



CANADIAN MENTAL HEALTH ASSOCIATION Winnipeg Region Inc.

# ANNUAL REPORT

# 08-09

## MISSION

The Canadian Mental Health Association, a nation-wide voluntary organization, promotes the mental health of all and supports the resilience and recovery of people experiencing mental illness.



**CANADIAN MENTAL  
HEALTH ASSOCIATION**  
**ASSOCIATION CANADIENNE  
POUR LA SANTÉ MENTALE**

## Supporting Resilience and Recovery

### Rehabilitation & Recovery Service

The Rehabilitation & Recovery Service assists people recovering from a mental illness to develop and achieve personal goals related to a place to live, employment or education, relationships and meaningful activities. The service provides an organized step by step process that helps people develop personal goals based on the person's interests and skills.

In 2008-2009 the Rehabilitation & Recovery Service assisted 164 individuals to learn skills and acquire resources related to their goals. The Exploring the Journey of Recovery Workshops continued to expand this year. These workshops provide participants the opportunity to work on their recovery in a workshop environment, along with individualized planning with the workshop facilitator. In 2008-2009, 74 spaces were used over 19 workshops on various areas of recovery, health, and wellness. In addition our Therapy Service assisted 19 people in 2008-2009.

The Service continued its involvement with the Winnipeg Regional Health Authority and Manitoba Housing in efforts to ensure that people with mental illness living in Manitoba Housing units experience a welcoming and supportive living environment.

In addition, CMHA Winnipeg entered into a new partnership with the Province of Manitoba Employment and Income Assistance Program that saw the creation of a new initiative entitled the Parent Wellness Initiative. This initiative is targeted at single parents in the Downtown/Point Douglas area that are facing coping challenges. In 2008-2009 two new staff were recruited to work as Life Skills Coaches in support of this program, along with a Rehabilitation Worker who was reassigned to work with these clients. A great deal of time has been spent in these first few months developing processes and relationships with our new partners at Employment and Income Assistance so that we can begin to assist in providing support to these clients, 14 of which received services this year.



## Understanding Mental Illness

Through education and training activities, the Association assists organizations and groups in our community to understand the issues that people with mental illness face and to learn about ways to support people with a mental illness. In addition, the association works to support a larger understanding of the importance of mental health. For the last 2 years CMHA has worked with the Winnipeg Regional Health Authority to offer a course titled Mental Health First Aid. This 12 hour course shows people how to recognize the signs and symptoms of mental health problems, provide initial help, and guide a person towards appropriate professional help. The concept is based on the model of medical first aid. In total, 28 courses of Mental Health First Aid Canada Training were offered in Winnipeg in 2008-2009, with 449 people trained.



In addition to Mental Health First Aid, CMHA Winnipeg provided many workshops and displays to increase ongoing awareness. In 2008-2009 CMHA Winnipeg began offering several new courses including; Mental Health Education for Families (3 Sessions); 4 Life-Balance Sessions for Manitoba Hydro; and the Mindfulness Based Stress Reduction Program (1 conference and 5 -8 week sessions with 110 people trained).

