



Canadian Mental  
Health Association  
Windsor-Essex County

Community well-being is our sole focus.

# WELCOME SPRING



## MESSAGE FROM THE CEO

Welcome spring! More hours of sunshine and warmer temperatures definitely improve our mental health. The beginning of 2025 has continued to be productive at CMHA-WECB. I'm happy to share some highlights that further our commitment to supporting mental health and primary care in our community.

- In recognition of the shortage of mental health supports in Essex County, CMHA-WECB has partnered with Erie Shores HealthCare on pathways for their patients to connect with CMHA services. We are very excited about this collaboration which started in February.
- Another expansion of mental health services includes 24-hour service at the Mental Health and Addictions Urgent Crisis Centre located at the Ouellette site of Windsor Regional Hospital. The expansion of hours means that first responders are able to be more efficient when bringing people to hospital. A big shout out to our staff on site – Carrie, Katie, and Lori. Additionally, our Safe Beds team is working in partnership to accept transfers from the MHAUCC directly. Excellent partnership from CMHA-WECB, HDGH and WRH!
- Interprofessional Primary Care Team Funding (IPCT) has been extended. One of the key mandates of this funding was to connect individuals to primary care. We've seen excellent access and attachment through our primary care team expansion and our Shelter Health clinics. Here are some key milestones:
  - Rostered over 700 new patients internally and with partners
  - Access to primary care with over 7700 additional visits

I would also like to offer kudos to everyone who participated in The Push-Up Challenge. Locally we had 573 participants who raised \$46,111!! This national fundraiser raised \$3,995,959 for CMHAs across Canada. That's 64,764,052 push ups!! A special shout-out to Norbert Bolger who raised funds in support of our branch and was the 2nd top individual fundraiser in Canada.

With the arrival of spring we are looking forward to several upcoming events!

**Mental Health Week – May 5-11 – Stay tuned for details!**

**Tailgate Takeout x Walkerville Brewery Cornhole Tournament @ Walkerville Brewery – Saturday, May 24**

**Show Your Canadian Pride at Ride Don't Hide – Sunday, June 1, Ciociaro Club**

Ride Don't Hide marks its 12th year in our community. In addition to cycling, we are excited to share that walking and running are options for 2025. And there is also a virtual option to participate in your own way in the month of May, leading up to Ride day.

**Go Green Golf Tournament – Monday, June 9**

Thank you to everyone who continues to support our Go Green Golf Tournament. We are looking forward to another stellar year at Essex Golf & Country Club.

**Cars for a Cause – Saturday, June 21, LaSalle Landing, 970 Front Rd., LaSalle**

If you're a car enthusiast, you will want to be at the LaSalle Event Centre to get up close to over 200 exclusive vehicles, enjoy vendors, raffles and a Low Car Limbo. CMHA is a one of the charity partners for this event.

Until next time,

Nicole Sbrocca

Chief Executive Officer

## MENTAL HEALTH WEEK IS COMING MAY 5-11



May 5 - 11, 2025 ► MentalHealthWeek.ca

### There's more to me.



Open and honest  
conversations connect us all.

#UnmaskingMentalHealth

Masking is hiding or suppressing something about ourselves — emotions, personality traits, behaviours, or symptoms — from others. It's a coping mechanism used to stay safe, hide in plain sight or "fit in," and we may even do it without being aware of it.

People mask for a lot of different reasons, including social acceptance, economic necessity and, sometimes, fear. Masking can be a helpful tool in our day-to-day lives — it can help people navigate social situations, feel safe, and maintain personal boundaries and privacy. We don't always want to share everything about ourselves with every person we interact with, and masking lets us decide who gets to see which parts of us.

Unfortunately, people with mental illnesses and addictions often feel the need to mask to keep a job, find housing, or simply be accepted. When asked how we're doing, many of us respond with the socially acceptable "I'm fine" or "I'm good" even though we might be having a bad day or struggling with something bigger. People with mental

health or addiction struggles often wear that "I'm fine" mask every day and, over time, constant masking — whatever the reason — can lead to other or worsened mental and physical health concerns.

### Professionalism and politeness aren't the same as masking

Managing your reputation by behaving professionally in the workplace, or politely in public, is not the same as masking. Being kind and courteous, even when we're struggling, is practicing compassion. Masking is more about hiding things about ourselves so that others accept us and requires constant effort. It's the difference between showing up as your best self at a job interview (managing your reputation in a specific situation) and constantly maintaining that idealized self so others will accept you.

### Stigma drives people to mask mental illness

Stigma — labeling, stereotyping or holding negative beliefs — against people with mental illnesses or substance use problems is still a major barrier to getting help. According to Statistics Canada, in 2018 almost one quarter of people identifying as having a mental health concern said they didn't seek mental health support, with 17.2% of those people saying it was because they were uncomfortable talking about these problems with others. In 2022, a survey by Leger revealed that 95% of people living with a mental illness experienced stigma.

People with mental illnesses also often internalize the stigma that society reflects, causing what's called self-stigma. Self-stigma can make people feel shame and believe they're less worthy than others. On top of being a barrier to getting help, self-stigma leads to low self-esteem, and low levels of hope and empowerment. The 2022 Leger survey also found that 72% of people living with a mental illness reported self-stigma.

There's even a hierarchy of stigma among mental illnesses with more prejudice and discrimination against people with severe and persistent mental illnesses such as schizophrenia or bipolar disorder, and people who use substances, than people with depression or anxiety.

### There's *more* to me

There is no normal. We all exist within a diverse range for all sorts of aspects of who we are, what we look like, and how we feel. While some behaviours may be more common, that doesn't make those behaviours normal. What's considered normal is based on the popular beliefs in a society at any given time. Normal is a social construct, and what's considered normal changes over time, and there really is no "normal" way to feel, behave, and act.

There's more to any one person than meets the eye and we should all be free to be seen, heard, and to express ourselves without fear. Addressing stigma and discrimination and practicing compassion can help us create a society where people feel safe to share and be who they are.

Let's unmask mental health together.

## UPCOMING EVENTS



### Education & Workshops

Ongoing Throughout 2025

In person or online

[Register Here!](#)



### Cinco De Mayo

Monday, May 5

Walkerville Brewery

[Purchase Tickets](#)



### Ride Don't Hide

Sunday, June 1

Ciociaro Club

[Walk, Run, Ride & Show Your](#)

[Canadian Pride](#)



### Cars for a Cause

Saturday, June 21

LaSalle Event Centre

[Details & Merch](#)

## MONTHLY GIVING

Did you know that you can make a monthly contribution to CMHA-WECB? A monthly contribution helps to ensure support and sustainability for programs that receive little to no government funding, including:

- Client Assistance Fund & Comfort Closet
- Wellness & Recovery College
- Bereavement Program
- Mental Health Promotion

Making a monthly gift is easy! Navigate to the [Canada Helps website](#) and choose "donate monthly".

We thank you for your support!

DONATE NOW

BECOME A MEMBER