



## NEWS RELEASE

*For immediate release*

### MENTAL HEALTH COMMISSION OF CANADA PLEASSED TO HEAR PREMIERS' FOCUS ON FAMILIES AND MENTAL HEALTH ISSUES

**Calgary, July 22, 2011** – The Mental Health Commission of Canada (MHCC) is pleased to see that the Council of the Federation, composed of Canada's premiers, making mental health promotion and mental illness prevention a priority.

"This is another clear indication that the issues of mental health and mental illness have risen to the top of the provincial and territorial governments' agendas. I was pleased to see the premiers acknowledge the reality that poor mental health and mental illness are the leading causes of disability in our country," said Louise Bradley, MHCC President and CEO. "Much of the MHCC's work is geared towards decreasing stigma and transformational change and we look forward to doing so through close collaboration with all levels of governments and the stakeholder community, so all Canadians can enjoy good mental health," she said.

The premiers also voiced their belief in the importance of the role that families and caregivers play in our healthcare system. Ella Amir, the MHCC's Family Caregivers Advisory Committee Chair and also the Executive Director of Quebec-based AMI-Quebec - a community organization committed to helping families cope with the effects of mental illness - is delighted to hear of the emphasis on families. "We know that families can face great challenges with respect to caring for a member living with mental health issues. The focus the premiers are placing on the challenges facing many Canadian families is encouraging," she said.

The MHCC is currently working on the first-ever Mental Health Strategy for Canada which addresses many issues related to improving Canada's mental health care system, one of which is the role of families. The MHCC will continue to work directly with provinces and territories to help ensure that the recommendations made in the strategy are adopted and create meaningful change in the lives of Canadians. *(For more on the MHCC strategy, please visit <http://www.mentalhealthcommission.ca/English/Pages/Strategy.aspx>)*

#### *About the Mental Health Commission of Canada*

*The Mental Health Commission of Canada is a catalyst for transformative change. Our mission is to work with stakeholders to change the attitudes of Canadians toward mental health problems and to improve services and support. Our goal is to promote mental health and help people who live with mental health problems lead meaningful and productive lives. The Mental Health Commission of Canada is funded by Health Canada. For more, visit [www.mentalhealthcommission.ca](http://www.mentalhealthcommission.ca)*

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