



November 14, 2011

Dear Minister,

It is our understanding the provincial and territorial health ministers are meeting to discuss the 2014 health care accord in Halifax on November 24-25. The Canadian Alliance on Mental Illness and Mental Health (CAMIMH) is requesting that mental health and addictions be placed at the forefront of the agenda during these negotiations.

CAMIMH is an alliance of mental health organizations comprised of health care providers, as well as the mentally ill and their families. CAMIMH's mandate is to ensure that mental health is placed on the national agenda so that persons with a lived experience of mental illness and their families receive appropriate access to care and support.

Mental illness and poor mental health have a profound impact on Canadian society. It is estimated at least one in five Canadians will suffer from a mental illness at some point in their lives. Mental illness affects individual Canadians of all ages and in all segments of the population, and is prevalent in all regions, including rural and urban areas.

While mental illnesses constitute more than 15 per cent of the disease burden in Canada, a disproportionately small fraction of total health funding is allocated to mental health care—six per cent in Canada in fiscal year 2003/04, which is below the level in most European and other developed countries.

People can recover from mental illness, but until these issues are addressed efforts to provide better mental health care will continue to be hampered. As you develop your plans for the next Health Accord, **CAMIMH is requesting that the government address the needs of Canadians by:**

- **putting mental health at the forefront of the agenda during the upcoming Health Accord negotiations;**

- **dedicating funds towards mental health in the 2014 Health Accord and that funds spent on mental health, mental illness and addictions are proportionate to the burden of illness in Canada; and**
- **ensuring equitable funding for mental health research.**

CAMIMH is willing to provide any assistance you may require to help improve mental health services in Canada. Please do not hesitate to contact me if you have any questions about the alliance and its activities. You may also visit our web site at <http://www.camimh.ca/>.

We hope that you will consider our request to have mental health and addictions put on the agenda at the next provincial and territorial health ministers meeting. Thank you very much for your time and attention.

Yours sincerely,

Dr. John Higenbottam

CAMIMH , Co-Chair

Dave Gallson

CAMIMH, Co-Chair

CAMIMH Members

Autism Society of Canada
 Canadian Association for Suicide Prevention
 Canadian Association of Occupational Therapists
 Canadian Association of Social Workers
 Canadian Coalition for Seniors Mental Health
 Canadian Federation of Mental Health Nurses
 Canadian Healthcare Association
 Canadian Medical Association, Office of Public Health
 Canadian Mental Health Association
 Canadian Psychological Association
 Canadian Psychiatric Association
 Psychosocial Rehabilitation/Réadaptation Psychosociale (PSR/RPS) Canada
 Canadian Psychiatric Research Foundation
 Mood Disorders Society of Canada
 National Network for Mental Health (NNMH)
 Réseau national pour la sante mentale (RNSM)
 Registered Psychiatric Nurses of Canada
 Schizophrenia Society of Canada

Affiliate Members

Union of Psychiatric Nurses of BC