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Executive Message

Strengthening Communities, Navigating Changes

This past year has been one of significant growth and progress as we deepen our commitment to supporting individuals and communities across British Columbia. Our expanding programs—such as PACT (Peer-Assisted Care Teams), Links to Employment, Treatment and Recovery Beds, and Workplace Wellness—have broadened our reach and impact. These initiatives reflect our unwavering dedication to addressing the pressing mental health and substance use challenges faced by so many.

Our success is rooted in the incredible partnerships we've built with like-minded organizations, local CMHA branches, and community allies. Together, we champion a compassionate public health approach, challenging stigma and empowering individuals to seek the care they need. At CMHA, our message is simple but powerful: through acts of kindness and understanding, we foster connections that bridge differences and help us all heal together.

Across British Columbia, our 14 local branches and provincial office have worked tirelessly to advocate for mental health awareness, support, and inclusion. Kindness—towards oneself and others—remains central to mental wellness. As we confront complex issues like the toxic drug crisis and broader community well-being, we remain committed to addressing the deeper societal challenges of housing, homelessness, and income inequality. Lasting change demands systemic reform, and we stand firm in our advocacy: unaddressed trauma and untreated mental health conditions are at the heart of the crisis.

The 2024 BC Budget brought renewed hope, with an additional \$215 million earmarked for mental health and substance use care over the next three years. Building on the historic \$1 billion investment in 2023, we are encouraged by the Province's continued commitment. However, as overall health spending increases, it's essential that mental health and addictions care receive the sustained investment they require. Our work is far from finished, and we remain vigilant in holding the Province accountable to these commitments.

We have heard firsthand from those whose lives have been transformed by these investments. Mary, a client at Discovery House, shared: "When I came into Discovery House, I was spiritually, mentally, emotionally, and physically bankrupt. After almost four months, I can't believe the transformation in every aspect of myself. This place has saved my life."

As we reflect on the past year, we are deeply grateful for the trust placed in us by the communities we serve, the partners who stand with us, and the donors and funders who make this work possible including the Government of British Columbia. It takes all of us working together to build a future where mental health is recognized and invested in as a core component of overall well-being, and where everyone can access the care, they need.

We invite you—our supporters, partners, and community members—to continue this mission with us. Your involvement, whether through sharing experiences, supporting initiatives, or advocating for change, is vital.

To the dedicated staff and volunteers across the CMHA federation, thank you for your leadership and unwavering commitment. Your work changes and saves lives every day.

We look ahead to the coming year with renewed energy and steadfast determination to continue making a positive impact on mental health across British Columbia.

Thank you

Sincerely,



Jonny Morris CEO, CMHA BC



David DeLongBoard Chair, CMHA BC

About Us

Canadian Mental Health Association, BC Division (CMHA BC) is British Columbia's mental health charity and champion, dedicated to creating a world where mental well-being is valued and supported by and for all. Through advocacy, education, engagement, and community-based services, we're here to break down barriers, combat stigma, uplift the voices of lived expertise, and ensure vital and equitable access to mental health and substance use resources. Together with 14 BC community branches, we're building a brighter, more inclusive future where mental health is a priority for all in British Columbia.

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

We respectfully acknowledge x^wməθk^wəÿəm (Musqueam), Skwxwú7mesh (Squamish), səliilwətaઋ (Tsleil-Waututh), Lkwungen (Songhees) and Wyomilth (Esquimalt) peoples on whose traditional, unceded lands the CMHA BC offices are located.

Our Vision:

Mentally healthy people in a healthy society

Our Mission:

To ensure that all people in Canada experience good mental health and well-being

Our Central Philosophy:

The Framework for Support: The person experiencing mental illness is at the centre of any supportive mental health system, with the goal of ensuring those experiencing mental illness live fulfilling lives in their community

Our Values:

Compassionate

Inclusive

Steadfast

Proactive

Collaborative



TOGETHER WE ARE MAKING A DIFFERENCE BY CHANGING THE WAY WE THINK ABOUT MENTAL HEALTH AND SUBSTANCE USE

Board of Directors 2023/2024

David DeLong (Chair, National Representative)

Jacki McPherson (Vice-Chair)

Errol Olsen (Secretary/Treasurer)

Jane Atherton

Kelli Bodnar

Judy Darcy

Shaughn Davoren

Jessica Drummond

Canon Fung

David McCov

Clayron Munro

Kevin Murray

Jenna Schonke

CMHA in British Columbia

Vancouver-Fraser

(Vancouver, New Westminster and Delta)

604-872-4902

www.vancouver-fraser.cmha.bc.ca

North and West Vancouver



604-987-6959

www.northwestvancouver.cmha.bc.ca

Mid-Island

(Nanaimo)

250-244-4042

www.cmhamidisland.ca

Port Alberni



250-724-7199 www.cmhaportalberni.ca

Cowichan Valley



250-597-1372

www.cmhacowichanvalley.com

CMHA BC

(Victoria Office)

250-216-4228 www.cmha.bc.ca

CMHA BC

(Vancouver Office)

604-688-3234 www.cmha.bc.ca South Cariboo (100 Mile House)

www.southcariboo.cmha.bc.ca

250-395-4883



Cariboo Chilcotin (Williams Lake)

www.cariboo.cmha.bc.ca

250-398-8220



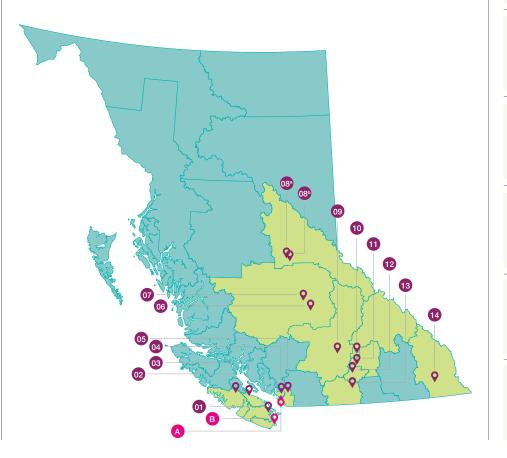
(Quesnel)

236-424-1946

Northern BC

www.northernbc.cmha.ca

CMHA offers services across British Columbia through 14 local branches and one provincial division supporting over 100 communities



