

Request for Proposals

Rapid scoping review on advancing quality services for the mental health of older adults.

Submission Deadline: 11:59PM EST, Monday, January 31, 2022

Purpose

The Mental Health Commission of Canada (MHCC) is seeking a consultant to conduct a rapid scoping review and stakeholder map about the current landscape across Canada related to the mental health of older adults. Over the past two years, in the wake of the COVID-19 pandemic, numerous new policies and programs have been put in place to address the disproportionate pandemic impact on older adults in Canada, while understanding that issues existed prior to, and will remain after the pandemic recedes. This scoping review will take stock of strategies, programs and policies that address older adult mental health and discuss key barriers, lessons, and recommendations of where efforts should be directed for improvement.

This rapid scoping review will help to inform the development of the MHCC's older adult mental health strategy by:

- Identifying system gaps and areas for action for the MHCC at a national level,
- Informing a future national older adult mental health action plan, and,
- Ensuring future actions do not duplicate other existing ongoing work by others in this space and amplify existing best practices.

Background

The MHCC has supported work in older adult mental health since its inception. Older adult mental health was identified as priority 1.4 in the Mental Health strategy for Canada. The MHCC has developed a range of projects to help policy makers, service providers, and caregivers ensure that older Canadians get the mental health supports they need. Seminal to the MHCC's work in this area are the *Guidelines for Comprehensive Mental Health Services for Older Adults in Canada* (the Guidelines). The Guidelines provide evidence-based recommendations to service providers and policy makers on ensuring a comprehensive service system that is inclusive of the mental health of older adults in a variety of settings.

The MHCC's 2021-2026 Health Canada workplan includes a renewed focus on older adult mental health, including mobilizing key stakeholders to spread best practices, promote evidence-based research to improve quality, collaboration, and access across the continuum of health services.

With the growth in our aging population, mental health problems and illnesses among older adults are likely to affect every family. If not addressed, the increasing pressure on the health-care system will have significant social and economic impacts.

While mental health in older adults is as important as mental health in any other stage of life, it does not always receive the attention and services that it requires. COVID-19 has disproportionately impacted older adults in Canada, with most COVID-19 deaths occurring in long-term care homes. COVID's most obvious effects have been on physical health, but the pandemic has also had a profound impact on the mental health of older adults (MHCC, 2021).

Scope

The scoping review could include, but is not limited to:

- Overview of the unique mental health care needs of older adults;
- Brief description of:
 - o rates of people living with mental health problems or illnesses who are considered an older adult (55+) – stratified by priority populations (e.g., IRER, LGBTQ2S+, First Nations, Inuit and Metis, Women and Youth)
 - o Gaps in mental health services related to diverse groups of older adults across society and access to services,
- An assessment/environmental scan of evidence-based best practices and lessons learned of policies, strategies, standards, and programs that support the mental health of older adults;
 - o Review should focus on Canada (national and provincial) but can also include international best practices where appropriate.
 - o limitations and barriers to access and outcomes by priority population and sub-population.
 - o Gap analysis of system changes and resource needs to support the mental health of older adults across both the community and long-term care settings;
 - o Appraisal of limitations of the current evidence, opportunities for future research, and recommendations of areas for action.

- A stakeholder map that represents the organizations who are responsible for, or involved in advancing the mental health of older adults and how they are connected or influence each other

The MHCC intends to align efforts with [The UN Decade of Healthy Ageing](#) (the Decade). The Decade focuses on four action areas, including:

- Ageism: changing how people think, feel and act towards age and ageing
- Age-Friendly Environments: ensuring that communities foster the abilities of older people
- Integrated Health Services: deliver person-centred integrated care and primary health services responsive to older people
- Long-term Care: provide access to long-term care for older people who need it

Findings and recommendations from the Scoping Review should be organized / categorized into the four action areas with a specific focus on mental health.

Note: we are open to other suggestions and recommendations on the overall scope of this review.

