



## EVENTS

**“Duty to Accommodate in the Federally Regulated Workplace”**

Ottawa, March  
24-25 2009

A member of the MHCC Workforce Advisory Committee will provide an update on the Commission's work

**“Into the Light”**

Vancouver, July  
19-20 2009

The mental health strategy for Canada will be discussed at this conference as well as issues relating to homelessness, stigma and discrimination

## MHCC Seeks Input on Mental Health Strategy



Participate in the on-line consultation:  
[www.mentalhealthcommission.ca/strategy](http://www.mentalhealthcommission.ca/strategy)

The Commission is asking all Canadians to get involved in the development of Canada's first mental health strategy. An e-consultation was launched on February 9th to seek the views of members of the public on the draft framework document, called “Toward Recovery and Well-Being.”

Howard Chodos, Director of the Commission's Mental Health Strategy initiative explains that the draft framework document details eight broad goals that will guide the development of the strategy.

“We are excited at the prospect of engaging Canadians in a dialogue about transforming the mental health system in our country,” he said. Cana-

dians have until April 19th to participate.

A special on-line workbook will guide members of the public through the document, and invite them to share their views. This is the first document to be released for public discussion

by the Commission since its creation in 2007.

The mental health strategy team is also holding meetings



*Mental health strategy director Howard Chodos speaks with interested stakeholders in Toronto*

with stakeholders in thirteen communities across Canada.

These consultations began February 3rd in St. John's, Newfoundland, and the last is set to take place in Edmonton



*The team: Howard Chodos, Mary Bartram and Gillian Mulvale are gathering input from Canadians on the draft strategy*

on March 26th. The other cities listed on the tour are Halifax, Ottawa, Thunder Bay, Toronto, Regina, Vancouver, Montreal, Yellowknife, Iqaluit, Whitehorse and Winnipeg.

“We have decided to release the document in draft form so that we can gather feedback on the framework from people from coast to coast to coast,” said Chodos.

“Once we finalize the framework with the help of the mental health community and interested Canadians, we will be able to move on to the second phase – producing a roadmap for HOW to achieve the eight goals for transforming the mental health system.”

## Michael Kirby Named To Order Of Canada



*This award recognizes a lifetime of achievement and merit of a high degree, especially in service to Canada or to humanity at large.*

MHCC Chair Michael Kirby has been appointed an Officer of the Order of Canada, the highest civilian honour that can be given to an individual in Canada.

Her Excellency the Right Honourable Michaëlle Jean, Governor-General, made the announcement in December.

The honour is in recognition of Mr. Kirby's more than thirty years of public

service on major policy issues and his current commitment to confronting the challenges related to mental health.

Mr. Kirby was praised "for his contributions to public policy and good governance in Canada, and more recently, for his leadership of the Mental Health Commission of Canada."

"It has been my privilege to work towards improving

the quality of life for Canadians...to help make a difference. To be recognized for this work is deeply gratifying. This honour also reflects the efforts of the many people I have worked with over the years, including those currently involved with the Mental Health Commission," said Kirby.



**Participate in the mental health strategy for Canada e-consultation. Visit [www.mentalhealthcommission.ca](http://www.mentalhealthcommission.ca)**

## Commission challenges students

Journalism and community services students will be in the audience at one of the first events put on as part of the Commission's anti-stigma, anti-discrimination campaign. A symposium entitled 'STIGMA – Mental Illness, Misconceptions and Stereotypes' will be held on March 19th at Mount Royal College in Calgary. The aim of the day is to encourage new supports for people with mental health problems and change in the words that are used to describe them.

Calgary Forensic psychologist, Patrick Baillie, will moderate the symposium. The presenters include Otto Wahl from the University of Hartford who will speak about how media and popular culture portray stigma and mental illness. Andre Picard is an award winning health policy journalist from the Globe and Mail. He will dissect media coverage of three tragic events in Canada. Amanda Tetrault, a young photojournalist from Montreal will present a visual

essay about her relationship with her father who has a severe mental illness. The impact of the event on the students will be evaluated through pre and post surveys which will determine the students' attitudes about mental illness and stigma.

In addition to planning the symposium, the MHCC is looking at a new identity and name for its anti-stigma / anti-discrimination initiative and hopes to begin using it in early May.

## Youth Reference Group

One of the exciting projects of the Child and Youth Advisory Group is the creation of a Youth Reference Group. It will help guide the Commission in matters pertaining to youth.

Committee member Joe Leger has lead the process.

A call for applications earlier this year was circulated across Canada. It resulted in almost 50 responses from

young individuals from all corners of the country. With help from others on Joe's sub-committee, interviews have been completed.

