



# CMHA

NOVA SCOTIA DIVISION

2023 - 2026 STRATEGIC PLAN



Canadian Mental  
Health Association  
Nova Scotia  
*Mental health for all*

# LAND ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

The Canadian Mental Health Association Nova Scotia Division Nova Scotia Division recognizes that we live work and play in Kjiptuk (Halifax) in Mi'kma'ki (Nova Scotia, Canada), the ancestral and unceded territory of the Mi'kmaq People.

This territory is covered by the "Treaties of Peace and Friendship," which Mi'kmaq, Wəlastəkwiyik (Maliseet), and Passamaquoddy Peoples first signed with the British Crown in 1725.

This treaty continues to be upheld today.

We are also in HRM which was settled and built by people of African ancestry in the 18th and 19th centuries.

African Nova Scotians were formative in the building of our communities in meaningful ways and have contributed to the development of Nova Scotia as we know it today.

At CMHA NS we acknowledge that we have benefited from the colonization of this region, and we strive for respectful relationships with the stewards of this land.

We must not forget that we are all treaty people and that we have responsibilities to each other and to this land.

# BACKGROUND AND CONTEXT

## OUR TIME IS NOW.

Mental health has never been more top-of-mind in Nova Scotia.

For CMHA Nova Scotia Division there has never been a more critical time to be fiercely intentional and bold in our actions to amplify our voice and our impact across our province's mental health landscape.

In April 2022, our staff and board collaborated to create a strategic plan that would act as our roadmap for the next three years.

The goal of this plan is to provide clarity and direction within our organization that will allow us to strengthen our collective impact, increase our profile and help shift public perceptions about mental health and mental illness.

The most important part of any successful strategy is people, so we started this plan by asking as many as we could.

Through individual interviews and open and honest discussions we surveyed over 500 stakeholders in the community, including our clients, our branches, all levels of government and our peers in the nonprofit sector.

We talked to as many of them as we could.

And most important of all, we listened.

CMHA NS employs 18 people across the province, and we can be an even more powerful force for good if we can work together with our branches and board of directors even more, guided by a new three-year strategic plan.

This plan sets out who we are as an organization, what we want to be known for, and what we plan to do for the next three years to take us there.



## OUR PURPOSE

Through education, navigation, and advocacy, we promote and support ongoing good mental health and well-being for all people in Nova Scotia.

## OUR VISION

A Canada where mental health is a universal human right.

## OUR MISSION

We empower and support the voices of all those seeking assistance on their mental health journey.

We are dedicated to eliminating stigma, so all feel safe and not alone.



# OUR VALUES

## WE ARE:

### INCLUSIVE

We want all people in Nova Scotia regardless of their ability, race, ethnicity, gender, age, economic status, sexual orientation, or gender identity, to have the right to their full potential in our society; the right to be treated with compassion, respect, and dignity, free from stigma and discrimination.

We value the voices of those with lived experience and knowledge and we recognize the need for a diverse range of mental health approaches, acknowledging that everyone is unique.

### PROGRESSIVE

We improve society by advocating for the conditions and policies required for good mental health for all.

### PROACTIVE

We are leaders.

We value action over talk. We will innovate and think ahead to continue to improve mental health in Nova Scotia.

### COMPASSIONATE

We lead with the heart.

We are compassionate, empathetic, and caring. We approach our mission with love and kindness.

### COLLABORATIVE

We mobilize and marshal resources, partners, and people to come together to realize necessary changes in our communities and in the mental health system in Nova Scotia.

### STEADFAST

We have long fought to improve the state of mental health in Nova Scotia, but our work is not done.

We are champions of social justice and remain committed to eliminating systemic barriers such as those caused by colonization and structural racism.

We remain as committed as ever to our task.

# STATEMENT OF STRATEGIC INTENT

Building a sustainable model of mental health supports including secure, core funding and human resources, strong brand recognition and governance.

## THE IMPORTANCE OF THIS ACHIEVEMENT:

We can increase our ability to facilitate the forward momentum of people on their journey to wellness.

## OUR STRATEGIC DIRECTION:

**Advocacy:** We advocate for all Nova Scotians; we advocate for programs and services needed to support their mental health and for the individual.

**Education:** To promote greater understanding of mental health issues, available formal and informal resources, and the ongoing risk of stigmatization.

**Navigation:** Supporting those in need of care and services to find the right pathway to navigate their journey in confidence.

## NOVA SCOTIANS CAN RELY ON CMHA-NS FOR:

**Advocacy:** Working with our partners, we push for new systems, policies, and practices that increase community capacity and foster better mental health and well-being for all Nova Scotians and address the social determinants of health.

**Education:** We promote greater understanding of mental health issues through inclusive, evidence-based mental health programming and education across the province. We are committed to ensuring this programming is accessible and meets the evolving mental health needs of Nova Scotians.

