



-FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE-

**The Canadian Alliance on Mental Illness and Mental Health
Congratulates the Government and Public Service Union on Landmark Agreement**
Sweeping Review of Mental Health Policies to be based on MHCC's Psychological Health Standard

(Ottawa, Ontario) March 30, 2015. The Canadian Alliance on Mental Illness and Mental Health (CAMIMH) congratulates the federal government and the Public Service Alliance of Canada (PSAC) for its recent landmark agreement on mental health in Canada's public service. This deal represents the very leadership CAMIMH has been calling on the federal government to demonstrate with regards to mental health in the workplace for many years. Both sides should be congratulated for what will be a key driver of workplace mental health in the years to come.

"This agreement is a very big deal," said, Dave Gallson, CAMIMH co-chair. "The federal government is Canada's single biggest employer and as such is in a unique position to demonstrate to all Canadian employers that the mental health of the workforce is of utmost importance. That the government is making this a priority in a time of challenging negotiations and deficit reduction also shows that ultimately, the mental health of any employer's workforce is one and the same as its bottom line," continued Gallson.

The government and PSAC have come to terms on a sweeping new agreement to address record-high levels of mental health claims in the public sector, and to actively address the mental health of the hundreds of thousands of federal public servants. A task force will be created with a strong mandate to review all aspects of mental health policies within the public service. Crucially, this review will be modeled on the Mental Health Commission of Canada's (MHCC) national standard for psychological health and safety in the workplace, a longstanding recommendation of CAMIMH.

"The federal government's and PSAC's agreement to base this review on MHCC's Standard is a huge development, and one which CAMIMH has been recommending for many years," said John Higenbottam, CAMIMH co-chair. "CAMIMH members met with Minister Clement in 2013 to discuss these very issues and recommendations. The federal government's role as Canada's biggest employer is huge. It is no less than to demonstrate to every Canadian employer that sound and active mental health policies aimed at the workforce are not only the right thing to do, they are consistent with improved productivity and bottom lines among private employers as well. CAMIMH looks forward to seeing the progress of the task force and to bringing its resources to bear in participating in the review process."

-30-

Established in 1998, the Canadian Alliance on Mental Illness and Mental Health (CAMIMH) is an alliance of 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.

For more information or to schedule an interview, please contact:

Michael Hatch
CAMIMH Public Affairs
Tel.: 613-233-8906 | Email: mhatch@impactcanada.com