

MENTAL ILLNESS INFORMATION SHEET

Mental Illness is a serious disturbance in thoughts, feelings and perceptions that is severe enough to affect day-to-day functioning. Some common types of mental illness include: depression, schizophrenia, bipolar disorder, anxiety disorders, eating disorders and Borderline Personality Disorder.

Significant Issues impacting those living with mental illness include:

- ❖ Safe, affordable housing
- ❖ Adequate, integrated care systems within communities
- ❖ Transitions from institutions to community care
- ❖ Focus on recovery
- ❖ Stigma of mental illness
- ❖ Discrimination
- ❖ Employment
- ❖ Workplace wellness
- ❖ Income support for those unable to achieve adequate employment
- ❖ Accessibility and availability of treatment for all incomes in all locales
- ❖ Forensic and law enforcement issues
- ❖ Family and community support systems
- ❖ Substance abuse

Strength in Numbers

- ❖ One in five Canadians will have a mental illness in their lifetimes
- ❖ More than 10 per cent of Canadians currently have a mental illness
- ❖ 90 per cent of those who commit suicide had a diagnosable mental illness
- ❖ Canadians with mental illness are 2.5 more likely to be victims of crime yet are not more likely to commit violent acts
- ❖ Suicide is the most common cause of violent death in the world
- ❖ Mental illness occurs at all ages, including 15 per cent of children and youth
- ❖ More than 80,000 young Albertans suffer from some form of mental illness
- ❖ Losses to the Canadian economy due to mental illness – \$33 billion per year
- ❖ Length of hospital stay for mental illness is twice that of other diagnoses
- ❖ More than 600,000 Albertans visit a physician with a mental health concern
- ❖ More than \$3 billion is lost to the Alberta economy annual due to disability claims for mental illness

Canadian Mental Health Association

CMHA was founded in 1918 and is Canada's only nation-wide voluntary, charitable organization that promotes the mental health of all people and supports the recovery and resilience of people living with mental illness.

In Alberta, CMHA has one division office, eight regional offices as well as the Centre for Suicide Prevention. It is also an active member of the Alberta Alliance on Mental Illness and Mental Health. It is active in education, direct programs for those with mental illness and their families, supportive housing, mental health promotion, referrals and information provision, advocacy and development of public policy.