living working belonging
CMHA Toronto Core Values

INTEGRITY
We value honesty and ethical behavior.

DIVERSITY & EQUITY
We respect all individuals and value their differences.

RECOVERY & WELLBEING
We value hope, self-determination, social inclusion and wellbeing.

ACCESSIBILITY
We value equitable access to integrated services and the social determinants of health—housing, income and employment.

SAFETY & PRIVACY
We value people’s privacy and will work to create safe environments that promote recovery and wellbeing.

PARTNERSHIP
We value partnership and teamwork with the people who use our services, their families, significant others, service providers, and communities.

QUALITY
We value providing effective, evidence based services and supports.

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President and Executive Director’s Report

The past year has been a difficult one for many people. A faltering economy has put even more pressure on an already overburdened social system. In spite of this, 2009-2010 was a good year for CMHA Toronto.

The board approved a three-year Equity & Diversity plan to improve our responsiveness to diverse communities. This has become one of the pillars of our new strategic plan, which will see us build on our consumer participation initiative, improve access to primary care and disease management, as well as continue our work on programs for individuals living with concurrent disorders, and on accreditation.

As part of our Equity & Diversity plan we have launched an ambitious training program for all staff and are continuing to build partnerships with ethno-racial communities.

Building peer support capacity is a critical ingredient of our Consumer Participation Initiative and we were able to expand our Wellness Recovery Action Planning groups (WRAP) through generous donor support, as well as create access to more supportive housing. CMHA program teams have developed over 70 workplans to increase service user participation in our programs. By having consumers on hiring committees and working to develop a client bill of rights, for example, service users become partners in the evolutionary process of service enhancement.

Organizationally we have made progress on accreditation and are on track to receive full accreditation in 2012. Staff and board have actively participated in this key strategy to ensure that we hold ourselves to the highest standards in providing mental health services within the community.

Our programs are at capacity, yet we have been able to offer some expanded services to respond to client need in areas such as concurrent disorders and DBT (dialectical behavioural therapy). However, our DBT Program already has an 18-month wait list. Clearly, the needs of our clients in the community are increasing faster than the funding for our capacity to meet them.

As the recent Select Committee on Mental Health and Addictions Final Report notes, many people experience difficulty accessing much-needed mental health support services. Although one in five people will experience mental illness, most people are unable to get the services and supports they need. This has to change. For example, there are now 2,500 people waiting for supportive housing in Toronto, and there are long waits for case management and assertive community treatment. Despite increased transfers from the federal government, only 6.59% of increased spending on health care in Ontario has gone to mental health over the past five years. As the provincial government develops its ten-year plan for mental health and addictions, it will be critical to ensure that the mental health share of health spending increases and that community capacity increases.

Our staff, volunteers and service users are working together to make recovery a reality for thousands of people in Toronto each year. Without them, there would be no CMHA.

Mary Jo Smith, Steve Lurie,
PRESIDENT EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR
Information, Intake and Referral Services are on the frontline at CMHA Toronto, providing information on our programs and how to access them to those with mental health issues, their families, service providers and the general public, as well as offering a 24/7 Police Access Line. Staff also make referrals to other community services, with the goal of helping those with mental health issues in their recovery process.

Public Education Workshops provide education and training to enhance understanding of mental health issues and share strategies for coping at home, on the job and in the community.

Workshops on Cross-Cultural Mental Health promote awareness about how individuals from different cultures view mental illness, and how this can influence the ways they seek help. CMHA Toronto’s “Joining Hands” workshops encourage service providers to develop culturally sensitive helping relationships.

Health Fairs are sponsored by agencies and businesses throughout the city. CMHA Toronto supports wellness and health promotion by participating in many such health fairs each year providing information on mental health issues and our programs and services.

“I have to thank CMHA Toronto for the best workshop I’ve ever been to! I now understand what it is like for someone who has schizophrenia and what they go through on a daily basis.”

