals who were unemployed re-offended at a rate of 40 percent compared to 17 percent of those who were employed. Employment supports that include job readiness, educational training, job placement and case management that address the specific needs of individuals are more likely to be successful and result in reduced recidivism rates and less costs to the justice system.<sup>xv</sup>

One cannot talk about quality employment without addressing its companion: market appropriate education and training. There is a strong correlation between low levels of education and low-wage employment.<sup>xvi</sup> Skills training refers to soft-skill development (e.g. time management, social skills), basic literacy training, as well as the workplace-specific skills needed to perform a job. Providing skills training and/or post-secondary education to individuals can help address the shortage of skilled labour, while moving a significant number of individuals out of poverty. The cost of not providing these supporting activities will cost the system 5.5 to 6.6 percent of the GDP, through loss in economic activity. By comparison, investing in training for adults with low income would generate additional revenue of \$1 billion to \$1.5 billion, by increasing economic output, thus increasing the GDP.<sup>xvii</sup>



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## INVEST IN INCOME SECURITY, ACCESS TO EDUCATION AND EMPLOYMENT SUPPORTS

CMHA Ontario recommends the provincial government enhance initiatives that promote income security, access to education and employment supports, by:

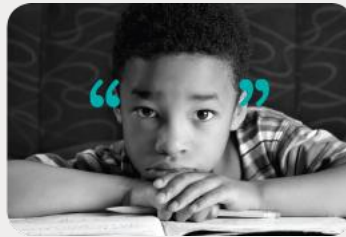
- Incrementally increasing minimum wage over five years to 10 per cent above the poverty line, with the recognition that increasing minimum wage is but one tool among many that can be used to narrow the poverty gap.
- Funding expanded employment services to include a full range of employment readiness activities, a more extensive job coaching component than is currently funded, and a focus on building individual capacity and skills.
- Promoting workplace mental health by adopting the voluntary *National Standard for Psychological Health and Safety in the Workplace* within the Ontario Public Service, as well as recommending its adoption to all government-funded agencies.

*Increased investment in income security, access to education and employment supports aligns with the third pillar of the government's Mental Health and Addictions Strategy: Expanding Housing, Employment Supports and Diversion and Transitions from the Justice System.*



**\$1.5 billion**

additional GDP revenue can be generated through investing in training for low income adults



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## INVEST IN INCREASED ACCESS TO A CORE BASKET OF SERVICES

**Providing people with necessary and timely supports will lower healthcare costs from crisis situations and hospitalizations.**

Currently, Ontarians with mental health or addictions issues are experiencing long wait lists, long lapses between obtaining assessments and receiving treatment as well as lack of services close to their homes. More specifically, there are a lack of direct services for individuals with concurrent mental health and addictions issues. Providing people with necessary and timely supports as part of a core basket of mental health and addiction services

CMHA Ontario calls for appropriate funding to:

- Increase the capacity of the community mental health and addictions system to guarantee a core basket of services and supports to individuals in need.
- Enhance a core basket of essential mental health and addictions services which consider the following:
  - Timely and equitable access to appropriate, culturally-sensitive and local programs and services;
  - Early identification, prevention and intervention services;
  - 24-hour, 7-day-a-week mobile crisis intervention teams;
  - Ongoing support in navigating systems and services;
  - Peer support workers that are involved in all aspects of service delivery;
  - Safe and affordable housing units with the appropriate community supports;
  - Employment and education opportunities for people with mental health and addiction issues.<sup>xix</sup>

*Increased investment to enhance access to a core basket of services aligns with the following three pillars of Ontario's Comprehensive Mental Health and Addictions Strategy: Promoting Mental Health and Well-being; Ensuring Early Identification and Intervention; Providing the Right Care, at the Right Time, in the Right Place.*

will lower costs that can otherwise result from crisis situations, hospitalizations, increased health care utilization and disability.

Investing in community services and related supports, such as income and employment support as well as affordable housing, generate benefits for existing government health priorities, such as reducing emergency department wait times and chronic disease prevention and management.

And while CMHA Ontario commends the Government of Ontario for its demonstrated commitment to addressing mental health and addictions by developing the second phase of *Open Minds, Healthy Minds: Ontario's Comprehensive Mental Health and Addictions Strategy*, further investments are needed to create a core basket of essential mental health and addictions services and supports.



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## OUR COMMITMENT TO ONTARIO

Now for the first time in Canadian history, every province has a strategy or plan focused on mental health and/or addictions. We commend the Ontario government for the important strides it has made in mental health legislation, policies and programs. The next step requires an increase in the share of health and social services dollars spent on mental health so all Canadians can live healthier and more productive lives.

Canadian Mental Health Association (CMHA), Ontario is committed to assisting the Government of Ontario solve health care challenges that impact the quality of life for persons living with mental health and addictions conditions. By investing in a range of housing options, enhancing the current income support system and ensuring access to a core basket of services, CMHA Ontario believes that together we can identify solutions that put Ontarians' health first.

