



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

**2024 MENTAL ILLNESS AWARENESS WEEK: ACCESS FOR ALL – TIME FOR ACTION,
TIME FOR CHANGE**

October 4, 2024 (OTTAWA) — The Canadian Alliance on Mental Illness and Mental Health (CAMIMH) is proud to lead the annual Mental Illness Awareness Week (MIAW) from October 6 to October 12, 2024. This national campaign aims to raise awareness about the ongoing challenges many Canadians face in accessing timely mental health and substance use health care.

The theme for MIAW 2024, “Access for All: Time for Action, Time for Change,” emphasizes the need for concrete steps to improve access to mental health services across the country. Despite growing awareness, far too many Canadians continue to encounter barriers when seeking mental health and substance use health care.

Supporting this urgency, CAMIMH’s second annual National Report Card revealed alarming results: federal and provincial governments received failing grades (an ‘F’) across key categories – including access, confidence, satisfaction, and effectiveness of mental health care services. This marks a significant decline from previous years and highlights the critical need for governments to act faster and invest more heavily in mental health resources.

“Canadians giving their governments failing grades is a clear sign that not enough is being done,” said Florence Budden, Co-Chair of CAMIMH. “MIAW is a call to action. We need to move beyond conversations and start implementing real, impactful changes to ensure mental health care is treated as a fundamental right for all.”

Anthony Esposti, CAMIMH Co-Chair further emphasized the importance of legislation: “We need a national *Mental Health and Substance Use Health Care Parity Act* to ensure mental health and substance use health care is given the same priority as physical health. Without it, we will continue to see a system that leaves too many Canadians without the mental health care they need.”

To recognize those making a difference in the mental health community, CAMIMH will host the 2024 Champions of Mental Health Awards on October 10, 2024, on Parliament Hill in Ottawa. Seven individuals will be honoured for their exceptional contributions to mental health advocacy. Their leadership and efforts serve as an inspiration to all Canadians, reminding us of the critical need to prioritize mental health as part of overall health.

For more information on MIAW 2024, please [click here](#).

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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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CAMIMH MEMBERS

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