– WORKSHOP PARTICIPANT

Information and Education

CMHA Toronto works to raise awareness about mental health issues and the programs that support those living with mental health issues through its Information & Education Services.
Case Management Services provide assistance in activities of daily living through programs operating in East and West Metro. Case workers also help clients to gain community living skills, such as banking and shopping, going to medical appointments, and helping them with social opportunities.

The Rehabilitation Action Program (RAP) offers case management services to individuals with serious mental illness, specifically in the Tamil, Somali, and Afghan communities in Scarborough.

Community Treatment Order (CTO) Case Management Services support individuals with serious mental illness who are on Community Treatment Orders (CTOs). CTOs are legal orders issued by a doctor and consented to by the individual, who is known to benefit from treatment but often does not engage voluntarily in services. The CTO lays out the terms under which that person may receive treatment and support in the community, as opposed to being hospitalized. Our CTO Case Managers support clients in their treatment plans and in achieving their goals, such as returning to work or school, finding housing, and improving significant relationships.

Housing Services ensure access to safe and affordable residential options for individuals with mental health issues throughout Toronto. Housing outreach workers act as a liaison between the landlords and our clients by providing information on their respective rights and responsibilities. We also work to raise awareness among landlords and property managers about mental health issues. Housing Services is available 24/7 as the need arises.

Employment Services provide strategies and support for people with mental illness on seeking and maintaining employment. Assistance with resume writing, developing interview skills, and conducting a job search is provided, along with job coaching and on-the-job training support for individuals assuming new positions. Employment Services also helps employers to make accommodations for individuals with mental health issues.

In the Community

At CMHA Toronto we work with our clients to meet their needs during the recovery process through a variety of community services and supports.

Case Management Services because they are vital for the community. They are angels of mercy.”

– NASSEF GEORGI, CMHA CLIENT

Housing Services provided accommodation to 527 clients this year.

Employment Services assisted 544 clients this year.

I just love Case Management Services provided accommodation to 527 clients this year.

Nassef Georgi, CMHA client, and Mary Mariyanayagam, Case Manager.

Case Management programs served 649 clients this year.

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The Yamaha Café is a consumer-operated business operating out of the head office of Yamaha Motor Canada Ltd. The Café serves the staff at Yamaha, providing them with breakfast, snacks, and lunch every day.

With the support of Don Spencer, Manager of General Services at Yamaha, and Tania Barrie of CMHA Toronto’s Employment Services program, our clients have the opportunity to perform functions ranging from planning the menu, to ordering, preparing and serving the food, to managing the kitchen and taking care of daily cash and banking responsibilities. A catering business run by the Café provides food for meetings and special events within Yamaha and elsewhere throughout the city.

The Café currently employs 13 staff and has been in operation for 15 years. Many of the staff at the Yamaha Café have advanced to other positions at Yamaha Motor Canada Ltd., while others have used the opportunity as a stepping stone toward other employment goals.

William began working at the Café in August 2007 and quickly became a valuable team member. William cooks the lunch special twice a week and is known for his delicious chili and “BBQ Fridays.”
Moving Toward Wellness & Recovery

CMHA Toronto offers supportive environments that promote a sense of belonging and provide invaluable opportunities for skill development, peer support and consumer leadership.

What Next!
What Next! Peer Support Drop-in provides a place where our clients can go to find social and emotional support. Paving the path to wellness and recovery through peer support, this peer-run program fosters personal growth through the sharing of experiences and the development of leadership opportunities.

Social Resource Centres
Social Resource Centres (SRCs) provide a safe and friendly atmosphere for people recovering from serious and persistent mental illness. Two SRCs – Dufferin in the West end of the city and Pathways in the East – feature walking clubs, cooking classes, games nights, yoga classes, book clubs, and arts and crafts projects as just some of the ways to become actively involved.