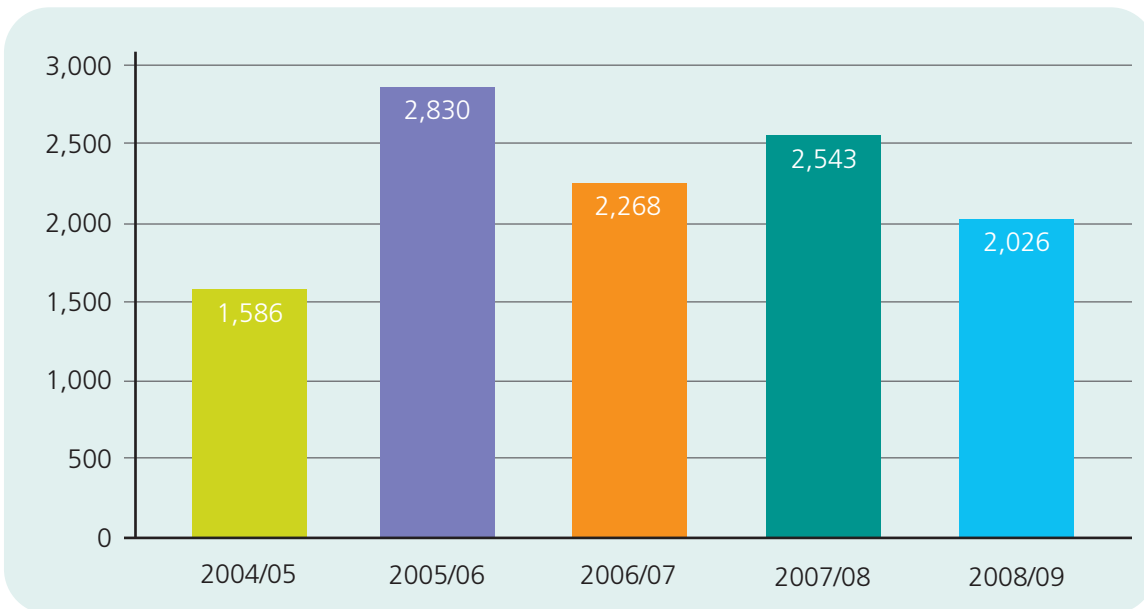




## Finding Help

Providing people with accurate and timely information about services and supports for people experiencing mental health problems continues to be an important part of our work. This year our Information & Referral service assisted 1,816 callers with information on a variety of issues to find services such as counseling, help for family members and friends and housing leads. The 13th edition of the Mental Health Resource Guide continues to be circulated throughout the community after getting a makeover and exciting new look this year. This publication provides information on mental health services and supports in our community. Updated last year, our website continues to provide information on CMHA Winnipeg activities and mental health and illness topics. CMHA also compiles and circulates a listing of various workshops, events and groups held for consumers in our community.

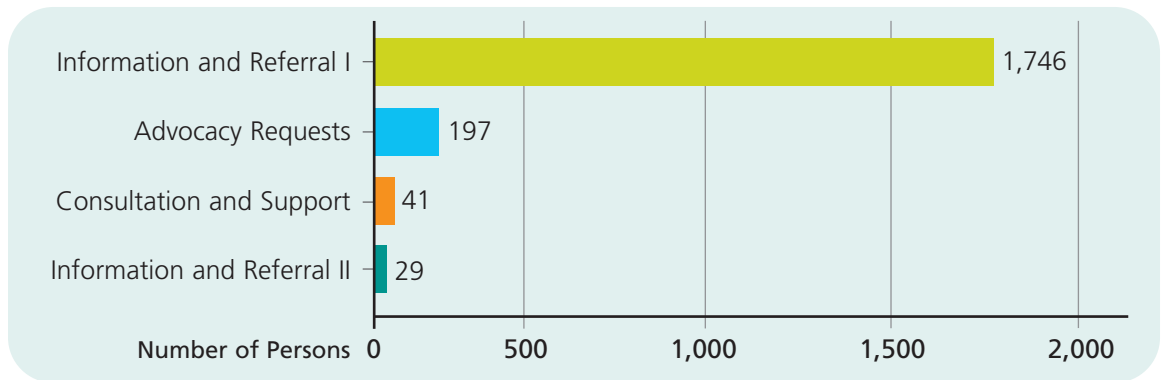
### Total Number of Contacts for Information and Referrals: 2004/05 to 2008/09



## Knowing Your Rights

The Rights Consultation service of CMHA helps people with mental illness to know and exercise their rights when they have complaints about services they have received or feel their rights have not been upheld. This year 197 people were assisted with problems they were dealing with. Information and advice was provided to callers on a range of issues including rights under the Mental Health Act and problems with service providers, income support programs and landlords. The Rights Consultant worked with 45 people to assist them to file complaints and appeals related to areas such as involuntary admission to hospital, tenancy rights, Employment and Income Assistance appeals and human rights complaints. The Rights Consultant also responded to requests in the community for presentations on advocacy related topics.

**Service Categories Regarding Contacts for Information and Referral: 2008/09**



(N=2,012. Adjusted to exclude missing data.)

**Influencing Public Policy**

CMHA is interested in public policy that supports community participation and integration of people with mental illness, as well as promotes the general mental health of all Winnipeggers. The organization has continued to focus its attention on the lack of affordable rental housing in the city, as well as general issues of poverty among the mentally ill. The lack of decent, safe and affordable housing is a significant barrier to full participation in community life for people with mental illness. In June 2008 The Canadian Mental Health Association (Winnipeg Region), the Manitoba Schizophrenia Society and The Public Interest Law Centre (Legal Aid Manitoba) co-hosted a one-day community forum to hear first-hand about the housing crisis from those on the front lines working with the mentally ill. The goal of this forum was to further inform and progress the advocacy movement around housing in Winnipeg and over 90 people participated. The forum report was sent to representatives of all three levels of government, as well as a wide variety of community stakeholders.

CMHA Winnipeg Region has also worked with Researchers from the Department of City Planning at the University of Manitoba and the Canadian Centre for Policy Alternatives (with support from United Way) to undertake a larger research study into Winnipeg Housing for people with mental health issues. This report entitled *“We Got Evicted...Did I leave that Out?”*, was released in January 2009 and copies were made widely available and sent to all levels of government with requests for further action.

