

CANADIAN MENTAL HEALTH ASSOCIATION

WOOD BUFFALO



ANNUAL REPORT 2017/2018

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CANADIAN MENTAL HEALTH ASSOCIATION (CMHA)

WOOD BUFFALO REGION

OUR VISION

Mentally healthy people in a healthy society.

OUR MISSION

A nation-wide voluntary organization that promotes the mental health of all and supports people experiencing mental health issues.

OUR GOAL

To provide services to all demographic areas in the region.

2017/2018

BOARD OF DIRECTORS

Steve Kelly

Corinna Pirie

Consuelo Alfaro

Caitlin Hardes

Tracy Meyers

Carina Francis

Brenda Smith

Tyler MacDonald

Charles MacDonald

President

Vice-President

Secretary

Treasurer

Director

Director

Director

Director

Director



Message from the Executive Director

This report will review the 2017/2018 programming year. This year has been an exceptional year for CMHA Wood Buffalo – one of progress, growth and success.

Over the past year, there has been a continuous theme of growth. Growth in the programs and services we provide, and in the staff and resources that make these services possible. The truth - which many outside of our region don't realize – is that our community is still struggling with the effects of the wildfire. Suicide, addiction, trauma, even sheer exhaustion is overwhelming people in our community. Due to these pressing needs within our community, we have pushed hard throughout this past year to bring this progress, growth and success into reality.

The biggest achievement and area of growth this year has been the development of the Centre for Excellence in Recovery and Peer Support. This facility is centered around providing immediate access to individuals struggling with Mental Health or Addiction issues, and to helping them on their recovery journey through continued peer-to-peer support. There are no barriers to access – anyone, any time, can come in through the centre's doors and find help in different forms, free of judgement, free of stigma, and free of charge.

Another area of growth and achievement to be highlighted is the strides made in our Indigenous Services. In working with the Red Cross, and indigenous community leaders, we are seeking to lower the rate of suicide and help communities heal after suicide through

prevention, intervention, and postvention. We are working to build community capacity to deal with this need in a manner that is effective, respectful, sustainable, and in keeping with traditional worldviews and values.

Our final area in which we experienced significant operational growth has been in our staffing and budget capacities. The needs of the community were – and still are – great. So I'm proud to say that today we've made significant strides in increasing our staff and our budget to support the needs of this community. In addition to this, we're building and training a strong base of Peer Support volunteers who will be working with The Recovery College to extend and enhance the ways we help our community.

In conclusion, this has been an incredible year. We've grown so much, achieved so much. There is as always so much more to do. The need is real, but so is the progress. And I know that with your continued supports and efforts, we'll be able to fulfill our three-part mission:

To provide mental health services that improve the quality of people's lives,

To reduce the stigma of mental illness,

And to advocate for a better health care system for you, your families, and our community.

Christine Savage
Executive Director

About us



Canadian Mental
Health Association
Wood Buffalo
Mental health for all

Welcome to CMHA - Wood Buffalo!

The Canadian Mental Health Association is a national organization, focused on the mission to promote mental health for all and to support people experiencing mental illness.

Since the 1980's we have been focused on supporting the mission to bring awareness and support to our community in regards to mental health. Our organization was incorporated in 1994 and we moved into our new location in 2015.

All our mental health programs are based on principles of empowerment, participation in decision-making, citizenship, inclusion in community life, peer and family support. We seek to consistently improve and build upon our past successes, so as to better connect and help individuals in the community.



Strategic Priorities

RAISE AGENCY PROFILE

**to maximize stakeholder engagement
and funding opportunities**

INCREASE OUR SCOPE

**of services to our outlying
Aboriginal Communities**

STABILIZE OUR DIVERSITY

**our funding to ensure a
sustainable future**

ATTRACT AND RETAIN

**people resources to become
employer of choice**

Staff



Christine Savage

Executive Director

Monica Viel

Manager of Operations

Katie McDonald

Mental Wellness Program Coordinator

Jasmeen Toor

Marketing & Community Education Strategist

Kristin Gear

Consumer Advocate

Maryann Cortes

Youth Programming Coordinator

Krista Anthony

Youth Programming & Caregiver Connections Coordinator

Alice Fontaine

Mental Health Worker

Angela Betts

Peer Mentor & Manager - Recovery College

Janene Hickman

Mental Health Engagement Strategist

Jacqui Everson

Manager - Recovery College

Bernie Lalor-Morton

Facilitator - Recovery College





Throughout the year, CMHA staff, board members, and volunteers take part in a variety of special community events and programs.

In addition to conferences and public forums, CMHA was involved in the following community initiatives in 2017:

- Mental Health Week
- Suicide Prevention Week
- Mental Illness Awareness Week
- Consumer Christmas Dinner
- Seniors Month
- Adopt-a-Trail
- Community Registration Day
- STHT (Support Through Housing Team)
- United Way “Seeing is Believing” Tours
- Community Registration Day at MacDonald Island Park
- Anti-Stigma ‘Make Noise’ Campaign at Keyano College
- Information booths at MacDonald Island Park
- Homeless Connect
- Keyano College Orientation Day
- Peter Pond Mall Wellness Fair
- Volunteer Management Breakfast
- Urban Market
- Bell Let’s Talk
- Community Café



World Suicide Prevention

In 2017, CMHA in partnership with SOS and the Fort McMurray Public School District hosted the Ceremony of Hope, a Smudging, Blessing and Tree Planting ceremony to celebrate life during World Suicide Prevention Week. Thanks to the generosity of our event partner, All Senior's Care, a \$10,000.00 donation was made towards suicide awareness and education for our community.





