

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

**2025 MENTAL ILLNESS AWARENESS WEEK: MENTAL HEALTH AND SUBSTANCE
USE HEALTH - A RIGHT, NOT A PRIVILEGE**

October 5, 2025 (OTTAWA) — The Canadian Alliance on Mental Illness and Mental Health (CAMIMH) is proud to lead the annual Mental Illness Awareness Week (MIAW) from **October 5 to October 11, 2025**. This national campaign calls for equitable access to mental health and substance use health care services and supports across Canada.

The 2025 theme, *“Mental Health and Substance Use Health: A Right, Not a Privilege,”* underscores that access to care should never depend on geography, income, or circumstance. Yet, significant systemic gaps persist. Canadians continue to report long wait times and limited availability of specialized services. CAMIMH’s most recent 2025 National Report [Card](#) reveals widespread public concern with how services are delivered and funded, a clear sign that governments must act with urgency.

“This year’s theme is about recognizing that timely access to care must be treated as a fundamental right, not an afterthought,” said Anthony Esposti, CAMIMH Co-Chair. “The voices of Canadians are clearly telling us that the system is not working as it should. Change must be bold, measurable, and immediate.”

“For too long, mental health and substance use health have been treated as secondary to physical health,” added Florence Budden, CAMIMH Co-Chair. “This week is a reminder that we cannot achieve real health equity until every Canadian can rely on timely, affordable, and consistent access to care.”

As part of MIAW, CAMIMH will host the 2025 Champions of Mental Health Awards on Monday, October 6, at the Sir John A. Macdonald Building in Ottawa. The event will recognize seven exceptional leaders and organizations whose contributions are advancing mental health and substance use health across the country.

For more information on MIAW 2025 and the work of CAMIMH, visit [HERE](#).

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About CAMIMH

Founded in 1998, the Canadian Alliance on Mental Illness and Mental Health (CAMIMH) is an alliance of national organizations comprised of health care providers and organizations representing people living with mental illness and substance use health, their families, and caregivers. CAMIMH’s mandate is to ensure that mental health is placed on the national agenda so that all Canadians can access appropriate care and support.

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