



Advancing the Agenda for Collaborative Mental Health Care

Mental illness is one of the most significant disabilities facing Canadians and many people are not getting the care that they need. This paper provides a snapshot of the barriers for people who need access to mental health services. A description of collaborative mental health care is presented, along with a description of barriers that impede its implementation. Activities being undertaken by the Canadian Collaborative Mental Health Initiative (CCMHI) to advance the agenda of collaborative mental health care are described.

What are some barriers to receiving mental health services in Canada?

- lack of resources to meet mental health care needs
- stigma and discrimination prevent people from seeking help
- language and cultural variations limit access
- geographic distances limit access
- confusion related to variations among service providers (e.g., referral and intake procedures)
- poor communication and limited knowledge of roles, responsibilities and skills among health professionals
- poor coordination and planning of primary health care and mental health care reform

What are some barriers to collaborative mental health care?

- system-wide, there are policy, planning, legislative, regulatory, funding and research issues
- operationally, there are accessibility, human resources and funding issues
- unsupportive professional culture
- lack of knowledge for effectively involving consumers

What is the CCMHI doing to advance the agenda of collaborative mental health care in Canada?

Twelve national health professional associations and consumer-oriented organizations have agreed to work together to:

- analyze the current state of collaborative mental health care (Research series)
- document strategies to develop collaborative mental health care (Toolkits)
- develop a set of principles and commitments to ensure collaboration continues and grows (Charter)

This document provides an overview of the paper: *Advancing the Agenda for Collaborative Mental Health Care*.

The paper is available in English and French. Visit our Web site: www.ccmhi.ca, or contact:

The CCMHI Secretariat
Tel: (905) 629-0900
E-mail: info@ccmhi.ca

The opinions expressed in this publication are those of the CCMHI secretariat and do not necessarily reflect the official views of the CCMHI's member organizations or Health Canada.

Funding for the CCMHI is provided by Health Canada's Primary Health Care Transition Fund.