In addition to housing, we continue to advocate on several issues including; physician services, income security and poverty, mental health promotion, and the need for a Provincial Mental Health Plan.

**Awards**

In 2008-09 nine individuals received the *Ruth Hamer Memorial Education Awards*. These awards provide a bursary of up to \$500.00 for individuals with a mental illness who wish to pursue an education or training goal. The organization has committed \$2,500.00 annually for these awards that are named in memory of Ruth Hamer, a long time employee of the association who passed away in November 2004.

The 2008 Heroes of Mental Health Awards were presented to 12 individuals, 3 Friend/Family, 6 Mental Health Professionals, 7 volunteers and 2 organizations, acknowledging the many contributions made by people and organizations in the advancement of mental health and to celebrate the victories of people who live with mental illness.





## Chairperson's Report



This year's report to the community on the Association's work provides a snapshot of the actions and activities the organization has taken in support of our vision that people with mental illness in Winnipeg are full participants in society.

For our Association this vision means that people with mental illness have the ability to participate meaningfully in their chosen roles in society, that public policy supports community participation and integration of people with mental illness, and that an accepting and inclusive society is created.

In support of this vision, representatives of our organization through our Political Linkage Committee have undertaken several activities to encourage all levels of government to create supportive public policy in the area of mental health, this includes writing letters of support for the announcement of new funding for addictions and mental health treatment and employment and disabilities. As well as letters requesting further action in the areas of housing, poverty reduction, mental health promotion and planning, and access to physicians. CMHA Winnipeg also, in addition to being a member of the Social Planning Council's Raise the Rates Campaign (an initiative aimed at raising Employment and Income Assistance rates to a more livable wage) became an active member in the Make Poverty History Campaign.

Continuing on in our important work in housing advocacy, CMHA Winnipeg Region, with support from the United Way, worked with researchers from the University of Manitoba Department of City Planning and the Canadian Centre for Policy Alternatives to conduct a comprehensive analysis of current housing needs for people with mental health issues. This resulted in the creation of a new report entitled, "We Got Evicted....Did I leave that Out?" This report was launched in January 2009 with a great deal of interest from media, stakeholders, and government representatives.

I am pleased to announce that the Board of Directors of CMHA Winnipeg Region has almost completed the process of an extensive policy review started in the previous year. Though this has taken significant Board time, it has been very rewarding to be a part of setting up a progressive vision and governance structure for the organization. I am excited to announce our new End's Statements which will take CMHA into the future:

### **Mega End**

CMHA Winnipeg Region exists so that people of Winnipeg are mentally healthy and people experiencing mental illness have support for their resilience and recovery.

*The Mega -End is further defined as, but is not limited to, the following second & subsequent levels (layers) of Ends. The following second level Ends are in order of priority:*





**2.1 People with mental illness** are full participants in society.

- 2.1.1 They participate meaningfully in their chosen roles in society; this includes employment, education, housing and social engagement.
- 2.1.2 They benefit from public policy that supports community participation and integration of people with mental illness.
- 2.1.3 They are accepted by society.

**2.2 People of Winnipeg** have an understanding of the factors involved in being mentally healthy.

- 2.2.1 They are aware of and understand mental illness and mental health.
- 2.2.2 They are aware of and can easily access appropriate services and supports.

**2.3 Families and Caregivers** have access to the appropriate supports required by themselves and those they care for.

- 2.3.1 They have opportunity for caregiver self care.
- 2.3.2 They have access to professional and/or peer supports.
- 2.3.3 They have access to support and information regarding advocacy.

**2.4 Decision Makers** have adequate information to make informed decisions regarding mental health and mental illness.

- 2.4.1 Decision-makers recognize the importance of mental health research.
- 2.4.2 Researchers are recommending best practices using appropriate research methods with emphasis on relating to lived experiences from people with mental health issues.
- 2.4.3 Media will have access to information on mental health issues.

Through the work of our Ownership Linkage Committee the Board of Directors has furthered our work towards a more interactive process of communication with stakeholders, this committee played a pivotal role in making recommendations about the organizations new End Statements, and conversely, future direction.

Finally, with the generous financial support from the United Way of Winnipeg, the Winnipeg Regional Health Authority, and the Province of Manitoba, we are able to continue to deliver high quality services in our community, including rehabilitation and recovery services, education, information and referral, and advocacy/rights consultation. Thanks go out to the many people that support the vision of our organization – our Board and committee members, staff, funders, members, and donors. A special thanks to the Community Services Council of Winnipeg, who's generous grant in 2008 allowed us to refurbish our office to ensure that we are wheelchair accessible, an important development in our ongoing strive to be accessible to all.



Harvey Slobodzian

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