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Mental Health
Commission
of Canada

Commission de
la santé mentale
du Canada

PARTNERSHIP OPPORTUNITY

Request for Interest (RFI):

The Mental Health Commission of Canada invites organizations and groups to express interest in helping to inform a new **Standard for Psychological Health and Safety for Post-Secondary Students**

(CSA Z2003 Psychological Health and Safety for Post-Secondary Students)

Deadline: November 16, 2018.

For questions, contact studentstandard@mentalhealthcommission.ca
or normeetudiant@commissionsantementale.ca



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1. BACKGROUND

Acquiring a post-secondary education can be exciting, transformative, and demanding. We know that students are diverse and that each one will have different challenges. Each student brings a unique set of interests, skills, and life experience to their post-secondary years. Juggling financial, academic, family, and personal demands, in addition to being away from home for the first time, are among the challenges new students share.

The post-secondary years are also a time when young adults are more susceptible to developing mental health issues. For example, 75 per cent of those who receive a diagnosis of a mental health disorder first receive this diagnosis between the ages of 16 and 24.¹ There are also an increasing number of students coming to campus with diagnosed mental health disorders. Recent surveys indicate that 50 per cent of students use campus mental health services, with 10 per cent being in urgent or crisis situations.²

These growing demands, along with the greater complexity of mental health issues students are facing, can create challenges for post-secondary institutions. These challenges vary depending on which stage students are at; for example, younger students struggle more with the transition to adulthood while for senior students it's employment, independence, etc.

Many post-secondary institutions have expressed a desire to see a pan-Canadian, systemic framework to protect and promote student psychological health and safety. Such a framework would bring a number of benefits, such as

- creating a consistent approach across all institutions
- offering evidence and practice that can address mental health for students at various stages of tenure and states of well-being or mental illness
- promoting a more collaborative approach by clearly identifying the shared responsibilities of students, staff, faculty, and other institutional support services.

In response to this identified need, the Mental Health Commission of Canada (MHCC) is championing the development of a new voluntary Standard for Psychological Health and Safety for Post-Secondary Students (the PSS Standard). Such a standard will build on existing mental health strategies, national frameworks, and promising practices and create a consistent evidence-informed approach that any post-secondary institution across the country can implement. It will support student success by promoting and protecting their psychological health and safety.

¹ Kessler, R. C., Berglund, P., Demler, O., Jin, R., Merikangas, K. R., & Walters, E. E. (2005). Lifetime prevalence and age-of-onset distributions of DSM-IV disorders in the national comorbidity survey replication. *Archives of General Psychiatry*, 62, 503-502. doi:10.1001/archpsyc.62.6.593

² Willinsky, C. (2015, November). *Transitions between secondary and postsecondary*. Paper presentation at the Consensus Conference on the Mental Health of Emerging Adults, Ottawa, ON. Retrieved from the Mental Health Commission of Canada website: https://www.mentalhealthcommission.ca/sites/default/files/willinsky_nov_3_950am_0.pdf

THE OPPORTUNITY

The PSS Standard itself will outline a quality improvement process for systemically addressing student mental health. As such, it would complement the current [National Standard for Psychological Health and Safety in the Workplace](#), which aims to address the mental health and wellness of staff and faculty.

CSA Group has agreed to develop and write the new PSS Standard. To that end, it has created a Technical Committee of 35 diverse experts in the field, including students (and family members), administrators, faculty, staff, and union leaders from colleges, universities, technical institutes and CEGEPs to develop the Standard. Funding is being provided by Bell Let's Talk, the Rossy Family Foundation, the RBC Foundation.³

Though the Technical Committee of 35 people are diverse and represent a balanced matrix, there is a need and desire to engage and consult with stakeholders, individuals and communities across the country to ensure their voice and perspectives are included to inform the development of the Standard.

2. CALL FOR PARTNERSHIPS

The Mental Health Commission of Canada invites organizations and groups to express interest to help inform the development of a new Standard for Psychological Health and Safety for Post-Secondary Students (CSA Z2003 Psychological Health and Safety for Post-Secondary Students).

2.1 Stakeholders

For the MHCC, a stakeholder is a person, group, or organization that will be influenced by the PSS Standard, affect its uptake and, by providing input, benefit its development.