Northern BC (Prince George)



250-564-8644

www.northernbc.cmha.ca

Kamloops



250-374-0440

www.kamloops.cmha.bc.ca

Shuswap-Revelstoke



(Salmon Arm)

250-832-8477

www.shuswap-revelstoke.cmha.bc.ca

Vernon and District



250-542-3114 www.cmhavernon.ca

Kelowna



250-861-3644

www.cmhakelowna.com

South Okanagan Similkameen (13) (Penticton)



250-493-8999

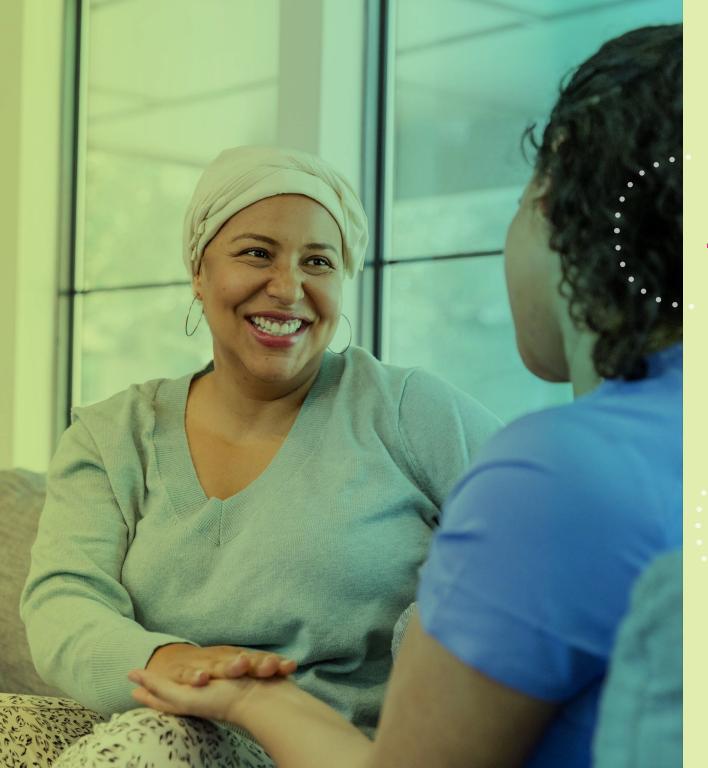
www.sos.cmha.bc.ca

Kootenays (Cranbrook)



250-426-5222

www.kootenays.cmha.bc.ca



Strategic Priorities 2021–2025



Reach

all British Columbians throughout their lifespan to promote mental wellness and provide mental illness and substance use care by leveraging strengths.



Uplift

the voices of BC's nonprofit organizations and people with lived and living experience to create positive change in our public and community-based systems of care.



Advance

our human right to our best possible mental health by calling for a comprehensive system of care that protects and promotes our rights to adequate housing, education, employment, community inclusion and health.

Learn more at www.cmha.bc.ca/strategic-plan

Our Impact

BounceBack®

3,900+

individuals were referred to learn skills to manage low mood, stress and worry



Peer Assisted Care Teams (PACT)

mental health crisis calls were received and supported by community-led crisis teams

Workplace Mental Health

4,900+

individuals were supported through training focused on improving workplace mental health

PROGRAM DEVELOPMENT AND DELIVERY

We help build mental health skills and resilience for individuals through parent support, employment services, youth programs, and wellness programs.

EDUCATION AND TRAINING

We work with community partners and businesses to develop and deliver training, resources, and events on mental health priorities. We provide scholarships and resources for students.

ENGAGEMENT AND OUTREACH

We connect individuals and organizations to resources and information. Our mental health champions raise awareness and funds to support our ongoing work in mental health and substance use care.

INITIATIVES AND ADVOCACY

We identify and respond to Canada's most pressing mental health priorities. We create opportunities for knowledge exchange, research, and collaboration with people with lived and living experience, our local CMHA branches, community partners, businesses, and government.

Wildfire Resilience

2,700+

individuals were supported by mental health education, suicide prevention and counselling in communities affected by wildfires



100,000+

views of Visions online articles

Confident Parents: Thriving Kids

5,000+

families were referred to learn skills for tackling anxiety or behaviour challenges together



Bed-Based Treatment and Recovery Grants

clients received quality bed-based treatment and recovery services

HeretoHelp

50,800

online mental health or substance use screenings taken

Confident Parents: Thriving Kids

Confident Parents: Thriving Kids has two program streams to help parents support their children aged 3-12 to manage either anxiety or behaviour challenges. Behaviour challenges may include uncooperative or disruptive behaviour, aggression or defiance. Sometimes anxiety can look similar, but the behaviours only appear in certain situations—like getting ready for school or going to bed. When children are feeling anxious, they may seem restless, agitated, withdrawn or tearful, complain of stomach aches or have trouble falling asleep. In addition, we are proud to offer a parent and caregiver program to support First Nations, Métis and Inuit families across BC. whose children are struggling with the experience of big worries and fears, also known as anxiety.





Confident Parents: Thriving Kids—Behaviour

The Confident Parents: Thriving Kids—Behaviour program addresses mild to moderate behavioural challenges and promotes healthy development. Through a series of 6, 10 or 14 weekly coaching sessions, along with workbooks and activities, trained coaches empower parents and caregivers to learn effective skills and techniques that support social skills and cooperation in their child. This past year, on average, the pre- and post-program results indicated a strong effect in decreasing the behavioural challenges that parents are identifying in their children. The outcomes showed a positive result for targeting behavioural symptoms but also for all other measures of child and youth mental health, functioning, and family well-being.

To support our increased demand for service, we trained several parent support coaches and launched a group delivery program in January 2024. So far, data has shown high ratings for program effectiveness, reduced service wait times and an increase in coaching skill development.

When faced with parenting challenges I now feel more clarity around what to do than I would have thought possible... I feel I have a structure to move forward with, and have already seen how my relationship with my children benefits from the skills I have learned... Sincerely, thank vou! I don't think it is an overstatement to say that this program has the power to change lives.

