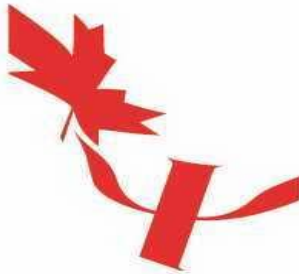


CANADIAN
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Press Release

Canadian Psychological Association Supports Senate Report on Mental Health

Ottawa, May 9, 2006 – The Senate Report entitled “*Out of the Shadows At Last*” is the most comprehensive examination of mental health needs and services in Canadian history. It deserves a great deal of attention. As the title suggests, “It is high time that we bring mental health out of the shadows and into the light of day” stated Dr. Daniel Perlman, President of the Canadian Psychological Association (CPA).

The Report makes important recommendations which include:

1. The **Canadian Mental Health Commission**. The Commission will bring co-ordinated attention to mental health issues and provide Canadians with a much needed pan-Canadian mental health national action plan, something the Canadian Alliance on Mental Illness and Mental Health has urged governments to develop over the last decade.
2. **The Mental Health Transition Fund**. CPA was glad to see its recommendation for a Mental Health Transition Fund in the Report. Like the successful Primary Health Care Transition Fund, it can provide an important engine for change to create services and networks to better meet the mental health needs of all Canadians. It will be a transfer of dollars from the Federal Government to the provinces and territories dedicated exclusively to mental health.
3. **Research Support**. Research is the backbone of effective and efficient health services. Biological, psychological and social factors interact to determine mental health and illness. The mental health community has long called for increased support for research into the psychological and social factors in mental health.

The Senate Report is a good platform to begin addressing issues rarely discussed in Canada. The Report mentions the importance of better co-ordination between publicly and privately funded services. For a variety of reasons, psychological services are increasingly being provided in the private sector. Psychologists are the largest provider of specialized mental health services in Canada. Public mental health services often don't exist or have terribly long waiting lists. Lower income Canadians or those with little or no private insurance cannot afford private services. New mechanisms must be developed to provide access to the right service from the right provider at the right time.

The Report highlights the desperate need to reduce red tape and silos in care. There is limited co-ordination of care among health and mental health services and within the

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mental health sector and even less among other sectors, like schools, criminal justice, social welfare and the workplace. Children and adolescents are particularly disadvantaged by fragmented and uncoordinated care.

“Canada needs this Report. It is the first comprehensive platform from which Canadians can discuss and plan mental health services for the next twenty five years,” stated Dr. Perlman. “We must not squander the opportunity.”

The Canadian Psychological Association was founded in 1939. It is the national professional association of scientists and practitioners in psychology. There are approximately 16,000 licensed psychologists in Canada. CPA’s mandate is to improve the health and welfare of all Canadians; to promote excellence and innovation in psychological research, education, and practice; to promote the advancement, development, dissemination, and application of psychological knowledge; and to provide high-quality services to members.

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