Stakeholders for the PSS Standard include the following groups:

- post-secondary students, their families, and caregivers
- Institutions (college, university, polytechnic, CEGEP), leaders, faculty, administrative staff, support service providers, staff and faculty unions, leadership deans, presidents, and VPs
- student voice groups: student unions and associations
- governments: provincial, territorial, and federal ministries of education and health
- social support groups and agencies: off-campus community organizations and faith-based groups
- service providers: employee and family assistance (EFAP, EAP), insurance, first responders, emergency medical technicians, emergency psychiatry treatment centres (hospital ERs), psychologists, mental health therapists and counsellors, and psychiatrists
- insurance providers and providers of student assistance programs (much like employee assistance programs) for student health and benefits
- groups representing special areas such as problematic substance use, suicide prevention
- researchers and academics
- Indigenous peoples
- LGBTQ+

³ The MHCC is funded by Health Canada.

- Quebec stakeholders
- francophone stakeholders

The MHCC and its partners intend to engage these stakeholders and give them the chance to inform the development of the PSS Standard.

2.2 We invite you

The MHCC is asking national, provincial, and regional associations, community organizations and other groups/individuals to help the MHCC reach their members to raise awareness about the project and the content of the Standard. This is an opportunity for everyone who wants to be involved to get involved and provide input. One of the key objectives of this RFI is to reach minority communities and priority population groups and ensure their voice is heard.

Over the course of about a year (September 2018 to May 2019), the MHCC and its partners will consult, meet, and hold events to let stakeholders contribute to the PSS Standard. The information gained in these sessions will be analyzed and fed into the work of the CSA Group Technical Committee. CSA Group is an accredited standards development organization.⁴

2.3 National consultations — goals and objectives

The MHCC's engagement with community organizations and groups will ask them to reach out to their members to

- raise awareness, interest, and engagement in the project
- build buy-in among networks that could champion its implementation, help develop tools and resources, or provide future implementation support on campuses
- assist in the development of the PSS Standard by gathering stakeholder input on concerns, needs, and experiences related to student success and mental health; for example, stakeholders' use of best, exemplary or promising practices, and any existing (or needed) evidence that would show progress
- highlight the importance of using the PSS Standard as a strategic tool for creating healthy campuses
- help develop key indicators of a healthy campus and the importance of institutional evaluations (at institutional and student levels) throughout the implementation process
- provide information on future tools and resources that could achieve the goals and objectives of the PSS Standard
- support future initiatives (e.g., research, evaluation studies) to measure success and impact of the PSS Standard on post-secondary institutions and students.

⁴ See Appendix A for more information on CSA Group and its standards development process.

2.4 What's in it for you?

Partnering with the MHCC will ensure that diverse stakeholders have a voice as well as an opportunity to

- play a critical role in the development of Canada's first-ever national framework to address student mental health
- connect with other valued stakeholders across Canada
- have members share their experiences and opinions about how institutions can support student mental health

2.5 What do we need from you?

We need you to complete a form in either English or French. The form will gather information from you on items such as:

- A list of possible opportunities/events for the MHCC to further connect with your stakeholders
- A description of how you or your organization will reach out stakeholders and raise awareness, engagement, and buy-in on the project
- An ability to collect and record your stakeholder's feedback in a comprehensive and pre-determined way (data to be collected anonymously and in aggregate) and submit it to the CSA Group Technical Committee
- A willingness to share current evidence-informed practices and/or frameworks that are effective in addressing the psychological health and safety of post-secondary students

2.6 What is available to you?

Through this partnership, you will liaise with the MHCC project team, which will help guide and confirm your efforts to engage with your stakeholders. This team will provide you with the necessary tools and resources, such as a facilitation guide, presentations, questions, and mechanisms (including online mechanisms) to effectively reach your stakeholders and gather feedback. These resources will be available in both official languages.

If needed, you can submit a small funding request to help offset some of the expenses incurred to engage your stakeholders.

3. APPLICATION FORM

If you would like to be part of this project to change campus cultures to promote and protect student mental health, please fill out the application form (Appendix B).

4. DEADLINE

Completed applications (English or French) should be sent no later than November 16, 2018, to studentstandard@mentalhealthcommission.ca or normeetudiant@commissionsantementale.ca. MHCC project team will reach out to the selected candidates no later than November 30, 2018. Successful candidates will be invited to a full day meeting on December 13, 2018 in Montreal. We ask that you please put December 13, 2018 on hold in your calendars in the instance that you are successful.

5. INQUIRIES/CONTACT

You can reach the MHCC project team at studentstandard@mentalhealthcommission.ca or normmeetudiant@commissionsantementale.ca.