Behaviour program participant

2501 **m**



families engaged in active coaching relationships



8238



96%

rated the overall quality of the behaviour program as excellent. very good or good

confidentparentsbc.ca

Confident Parents: Thriving Kids—Anxiety

The Confident Parents: Thriving Kids—Anxiety program incorporates principles from cognitive behavioural therapy (CBT) and other best practices to address anxiety that impacts child development and happiness at home, school, and in the community. Through online videos with coaching sessions by phone, parents and caregivers learn effective skills and techniques to help their child manage anxious behaviours. On average, program results indicate a strong effect in decreasing the anxiety challenges that parents are identifying in their children. The outcomes show a positive result for targeting anxiety symptoms but also for all other measures of child and youth mental health, functioning, and family well-being.



This was an exceptional program. I learned a whole new skill set that applies to much more than just my son's anxiety. Truly grateful for this program and for the amazing coach I had.



There were so many things I didn't even realize were anxiety and so many ways I was trying to cope with it that I didn't even notice. Understanding what these behaviours were made such a difference. We can definitely see the changes in our daughter and feel them within ourselves. I highly recommend this program to other parents.

Anxiety program participants

2551



families referred

7939 coaching sessions held



1141
families commenced coaching services

confidentparentsbc.ca

We Are Indigenous: Big Worries/Fears

We are Indigenous: Big Worries/Fears parent/caregiver support program is a free phone-based coaching program for Indigenous families with children ages 3 to 12 who are experiencing big worries/fears, also known as anxiety. Parents/Caregivers and their children explore Indigenous-centered wellness practices and cognitive behavioural therapy (CBT) to enhance their child's skills and strong spiritedness when navigating big worries/fears. Through online videos and scheduled telephone coaching sessions parents/caregivers can discuss child and family strengths, program practices, and implementation strategies. The program was developed with the guidance of an Indigenous advisory group and the program content and materials were created by Indigenous writers, videographers, and clinicians in collaboration with CMHA BC.



I think it's good to have those tools in my box and [to know] that the things that I was doing before were good. It's affirming as a mother... I'm very happy with the program. For me it's more of a validation of doing the right things. Most mothers are the hardest on themselves, so coming and knowing that what I have been doing is right is very affirming.

We Are Indigenous: Big Worries/Fears program participant



bigworriesstrongspirit.ca

BounceBack®

BounceBack is a free, telephone-based coaching program that supports individuals 13 and up to build skills to combat unhelpful thinking, manage worry and stress and improve mental health. BounceBack telephone coaching is available in English, French, Cantonese, and Mandarin. We also offer a self-guided e-learning version of the program. Over the past year, BounceBack has increased accessibility to the program by expanding referral pathways through a broader range of practitioners and improved the program's ability to support people with visual impairments through improvements to the online materials platform.

BounceBack and my lovely and professional couch rescued me just on time. When I was going down and feeling hopeless she lifted me up and showed me other options to redirect my life, my decisions and the most important thing, she helped me to build a stronger willpower and thinking positively when challenges or adversities knock on my door.

BounceBack program participant

individuals referred

752 vouth referred





improvement in participants' depression symptoms

improvement in participants' anxiety symptoms

funding provided by



Living Life to the Full

Living Life to the Full is an interactive, community-based course that provides simple, practical skills for coping with stress, problem-solving, boosting mood, and dealing with unhelpful thoughts. Facilitators bring these skills to life through booklets, handouts, group activities, and discussions. Based on principles of cognitive behavioural therapy (CBT), the course has been shown to effectively improve resilience, well-being, mood, social support, and reduce anxiety. The courses are currently available in nine provinces and one territory, with materials in English, French, Cantonese, Mandarin, Puniabi, and Tamil.

This year, we continued the BC Youth Initiative Project and started the BlueWave National Project for Youth. We also began adapting the UK-based Enjoy Your Baby course for Canadian audiences. Overall, the program continues to expand its reach throughout the country thanks to the support of our funders and partners.

courses delivered

community partners-9 new partners this year

individuals participated in the courses

-508 youth and 999 adults

said the course improved their ability to deal with stress

said they would recommend the course

Centra Windows Shoppers Drug Mart Run for Women

to someone else

bluewave_



Living Life to the Full course participant

I did learn a few new things but mostly positive reminders. I thoroughly enjoyed the

facilitator] made it very safe and welcoming to all. Highly

recommend to all people. The

information shared is valuable

course and again, [the

to all people.

Links to Employment

Links to Employment helps job seekers with persistent and multiple barriers reach their goals of obtaining meaningful training, volunteer work, or employment. We offer a holistic approach to wellness in primary care settings, connecting individuals to a network of support earlier on in their recovery. The program is based on the evidence-based Individual Placement and Support (IPS) model which offers individualized, strengths-based, and trauma-informed supports focused on helping individuals gain and sustain meaningful employment, education, or training, while supporting their health and well-being. Employment support is seen as an integral way to strengthen confidence, promote wellness, and enhance specific determinants of health related to employment.

Since 2020 Links to Employment has been operating in primary care settings in Vancouver and Vernon. In this past year, we expanded Links to Employment to primary care settings in two new communities, Prince George and Nanaimo as well as into five bed-based treatment and recovery centres located in Prince Rupert, Kamloops, Vernon, Penticton and Nanaimo.

223



individuals served this year
—153 through primary care settings and 70 through treatment and recovery centres

66

This program has been very helpful and supportive with my barriers to getting back to work. I have gained a good job. I also have been able to connect with family through my job. My Links worker has been very helpful and supportive.

Links to Employment program participant





cmha.bc.ca/links-to-employment



Workplace Mental Health

CMHA BC recognizes that every workplace is unique. We are dedicated to collaborating with employers to deliver strategies, resources, and training that supports and benefits all individuals. Our goal is to implement real-time strategies to address psychological health and safety in the workplace.

- We are proud partners in contributing to and delivering nationally certified psychological health and safety training
- Our services are informed and administered by qualified professionals with lived experience and expertise in HR, management, facilitation, and mental health and well-being
- We have delivered training to over 30,000 participants overall, offering workshops virtually, in-person, and hybrid
- We provide evidence-based resources and information that are grounded in best practices to support your unique workplace



Workplace Mental Health Education and Workshops

Thriving employees mean thriving organizations. At CMHA BC, we walk alongside workplaces to provide best practices and real-time strategies to support healthy workplaces. We are dedicated to collaborating with employers to deliver strategies, resources, and training that supports and benefits all individuals. From workshops to resources, we offer a variety of tools employees can use to help improve workplace mental health.