Wellness Recovery Action Plan (WRAP)
WRAP, a structured self-help program focusing on hope, recovery and self-advocacy, enables clients and staff with mental health challenges to regain a sense of control over their lives. Participants in WRAP sessions develop individual action plans to maintain, improve and respond to changes in their mental wellbeing. In addition, this past year, CMHA Toronto trained 30 clients and staff with lived experience to be WRAP facilitators.

WRAP has helped me because now I have learned my early warning signs. It has helped me with my recovery because I am learning to cope with my daily life. I am doing better and feel that I will not have to go to the hospital as often because I know how to recognize my triggers and warning signs.” CMHA CLIENT

Keele Street Women’s Group
The Keele Street Women’s Group supports women who have serious and persistent mental illness. Group activities are organized, such as bowling or movies, arts and crafts, or fitness classes. The women work together to make simple, nutritious meals at the lunch program.
Investing in the Future

Thanks to the generosity of our donors, CMHA Toronto is able to assist our clients in their recovery through the following programs:

**Consumer Financial Assistance Programs**
Assistance is available to support our clients during the recovery process. The Green-Fischer Personal Assistance Fund pays for expenses such as medications and dental costs that are not covered by other income support programs. The Cameron-Lurie Educational Bursary provides financial support to help clients who are pursuing educational opportunities. Reaching for the Stars assists CMHA Toronto clients with the costs involved in starting up their own businesses, such as the printing of flyers or business cards.

**Holiday Gift Program**
The Holiday Gift Program, CMHA Toronto’s oldest service, has provided gifts to people with mental illness every December since 1956. Hats, gloves, scarves, backpacks, personal care products and other items are distributed to men and women living in boarding homes, mental health care facilities and in the community. The program is made possible by financial donations from the Rotary Club of Scarborough Bluffs Golf Tournament, and The Bargains Group, our supplier, which allowed our volunteers to sort and wrap the gifts in their warehouse.

"CMHA really made a difference by helping to finance my education through the Cameron-Lurie Bursary program. It meant so much, knowing that people believed in me. Now I operate my own catering business, and I’m continuing my education in culinary arts and business. I’m giving back too, teaching others the variety of important skills I’ve learned."

When you’re not directly involved in mental health, you might not realize the impact that CMHA Toronto makes. I can tell you what an incredible difference they made for me. To all the donors who support CMHA Toronto, I want to thank you for changing my life forever."

– KEITH BUNDOCK, CMHA CLIENT
Early Intervention Programs served 148 clients this year.

Meeting the Need: Specialized Services

CMHA offers specialized services providing crucial support at all stages of recovery.

**Early Intervention**
CMHA Toronto’s Mood & Psychosis Early Intervention Program (MOD) is geared specifically to youth between the ages of 16 and 35. MOD works to enhance the recovery of young people who are in the early stages of psychosis. Services include psychiatric support, clinical services and psychosocial support. The MOD Team also works closely with clients’ families, providing education and supportive counselling.

**Transitional Youth Program (TYP)**
TYP assists youth, ages 16 to 24, who have been diagnosed with schizophrenia or a mood disorder. Young people are supported in their efforts to regain and maintain age appropriate activities such as school, work, and relationships. TYP works closely with clients, their families and social supports to assist them in understanding and coping with their illness.

**Assertive Community Treatment (ACT) (East Metro/West Metro/New Dimensions)**
ACT Teams provide intensive support to individuals with severe mental illness who have had multiple hospitalizations. ACT Teams are multidisciplinary, combining the expertise of social workers, nurses, vocational specialists, occupational therapists, psychiatrists, peer support workers and addiction specialists to ensure that the clients’ needs are addressed. A 24/7 on-call system is available all year round. The ACT Team will meet with clients as required, whether that is once a week or twice each day.

**Mental Health and Justice**

The Mental Health and Justice Prevention Program supports individuals who have a mental health issue and;
- are at significant risk of incurring criminal charges, or
- have current criminal charges, or
- have recently faced charges before the criminal courts.

