Mental Health Commission of Canada

Mental Health Commission of Canada

Strength in Partnership

Message from the Chair and our President and CEO

Stronger Partners, Stronger Mental Health

The Mental Health Commission of Canada engages across sectors and jurisdictions, connecting partners, interest holders, decision-makers and lived experience to foster collaboration and advance shared goals of stronger mental health.

The stories in this impact report highlight just a few of our joint initiatives that are destined to have tangible, enduring and positive impacts on mental health. At the heart of each project lies a strong partnership. Since our start in 2007, the Commission has continually leveraged the power of partnerships to steadily increase our relevance, effectiveness, and value. From improving workplace mental health and safety standards with the CSA Group to realizing the potential of AI with the Canadian Centre on Substance Use and Addiction, our collaborations strive to transform knowledge into practical resources, strategies, and practices.

"In my 20 years in service to the Commission, I've learned that lasting change comes through partnership. From workplaces to communities, from board members to frontline service providers, every relationship we've built has strengthened the Commission's impact. That collaborative spirit is how we'll continue to advance mental health across Canada and beyond."

CHUCK BRUCE,
Chair, Board of Directors

Collaboration was also central to our Future Program and Planning Consultations, a critical initiative that charted the Commission's future path. The work involved a comprehensive process of consultation, engagement, and analysis. We are grateful to all contributors, particularly First Nations, Métis, Inuit, and people with lived experience. The consultations confirmed the importance of our role connecting evidence, knowledge and lived experience to provide actionable insights and solutions that advance mental health and improve lives. As part of this work, we have crafted and begun implementing new mission, vision, values, and role statements, as well as our next strategic pillars. As we head into 2027, our 20th anniversary year, this work will deeply inform our priorities and our programs.

As current Chair and having been a part of the Mental Health Commission of Canada since its inception, I can attest to the fact that the Commission has always leveraged the power of partnerships to steadily increase our effectiveness and value.

CHUCK BRUCE,
Chair, Board of Directors

As the PCEO, I look ahead to our 20th anniversary with excitement, knowing we have so many mental health partners, champions, and innovators to work alongside. I would be remiss not to also acknowledge that it is a bittersweet anniversary. After 20 years of service to the Commission, eight of those as our Board Chair, Chuck Bruce will complete his mandate with us in March of 2027. Through partnerships like those described throughout this report, and in so many other ways, your legacy will endure.

LILI-ANNA PEREŠA, C.Q.
President and Chief Executive Officer

Our Future Path

After informed consultations, the Mental Health Commission of Canada is pleased to share our three strategic pillars of work across the ecosystem. **Guide and Inform** provides leadership, standards, and evidence to strengthen policies and decision-making. **Advance and Strengthen** works to improve access, equity and quality, expand mental health literacy, and reduce stigma. **Anticipate and Innovate** explores emerging needs and solutions to enhance system transformation and strengthen Canada's readiness for future challenges and opportunities. Partnering with others across Canada will ensure these commitments help drive lasting improvements, and we are very grateful to those who have supported us in their development.

Mental Health Commission of Canada

We are proud to share our new Vision, Mission, Role, and Values.

Vision

Strong evidence.
Strong solutions.
Strong mental health.

Mission

We connect evidence, knowledge and lived experience to provide actionable insights and solutions that advance mental health to improve lives.

Role

As a Pan-Canadian Health Organization dedicated to mental health, the Mental Health Commission of Canada engages across sectors and jurisdictions to advance its mission by:

- **Enabling Collective Action –** Convening diverse interest holders, partners, sectors, decision-makers, and voices of lived experience to align priorities, foster collaboration, and advance shared pan-Canadian objectives.
- **Informing Solutions and Decision-Making –** Informing Solutions and Decision-Making—Amplifying the voices of lived experience and listening to First Nations, Inuit and Métis leaders, and guiding research to address knowledge gaps and provide thought leadership that informs mental health strategies.
- **Transforming Knowledge –** Turning evidence and insights into national standards, practical resources, strategies, and practices that shape care across Canada.
- **Building Capacity –** Designing and delivering initiatives and training that strengthen mental health literacy, reduce stigma, and help advance prevention and early intervention.