3128



individuals attended workshops to help improve mental health in their workplaces

workplace mental health workshops delivered



cmha.bc.ca/workplace-mental-health

BC's Hub For Workplace Mental Health

BC's Hub for Workplace Mental Health is a free online resource hub for employers and employees working in a variety of sectors. In addition to information, webinars, and workshops, the Hub offers a free CARE training program for the tourism and hospitality, and community social services sectors.

10,331

visitors to the Hub website, totalling 27,766 visitors since launch

1747

individuals participated in CARE training—988 working in tourism and hospitality and 759 working in community social services



36

webinars delivered
—14 for the tourism
and hospitality and
22 for the community
social services sector



In partnership with







workmentalhealthbc.ca

Care for Caregivers and Care to Speak

Care for Caregivers provides free, accessible mental health information, webinars and support for healthcare providers. We aim to empower healthcare professionals to prioritize their well-being by cultivating a network of helpful resources and fostering a resilient community of caregivers supporting caregivers. Services include the **Care to Listen** podcast, which centers the lived experiences of healthcare workers and shares sources of support, and **Leading from the Inside Out**, a free training program helping long-term and home care leaders connect and build skills for self-care and resilience.

Care to Speak is a free, confidential, and unbiased peer support service delivered by CMHA Vernon. This service provides healthcare and social service providers with emotional support from trained volunteers experienced in their sector. Care to Speak is available 9 am to 9 pm, Monday through Friday, by phone, online chat and text.

41,775

visitors to Care for Caregivers website

741



individuals connected to peer support through Care to Speak

28



webinars delivered

4654

webinar views—1,725 live and 2,929 recorded

38

leaders completed Leading from the Inside Out training

In partnership with







Youth Mental Health

Young people aged 15 to 24 are more likely to experience mental illness and/or substance use challenges than any other age group. CMHA BC continues to advocate for, promote and support mental health for youth through education, training, and early intervention programs. We work closely with community partners and schools to build resilience in the young people of BC.

This year, we helped over 500 youth develop mental health skills through our Living Life to the Full course and over 700 youth were referred to BounceBack, a free, evidence-based, self-help program (see p 10). BounceBack Youth Advisory Committee members have played a key role in developing a program for youth, by youth.



Healthy Minds | Healthy Campuses

Healthy Minds | Healthy Campuses (HM|HC) is a province-wide community of practice, learning and working together to promote mental well-being and healthier relationships with substances within BC post-secondary institutions. HM|HC initiatives engage students, service staff, faculty and administrators to build capacity and shape campus cultures and environments that help all campus community members to thrive.

Various efforts followed up on the 2023 biennial Summit encouraging campuses to activate the Okanagan Charter: An International Charter for Health Promoting University and Colleges in different areas of their community. In March, a BC interior campus hosted a Regional Forum to gather students and staff to discuss topics around student well-being and provide feedback to their student engagement and wellness department. HM|HC continued as a consulting resource for campuses, campus members and external agencies, and engaged students to participate on the leadership committee, support team and as HM|HC Talk panel members.

I am so grateful to have had the opportunity to be involved on the Leadership Committee and connect with the wonderful humans and hearts who are contributing to something so powerful and needed in support of campus mental health and well-being.

HM|HC Leadership Committee member

355+ **†††**

learning event participants—267 for HM|HC Talks and 88 for Regional Forum workshops

learning events held—5 HM|HC Talks and 4 Regional Forum workshops



1500+ social media followers 1482 HM|HC e-newsletter subscribers



www.healthycampuses.ca

SCHOLARSHIP RECIPIENTS nitials have been used to protect privacy

addiction.

Lorne Fraser Scholarship for Mental Health Promotion CKC, UBC, Program:

Masters of Kinesiology

LC, UBC, Program: Medicine Undergraduate Program

Lorne Fraser Educational

SV, SFU, Program: Bachelor of Health Sciences

NP, Vancouver Community College, Program: Counselling Foundations Certificate IFC, Vancouver Island University, Program: Bachelor of Psychology

SC, UBCO, Program: Bachelor of Education

KN, Selkirk College, Program: Digital Arts

Scholarships and Bursaries

Since 1982, CMHA BC has been helping individuals with mental illness further

their pursuit of post-secondary education through our scholarship and bursary

programs. We are committed to lowering access barriers and would like to ensure

that these scholarships and bursaries are available to anyone in British Columbia

available each year to BC post-secondary students who live with mental illness or

with lived experience who is pursuing higher education. Several awards are

scholarships

awarded

DG, UBC, Program: Bachelor of Applied Science

Mental Health Fine Arts Bursary

SB, Vancouver Community College, Program: Graphic Design

MM, Capilano, Program: Technical Theatre Diploma

Janice Lee Blue Wave Youth Bursary

RR, TWU, Program: Bachelor of Education

MYL, KPU, Bachelor of Business (General Business Studies)

Andre Courtemanche Green Ribbon Scholarship

JN, Okanagan College, Program: Human Kinetics/ Kinesiology



This award would be a lifeline... [it] would not only provide financial relief but also serve as a reminder that there are people rooting for me to achieve my goals to dedicate myself to my studies and make a meaningful impact in the field of mental health.

scholarship recipient

www.cmha.bc.ca/scholarships

Youth Summit

CMHA BC hosted the 7th annual HEADSTRONG Summit on February 8, 2024, bringing together middle school students and counsellors from across Greater Victoria. Developed by the Mental Health Commission of Canada, the goal of HEADSTRONG Summit is to engage, educate, and activate youth in mental health promotion and stigma reduction. Youth speakers shared their mental health journeys and experiences, including topics such as depression, anxiety, suicide, medical diagnoses, mental health care and more. Many students indicated that they could relate to or identify with one or more speakers and what they spoke about.

83

participants in the 2024 Youth Summit —73 students and 10 counsellors



94%

said the event inspired them to take a stand against stigma

48%

identified as having lived experience with mental illness

Supported by

Mental Health Commission of Canada Mood Swings Golf Tournament BlueWave



Youth Summit participant

going through the same thing.



