



## FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

### THE CANADIAN ALLIANCE ON MENTAL ILLNESS AND MENTAL HEALTH ANNOUNCE 2023 CHAMPIONS OF MENTAL HEALTH

**August 28, 2023 (Ottawa)** — The Canadian Alliance on Mental Illness and Mental Health (CAMIMH) is proud to announce this year's Champions of Mental Health Awards. This annual advocacy campaign commends the outstanding efforts of seven remarkable Canadians who dedicated themselves to advancing mental and substance use health initiatives across the nation.

The honorees were nominated by their peers, colleagues, friends, and community members in recognition of their significant contributions to mental and substance use health advocacy at the local, provincial, and national levels. Their selection was conducted under the careful evaluation of the CAMIMH selection committee, which comprises of healthcare professionals and organizations representing individuals living with mental illnesses, their families, and caregivers.

2023 Champions of Mental Health:

- [\*\*The Sharon Johnston Champion of Mental Health Award for Youth\*\*](#) – Tina Colaco
- [\*\*Media\*\*](#) – Eva Milko
- [\*\*Workplace Mental Health\*\*](#) – Willa Zlabis
- [\*\*Community Organization\*\*](#) – Isaksimagit Inuusirmi Katujjigaaatigiit, Embrace Life Council (IIKELC)
- [\*\*Community Individual\*\*](#) – Mike Beauchesne
- [\*\*Parliamentarian\*\*](#) – Member of Provincial Parliament Bhutila Karpoche
- [\*\*Innovation - Researcher or Clinician\*\*](#) – Dr. AnnMarie Churchill

“Mental health and mental health awareness have long been central to Canadians’ well-being,” said Florence Budden, Co-Chair of CAMIMH and Chair of the Champions Campaign. “Now more than ever, we have come to grasp the indispensable role it plays in our communities, individual health, and the country as a whole. This is precisely why, each year, we celebrate and honour the champions who have fervently advocated for mental health within their communities and far beyond.”

“We find ourselves truly inspired by the remarkable contributions of our 2023 Champions,” said Ellen Cohen, Co-Chair of CAMIMH. “Much like their predecessors, they stand at the forefront of mental health awareness, advocating for the advancement of programs, innovation solutions, and anti-stigma initiatives. Their dedication propels us toward a world where mental health is given the same earnest consideration and cohesive treatment as other health conditions.”

#### CAMIMH MEMBERS

Canadian Association for  
Suicide Prevention

Canadian Association of Social  
Workers

Canadian Association of  
Occupational Therapists

Canadian Counselling and  
Psychotherapy Association

Canadian Federation of Mental  
Health Nurses

Canadian Medical Association

Canadian Mental Health  
Association

Canadian Perinatal Mental  
Health Collaborative

Canadian Psychiatric  
Association

Canadian Psychological  
Association

Canadian Consortium for Early  
Intervention in Psychosis

Community Addictions Peer  
Support Association

Medical Psychotherapy  
Association of Canada

National Initiative for Eating  
Disorders

National Network for Mental  
Health

Psychosocial Rehabilitation  
Canada

Schizophrenia Society of  
Canada

The College of Family  
Physicians of Canada

The Champions of Mental Health Campaign serves as CAMIMH's flagship program, acknowledging individuals from all corners of the country who, through their advocacy, groundbreaking solutions, and remarkable stories, reduce stigma and improve access to mental and substance use health resources and support across Canada.

This year's Champions will be recognized and celebrated at an event held at Parliament Hill. It is scheduled to take place on October 3<sup>rd</sup>, coinciding with the observance of Mental Illness Awareness Week (MIAW) – a time dedicated to raising awareness and understanding of mental and substance use health challenges in Canada.

CAMIMH extends its heartfelt gratitude to its generous partners: [Bell Let's Talk](#) (Silver Partner), [Mental Health Commission of Canada](#) (Silver Partner), [Lundbeck](#) (Bronze Partner), [Canadian Credit Union Association](#) (Bronze Partner), [Innovative Medicines Canada](#) (Bronze Partner) and [AbbVie](#) (Bronze Partner), whose support makes this campaign possible.

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*Established in 1998, the Canadian Alliance on Mental Illness and Mental Health (CAMIMH) is an alliance of national mental health organizations comprised of health care providers and organizations representing persons with mental illness and their families and caregivers. 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 substance use health and their families receive appropriate access to care and support.*

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