The program supports clients in accessing and using mental health and community services and, when needed, provides short-term case management. Consultation is available by phone for police, probation officers, other criminal justice personnel, as well as family members and service providers.

The Mental Health Court Support Program assists people with serious mental illness who are involved in the criminal justice system. Court Support workers provide the link between community mental health services and our clients, to assist in their release from custody, to facilitate the process of mental health diversion, to mitigate the outcome of their case, and to prevent future contact with the criminal justice system. They also provide information about mental health services and the criminal justice system to lawyers, judiciary, probation supervisors, and families.
Mental Health and Justice Case Management Services provide intensive case management to individuals residing in subsidized Mental Health and Justice Housing Initiatives apartments, which are available to people with a serious mental illness who have had criminal justice involvement. Case managers provide support and assistance to help them maintain stable housing and prevent future involvement with the criminal justice system.

Transitional Case Management (TCM) Services support individuals who have serious mental health issues, who have been found not criminally responsible (NCR), and who are under the jurisdiction of the Ontario Review Board (ORB). The TCM Team works to facilitate the safe transition from a secure forensic unit in the hospital back to the community, balancing community safety with quality of life and autonomy for the individual. This program is delivered in partnership with the Centre for Addiction and Mental Health and Reconnect Mental Health Services.

The Transitional Rehabilitation Housing Program (TRHP) provides supportive housing in a CMHA-operated building to individuals who have serious mental health issues, have been found NCR and are under the jurisdiction of the ORB. TRHP provides intensive case management services with a focus on recovery, skill building and risk management. Clients remain in the program until they are able to live successfully in permanent housing with appropriate community supports.

The Short-term Residential Bed Program (Safe Bed) provides short-term housing for individuals with serious mental illness who are in crisis and who have come in contact with the law. Safe Bed provides an alternative to custody or hospital admission by providing non-medical crisis intervention in a short-stay residential setting. The goal is to help clients through the immediate crisis and to establish links with community resources for ongoing support.

Meeting the Need: Specialized Services . . .

The TYP Program served 40 clients this year.

ACT Programs served 279 clients this year.

Mental Health and Justice Programs served 1027 clients this year.
Our Diverse Community

CMHA Toronto has always had a strong commitment to diversity, a value that is reflected in both our policies and our work.

Equity & Diversity Initiative

Launched this year, the Equity & Diversity Initiative ensures that all our programs and services are reflective of the communities we serve. One approach to accomplishing this goal is to establish a process for inviting diverse communities to participate in decision-making processes at CMHA Toronto. In this way, we are making a concerted effort to foster inclusion for all individuals dealing with mental health issues, regardless of ethno-cultural background, economic status, disability, age or sexual orientation.

All CMHA Toronto staff take part in training sessions on diversity, as well as capacity-building workshops focusing on specific groups within the community. Our overarching objective is to build an organizational culture that embraces and promotes diversity.

Women’s Wellness Groups

In partnership with settlement and community agencies, Women’s Wellness Groups promote the mental health of immigrant and refugee women who are socially isolated and at risk due to their difficult life circumstances. Help is offered through discussions on topics such as community resources, nutrition and stress management.

Healthy Living Groups

Healthy Living Groups focus on mental health promotion for residents of Toronto Community Housing Corporation buildings in Scarborough. Issues addressed include social isolation and resettlement stress.

Working Together: Across Cultures

is program where CMHA Toronto offers services for newcomer communities in partnership with other agencies. The focus is on helping settlement agency staff to recognize the signs and symptoms of mental illness and indicators of settlement stress, and to understand how the mental health system works.

“I am so glad that at CMHA we are encouraged to celebrate our diversity.”
– TABY HUSSAIN, CMHA RECEPTIONIST
OPENING DOORS

Opening Doors is a collaborative initiative of CMHA Toronto, Access Alliance and Across Boundaries. Funded by Citizenship & Immigration Canada, its goal is to foster healthier communities in support of newcomers and mental health survivors.