Suicide Prevention and Life Promotion

CMHA BC is dedicated to supporting suicide prevention and life promotion across the province. Thanks to continued funding from BC's Ministry of Mental Health and Addictions, CMHA BC has continued to work alongside BC's five regional health authorities to support their ongoing efforts towards improving suicide care in healthcare settings. We also develop and deliver suicide prevention and intervention education and training to partners across BC. We are excited to offer both standardized workshops such as ASIST and safeTALK, as well as custom workshops created to best suit client needs.



We are so thankful for the support from CMHA BC and MMHA that has allowed us dedicated time and resources to address this important topic in our hospital settings. We are confident this project is making a difference to both our clinicians and our patients.

Safer Suicide Care Initiative project partner



This training was very informative and important. Thank you for bringing this goodness to our organization. Such an important topic—I found it very touching and moving to talk openly about suicide.

suicide prevention training participant

96%



of participants felt prepared to support a client through their thoughts of suicide after taking a custom workshop

9.5

out of 10 rating for safeTALK training overall

600+
individuals participated in

suicide prevention education



www.cmha.bc.ca/suicide-prevention-life-promotion

AgLife

The AgLife Connector training is a suicide prevention and mental health awareness provincial training program specifically designed for the BC agricultural sector. This initiative is adapted from the CMHA Ontario's successful and award-winning Guardian Network and Association Quebecois de Prevention du Suicide's Sentinel Program.

AgLife Connector training is based on the community gatekeeper model for suicide prevention education, aimed at helping build skills for support, intervention, and connection to help community members support each other as they navigate tough times. AgLife Connectors learn the Check, Care, Connect model developed specifically for this program. This three-step model helps Connectors identify those who may be struggling with their mental health or experiencing thoughts of suicide, and develop skills to support these individuals. AgLife Connector training was piloted in March and officially launched April 1, 2024.

individuals participated in pilot AgLife Connector training





aglife.ca

Mental Health Information and Referral

Each year, our information and referral help desk responds to phone and e-mail requests for system navigation around mental health and substance use, including complex requests about housing, workplace discrimination, financial insecurity, and more.



I am very very very happy with all of the information provided. Not only was it clear and concise but if I were to run into any roadblocks, I was given everything I need to move to the next resource. Much appreciated!

individual connecting with CMHA Help Desk

Extremely helpful and thorough support, quick turnaround time, I really appreciated it.

individual connecting with CMHA Help Desk

961

requests for info from CMHA BC help desk



help@cmha.bc.ca

Wildfire Resilience

More than half of CMHA branches in BC are located in the Interior and North, regions that have seen both annual and cumulative impacts from climate emergencies including floods, droughts and wildfires. This past year saw a renewal of CMHA BC's support of branches affected by the stress, anxiety and loss associated with wildfires.

This year, CMHA BC administrated a grant from the Canadian Red Cross allowing three branches—Northern BC, Cariboo-Chilcotin and South Cariboo—to focus on building the mental well-being and resilience of communities ravaged by the 2017 wildfires. The branches delivered a range of community mental health education and suicide prevention training to Indigenous groups, community organizations

and the public. The grant also allowed the branches to more intentionally care for staff feeling the strain of living and working in affected regions, as well as for two of the branches to provide free counselling to their communities.

Provincially, CMHA BC engaged with partners including Health Emergency Management BC, Red Cross, First Nations Health Authority and Salvation Army, resulting in seven branches being invited to speak to Disaster Psychosocial Services volunteers—mental health clinicians and paraprofessionals who are deployed by the province into fire-ravaged communities. Branch staff shared their insights from providing support on the ground as branches were involved in wildfire response in 2023 like never before.



It was really helpful at my time of need. We all need suicide education.

suicide prevention training participant



I so appreciate having counselling as I could never afford it otherwise.

free counselling client

2706

unique individuals and 102 organizations supported

951

counselling sessions provided

26

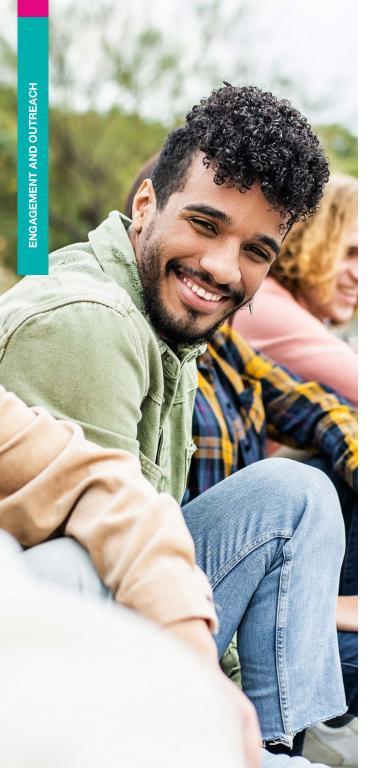
courses delivered across 8 different communities

224

staff participated in wellness training

Supported by





Low-Risk Drinking

CMHA BC embarked on a one-year research and engagement initiative inspired by new guidance from the Canadian Centre on Substance Use and Addiction. The guidance notes that all levels of drinking of alcohol carry risk to health and to safety and that drinking less is better. The goal of the project was to find out which messages, audiences and resources might resonate most with people who want to reduce their drinking.

We ran a public opinion poll to better understand interest among BC adult drinkers around reduced drinking, resource gaps and opportunities. Poll data showed that a sizable segment of the population is reviewing their alcohol intake; many people would like to better understand the health risks related to drinking; saving money is a big motivator; and many of those interested in reducing their drinking would be interested in accessing brief advice or support.

reached through paid social media ad campaign

Informed by these poll results, we developed a digital campaign around Mindful Drinking—promoting being thoughtful about if, why and how much you drink. Information about alcohol's effects on physical and mental health, tips for safer or reduced drinking, and strategies to support others in their journey of reduced drinking were shared on a microsite and promoted through social media, e-newsletters, and blog posts. A paid social media ad campaign encouraged balance, while connecting those interested with information and resources for support.