Values

- **Collaboration –** Achieving more together than we could alone
- **Innovation –** Turning possibility into progress
- **Contribution –** Harnessing our passion for meaningful impact
- **Integrity –** Building trust through our actions
- **Care –** Putting people at the heart of how we work

Guide and Inform

Workplace mental health and safety

Employers and employees alike will soon benefit from the second edition of the National Standard of Canada for Psychological Health and Safety in the Workplace, to be published in November, 2026. The updated Standard is the result of a collaboration with CSA Group (formerly Canadian Standards Association), an accredited standards-development organization, and incorporates the latest evidence regarding modern workplaces.

Approximately
62% of workers in Canada report high levels of work-related stress.

Source: Statistics Canada

We collaborated in 2013 to establish the Standard—the first of its kind in the world. In 2020, we also collaborated with CSA Group on another world's first: the National Standard for Mental Health and Well-Being for Post-Secondary Students. A commitment to continuous improvement is inherent in both Standards.

The updated edition of the Workplace Standard includes psychosocial hazards, such as chronic overwork, bullying and burnout. To mitigate these, the Standard prescribes a broad, systematic approach that includes identifying and assessing potential hazards, and actively working to prevent harm and protect safety. The second edition considers a host of new and emerging factors, such as climate change, digital technologies, and diversity, equity and inclusion. Thanks to the participation of Accessibility Standards Canada, the updated Standard also deepens accessibility considerations.

We continue to work with CSA Group to raise awareness of the Standard and promote its adoption, and to gather evidence about relevant best practices.

Burnout prevalence

1 in 3
working-age people in Canada is reported to experience burnout.

Source: Psychology Works Fact Sheet, Canadian Psychological Association

"As mental health needs and concepts evolve, so too must the Standard. The CSA Group is proud to collaborate with the Commission to help ensure that the Standard keeps pace with changes in workplaces, and protects both workers and employers."

KAY PENN, P. Eng.,
Director, Standards,
Health and Safety Sector Director,
CSA Group

Advance and Strengthen

Increasing Mental Health Literacy

A collaborative project to update and expand Mental Health First Aid (MHFA) training promises to increase mental health literacy in Canada.

10,867
courses delivered since 2007

836,000+
people trained since 2007

2,203
First Nations, Inuit, and Métis people trained since 2007

Originally developed in Australia more than 25 years ago, MHFA trains people to recognize significant changes in mental health, and to respond in a supportive, practical and appropriate manner. It also helps participants build confidence, reduce stigma and protect their own mental health. Increasingly adopted by organizations as part of workplace mental health strategies, completed by more than 8 million people in 55 countries[1], MHFA has evolved continually to incorporate relevant research findings. We are Canada's sole licensee.

In response to calls for a version that certifies learning outcomes, we partnered with a range of organizations, along with experts in education and mental health, including MHFA facilitators and people with lived experience. The project created two courses, available online or in person: MHFA Certification (2 days) and MHFA Essentials (one day). We also collaborated on the development of a series of MHFA adaptations that address the distinct needs of older adults, and the veteran community.

We work in partnership with First Nations, Inuit, and Métis communities and organizations to advance culturally relevant, distinctions-based approaches to mental health and wellness. Through training, knowledge mobilization, and collaborative initiatives, we support community strengths, resilience, and self-determined solutions that reflect Indigenous cultures, experiences, and ways of knowing.

"More and more organizations recognize the positive impacts that MHFA training has not only on the mental health and wellness of workers, but also on corporate culture and efficiency. Creating MHFA Certification also makes it easier to incorporate it into policy, as is common with other first aid training."

PAULA CORCORAN,
Independent MHFA Facilitator
Person with Lived Experience

1 https://openingminds.org/training/mhfa/

Anticipate and Innovate

Realizing the Full Potential of AI

A partnership with the Canadian Centre on Substance Use and Addiction (CCSA) promises to provide much-needed practical guidance regarding the use of artificial intelligence (AI) in healthcare.

