

EVENTS

“Calgary
Chamber of
Commerce”

Calgary, Dec. 15,
2008

**MHCC President
and CEO Michael
Howlett will
speak about
homelessness at
this event**

“OPA
Conference on
mental health”

Toronto, Feb. 28,
2009

**MHCC Secretary
to the Board
Glenn Thompson
will speak to the
Ontario Psychiat-
ric Association
about the work of
the Commission**

New mental health charity takes flight

A new Canadian mental health charity will expand fundraising activities and develop leading research and demonstration projects in the field of mental health and mental illness.

On November 25, 2008 in Toronto, the Canadian Psychiatric Research Foundation (CPRF) announced it is forming a strategic alliance with Mental Health Partnerships of Canada (MHPC).

The joint announcement was made by Michael Kirby, Chair of MHPC and Chair of the MHCC, and Kevin McNeil, Chair of the CPRF.

“This alliance and major new



*Kevin McNeil (left) and Michael Kirby (right) announce they will join forces to oversee Mental Health Partnerships of Canada.
(Photo: Pat Parent Photography)*

thrust in fundraising will have a transformational impact on the mental health sector in our country,” said McNeil.

“Our alliance will create a charity for mental health on a scale with charities such as

breast cancer and heart and stroke.” Kirby added.

The CPRF has funded mental health research for nearly 30 years. It will bring significant research, peer review, and publishing capacity to the new partnership. MHPC has been established as a separate entity to support the goals of the Mental Health Commission of Canada.

MHPC is awaiting its charitable status and will contribute its broad fundraising potential to the new alliance.

“A national charity is critical if we want to keep mental illness out of the shadows forever,” Kirby said.

Anti-stigma meeting draws consensus

In September 2008, the MHCC hosted a “consensus” meeting in Toronto. The idea was to create a vision, principles, and consensus statement to help guide the 10 year anti-stigma initiative.

Representatives from national

mental health consumer, professional and non-profit organizations were invited to help craft the agreement.

All Canadians and organizations are invited to sign up and lend their support to the consensus agreement.

Link to the full document via:
www.mentalhealthcommission.ca
*Under Initiatives and Projects,
click on Anti-Stigma Campaign.*



The next MHCC Board Meeting is scheduled for Montreal from January 25-26, 2009

Read the full

Consensus

Statement on

Depression

Visit the MHCC

website, or

www.ihe.ca

Dr. Heather Stuart is currently a professor at Queen's University in Kingston, Ontario



Dr. Heather Stuart is the new Senior Consultant for the MHCC Anti-Stigma campaign. Stuart is currently the leading Canadian expert on stigma reduction related to mental health.

Stuart has worked in both hospital and community based mental health treatment systems and on international projects with the World Health Organization, the Pan American Health Organization, and the World Psychiatric

Organization.

In her role with the Commission, Stuart will use her expertise and experience with other projects around the world, to ensure the Commission's Anti-Stigma campaign stays on target.

Winnipeg board meeting highlights

MHCC Board Members and Executive staff met in Winnipeg on October 5th and 6th, 2008.

At a reception beforehand, members heard from Manitoba MP Stephen Fletcher who commended the MHCC on its work to date.

A number of important initiatives were announced at the meeting, notably:

- The MHCC will enter

into a partnership with the Canadian Institutes of Health Research in order to conduct research projects in the area of mental illness and homelessness.

- MHCC Chair Mike Kirby and President and CEO Michael Howlett reported on the future of **Mental Health Partnerships of Canada**, a new national charity.

- Also revealed, was the name for the MHCC's new volunteer movement:

Partners for Mental Health will be a national volunteer initiative with the goal of creating a groundswell of volunteers.

These volunteers will help initiate and carry out programs designed to benefit people living with a mental illness.

Consensus on depression

From October 15th-17th 2008 in Calgary, MHCC Chair Michael Kirby led an expert panel conference on depression in adults.

After two days of hearings, including input from people dealing with depression, the panel released a series of recommendations. They

include wide and immediate changes to how depression is viewed, prevented, diagnosed and treated in Canada.