In addition, we developed resources around mindful drinking at workplace celebrations, worked with Small Business BC to share information on how workplaces can support individuals in being mindful drinkers, and prepared a report for government with recommendations on how to better support low-risk drinking in BC.

531,699 **†††**



I just saw your post on drinking mindfully. Thanks for posting about getting curious about why we drink, instead of just shaming people for it. It's so refreshing to see a more balanced approach to mental health, kinda like with dieting—it's not all or nothing. This is the kind of conversation we need more of!

emalil message to info@cmha.bc.ca







mindfuldrinking.ca

Newcomer Mental Health

The newcomer mental health project was a one-year project meant to boost mental health services for newcomers, especially migrants and refugees fleeing war, both youth and adults. Migrants fleeing conflict and violence are especially prone to stress and mental health problems on settlement to a new country.

Through a partnership with Community Action Initiative, which administered grants to ten counselling agencies that serve newcomers, counsellors were able to directly help thousands of migrants with individual counselling, family and couples counselling, and group educational workshops. To complement these services, we held consultations with frontline staff at the ten agencies to find out about met and unmet educational needs for newcomers. The findings informed the development of seven plain-language booklets about protecting mental well-being, normalizing the stresses newcomers face, and getting help when needed. The booklets were printed in ten different languages for the agencies to share with newcomer clients.

8593
counselling sessions or workshops held

66

Immigrant clients often experience great isolation living in a different culture, often with lesser language skills. Having a therapist to assist with adapting to this changed reality and to offer support and hope is an essential part of the transition to a new land.

migrant counselling service provider

81,900

educational resources

51%

of clients received support for the first time

In partnership with





cmha.bc.ca/newcomer





HeretoHelp Outreach

HeretoHelp.bc.ca is an evidence-based, user-friendly website tailored for people in BC seeking mental health and substance use support. The site features close to 2,000 plain-language resources including personal stories, Visions articles, info sheets, workbooks, screening self-tests, and multilingual content. Information on Safer Tripping, Safer Smoking and Safer Injecting, along with general mental health information were the most accessed HeretoHelp resources. Visitor survey respondents report primarily using information for themselves, followed by help for family members or patients/clients.

One of the features of the HeretoHelp website is an email-based information and referral service, helping people find local, trustworthy mental health and substance use resources and services for themselves and their loved ones.

The HeretoHelp website and information and referral service are managed by CMHA BC on behalf of the BC Partners for Mental Health and Substance Use Information, a group of seven leading mental health and substance use non-profit organizations working together to help people live well and better prevent and manage mental health and substance use problems. Supported by BC Mental Health and Substance Use Services, an agency of the Provincial Health Services Authority, the partners include Anxiety Canada, British Columbia Schizophrenia Society, CMHA BC, the Canadian Institute for Substance Use Research, FamilySmart, Embody, and Mood Disorders Association of BC (a branch of Lookout Housing and Health Society).

50,800



mental health screenings taken

1,400,000+ website page views from 645,000 visitors



[HeretoHelp] made me realize that I'm not alone in my curiosity and reduces the stigma surrounding my issues. It's a safe and reliable site when looking for answers to the hard-toask questions.

HeretoHelp online visitor





Visions

Visions: BC's Mental Health and Substance Use Journal is written by and for people with lived experience, their families, service providers, policy makers, and others who care about mental health and substance use. Three issues of Visions are released yearly, and readers vote on the subthemes they would like to see. Anyone in BC can receive Visions free of charge via print, web, email, or e-book formats. Visions continued to respond to the needs and interests of its readership by releasing issues on topics identified by readers as being relevant: The Many Faces of Neurodiversity; Nourishing and Moving our Bodies; and Families, Friends and Substance Use. Visions is a cross-collaborative effort alongside other BC Partners agencies which allows for new perspectives to be brought into each issue.

15,200 print copies shared across BC



I feel a sense of hope when I read Visions. I appreciate the dialogue around past, present, and emerging mental health concerns.

Visions reader

8919



100,000+views of Visions online articles

In partnership with



funding provided by



www.heretohelp.bc.ca/visions

Beyond the Blues

Beyond the Blues: Education and Screening Days is an annual awareness campaign featuring a series of free community events across BC. Beyond the Blues builds community capacity and helps people start conversations about mental well-being, mood, anxiety, stress, and risky drinking and drug use, as well as when and how to get help. Events often offer optional screening self-tests with on-site clinician debriefs in its efforts to educate, empower, and connect attendees to local resources. This year, 16 agencies participated in hosting a total of 44 events. Participants expressed that they were satisfied with their experience, that the info was useful, and that they feel better informed on where to get support. As a result of attending, attendees said they were most likely to make lifestyle changes, try something new, seek help, share information with someone they cared about, or follow up with someone.



It's great to start conversations about mental health in the Fall semester just as stressors can be pilling up... [The event] opens a conversation that continues in many ways within the campus community about mental health and the importance of accessing support and resources.

Beyond the Blues event host

participants at Beyond the Blues events

14,000



resources and materials shared

said the event helped them

In partnership with



funding provided by





Advocacy and Systemic Change

Supporting mental health for all in British Columbia is about more than healthcare or self-care. It's also about ensuring more equitable access to the factors that support mental health such as income, employment and education, and advocating for legislation, policies and practices that support the rights and interests of people experiencing mental illness.



Transforming Systems of Care

A significant focus this year has been working to transform how we respond to and care for people experiencing a mental health crisis by advocating for the Peer Assisted Care Team (PACT) model in more BC communities (see p. 23). We were successful in achieving increased and sustainable funding as part of the BC Budget 2024 consultations, moving from one-time to three-year funding for PACT. We also shared our **crisis care reform** efforts across the province, including at the Union of BC Municipalities Convention, the Housing Central conference and the Columbia Institute's High Ground conference on municipal governance.

In April, CMHA BC provided a submission to the Province of BC to inform the update on BC's **Poverty Reduction Strategy**, which included recommendations on mental health and substance use, income and employment and housing. We were particularly heartened to see the emphasis on peer workers in the provision of mental health and substance use care in the Province of BC's updated strategy.

