



**Canadian Mental  
Health Association**  
Ottawa  
*Mental health for all*

**Association canadienne  
pour la santé mentale**  
Ottawa  
*La santé mentale pour tous*

The Canadian Mental Health Association, Ottawa Branch (CMHA Ottawa), is an independent community-based non-profit organization providing in-community services for individuals with severe and persistent mental illness who are homeless or vulnerable.

CMHA Ottawa is dedicated to promoting good mental health, developing and implementing sustainable support systems and services, and encouraging public action to strengthen community mental health services and related policies and legislation.

CMHA Ottawa offers a variety of services and programs that are accessible to both the public and other support organizations. As a recognized leader in its field, CMHA Ottawa works with other mental health and addictions organizations to promote this mandate. Services include: intensive case management, outreach, concurrent disorders counselling, Cognitive Behavioural Therapy (CBT), physical health supports, housing support, etc.

#### Fast facts:

- CMHA Ottawa focuses on treatment, rehabilitation, and support for individuals with serious mental illnesses living in their community using strength-based practices and evidence-based decision-making.
- CMHA Ottawa engages in social action and community capacity-building and education efforts, including stigma-busting campaigns and training for professionals.
- CMHA Ottawa services are extremely decentralized, with approximately 90 per cent of the services provided in clients' home and communities.
- CMHA Ottawa is guided by the belief that people's recovery is most effective when they have a place of their own to call home (housing first).
- As a health care organization, CMHA Ottawa is proud to hold accreditation with "exemplary standing", as awarded by Accreditation Canada.
- To find out more about CMHA Ottawa, please visit the website at <https://ottawa.cmha.ca>.

#### COVID-19: CMHA Ottawa designated an essential service

At the onset of the COVID-19 pandemic, CMHA Ottawa was designated as an essential service by the provincial government and continues to deliver direct services to its clients. The agency has remained operational and accepts new clients via housing outreach, court outreach, hospital outreach and MHCSS (Mental Health Community Support Services) intake, however its offices remain closed to visitors; it has pivoted its delivery of services to prioritize virtual care. During the summer of 2020, CMHA Ottawa introduced a mandatory daily self-screening protocol to its staff and increased safe in-person contact with clients while observing strict precautions to mitigate the possibility of infection. CMHA Ottawa's learning and development team, which oversees training for staff and the community, moved its offerings to a virtual model, as did its counselling services team for its group offerings (IASP, Concurrent Disorders, Dialectical Behaviour Therapy, etc.). At the beginning of the COVID-19 pandemic, CMHA Ottawa established itself as a leader in addressing the disparity in access to digital technology for marginalized individuals by purchasing more than 150 smartphones (so far) and distributing them to its clients.

PROMOTING MENTAL HEALTH. SUPPORTING PEOPLE. | PROMOUVOIR LA SANTÉ MENTALE. SOUTENIR LES GENS.