The panel of health professionals, academics and public representatives, is calling on federal and provincial governments to develop

and promote policies to better help people with depression.

There are also key recommendations for action to be taken by the MHCC. The panel's final report is to be distributed to 20,000 government and health care related contacts.

Anti-stigma: Senior Consultant

MHCC participates in Mental Illness Awareness Week



MHCC Chair Michael Kirby speaks to the audience about the Commission during MIAW

The Mental Health Commission of Canada was a key participant at this year's Mental Health Awareness Week in Ottawa in

October. Members of the MHCC had the opportunity to provide an update on the work of the Commission, including developments related to its key initiatives.

The Commission's newly-designed website was also officially launched at the event. The new site includes video stories of hope and recovery.

To learn more about MIAW, visit www.miaaw.ca



MHCC Director of Stakeholder Relations, Phil Upshall, helps unveil new mental health-themed stamp

"Toward Recovery and Well-Being: A Framework for a Mental Health Strategy for Canada" will be released for public review and input

Progress report on national strategy

A draft National Strategy document is currently under review and set to be released for public review in early 2009.

The draft work is being altered to reflect initial feedback from MHCC members and government officials, among others.

Public consultations will then

occur and will include an on-line process, and a series of regional meetings.

The first phase of the national strategy will set out broad goals for what a transformed Canadian mental health system will look like. It will include a clear focus on recovery and wellness.

During the second phase, the Commission will focus on how to achieve these broad goals, across each sector and constituency.

Ultimately, the MHCC wants to develop a unifying vision, and encourage the adoption of Canadian best practices.

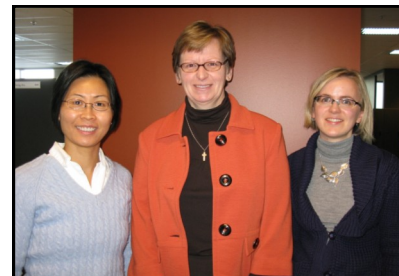
New MHCC research and planning team

The MHCC has established a new internal research resource team in its Calgary office. Three Associate Research Officers have been hired to liaise with and assist the Commission's Advisory Committees.

Brenda Leung, Susan Hardie and Sophie Sapergia will help find

the needed research tools and information to implement the committees' projects.

The trio will also help ensure knowledge translation and exchange principles are used to enable project results to adequately influence policy and practice.



Leung (left) Hardie (middle) and Sapergia (right) are the Commission's new research and planning team



**MENTAL HEALTH
COMMISSION OF CANADA**
10301 Southport Lane SW
Suite 800
Calgary, Alberta, Canada
T2W 1S7

www.mentalhealthcommission.ca

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.

Research Lead named to homelessness initiative

When Dr. Paula Goering talks about her new role as Research Lead for the MHCC's homelessness initiative, there's definite excitement in her voice. In fact, "this is probably the most exciting project I've ever been involved with," she says.

Research demonstration projects are being set up in five Canadian cities, including Moncton, Montreal, Toronto, Winnipeg and Vancouver. Each project will focus on homeless people who have a mental illness, but will also target distinct groups within that population. (For more information, visit www.mentalhealthcommission.ca).

The projects will utilize a "Housing First" model. Central to this model is the philosophy that people who are

homeless and have a mental illness, will respond better to interventions if they have a safe place to live.

Goering was attracted to this service and research agenda because it was a chance to do something "extraordinarily important." A chance to implement and investigate best practices at the same time.

"We will be creating knowledge that will provide a solid cross Canada understanding on how to best help people who have a mental illness and who are homeless," Goering says. She believes this collaborative work will create an extensive knowledge base that will provide convincing evidence to government decision makers and to the public.



Dr. Goering is currently head of the Health Systems Research and Consulting Unit at the Centre for Addiction and Mental Health in Toronto. She is also a professor in the University of Toronto's Dept. of Psychiatry.

Goering has drawn on her expertise in issues pertaining to homelessness and multi-evaluation studies, in order to help the MHCC design and implement its research demonstration projects.