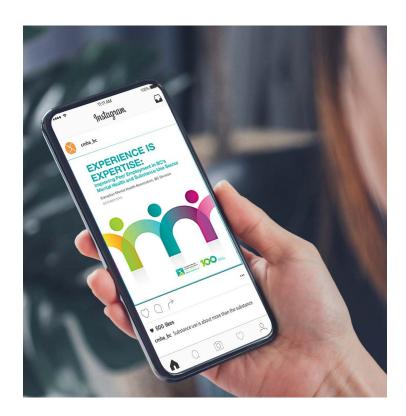
In October 2023, we spoke up against Bill 34 and the harmful narratives about people who use drugs driving this proposed legislation, which sought to restrict use of illicit substances in most public spaces. CMHA BC is proud to stand in solidarity with people who use drugs and their advocates to speak out against this regression to BC's decriminalization policy that allowed for the use and possession of a small amount of select illicit substances for personal use in an effort to combat stigma and reduce barriers to care.

On the horizon is a provincial election where a lot is at stake. The Ministry of Mental Health and Addictions has accomplished a lot since its inception in 2017, and there is still much to do. We will be advocating to ensure that this momentum carries forward into a new government mandate and that we are working towards a cohesive, accessible and quality system of care where someone can ask once and get help fast.

Peer Employment Project

October 2023 marked the completion of a three-year community-based research project on the state of peer work in the mental health and substance use sector in BC. This work has resulted in important research and recommendations to support and enhance peer work across the sector, tools for employers to best support and empower peers, and resources for peers to reflect on their own work experiences.

Since the release, we have been focused on knowledge translation, hosting webinars and presenting at research symposiums and conferences. CMHA BC will continue to advocate for the rights and needs of peer workers and has already been able to make a tangible impact by advising on the Province of BC's Health Career Access Program for mental health and addictions workers to ensure that this opportunity for advanced education is available to peers in the sector.



Peer Assisted Care Teams (PACT)

The PACT model, led, administered, and advocated for by CMHA BC, is a community led crisis response service. These mobile response teams respond to mental health and substance use crisis calls within local BC communities. Each team consists of trained professionals equipped with lived and living experience, mental health expertise, and other extensive training. The teams specialize in de-escalating situations and connecting individuals in crisis to ongoing community services and supports. PACT aims to alleviate reliance on existing emergency services such as fire, ambulance and police by providing a specialized, compassionate mental health response. Services are locally operated by community-based organizations deeply embedded in their communities, with provincial oversight from CMHA BC. PACT is available in North/West Vancouver, New Westminster and Victoria, with services available to Prince George, Kamloops and Comox Valley in 2024.

4000+ calls received

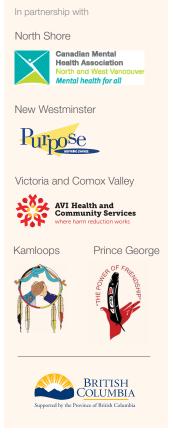


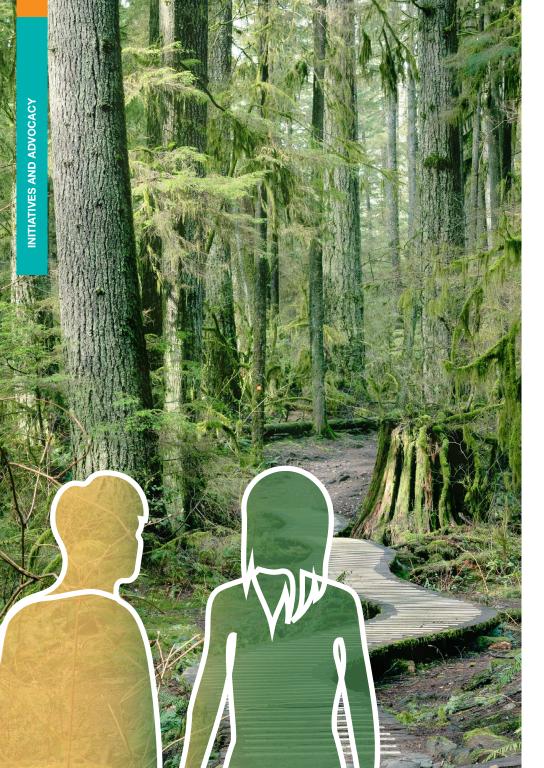


I am honoured to have the opportunity to work in my community who has given so much to me. To me, being a member of PACT means walking alongside someone in their dark and difficult moments, seeking to better understand and hold space for the people in our community.

We journey with people who are in a moment of crisis without judgement or pride because we too have been in crisis and have seen the power and validation that comes of being truly seen and heard.

Gillian Johnston, Peer Assisted Care Team responder





Independent Rights Advice Service

The Independent Rights Advice Service provides information to people who are detained and experiencing involuntary treatment under the Mental Health Act in BC. Launched in February 2024, the service helps people understand what their legal rights are and how they can act on those rights. Individuals experiencing involuntary treatment can request a meeting with a Rights Advisor, or access information and resources about their rights through the website. Rights Advisors can help individuals access second medical opinions, medical records, and legal services, complete Review Panel Hearing applications and more. The service is designed and delivered using a partnership model that brings together multiple organizations and stakeholders including the expertise of people with lived and living experience of involuntary detainment, Métis Nation BC, Community Legal Assistance Society, Health Justice, Urban Native Youth Association, First Nations Justice Council and First Nations Health Authority.

40

rights advice meeting requests received —9 in person,10 by phone, 21 by videoconference

66

While hospitalized multiple times I was never informed that I had rights. This service would have given me a voice to speak up and advocate for myself. Knowing my rights would have helped me de-escalate and know what was in my control instead of escalating out of fear and confinement. My hope in sharing my lived experience is to shine light on why this service is important.

43

mental health facilities served

908

website

Service Delivery Partners





Canadian Mental
Health Association
Mid-Island



Canadian Mental
Health Association
Vernon & District
Mental health for all



Rights Advisor

Bed-Based Treatment and Recovery Grants

In 2021, the Province of BC invested in increasing the number of community-based publicly funded substance use treatment and recovery beds through a grants program administered by CMHA BC. At the time, this program resulted in establishing 105 grants-funded treatment and recovery beds to help ensure that the people most affected by mental health and substance use challenges have access to quality treatment and recovery services where and when they need them. A further investment announced in 2023 has facilitated the doubling of the number of grant-funded beds to 201 by the end of March 2024. More beds and service operators will be added throughout the course of the upcoming year to continue to meet demand, while continuing in-depth evaluations into the client experience and developing tandards of practice. Priority populations for service are individuals in rural and remote locations throughout BC, Indigenous people, women, and pregnant or newly parenting mothers.