FUNDRAISING EVENTS

CMHA held a variety of successful fundraising events in 2017! These fundraisers would not have been possible without the tremendous, ongoing support from community members and local businesses, along with the hard work of our staff, board members, and volunteers. The events included:

- Charity Jam & Silent Auction
- Canadian Tire Community BBQ
- Bake Sale Fundraiser - Supporting The United Way of Fort McMurray
- Casino Night at Boomtown Casino
- March Mullets for Mental Health

THANK YOU!

We would like to express our heartfelt gratitude to all of our partners, donors and sponsors, for making these events such a resounding success. Your dedication and ongoing support are making a larger impact to help so many in our community. We couldn't do it without you!



United Way
Fort McMurray



EMERGENCY SERVICES



FORT MCMURRAY TEACHERS
Local #48 of the Alberta Teachers' Association

Doing what we love. Loving what we do.



UNIFOR
Local 707-A



SUNCOR
ENERGY



Alberta Health Services



VOIGT
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Education and Services - Adult Programming

CMHA's programs and services are designed to help people...

- Improve their mental health
- Integrate into the community
- Become more resilient
- Be supported in their recovery from mental illness

We strive to provide support and education for all to protect and promote mental health through education, advocacy, understanding and support with the goal to reduce stigma around mental health.

It is our mandate to provide Mental Health programs and services that are responsive to local needs. We provide training and workshops to adults on a variety of topics affecting individuals in our community through 2017 including:

408 individuals took part in CMHA mental health education programs in 2017.

- Empowering Women's Self esteem
 - Anger Management for Adults
 - Stress Management
 - Living Life to the Full
 - SafeTALK
- ASIST (Applied Suicide Intervention Skills Training)
- Mental Health First Aid Training for Adults: BASIC
 - Basic Facilitator Training

Suicide is among the leading causes of death in 15-24 year old Canadians....but there is help. Have the conversation.

***Coming in 2018 *
Child & Youth Suicide Prevention
Workshops**

**Tattered Teddies
Straight Talk**



Education and Services - Youth Programming

Our programming is not limited to only adults. CMHA believes in the development of our youth, and has a well-developed partnership with the Fort McMurray Public School District, allowing us to offer in-school programming to youth, grades k – 12 helping them reduce the stigma and learn coping skills.

This programming includes:

- WITS
- The Fourth R – Healthy Relationships Plus Program (HRPP)
- Mental Health and High School Curriculum
- Be Safe!
- Additional presentations on stress, anxiety and other mental health topics.

1,450

students were reached on average each month during the 2017/2018 school year.

As part of the **WITS** program, in 2017 CMHA held **11 school-wide assemblies** to discuss **anti-bullying** and **peer skills**.



Students were **sworn in** and **deputized** through our partnership with the Fort McMurray RCMP as official "**Wits LEADers**" in their schools.



Paws for People

Volunteer Pet Visitation Program

Pet therapy originally began in Fort McMurray in 1989 with two residents and their dogs visiting seniors. Since these beginnings the program grew into a network of volunteers and pets with more visitations being added.

In 2010 PAWS for People joined under the CMHA umbrella as a local volunteer group interested in the therapeutic effect of animals on people.

These volunteers and their dogs/cats are screened and trained to make visits to multiple locations across town.

The program continues to grow and is coordinated by Koralee Samaroden.



The PAWS team loves to travel!
In the 2017/18 year, PAWS went on 195 venue visits, connecting with over 5000 individuals in our community.



How Can Pet Visitation Help?

Physical benefits. Interaction with visitation teams dogs has been shown to reduce blood pressure, provide physical stimulation and assist with pain management.

Social benefits. A visiting dog promotes greater self-esteem and focused interaction, for example with other students and teachers.

Cognitive benefits. It has been empirically proven that therapy dogs stimulate memory and problem-solving skills.

Emotional and mental health benefits. A recent national survey of adolescent mental health found that more youth (aged 15 to 24) met the criteria for mood disorders and substance use disorders than any other age group. Making a connection with a visiting animal can help.



Membership

CMHA – Wood Buffalo is seeking passionate individuals to become Association Members.

By Becoming a CMHA – WB Member you help by:

- Supporting specialized services across Alberta and in your local community
- Joining a movement to build a community of hope, support and inclusion for people experiencing mental illness
- Showing you care about mental health in Alberta and your community

What Do You Gain?

- Membership with your local CMHA region and the CMHA Alberta Division
- The opportunity to vote for members of our governing board of directors
- The opportunity to attend our divisional annual meeting
- Information and news about mental health in your community

Memberships

Annual membership fees:

- \$5 Individuals on a limited income
- \$20 Individual
- \$50 Organization

Contact us at adminassistant@woodbuffalo.cmha.ab.ca to sign up or learn more.



**Canadian Mental
Health Association**
Wood Buffalo
Mental health for all

Stay Connected

Canadian Mental Health Association Wood Buffalo

10019 MacDonalD Ave, Fort McMurray, AB. T9K2K7

Phone: 780-743-1053 Fax: 780-743-0959

Office Hours: Monday to Friday 8:30 AM to 4:00 PM

Follow us

 Facebook @ facebook.com/CMHAWB

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 Instagram @CMHAWB

 Website: woodbuffalo.cmha.ca

**Thank you to our
Primary Funders**



United Way
Fort McMurray
fmunitedway.com



**Alberta Health
Services**



REGIONAL MUNICIPALITY
OF WOOD BUFFALO



**CANADIAN
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