



Collaborative Partnership for Quality Improvement in Community Mental Health and Addictions

March 15, 2016 –Addictions and Mental Health Ontario (AMHO) and Canadian Mental Health Association, Ontario (CMHA Ontario) are collaborating with Health Quality Ontario (HQO) to launch the ground breaking initiative, the **Excellence through Quality Improvement Project (E-QIP): *partnering to make mental health and addictions care better***, which will benefit the community mental health and addictions sector and the individuals and families we serve. But we can't do this in isolation and are asking for your help. A key component to Excellence through Quality Improvement Project (E-QIP) is consultation with you, our partners in the community mental health and addictions sector so that we can enhance our sector together, making it more accountable and measurable through quality improvement.

We recognize our sector's existing commitment to provide high quality, person-centred care. We also realize that demands on organizations are growing and so too are the needs of our communities. Specifically, this 18 month project will work with you to help grow our sector's capacity for quality improvement. Together, our ultimate goal is to enhance the quality of mental health and addictions services for individuals and families in Ontario.

"Often people that are turning to community mental health and addictions services are at a very vulnerable point in their lives," explains Gail Czukar, CEO of Addictions and Mental Health Ontario . "We believe that Ontarians should be confident that they are going to receive the highest quality services no matter where they live or where they are receiving services. That's the driving force behind this project."

This initiative is a transformative step for the community mental health and addictions sector. Supporting and enhancing a **culture of quality improvement** across the sector is key toward further developing services that are more accountable to government, funders and most importantly, to individuals and their families who put their trust in our services every day.

We will be asking for your help through this process so together we can:

- Build a **common understanding** of quality improvement
- Gain an understanding of the **full range of quality initiatives** that exist in the sector, and sharing examples for others to learn from
- **Share** quality knowledge, and build capacity to bring the entire field to the same level
- **Ensure sustainability** of quality improvement capacity
- **Lay the groundwork**, so that the sector is ready to meet quality measurement expectations for the sector

- **Ensure alignment** with other quality improvement initiatives in Ontario including Quality Matters: Realizing Excellent Care For All
<http://www.hqontario.ca/portals/0/Documents/pr/quality-poster-en.pdf>

Together, Excellence through Quality Improvement Project (E-QIP) will build an understanding of what is happening in our sector, what improvements are needed, and how we can collaborate to make those improvements.

A Proactive Approach

Quality improvement is a key part of Ontario's commitment to providing all Ontarians – regardless of where they live – with access to quality services.

Although the community mental health and addictions sector is not currently mandated under the Excellent Care for All Act (ECFAA) to report on their quality initiatives, we want to develop skills and build quality improvement mechanisms to assure our clients and their families that we are providing the best possible services. Furthermore, this is an opportunity to be proactive on how we can develop meaningful measures for the care and services we provide to our clients, to hold us accountable in a similar way to hospitals, long term care and others.

“We’re a proactive sector,” said Camille Quenneville, CEO of the Canadian Mental Health Association, Ontario. “By taking a proactive stance on quality improvement, we are showing a commitment that is already embedded in our work every day.”

While some community mental health and addictions organizations are already doing quality improvement work, there is a need to create a consistent approach with the required supports and resources, across the sector which is what this project aims to do.

Collaboration and Consistency

In the coming days, community mental health and addictions organizations will receive a survey to provide input on quality improvement practices. We ask that your organization respond to this survey, as your feedback is critical to the roll-out of this initiative to your region, which will include:

- Training and coaching support for organizations to build capacity for QI projects
- Continuing to develop leadership support for a culture of quality improvement
- Opportunities for collaborating towards system improvement
- Learning from sector leaders
- Benchmarking
- Access to advanced learning programs such as IDEAS

Data collected at the service provider level is an important component to improving quality. Excellence through Quality Improvement Project (E-QIP) will also increase the ability of our sector to collect and use quality measures within individual organizations.

We are pleased to be introducing **Michael Dunn**, Director of Quality Improvement for CMHA Ontario. Michael will be joined shortly by a co-Director with AMHO, once the secondment has been finalized. Together, with the support of HQO, they will lead the Excellence through Quality Improvement Project (E-QIP). Michael has over twelve years experience working in the mental health and addictions sector in a wide range of positions ranging from direct client service to senior leadership. Michael is seconded from CMHA Simcoe County Branch where he holds the position of Director of Research, Evaluation and Quality Improvement and has led both small and large scale quality improvement initiatives. Michael's education background includes an undergraduate degree in psychology and law, a Master in Science degree from the Institute of Health Policy, Management and Evaluation at the University of Toronto as well as post-graduate certificates in Advanced Addiction Education, and Leadership in the Human Service Sector among others. Michael's most recent research has been in the areas of health literacy and access to care, ethics in mental health, and youth mental health.

We hope you will join us in celebrating the launch of this exciting work, and can look forward to the impact that this initiative will have on the sector, and most of all, on the people of Ontario who seek support for mental illnesses and/or addictions. We owe it to individuals and their families to work towards providing the safest, most effective community mental health and addictions services possible.

Stay tuned for more updates and information about the project.

For more information, contact:

Gail Czukar, CEO
Addictions and Mental Health Ontario
416.490.8900

Camille Quenneville, CEO
Canadian Mental Health Association,
Ontario
416.977.5580 ext 4126