679

clients accessed treatment and recovery programs

"

I had no means to pay for treatment, and my stay was funded by CMHA, providing an opportunity for a new beginning. Recovery is a journey marked by both triumphs and challenges. Yet, every day in recovery, even the most difficult, surpasses the best day lived in active addiction. Discovery House not only saved my life but gave me a life full of purpose and meaning.

Richard Thompson, Penticton Recovery Resource Society (Discovery House) Alumn 2427

referrals received 84%

occupancy rate

201

grant-funded treatment and recovery beds

55%

clients identified as First Nations, Indigenous, Métis, Inuit, and/or Urban Indigenous





Mental Health Champions: Our Valued Donors

At the heart of our mission are the incredible individuals and groups we proudly call our Mental Health Champions. These dedicated supporters drive our efforts to provide and advocate for vital mental health and substance use services and supports. From individuals making personal donations to organizations hosting fundraising events like golf tournaments and outdoor activities, our champions come from all walks of life. Employees participate in workplace giving programs, and businesses partner with us through corporate giving, while thoughtful supporters include us in their estate plans to ensure their legacy promotes mental well-being for generations to come.

Each donation, whether large or small, helps us break down barriers, challenge stigma, and provide hope to those affected by mental health issues and substance use. Together, our Mental Health Champions make a profound difference in the lives of countless individuals and families. We are deeply grateful for their unwavering support and commitment.



Team Fundraising Events

Recognizing organizations, communities, and groups who came together to fundraise for mental health.

Truffle Group Point of Sale Fundraiser \$3.031

Bigger than Basketball

Annually organized by Bradley Braich \$5,130

Centra Charity Golf Tournament

Hosted by Centra Windows \$55,000

Fraternal Order of the Eagles Ladies' Auxiliary

Conclusion of a two-year fundraising campaign \$3,450

Shoppers Drug Mart Run for Women

Annually hosted by Shoppers Drug Mart \$41.098

Real Estate Grind for Mental Health

Annually organized by Richard Costello \$20,000

Mind Your Health

Hosted by Westburne Electric \$705

KC Memorial Golf Tournament \$40.000

10,000

Mood Swing Golf Tournament

Annually hosted by Jeff Palmer, Highland Pacific Golf \$11,011

Run for Sobriety

Annually organized by Josh Baron \$4,652

Tennis Community Fundraiser

Annually hosted by Michail Michaels, Tennis Troupe \$8,245

Miles for Mental Health

Organized by Insure BC \$5.000

First Responders Half Marathon

Organized by Trevor Soll, Multisports Canada \$7.304

Kiewit-Ledcor TMEP Partnership

\$50,000

Employee, Corporate and Community Giving

Dr. Christiaan Avenant Inc.

JillyBox.com

Million Dollar

Benefaction

Fraternal Order of Eagles No. 2101

The Kung Family Foundation (TD Canada Trust)

Turnham Woodland Barristers & Solicitors

The Truffles Group

Great Canadian Casinos INC.

Pacific Christian School

RBC Foundation

First West Credit Union

Centra Cares Foundation

CCM Construction Ltd.

Leon's Furniture Limited

The Margaret Roche-Heywood Foundation

Sharpline Developments

Vancouver Foundation

Shoppers Foundation for Women's Health

The Gore Mutual Foundation

Karuna Fund (Nicola Wealth)

Mamida Holdings Inc.

Victoria Foundation - Rheta May Pederson

Memorial Trust

BC Recreation and Parks Association

Fairway Fund at Vancouver Foundation

The Estate Planning Council of Vancouver

Hunter Family Foundation Fund at

Vancouver Foundation

Thomas Alan Budd Foundation

Shri Durga Hanuman Religious & Cultural

Society Of BC

Rexel Canada Electrical Inc. - Head Office

Westburne West - Division of Rexel Canada

Electrical Inc.

Patricia Miller & Richard Grant Fund at

Vacouver Foundation

Prospera Credit Union

FortisBC Energy Inc

Strategic Charitable Giving foundation

Volunteer Victoria Trust Account

Westburne

Lightburn Family Fund via Vancouver

Foundation

7-Eleven Canada, Inc

Vancouver Community College

Moving Forward Family Services

Coast Mental Health

Compensation Employees Credit Union

The Board of Education of School District 61

Brandt Group of Companies

Dr Kalwinder Singh Saran Inc

Metanoia Creations

Uncommon Purpose

Victoria Foundation

WorkSafeBC

MJW Kreative

Simon Fraser University

StrictlyTango



Join our team of **Mental Health Champions!**

There are many ways to make a difference. Reach out to learn how you can:

- **Host your own fundraiser** to raise awareness and funds in your community
- Continue your legacy with Planned Giving make a big impact with a gift to CMHA in your will
- Donate stocks and securities with a simple transfer form, for a full tax receipt CMHA

Visit www.cmha.bc.ca/donate or email fundraising@cmha.bc.ca today!



Ride Don't Hide

Ride Don't Hide is the largest mental health bike ride in Canada. The Ride Don't Hide movement began in 2010 as BC's Michael Schratter embarked on a global journey to cycle 40,000 km, crossing six continents and 33 countries and to raise funds for CMHA. Michael's mission was to bring awareness to the stigma surrounding mental illness by sharing stories around the world. CMHA BC hosted Victoria's 11th annual Ride Don't Hide event on June 4, 2023.

\$81,374 raised

232 5

participants



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Clinic 805

SILVER SPONSOR

Island Floor Centre

BRONZE SPONSORS

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Scotty Manufacturing

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Fax: 604-688-3236

www.cmha.bc.ca

We respectfully acknowledge x^wməθk^wəẏəm (Musqueam), Skwxwú7mesh (Squamish), səʾlilwətaʔ⁴ (Tsleil-Waututh), Lkwungen (Songhees) and Wyomilth (Esquimalt) peoples on whose traditional, unceded lands the CMHA BC offices are located.