



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Canadian Alliance on Mental Illness and Mental Health Announces 2021 Champions of Mental Health

OTTAWA—August 18, 2021—The Canadian Alliance on Mental Illness and Mental Health (CAMIMH) is pleased to announce this year's winners of the Champions of Mental Health Awards. The annual awards campaign recognizes seven exceptional Canadians who have worked to advance the mental health agenda in Canada. These remarkable individuals were nominated by their peers, colleagues, and community members. A CAMIMH selection committee, comprised of representatives from health and social care provider organizations, and organizations that represent people with mental illness, their families and caregivers, reviewed the submissions.

This year's winners are:

- 1) *The Sharon Johnston Champion of Mental Health Award for Youth* – **Hani Rukh E Qamar (Montréal, QC)**
- 2) *Media* – **Leigh Burse (Brockville, ON)**
- 3) *Workplace Mental Health* – **Annabelle Bourassa (Montréal, QC)**
- 4) *Community Organization* – **Boots on the Ground (Georgetown, ON)**
- 5) *Community Individual* – **Helen Fishburn (Guelph, ON)**
- 6) *Parliamentarian* – **MP Todd Doherty (MP for Cariboo-Prince George, BC)**
- 7) *Innovation (Researcher or Clinician)* – **Dr. Srividya Iyer (Montréal, QC)**

“We are so grateful for the important work they have been doing to advance the mental health agenda in Canada,” said Ellen Cohen, co-chair of CAMIMH.

“These Champions, and every other Champion that has come before them, are instrumental in helping us advance the mental health and substance use agenda in Canada, and for putting a face to some of the progress being made around the country,” said Kim Hollihan, co-chair of CAMIMH.

CAMIMH MEMBERS

Canadian Association of Social Workers

Canadian Counselling and Psychotherapy Association

Canadian Federation of Mental Health Nurses

Canadian Medical Association

Canadian Mental Health Association

Canadian Psychiatric Association

Canadian Psychological Association

Medical Psychotherapy Association of Canada

National Initiative for Eating Disorders

National Network for Mental Health

Schizophrenia Society of Canada

Psychosocial Rehabilitation Canada

The College of Family Physicians Canada

The Champions of Mental Health Campaign is CAMIMH's cornerstone campaign, to celebrate the people across the country that, through their advocacy, innovative solutions, and remarkable stories continue to bring attention to the importance of mental health in Canada.

"Especially after such a difficult and uncertain year, it is all the more important to celebrate the amazing individuals that forged ahead in the fight for a better mental health future for Canadians," added Champions Gala Chair Florence Budden. "This year's awards are all the more impressive and reflective of such critical work in our communities."

The award winners will be celebrated at the annual Champions of Mental Health Awards gala, taking place virtually on October 5, 2021, during Mental Illness Awareness Week (MIAW). The theme for this year's gala is *Embrace, Celebrate and Connect with the Champions of Mental Health*. For more information, please visit camimh.ca.

CAMIMH would like to thank its generous partners who make this campaign possible: [Bell Let's Talk](#), [the Mental Health Commission of Canada](#), [Lundbeck Canada](#), [the Canadian Credit Union Association](#), [Innovative Medicines Canada](#), and [Impact Public Affairs](#).

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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 their families receive appropriate access to care and support.

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