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# A Message from our Board Chair

**IN ANY GIVEN YEAR**, one in five Canadians will experience a mental health problem or illness. There is no one among us who hasn't felt its impact.

Part of our job at the Mental Health Commission of Canada is to sound the call regarding the urgent need for additional supports and services for Canadians living with mental health problems, and their families.

Each year, mental health problems and illnesses cost our country \$51 billion - both in health care expenses and lost productivity. Fortunately, innovative thinking, best practice sharing, and thoughtful new financial investments can - and will - reduce that financial and human burden. *Changing Directions, Changing Lives: The Mental Health Strategy for Canada* supports the need for this crucial investment, which will enhance our well-being as a nation. Working together with key partners, and with the integral support of Health Canada, the MHCC has identified how we can take collective action to ensure the greatest possible impact.

This Strategic Plan encapsulates the input of MHCC staff, our valued partners and our many friends in the mental health community. Each contributor has left an indelible mark on this plan. Their cumulative wisdom was invaluable to the Board as we shaped the MHCC's future direction.

Looking ahead to a bright future for mental health, I am honoured to be part of this journey.



**Hon. Michael Wilson, P.C., C.C.**  
**Board Chair**  
**Mental Health Commission of Canada**

Each year, mental health problems and illnesses cost our country \$51 billion – both in health care expenses and lost productivity.”

# A Message from our President and CEO

**IN JUST A FEW SHORT YEARS**, we've seen tremendous progress in advancing mental health and wellness in Canada. From the creation of the country's first mental health strategy, to homegrown innovations and stigma reduction, our collective efforts are gaining recognition around the world.

We can all take pride in the solid foundation we've built, together with our partners, but we must not shy away from the work that lies ahead. As we move forward, this Strategic Plan will serve as the MHCC's roadmap for even greater transformational change in our country.

All future work of the MHCC will contribute to the fulfillment of this plan. While it outlines focused priorities, it also allows for broad interpretation of how these goals can be achieved.

Our Strategic Plan is an ambitious and welcoming call to action. It is a reminder that the mental health and wellness of Canadians is a responsibility that we all must shoulder; however, it is an achievement that will enrich each of our lives.



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**Louise Bradley**  
**President and CEO**  
**Mental Health Commission of Canada**



Our Strategic Plan is an ambitious and welcoming call to action. It is a reminder that the mental health and wellness of Canadians is a responsibility that we all must shoulder.”



**OVER THE LAST NINE YEARS**, the MHCC has worked hard to shepherd meaningful changes across Canada's mental health landscape. Through national consensus building, we oversaw the creation of one of this country's most seminal mental health efforts: *Changing Directions, Changing Lives: The Mental Health Strategy for Canada*.

Since then, through our influence on policy, our stakeholder partnerships, and our leadership in knowledge-exchange, many of the recommendations in the *Strategy* are taking root and flourishing.

We are making serious inroads in our efforts to conquer stigma—and its destructive counterpart—discrimination.

# Our Story

Mental health is open for discussion, in our schools, our communities and—in a truly revolutionary step—in our workplaces.

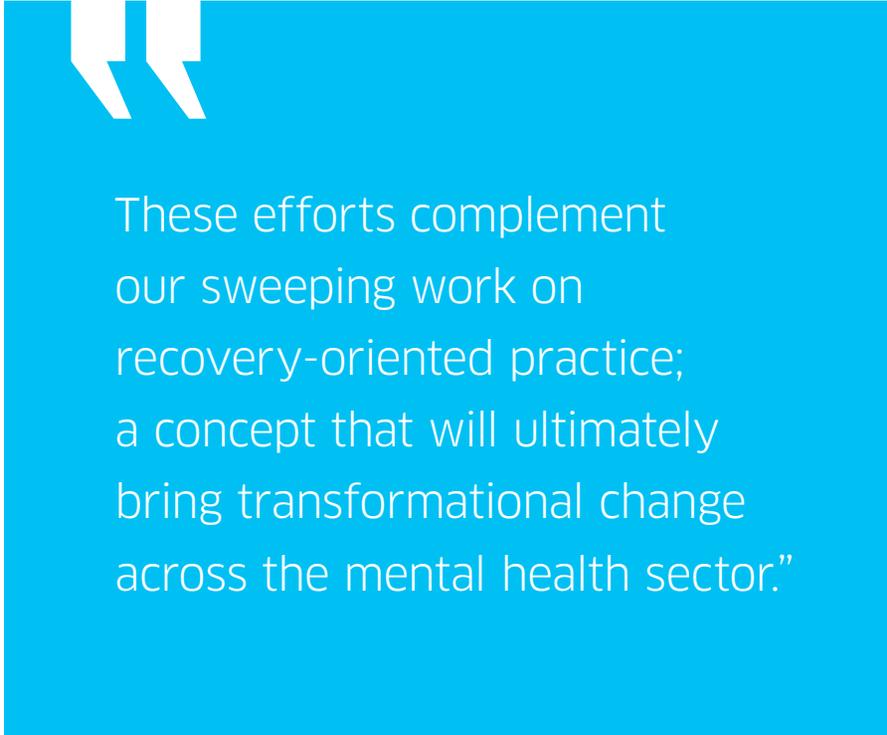
The MHCC's homegrown solutions include tools and resources that are helping employers safeguard their workers' mental health. And though much of this work is carried out in non-traditional spaces, like police stations and fire halls, we are also striving to improve quality of care by reducing stigma in healthcare settings.