Launched in March 2010, Opening Doors offers interactive and experiential workshops to newcomer communities, agencies serving immigrants and refugees, mental health survivors, and mental health service providers. These workshops cover topics such as migration and stress, diversity and anti-racism, and building resilience. They engage peer facilitators to provide the valuable perspective of their own experiences of moving to a new country.

“Opening Doors is the first job I applied for that I didn’t have to hide who I am. It was alright that I was in the Black Students’ Association, performed in the Vagina Monologues and live through bouts of depression.”

- FAYOLA JACOBS, OPENING DOORS FACILITATOR

Opening Doors Staff: Hussain Sookot, Renée Ferguson, René Bogović, Laura Guerrero, Fayola Jacobs, Vijayakumary Murugaiyah, Memuna Stevens, Ali Mohamud
Engaging Our Clients

Integral to our programs at CMHA Toronto is engaging with our clients at every possible level of community service and support.

Power of Words Art Project

This painting is one of 60 that were created as part of the Power of Words (POW) collaborative art project by CMHA clients, members, residents and staff, under the direction of local artist Julie Jarvis. POW celebrates diversity and the power of language to welcome and include everyone. These colourful “conversations in paint” express creativity, connection, and the magic of collaborative art. Together with art from a previous project, ‘Without Labels,’ an exhibit was created at City Hall to launch the Opening Doors project in March 2010.

Consumer Participation Initiative (CPI)

The Consumer Participation Initiative, launched in 2007, ensures that we continue to build on a strong foundation of consumer participation and a recovery philosophy. Thanks to CPI we have engaged consumers in our work at CMHA Toronto through our hiring panels and the creation of volunteer opportunities and paid positions within teams. We are committed to listening to the voices of our clients at every level of the organization and this past year conducted a client survey to get their input on our programs and services.

“When painting these abstracts, I felt it to be both calming and therapeutic. Almost like sitting at the beach watching the water.”

— POWER OF WORDS PARTICIPANT
On Wednesday May 20th, 2009, Mel Thompson dipped the wheels of his bicycle into the Pacific. That act signaled the start of the Ride for Mental Health, which took Mel across Canada, accompanied by his wife Carol and daughter Lindsay in the family RV. He finally reached St. John’s, Newfoundland 103 days and 7,587 km later.

“‘Ride across Canada? What are you thinking?’ was the initial reaction from family and friends when I shared my plans with them,” said Mel, Vice President of Xerox Customer Services. “I set this goal four years ago and have been building up my ride distances each summer…. I have run marathons and climbed mountains. When I set a goal I do everything possible to achieve it.”

Mel’s daughter, Lindsay, was his inspiration. “Lindsay is the eldest of our four children. She was an excellent student, a talented artist, and a very good athlete,” Mel says. “However, her behaviour started to change when she was a teenager, but we believed it was normal teenage rebellion.” By the time she was eighteen, Lindsay was diagnosed with schizoaffective disorder.

Mel’s goal in doing the Ride was to raise awareness about mental illness, and to raise money for community-based programs and services, such as those provided by CMHA Toronto. As a family, the Thomsons know that awareness works to reduce the stigma and to promote acceptance and understanding in the community.

“AWARENESS WORKS: THE RIDE FOR MENTAL HEALTH

It’s time to change and open the doors; let’s take mental illness out of the shadows and into the light.”

– CAROL THOMPSON
We wish to thank all our funders and donors who contribute to the work of CMHA Toronto. Without the generous support of many individuals and organizations, we couldn’t do the important work of helping individuals with serious mental illness to live, work, and belong in our community.
CMHA TORONTO VISION
Mentally healthy people in a healthy society.

CMHA TORONTO MISSION
To develop and provide community based support services that help people who are living with mental illness or mental health problems improve the quality of their lives in accordance with their defined needs.

To provide information and education to increase knowledge and understanding of mental health and mental illness and services that promote mental health.

To advocate for public policies that lead to improved quality of life for people living with mental illness or mental health problems, their families and our community.