

66TH ANNUAL CMHA MENTAL HEALTH WEEK MAY 1-7, 2017

SICK OF WAITING

GET LOUD for positive mental health.

GET LOUD and make a difference.

Waiting. Say you're at a bus stop. You're waiting for the bus to come. Say you're late for work, or to pick up your children. You are feeling a little impatient, but you know that, sooner or later, a bus will be along.

But say you're waiting for mental health care or mental health services. You might be waiting an awfully long time.

Mental illnesses are treatable. People can, and do recover, but these illnesses often go untreated until they become severe. We don't wait until stage 4 to treat cancer. We act fast. But when it comes to mental illnesses, it's another story.

Visit
MentalHealthWeek.ca to
GET LOUD
for mental
health

WAITING CAN BE A MATTER OF LIFE AND DEATH

Here's what you need to know:

- **One in five Canadians** will experience mental health problems or mental illness in any given year. Still, only one-third of us will seek out – and receive – the treatment we need.
- **Mental health care has always been drastically underfunded, and has never been funded on par with physical health care.** This year, for the very first time, the Federal Government will transfer earmarked funds for mental health care to the Provinces and Territories.
- **People with mental illness and addictions are more likely to die prematurely** than the general population, in part due to a lack of access to health care. Tragically, nearly 4,000 Canadians die by suicide each year.
- **Compared to other commonwealth countries** like the U.K. and The Netherlands, Canadians wait significantly longer for doctors and specialists.

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Canadian Mental
Health Association
Mental health for all

- **Many Canadians rely on their family doctors** for mental health care, but fewer than half (43%) of Canadians could get a same- or next-day appointment.
- **Not all mental health services are publicly funded**, so many people are waiting indefinitely for services such as counseling.
- **While it is faster to see a private specialist, like a psychologist**, Canadians who don't have insurance or financial resources may not be able to pay for private services.
- **Discrimination and stigma** prevent some people from asking for help. 60% of people with a mental health problem or illness won't seek help for fear of being labeled.
- **Community-based programs and services** such as Bounce Back and Living Life to the Full can help address mental health symptoms early but they need direct funding.
- **Everyone's treatment needs are different**, and sometimes the right services and community supports aren't available when people need them.
- Canadians need illness prevention, mental health promotion and education, adequate housing, and financial security.

WHAT CAN WE DO?

Here are some strategies that might help if you are waiting for mental health care:

If you are in crisis, go to the nearest hospital Emergency Department, call 911 or contact a crisis line in your community.

- **Make an appointment with your family doctor** or at the clinic where you normally receive health care.
- **Write to your elected representatives** and explain why you – and other Canadians – need better, faster access to mental health services.
- **Connect with community-based mental health organizations** for more information about mental health promotion and illness prevention.
- **Talk with supportive friends and family.** Loved ones can offer both emotional and practical support—like scheduling appointments or finding services.
- **Connect with others who have personal experience with a mental health problem.** Learn more about their recovery journey.

How CMHA can help

Every year, CMHA's remarkable cross-Canada team of more than 10,000 staff and volunteers provides more than half a million Canadians with vital, community mental health services and support. Contact your local CMHA at cmha.ca to learn more.



Canadian Mental Health Association
Mental health for all

Founded in 1918, the Canadian Mental Health Association (CMHA) is the most established, most extensive community mental health organization in Canada. Through a presence in hundreds of neighbourhoods across every province, CMHA provides advocacy and resources that help to prevent mental health problems and illnesses, support recovery and resilience, and enable all Canadians to flourish and thrive.