76%
of people living in Canada find AI effective for their MH, but only
14% trust it.

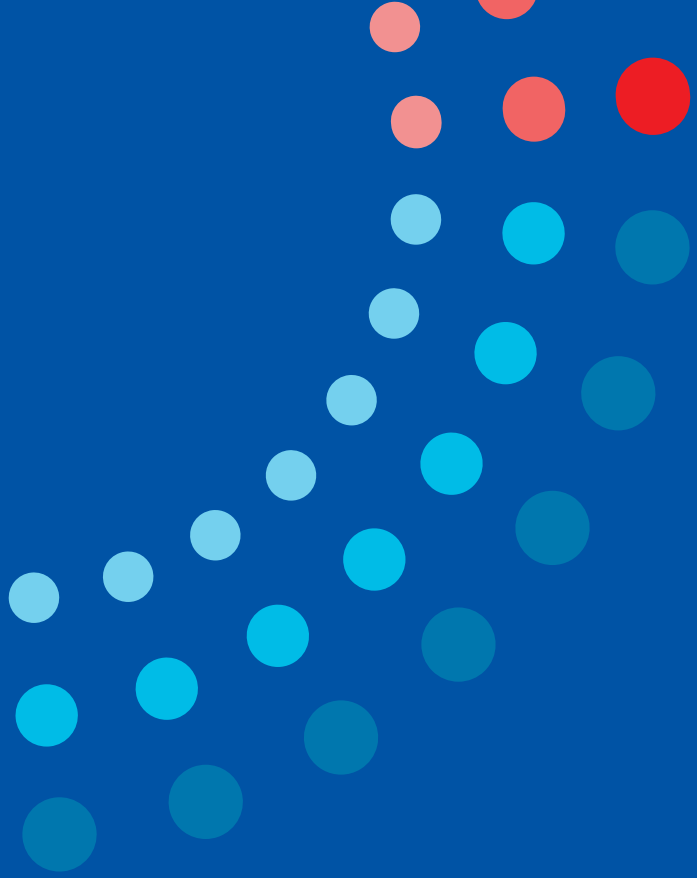
Source: The Role of Virtual Services and AI in Mental Health Care Across Canada, Mental Health Commission of Canada, 2026

> **We're proud to co-lead with the Commission on the development of Canada's first national guidance for AI in the mental health and substance use health field. Together, we can do so much more than we could apart, including creating real systemic change."**
>
> **DR. KIM CORACE,**
> Vice President, Innovation and Senior Scientist,
> Canadian Centre on Substance Use and Addiction

The rapid adoption of AI in healthcare poses a host of challenges and opportunities to individuals, practitioners and organizations. Generative AI uses online content to create new data, such as advice on diagnosis and treatment.

Currently, however, little evidence-based guidance exists regarding the safe and effective use of AI in healthcare in Canada. Our project with CCSA prioritizes safety, accountability and well-being.

The project, overseen by a steering committee of experts, includes a literature review, environmental scan and consultations with relevant groups, including people with lived experience. The work identifies 10 key considerations under three themes: trust and explainability of AI systems; human-centred care; and equity and data governance. In 2027, the project expects to deliver a suite of tools to meet the needs of individuals and families, healthcare providers and organizations, and researchers and policymakers.



Mental Health Commission of Canada

The Mental Health Commission of Canada head office is located on the unceded traditional territory of the Algonquin Anishinaabe Nation. As a national organization, we also acknowledge that we work on the traditional lands of many different nations.

Our regular funding partners

Health Canada Santé Canada

HealthPartners PartenaireSanté

Funds raised through HealthPartners helps us to fund a broad array of initiatives.

Thank you to all of our donors!

Mental Health Commission of Canada

Suite 1210, 350 Albert Street
Ottawa, ON K1R 1A4

Tel: 613 683-3755
Fax: 613 798-2989

/mental-health-commission-of-canada
@MHCC_ /theMHCC @theMHCC

mhccinfo@mentalhealthcommission.ca
www.mentalhealthcommission.ca

ISBN: 978-1-77318-374-9