**Resource Navigation:** We connect all people in Nova Scotia with safe, inclusive, culturally relevant, accessible mental health programs, services, and support. We are committed to expanding our network and building strong connections with our community partners across the province to ensure we meet these needs.



# OUR STRATEGIC GOALS:

- A commitment to Truth and Reconciliation
- A commitment to Indigenous mental health equity
- A commitment to anti-racism
- A leading government partner
- A powerful public voice
- Strategic partnerships
- Equitable access
- An equitable and accessible front door to our mental health system
- A leader in workplace mental health

## OUR STRATEGIC INITIATIVES:

### INITIATIVE ONE:

We advocate. We are a trusted voice at the table - there to advise, enable and support the moving parts of the mental healthcare system to work effectively together for the individual in need.

*Achieved through the following actions:*

#### **We will have a sustainable funding model.**

- **Sustainable:** To create the meaningful impact needed to support mental health, we will build a recurring and sustainable funding model that supports our success on a more strategic and dependable basis.

#### **We will be guided by an advocacy plan that promotes mental health as a human right.**

- **Foundation:** We will advocate for the fundamental needs of positive mental health focused on proper housing and attending to the needs of people with disabilities.

#### **We will have a clear and strong advisory role with government.**

- **Voice:** With a clear and concise message of our identity, we will provide a coordinated and clear voice building our relationships as an advisor for government to advocate for policy change.



## **INITIATIVE TWO:**

We educate ... raising understanding, to eliminate the stigma around mental health in the lives and work of Nova Scotians.

*Achieved through the following actions.*

**We will work from an education strategy that raises awareness and reduces stigma.**

- Conversations: Using information campaigns, grassroots discussions, and promoting our brand, we will raise awareness and comfort in talking about mental health, reducing stigma by focusing on demystifying how our mental healthcare system works and increasing mental health literacy skills.

**We will ensure our education strategies will be integrated into the systems where Nova Scotians live, learn and work.**

- Workplace: By meeting people where they are, at their work, we will engage in conversations around mental health with leaders, human resources groups, and organizations to develop reduce stigma around mental health in the workplace, helping to develop proactive mental health strategies for employees.

**We will design programming so that our education strategies will help Nova Scotia youth, their parents, and teachers, promote early intervention and awareness.**

- Prepare: Supporting youth, we will design and initiate projects to build a healthy perspective around emotions and psychological well-being.

### **INITIATIVE THREE:**

We navigate ... supporting those in need of care and services to find the right pathway for their journey with confidence.

*Achieved through the following actions.*

**We will coordinate information so that Nova Scotians will know us as a “front door” to the mental health supports and services they need.**

- Pathway: Knowing that people need to know where to start, we will coordinate information that highlights the journey for people to access the mental healthcare system (formal and informal), outlining starting points, the roles of each group, and expectations to enable people to make confident decisions, with current and accurate information and supporting services.

**We will be a member of a strong network of community mental health groups that collectively enhance the positive impact we have.**

- Coordinate: We will connect with community groups to build a shared voice, raising understanding of offerings, reduce duplication of efforts, and collaborating to provide a wide diversity of needed services and supports in all communities for prevention, recovery, and resiliency.

**We will build recognition so that our internal and external stakeholders will recognize our brand and what it stands for in our community, division, and branches.**



# THE GUIDING QUESTIONS

**We will use the following questions to ensure our work aligns with our strategic intent.**

- Will this decision enable us to provide clarity for people and organizations around mental health care services and support?
- Will this decision enable us to enhance the confidence people have in our system of mental health care and services?
- Will this decision enable people to commit with greater trust to interacting with mental health care and services?
- Will this decision enable us to learn and create value for all those interacting with or involved in mental health care and services?
- Will this decision enable us to raise people's voices around mental health and diversity of mental health support needs?
- Will this decision enable us to enhance the recognition and respect for marginalized and underserved communities, with attention to inclusivity, diversity, equity and belonging?
- Will this decision enable us to innovate to create greater value?

**The development of our strategy is in support of the CMHA National Vision, centered on mental health as a human right, founded in four approaches.**

## **Accessible, acceptable, and available high-quality mental health care and services.**

- Advocacy would support this approach.
- Navigation would support this approach.
- Innovation would support this approach.

## **Access to the prerequisites of good mental health.**

- Advocacy would support this approach.
- Innovation would support this approach.

## **Freedom from stigma and discrimination from exclusion and being denied opportunity.**

- Advocacy would support this approach.
- Education would support this approach.
- Navigation would support this approach.
- Innovation would support this approach.

## **Freedom from violence, mistreatment, and abuse for all.**

- Advocacy would support this approach.
- Education would support this approach.
- Navigation would support this approach.

# CONTACT US



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