6. APPENDIX A



Standards Development

CSA Group is an accredited standards development organization (SDO) through the Standards Council of Canada. The standards development process is well developed, and formally documented and controlled and includes eight distinct stages which are required when developing a National Standard of Canada.

Preliminary Stage	On receipt of a request for the development of a standard, an evaluation is conducted, and the project is submitted for approval.
Proposal Stage	Public notice of intent to proceed is published and a Technical Committee is formed, or the project is assigned to an existing Technical Committee.
Preparatory Stage	A working draft is prepared, and a project schedule is established.
Committee Stage	The Technical Committee or Technical Subcommittee, facilitated by CSA staff, develops the draft through an iterative process that typically involves a number of committee meetings.
Enquiry Stage	Stakeholder consultations support the development of the standard. The draft standard is offered to the public for review and comment. The Technical Committee considers comments and reaches consensus on the standard content. CSA staff conduct a quality review and a pre-approval edit is completed.
Approval Stage	The Technical Committee approves the technical content through a formal ballot. A second level review verifies that standards development procedures were followed.
Publication Stage	CSA Group conducts a final edit to verify conformity with the applicable editorial and accredited procedural requirements and then publishes and disseminates the standard.
Maintenance Stage	The standard is maintained with the objective of keeping it up to date and technically valid. This may include the publication of amendments, the interpretation of a standard or clause, and the systematic (five-year) review of all standards.

7. APPENDIX B

The Mental Health Commission of Canada invites organizations and groups to express interest in helping to develop a new Standard for Psychological Health and Safety for Post-Secondary Students

Instructions:

Please answer the questions below within the boxes provided.

A structured review using the following evaluation criteria will be used when assessing your application:

- 1) Summary of why you would like to partner on this project. What's in it for you?
- 2) Who are your stakeholders? Please review the list of stakeholders identified within the RFI and list as many as you serve. If there are some missing on that list, please feel free to add more to your response (25%)
- 3) How large is your reach (number of stakeholders/members you can reach as part of these consultations)?
- 4) List of the opportunities that MHCC can leverage to further connect with your stakeholders. For each opportunity, identify the audience, # of potential attendees/participants, objective to be achieved at this opportunity (refer to the objectives outlined within the Request for Interest), and expected outcomes (40%)
- 5) Do you have the resources to devote to the gathering of data collected through the consultations and submit responses to the CSA Group (using a pre-determined approach)? (20%)
- 6) Budget request, if any (NOTE: if budget is being requested, we ask that the organization bring equal matching funds in-kind or in dollars) (15%)
- 7) Other information you would like to share (not part of scoring matrix)

Applicant Information

Name (person completing application):	Consultation Lead (if different from the left column):
Organization:	Organization (if different from the left column):

<p>Position or Role:</p>	<p>Position or Role (if different from the left column):</p>
<p>Contact Information:</p> <p>Email:</p> <p>Phone:</p> <p>Address:</p>	<p>Contact Information (if different from the left column):</p> <p>Email:</p> <p>Phone:</p> <p>Address:</p>
<p>1. Summary of why you would like to partner with the Mental Health Commission of Canada on this project. What is in it for you <i>(include what you believe you and/or your organization have to offer that will inform the development of the Standard. Examples may include lived experience, clinical or counselling experience, working with students with mental health issues, ability to offer unique perspectives)?</i></p>	

2. Who are your stakeholders? Please review the list of stakeholders identified within the RFI and list as many as you serve. If there are some missing on that list, please feel free to add more to your response.

3. How large is your reach? i.e., how many stakeholders/members can you potentially reach as part of these consultations?

- < 100
- 100 – 1,000
- > 1,000

Specify by stakeholder type (if applicable).

4. List of the opportunities that the MHCC can leverage to further connect with your stakeholders. For each opportunity, identify the audience, # of potential attendees/participants, objective to be achieved at this opportunity (refer to the objectives outlined within the RFI), and expected outcomes.

5. Do you have the resources to devote to the gathering of data collected through the consultations and submit responses to the CSA Group (using a pre-determined approach)?

6. Do you have capacity to submit feedback in English?

Yes

No

7. **Budget Request:** Describe the budget you will require to hold the consultation sessions. Details required include: opportunity identified (from the list of opportunities listed above), type of expense, cost, funding requested from the MHCC, in-kind/cash contributions provided by the organization.

8. **Other information you would like to share with us; for example, if you have any community partners that you will be able to work with as part of the consultations.**