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# Two Women Lead Partners for Mental Health

Sandra Bray and Louise Pajot-Phipps are the new Program Managers who will oversee the Commission's latest initiative, called "Partners for Mental Health." The women will help coordinate a nationwide volunteer movement designed to shine a spotlight on mental health.



Sandra Bray (left) and Louise Pajot-Phipps (right) are leading "Partners."

Bray has over 25 years of experience in both corporate and not-for-profit mental health organizations. She has a long history of volunteer coordination and management, most recently as Manager of Volunteer Resources at Alberta Health Services.

"I am thrilled to be part of a national effort that is focusing on changing the way Canadians think about mental ill

ness. It's time," she says. Bray is looking forward to creating links to community organizations and volunteers. "They will play such a key role across Canada, in raising awareness about mental health issues, and ensuring there is consistent support, and acceptance, of individuals living with mental illness and their families," she says.

Pajot-Phipps has extensive managerial experience through her work as a Human Resources manager overseeing a merger of three firms. Her most recent role was as Program Coordinator at the Calgary Catholic Immigration Society. She has a significant background in recruiting, managing and retaining a network of volunteers.

"I am excited to be joining the Commission's dynamic and committed team of employees and volunteers," she says. Pajot-Phipps says the coming months will be a welcome challenge. "Creating a broadly-based social movement that keeps mental health issues out of the shadows forever will certainly keep me engaged!" she says.

# Update on Mental Health and Homelessness Projects

Work on the MHCC mental health and homelessness projects is picking up steam. The cities of Moncton, Montreal, Toronto, Winnipeg and Vancouver are the sites for five research demonstration projects which are set to launch later this year.

The idea is to investigate the best way to provide housing and services to people who are homeless and living with a mental illness. A "housing first" model will be used, which means there will be a focus on providing a place to live.

There will also be a focus on different populations within each city. For example, in Vancouver the project will highlight people with addictions and substance abuse problems.

A review panel including renowned experts in mental health and homelessness from across North America recently

provided detailed feedback on the research proposals for each site.

The proposals involved tremendous collaboration among local researchers, service providers and other stakeholders. Site coordinators are now in the process finalizing their site-specific plans and developing their local teams.

Soon, a Consumer Research Consultant will also be on board with this initiative. This consultant will be someone with a lived experience of homelessness and mental illness. This person will work to ensure that people with lived experience are included in all aspects of the projects' implementation.

Cameron Keller, Manager of the Mental Health and Homelessness Research Demonstration Projects, is looking forward to the days ahead. He says, "I am honoured to have a role in such an



exciting and meaningful project that will yield important findings. I am excited that throughout the research project we will be making a real

difference in the lives of hundreds of Canadians who have significant housing and support needs."

At a recent national "Growing Home" conference in Calgary on homelessness, project members had a chance to outline the scope of this MHCC initiative and answer questions. There was significant interest from people across the country and as the projects get underway and develop, updates will be posted on the MHCC website.



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**The Mental Health Commission of Canada will:**

- Be a catalyst for the reform of mental health policies and improvements in service delivery;
- Act as a facilitator, enabler and supporter of a national approach to mental health issues;
- Work to diminish the stigma and discrimination faced by Canadians living with mental illness;
- Disseminate evidence-based information on all aspects of mental health and mental illness to governments, stakeholders and the public.

## *Commission Welcomes New Chief Operating Officer*

Louise Bradley joined the Commission as Chief Operating Officer (COO) in February 2009.

“Louise brings with her a wealth of experience in the mental health field and I am very pleased to welcome her to help lead our team,” says MHCC President and CEO Michael Howlett.

Louise came to the Commission from her position as Vice President and COO of Regional Mental Health for Capital Health in Edmonton. There, she managed in-patient services and community programs and played a lead role in developing policy and designing and implementing mental health strategies.



*COO Louise Bradley is looking forward to helping the MHCC make a real difference.*

Louise is a familiar face to some within the Commission as she was a member of the MHCC’s Service Systems advisory committee.

Her career has also involved providing professional mental health advice and support, leading the integration of provincial health programs, and managing the needs of stakeholders across Canada. Louise is a registered nurse and also holds a Master of Science degree with a specialty in mental health.

Excited about her new role Louise says: “The Commission is the most important thing to happen to mental health in the country. I believe the work of the Commission can make a real difference in many lives and I am delighted and honoured to become a formal part of this great initiative.”

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Joe speaks about the quality of the young people who applied to be members of the group: “In the end, we could easily have put together a

quality group of over 25 youths. It has been hard choosing between such a wonderful selection of people.” Ten members will be named to the Youth Reference Group.

