



NEWS RELEASE

MENTAL HEALTH COMMISSION RELEASES FRAMEWORK FOR MENTAL HEALTH STRATEGY

Calgary, Alberta, November 30 2009 – In a first step toward changing Canada’s status as the only G8 country without a mental health strategy, the Mental Health Commission of Canada (MHCC) today released the framework for Canada’s national strategy.

The culmination of a year-long process, the document *Toward Recovery and Well-Being* introduces Canadians to the Commission’s vision for change and the actions needed to address the mental health needs of Canadians.

Drawing on input from thousands of people from all corners of Canada, it envisions a country in which all people have the opportunity to achieve and maintain the best possible mental health and well-being.

“This is a key step in developing a mental health system that puts people living with mental illness at its centre and has a clear focus on their ability to recover,” says Michael Kirby, Chair of the Mental Health Commission of Canada. “It also promotes the mental health and well-being of everyone living in Canada.”

Kirby adds that there is no health without mental health. “It’s something we all need. There simply is no us and them.”

The framework’s seven goals will provide direction in creating a transformed mental health system where:

1. People of all ages living with mental health problems and illnesses are actively engaged and supported in their journey of recovery and well-being.
2. Mental health is promoted, and mental health problems and illnesses are prevented wherever possible.
3. The mental health system responds to the diverse needs of all people living in Canada.
4. The role of families in promoting well-being and providing care is recognized, and their needs are supported.
5. People have equitable and timely access to appropriate and effective programs, treatments, services and supports that are seamlessly integrated around their needs.
6. Actions are informed by the best evidence based on multiple sources of knowledge, outcomes are measured, and research is advanced.
7. People living with mental health problems and illnesses are fully included as valued members of society.



Over the next two years, the Commission will work with many different people and groups across the country to develop the framework into a concrete mental health strategy and bring Canada in line with other G8 countries.

The Mental Health Commission of Canada is a non-profit organization created to focus national attention on mental health issues. The MHCC does not provide services, but rather acts as a catalyst for action. Although funded by the federal government, it operates at arm's length from government.

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