These efforts complement our sweeping work on recovery-oriented practice; a concept that will ultimately bring transformational change across the mental health sector.

Yet, our task is far from complete.

Ten Canadians die by suicide every day. Canada lags behind developed nations in mental health spending. Five hundred thousand Canadians miss work every week due to mental health problems and illnesses.

Over the next five years, this plan will serve as the roadmap we will follow as we work together with our partners to achieve our vision: mental health and wellness for all.



These efforts complement our sweeping work on recovery-oriented practice; a concept that will ultimately bring transformational change across the mental health sector.”

# Key Success Factors

To deliver on this far-reaching Strategic Plan, the MHCC will operate as a high-performing organization. We will build on strong external partnerships and exceptional internal leadership to maximize the reach and impact of our efforts. The following structures and processes are integral to our success:



## Effective governance

Thoughtful policy, clear structure, and active relationships between the Board and CEO inspire meaningful contributions from Board Directors.

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## Financial stability

Adequate financial support underpins the implementation of this Strategic Plan.

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## Internal performance measurement and accountability

Top-tier systems and processes enable us to optimize our resources, maximize the impact of our actions, and strengthen our governance.



## Engaged supporters, partners, mental health champions, and people living with mental health problems and illnesses

Our effectiveness relies upon the strength of our relationships and our ability to empower our partners across the country.

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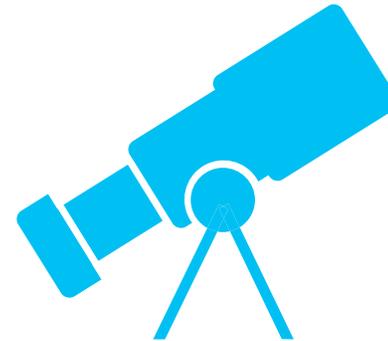


## Employer of choice

Being a top employer, with a healthy and productive work environment, allows us to attract talented individuals who embody our guiding principles.

Our Vision, Mission,  
& Guiding Principles

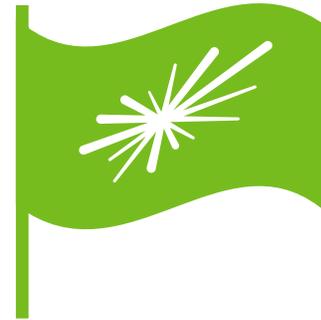
Vision



Mental health and  
wellness for all.

Our Vision, Mission,  
& Guiding Principles

## Mission



To raise awareness of the mental health and wellness needs of Canadians, and to catalyze collaborative solutions to mental health system challenges.

Our Vision, Mission,  
& Guiding Principles

# Guiding Principles



The guiding principles to which we aspire at the MHCC are embodied by our staff and embraced by our leadership. They are also reflective of the culture we wish to foster within the MHCC and in the mental health community.

- Champion ambitious, courageous, and progressive ideas;
- Embrace the principles of recovery;
- Be co-creators and collaborators;
- Integrate the voices of people with lived experience, families, and caregivers into all of the work we do;
- Promote and celebrate equity, diversity, and inclusion;
- Encourage and develop leaders;
- Seek and share new approaches in the spirit of continuous improvement;
- Be passionate in our work; and,
- Celebrate the contributions of others.

# Strategic Objectives

Our strategic objectives are foundational to our work, frame our priorities, and focus our efforts:



Leadership, partnership,  
and capacity building



Promotion and advancement  
of the *Mental Health  
Strategy for Canada*



Knowledge  
mobilization

# Strategic Priorities

Each strategic objective is underpinned by key priorities that outline how we can best achieve our goals; they define the steps we will need to take to meet our objectives. Often, these priorities will build upon one another, creating a whole that is greater than the sum of its parts.

Over the next five years,  
this plan will serve as the roadmap we will follow  
as we work together with our partners to achieve  
our vision: mental health and wellness for all.



# Strategic Objective #1:

## Leadership, Partnership, and Capacity Building

The focus of this strategic objective is to increase the effectiveness of Canada's mental health system by convening stakeholders, developing and influencing sound public policy, and inspiring collective action.

