



Mental Health
Commission
of Canada

Commission de
la santé mentale
du Canada

MEDIA RELEASE

For immediate distribution

The Mental Health Commission of Canada welcomes Uppala Chandrasekera to its Board of Directors

Calgary, Alberta, September 14, 2012 — The Mental Health Commission of Canada (MHCC) is pleased to announce the election of Uppala Chandrasekera to its Board of Directors.

Ms. Chandrasekera is a Toronto-based social worker with expertise in anti-oppression, anti-racism and social justice work, focusing on the areas of health inequities and the social determinants of health. Her writings examine the impact of the lived experience of discrimination on the health and well-being of marginalized individuals and communities, and her advocacy efforts are focused on reducing health disparities and promoting human rights.

She brings a wide perspective on health care from her previous experiences working in human rights and social justice, health promotion, and health and social policy. She is currently a Planning and Policy Analyst at the Canadian Mental Health Association Ontario and provides policy support to the Provincial Human Services and Justice Coordinating Committee. She is the President of the Board of Directors at Parkdale Community Health Centre and Co-Chair for the Mental Health Police Records Check Coalition. As Managing Partner at Authentiq Consulting, Ms. Chandrasekera also provides education, training, and consultation services in the area of human rights, anti-racism and health equity. In 2011, she was recognized by the Association of Ontario Health Centres as their *New Emerging Leader*.

"Mental health affects us all, regardless of our socio-economic status, our race, our gender, or any other factors," says Ms. Chandrasekera. "The MHCC has been doing great work to increase awareness about mental health, and the development of *Changing Directions, Changing Lives: the Mental Health Strategy for Canada* is a significant milestone. I am delighted to be joining the MHCC Board to support this important work."

The MHCC Board is made up of non-government directors and government-appointed directors from across Canada. Ms. Chandrasekera is one of four new members named to the MHCC Board this week.

"The experiences and expertise of our new board members will be tremendously beneficial in guiding the Commission as we continue to present the national mental health strategy to policy makers, service providers and others across the country," says MHCC Board Chair David Goldbloom, MD. "They will play an important role, directing the MHCC in its mission to make mental health a higher priority for our country and to achieve change for people living with a mental health problem or mental illness."



Mental Health
Commission
of Canada

Commission de
la santé mentale
du Canada

ABOUT THE MENTAL HEALTH COMMISSION OF CANADA

The Mental Health Commission of Canada is a catalyst for change. We are collaborating with hundreds of partners to change the attitudes of Canadians toward mental health problems and to improve services and support. Our goal is to help people who live with mental health problems and illnesses lead meaningful and productive lives. Together we spark change.

The Mental Health Commission of Canada is funded by Health Canada.

www.mentalhealthcommission.ca

strategy.mentalhealthcommission.ca

- 30 -

Contact:

Kyle Marr, Senior Communication Specialist

Mental Health Commission of Canada

Office: (403) 385-4050

Cell: (587) 226-8782

kmarr@mentalhealthcommission.ca

*The views represented herein solely represent the views of the Mental Health Commission of Canada.
Production of this document is made possible through a financial contribution from Health Canada.*