CMHA Ontario welcomes the opportunity to work with the province to ensure that prevention of mental illnesses and the promotion of mental health remains a priority for the Ontario government.

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<sup>i</sup>Ontario Ministry of Health and Long-Term Care. Open Minds, Healthy Minds: Ontario's Comprehensive Mental Health and Addictions Strategy ([http://www.health.gov.on.ca/en/public/programs/mentalhealth/docs/open\\_minds\\_healthy\\_minds.pdf](http://www.health.gov.on.ca/en/public/programs/mentalhealth/docs/open_minds_healthy_minds.pdf))

<sup>ii</sup>World Health Organization. Mental Health – Strengthening Our Response (<http://www.who.int/mediacentre/factsheets/fs220/en/>)

<sup>iii</sup>Ontario Ministry of Health and Long-Term Care. Open Minds, Healthy Minds: Ontario's Comprehensive Mental Health and Addictions Strategy ([http://www.health.gov.on.ca/en/public/programs/mentalhealth/docs/open\\_minds\\_healthy\\_minds.pdf](http://www.health.gov.on.ca/en/public/programs/mentalhealth/docs/open_minds_healthy_minds.pdf))

<sup>iv</sup>Mental Health Commission of Canada. (2013). Making the Case for Investing in Mental Health in Canada. <http://www.mentalhealthcommission.ca/English/node/5020>

<sup>v</sup>Mental Health Commission of Canada. (2013). Making the Case for Investing in Mental Health in Canada. <http://www.mentalhealthcommission.ca/English/node/5020>

<sup>vi</sup>Standing Senate Committee on Social Affairs, Science and Technology, Final Report of Senate Subcommittee on Population Health, "A Healthy, Productive Canada: A Determinant of Health Approach," June 2009, pp. 7–9, downloaded from <http://www.parl.gc.ca/Content/SEN/Committee/402/popu/rep/rephealth1jun09>; cited in PUBLIC SERVICES FOR ONTARIANS: A PATH TO SUSTAINABILITY AND EXCELLENCE (2012)

<sup>vii</sup>Ministry of Finance. Expenditure Estimates by Ministry, 2013-2014. <http://www.fin.gov.on.ca/en/budget/estimates/2014-15/volume1/MOHLTC.pdf>

<sup>viii</sup>Ministry of Health and Long-Term Care. Health Indicator Tool (HIT) for Community Mental Health and Addictions Programs. <https://hsimi.ca/hit/UniDisplay.aspx>

<sup>ix</sup>CMHA BC Division. Community-Based Supports for Mental Health and Substance Use Care (2014) <http://www.cmha.bc.ca/files/2015BudgetConsultation.pdf>

<sup>x</sup>Ontario, Ministry of Health and Long-Term Care, "Provincial Summary – Average Costs for CMH&A Service Recipient Activity," 11 August 2006.<sup>1</sup>

<sup>xi</sup>Ontario, Ministry of Health and Long-Term Care. (2013). Community Mental Health and Addictions (CMH&A) - Functional Centres. In Ministry of Health and Long-Term Care Healthcare Indicator Tool. <https://hsimi.on.ca/hdbportal>.

<sup>xii</sup>Mikkonen, J., & Raphael, D. (2010). Social Determinants of Health: The Canadian Facts. Toronto: York University School of Health Policy and Management. The Canadian Facts <http://www.thecanadianfacts.org>

<sup>xiii</sup>CMA poll finds "worrisome" gap in income-related health status [http://www.cma.ca/index.php?ci\\_id=204846&la\\_id=1](http://www.cma.ca/index.php?ci_id=204846&la_id=1)

<sup>xiv</sup>Canadian Medical Association. Health care in Canada: What Makes Us Sick? July 2013.

<sup>xv</sup>John Howard Society of Ontario (2009). Face Sheet, Issue 24, Crime and Unemployment: What's the link? Retrieved from <http://www.johnhoward.on.ca/wp-content/uploads/2014/09/facts-24-crime-and-unemployment-whats-the-link-march-2009.pdf>

<sup>xvi</sup>Martin Prosperity Institute, "Ontario in the Creative Age," February 2009 <http://martinprosperity.org/research-and-publications/publication/ontario-in-the-creative-age-project>

<sup>xvii</sup>Ontario Association of Food Banks (2008) "Cost of Poverty: An Analysis of the Economic Costs of Poverty in Ontario."

<sup>xviii</sup>Gunderson, Morley. Minimum Wages: Issues and Options for Ontario. 2007; Ontario Chamber of Commerce, The Business Perspective on How to Set Ontario's Minimum Wage: Predictable, Transparent, and Fair. 2013.

<sup>xix</sup>Select Committee on Mental Health and Addictions Final Report, "Navigating the Journey to Wellness: The Comprehensive Mental Health and Addictions Action Plan for Ontarians," 2nd Session, 39th Parliament, 2010.