### PRIORITIES:



**1.1. Convene and align the Canadian mental health sector** by uniting key stakeholders to advance important issues and challenges.

.....



**1.2. Inform and influence public policy development** by working with stakeholders to define best and promising practices, and sharing recommendations with decision-makers and key influencers.

.....



**1.3. Optimize working relationships with the provinces and territories** in an effort to build a smart and streamlined pan-Canadian system.

.....



**1.4. Stimulate cross-sector action** by seeking meaningful opportunities to engage with all sectors— public, private, and not-for-profit.



**1.5. Seek a process of reconciliation in partnership with Indigenous peoples** by working to revitalize and strengthen relationships of mutual respect with Indigenous partners, and building relationships with leaders and champions in Indigenous mental wellness.

.....



**1.6. Raise the profile of mental health and wellness in Canada** by developing a strategic communications plan and working closely with mental health champions.

.....



**1.7. Be an active global mental health leader** by building and maintaining relationships with mental health champions around the globe, and sharing best and promising practices.

# Strategic Objective #2:

## Promotion and Advancement of Changing Directions, Changing Lives: The Mental Health Strategy for Canada

This strategic objective encourages actions that advance the *Strategy*.

### PRIORITIES:

-  **2.1. Identify ideas, champions, and best practices** that are effective and evidence-based, while encouraging new and promising practices that advance the *Strategy*.  
.....
-  **2.2. Prioritize system needs** within the context of the *Strategy*.  
.....
-  **2.3. Develop and disseminate** tools that will assist mental health champions to collectively act upon the recommendations in the *Strategy*.  
.....
-  **2.4. Collaborate with provinces, territories,** and other partners to implement innovative practices and solutions to improve mental health service quality and access.
-  **2.5. Provide partners with information, tools, and supports** that will facilitate the development, adoption, and evaluation of promising practices.  
.....
-  **2.6. Incubate initiatives** by identifying, structuring, supporting, evaluating, and appropriately divesting programs. We will, when appropriate and when there is a gap in the sector, take a more hands-on approach to initiatives and opportunities. We will engage in funding initiatives when they are co-developed and co-run, and on a time-limited basis.  
.....
-  **2.7. Review and evaluate progress** toward achieving key priorities articulated in the *Strategy*. We will monitor progress toward salient mental health indicators and milestones, using that information to best serve the mental health needs of Canadians.

# Strategic Objective #3:

## Knowledge Mobilization

This strategic objective focuses on developing and sharing effective and innovative knowledge.

### PRIORITIES:

-  **3.1. Develop and implement relevant and timely mental health and wellness indicators for Canada**, in partnership with system data collectors. We will create key measures and comparable data to help identify challenges and opportunities.  
.....
-  **3.2. Aggregate, integrate, and disseminate information** in a way that is relevant and customized for different audiences. We will find, analyze, and share important information and conclusions related to mental health and wellness best practices. We will manage information in a way that is most useful for organizations throughout the mental health system.  
.....
-  **3.3. Facilitate knowledge exchange and sharing of best and promising practices** by creating forums to share knowledge and advance collaboration in the system.  
.....
-  **3.4. Examine** how social determinants of health impact mental wellness, and identify groups with significant risks.



# MHCC Strategic Plan At-A-Glance

The MHCC’s Strategic Plan is a roadmap that will guide our work for the next five years.

**Vision** 

Mental health  
and wellness  
for all.

**Mission** 

To raise awareness of the mental health and wellness needs of Canadians, and to catalyze collaborative solutions to mental health system challenges.

**Guiding Principles** 

- Champion ambitious, courageous, and progressive ideas
- Co-create and collaborate
- Promote and celebrate equity and inclusiveness
- Give voice to people with lived experience

- Encourage and develop leaders
- Continuously improve with new approaches
- Be passionate
- Celebrate the contributions of others
- Embrace recovery

## Strategic Objectives

-  **Be a leading partner in forging a strong mental health system**  
Convene stakeholders and build relationships to create healthy public policy and inspire collective action for meaningful change.
-  **Advance *Changing Directions, Changing Lives: The Mental Health Strategy for Canada***  
Extend the reach of the *Strategy* and facilitate its implementation with evidence-based guidance, innovative ideas, and practical tools.
-  **Manage continuous knowledge exchange**  
Capture meaningful data to support effective analysis and be a conduit for the exchange of knowledge, solutions, and opportunities.

## Success Factors

- Effective governance
- Financial stability
- Internal performance measurement and accountability
- Engaged supporters, partners, and champions
- Employer of choice



Mental Health  
Commission  
of Canada

Commission de  
la santé mentale  
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