



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

## Timely Access to Mental Health Care Must be a Top Priority

**April 11, 2022 (Ottawa)** – In responding to the federal government’s 2022 Budget, the Canadian Alliance on Mental Illness and Mental Health (CAMIMH) is supportive of the combination of health and social policy investments that improve access to virtual mental health care, promote substance use health and provide affordable housing for priority populations including Indigenous Peoples, persons with disabilities and Veterans.

“These investments are necessary, but not sufficient,” said Ellen Cohen, CAMIMH co-chair. “As we begin to emerge from the COVID-19 pandemic, more must be done to improve timely access to accessible and inclusive mental health and substance use health programs, services and supports for the people of Canada.”

CAMIMH urges the federal government, which did not announce a multi-year fiscal framework for the new *Canada Mental Health Transfer*, to expedite its discussions with the provinces and territories so that targeted multi-year funding can expand and improve care to those in need.

To support these discussions, CAMIMH continues to call on the federal government to introduce a new piece of legislation called the [Mental Health and Substance Use Health Care For All Parity Act](#).

“We know that the mental health and substance use health impacts of COVID-19 will remain with us for a significantly longer period of time and continue to affect those with a pre-existing mental health problem. Now, more than ever, governments at all levels must ensure the people of Canada have timely access to mental health and substance use health programs, services and supports,” said Dr. Kim Hollihan, CAMIMH co-chair.

CAMIMH – which includes 15 national organizations representing people with lived and living experience, their families and caregivers, as well as health care providers – stands ready to work with governments and others to make this a reality.

There is no health without mental health.

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### About CAMIMH

*CAMIMH is a non-profit organization comprised of health care providers as well as organizations which represent individuals with lived experience of mental illness. Established in 1998, CAMIMH is a volunteer run organization that provides mental health education to the public. A fundamental objective of CAMIMH is to engage Canadians in a national conversation about mental illness. By starting this conversation, CAMIMH hopes to reduce the stigma associated with mental illness and provide insight into the services and support available to those living with mental illness.*

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