



**Canadian Mental
Health Association**
Mental health for all

NEWS RELEASE

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Victoria Maxwell Chosen as BC Women's Mental Health Champion

Sechelt woman wins accolades along with 1 Million Shoppers Optimum Points



Photo caption: Jennifer Kim, Pharmacist/Owner, Shoppers Drug Mart – Denman Place Mall, presents 1,000,000 Shoppers Optimum Points to Shoppers Drug Mart Ride Don't Hide LOVE. YOU. Contest winner Victoria Maxwell (left to right).

Vancouver, B.C. – The **Shoppers Drug Mart Ride Don't Hide LOVE. YOU. Contest** celebrates women who make mental health matter in their communities. As the contest winner, Victoria Maxwell has won 1,000,000 Shoppers Optimum points—a value of \$1,700.

The points presentation took place Sunday, June 26 at Shoppers Drug Mart Ride Don't Hide – Greater Vancouver, a charity bike ride in support of the Canadian Mental Health Association.

The contest invited British Columbians to share their own stories or to nominate women who had inspired them. Of these nominations, five finalists were selected by a panel of Shoppers Drug Mart Pharmacist-owners. In the final round, Victoria Maxwell was chosen by popular vote with over 1800 online ballots cast in her favour.

"I feel so supported. The contest wasn't just a one person effort—it had to be others supporting me. I was just blown away by how many people were cheering me on, and I was blown away by the other finalists," says Maxwell.

Victoria Maxwell is an actress and playwright with lived experience of bipolar disorder, anxiety and psychosis. Her critically acclaimed one-woman show *Crazy for Life*—drawn from her lived experience with mental illness—has toured internationally with runs in Toronto, England and New Zealand. Maxwell is also a public speaker and facilitator, and offers mental health consulting services to employers looking to enhance workplace wellness.

Throughout her career, she has made a point of being open about her experience as a way to push back against the stigma that often surrounds mental illness.

“When I was diagnosed there weren’t a lot of stories about mental illness and recovery,” says Maxwell. “I saw that shame really prevented people from not just reaching out for help, but also from feeling good about who they were.”

“I wanted to share my story because I’ve been really fortunate in the treatment that I’ve gotten and wanted to pass that along to others, to let them know that it’s possible to live well with mental illness.”

The contest is part of the Shoppers Drug Mart Ride Don’t Hide movement in support of mental health. On June 26, more than 7,000 cyclists in 29 communities across Canada joined together to ride for mental health at Shoppers Drug Mart Ride Don’t Hide. Shoppers Drug Mart is the title sponsor for the rides in BC and proud champion for women and girls’ mental health.

To learn more or donate, visit www.ridedonthide.com.

About the Canadian Mental Health Association:

Founded in 1918, the Canadian Mental Health Association (CMHA) is a national charity that helps maintain and improve mental health for all Canadians. As the nation-wide leader and champion for mental health, CMHA helps people access the community resources they need to build resilience and support recovery from mental illness. Visit the CMHA website at www.cmha.ca today

About Shoppers Drug Mart LOVE. YOU.

Shoppers LOVE.YOU. – Putting Women’s Health First – is dedicated to being part of every woman’s support network through the sponsorship of a full range of national and community initiatives focused on advancing women’s health in body, mind and spirit. More information can be found at www.shoppersloveyou.ca.

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