Deliverables

1. A project plan for the scoping review and stakeholder map, including stage-based planning, scope, timelines, and budget
2. Proposed scope and search parameters for the literature review and stakeholder map
3. A literature review, based on the barriers and facilitators related to the mental health of older adults
4. A map of key stakeholders in the sector
5. A final report that includes the findings and recommendations for action, connected to the four action areas of the Decade.

Note: The MHCC will be responsible for communications supports, including translation, editing, and design for all public-facing content.

Qualifications

The successful candidate will:

- Be experienced in conducting qualitative research, content auditing, and assessment of various audiences, particularly decision makers, policy makers, and health-care service providers
- Be experienced in conducting research related to older adult mental health
- Be familiar with the role of the MHCC and other key guiding documents (below)
- Have the capacity (internal or with external support) to review relevant French-only Canadian literature and policies.
- Effective project management and research skills (access to a librarian is an asset)
- Ability to complete the project within the limited budget available.

Budget

The total maximum allowable budget for this project is \$50,000.00 CDN (including all applicable taxes)

Please submit a detailed budget on how the money will be allocated across the different elements outlined in this request and include any additional indirect costs/fees or in-kind contributions for the work.

Timeline

- 11:59PM EST, January 31, 2022: deadline for proposal submission
- February: successful candidate(s) will be notified
- March 2022: check in on progress of work
- May 2022: deliverables due
- Bi-weekly check-ins

Proposal Requirements

1. Project plan for all deliverables with a focus on approach/methodology, activity timelines, and budget (including GST/HST/PST)
2. A statement of how you will incorporate the UN Decade of Healthy Ageing framework into the findings and recommendations for action
3. A statement of how you will incorporate MHCC's commitment to social justice and human rights, social determinants of health and health equity, intersectionality, gender-based analysis plus (GBA+), Indigenous cultural safety and humility
4. Names, CVs or bios, and roles of project team members
5. Two examples of related prior projects
6. Two relevant references (preferably previous clients) that the MHCC may contact
7. A list of other organizations that you plan to draw on or engage to complete the work

Evaluation Criteria

1. Demonstrated experience with mixed methods research and evaluation
2. Demonstrated history of writing and publishing on advancing the mental health of older adults
3. Demonstrated familiarity with the key concepts related to the advancement of older adult mental health
4. Familiarity with the role of the MHCC, the MHCC's [safe language guide](#), social determinants of health (including [sex- and gender-based analysis](#)), and the [Guidelines for Comprehensive Mental Health Services for Older Adults in Canada](#)
5. Adequate resource capacity to meet identified timelines
6. Ability to complete the project within scope (timelines, budget, and products/goals)

Supporting Documentation and Applicable Resources

1. [Changing Directions, Changing Lives: The Mental Health Strategy for Canada](#)
2. [Guidelines for Comprehensive Mental Health Services for Older Adults in Canada](#)
3. [Compendium of Good Practices for Improving Seniors Mental Health in Canada](#)
4. [Supporting Older Adults' Mental Health: Using principles and values to promote best practice](#)
5. [Applying the Guidelines for Comprehensive Mental Health Services for Older Adults in Canada during COVID-19](#)
6. [Decade of Healthy Ageing: Baseline Report](#)
7. [Government of Canada's Approach to Gender-Based Analysis Plus \(GBA+\)](#)

How to submit a proposal

Submission Deadline: 11:59PM EST, January 31, 2022

Please send your proposal to Katie Ellis, Program Manager at kellis@mentalhealthcommission.ca and cc Sylvianne Breton, Program Coordinator, at sbreton@mentalhealthcomission.ca and request confirmation of receipt.

Note: MHCC reserves the right to select the proponent of its choosing, or to not proceed with any.

Recognition and authorship

The MHCC will retain the intellectual property rights of the literature review and final report. Researchers and contributors will be recognized in reports produced during the

project in keeping with applicable international guidelines. Co-branding and shared knowledge translation opportunities may be available.

References

Mental Health Commission of Canada. (2021). Applying the Guidelines for Comprehensive Mental Health Services for Older Adults in Canada during COVID-19. Ottawa, ON.