

CCSMH Annual Report to CAGP October 2022 to September 2023

PREAMBLE

In 2022, CCSMH won three substantial 2-year grants. The funding has allowed us to increase our staffing to support this new work. Most of the staff were onboarded in the fall of 2022 and early winter of 2023. The growth of the team has presented us with the opportunity to direct some attention to other activities that broaden the scope of what we are able to do, and to help us build a more stable and sustainable foundation for the organization.

GENERAL WORK

1. Communications and Outreach

After 20 years with our original logo and branding, the CCSMH is undergoing a rebranding exercise that includes the selection of a new logo and look. The website will get a refresh and new resources produced from our current active projects will include our new branding. Concerted efforts to engage via social media has led to a significant increase in followers on our networks: [Facebook](#), X ([Twitter](#)) and [LinkedIn](#). We continue to issue a quarterly e-newsletter to over 3,000 subscribers. CCSMH has had the opportunity to increase our profile and share information at various conferences this year through exhibit booths and presentations. In the past year, we have attended and brought our material to the Canadian Association of Gerontology, Canadian Geriatrics Society, Canadian Gerontological Nursing Association, International Psychogeriatric Association, and the Alzheimer's Association International Conferences.

2. CAGP-CCSMH Awards

The CCSMH leads the work on two annual [CAGP-CCSMH awards](#): the Vision Award which celebrates an organization, individual or program that combats ageism and stigma and promotes the strengths of aging and highlights the value of older adults in society. Our Outstanding Care and Integrative Practice Award is given in recognition of an individual, team, service or program leading outstanding seniors' mental health care and integrative practice models. This year's winners will be announced at the ASM as well as in our newsletter, on our website and in social media in the coming months.

3. Fund Development

For the 20 years of the CCSMH's existence, we have been entirely self-sustaining. Over the years, we have been fortunate to be successful on a number of key grant proposals which have allowed us to do our important work. In mid-August, CCSMH hired a part-time Fund Development Coordinator to assist us in fund development so that we can establish stable and ongoing sustainability. Over the

next six months, the Coordinator will help us in identifying and pursuing grants, developing relationships with foundations and initiating a small giving campaign with our membership base.

4. Partnerships and Public Policy Work

CCSMH is often approached by other organizations and initiatives to: a) endorse project proposals and, if successful, participate in some way (e.g., advisory groups, knowledge translation), or; b) participate in consultations. Currently, either Claire or other members from our Public Policy Working Group are representing CCSMH at 11 different “tables” addressing issues such as social prescribing; psychological resiliency among veterans and first responders; adult depression screening; practical guidance in delirium care; emergency department overcrowding; mental health in long-term care, and; the development of a federal aging plan. In the spring and summer of 2023, CCSMH sent letters to the federal, provincial and territorial governments regarding the next steps in improving systems to support mental health in long-term care post COVID. A letter was also sent to the members of the Standing Senate Committee on Social Affairs, Science and Technology expressing our appreciation for their report on suicide prevention while reminding members of the disproportionately high rates of suicide among older men.

In addition to these efforts, the CCSMH continues to work with the Mental Health Commission of Canada (MHCC) towards the development of their Older Adults Mental Health Framework for Action. We are also represented on the Canadian Collaborative for Suicide Prevention a group of national and provincial organizations with a common interest of suicide prevention in Canada.

5. Subject Matter Expert Database

We are slowly building a database of various health care professionals with special expertise in a mental health field of particular concern to older adults. This database will contain information on individuals who are willing to support CCSMH from one-off presentations to sitting on a project working group. The database has helped us enormously in identifying experts to work with who represent various health professions across Canada. If you are interested, please complete this [SME Survey](#) or feel free to come by our booth for more information!

PROJECT WORK

6. Cannabis and eLearning Modules Project

This three-year project wrapped up in December 2022 and had us developing a series of 11 accredited [eLearning modules](#) for health care providers on various topics relating to cannabis use among older adults. As of September 13, 2023, 1,903 health professionals have attended our eLearning course. This course is still available for free online. A [Clinician Toolkit](#) with eight infographics for health care providers and four infosheets for older adults was also completed.

7. Clinical Guidelines on Social Isolation and Loneliness among Older Adults

Running April 2022-March 2024, this privately funded project has us researching and developing the first of their kind clinical guidelines on social isolation and loneliness that will support health and social service providers in their practice with older adults. The draft guidelines are currently in

editing stage with a goal of initial dissemination in February 2024. A pan-Canadian working group of clinicians and academics, all who are experts in this field, started this work in December 2022.

In order to inform the development of these guidelines, we conducted consultations, a thorough scoping literature review and two national surveys (one for health and social service providers and another for older adults). Data describing the findings from our surveys will be available in infographic and report form in both official languages for shared learning in the coming months.

Ongoing awareness raising about the health impacts of SIL in older adults has been carried out via social media, presentations, outreach and engagement processes. More details about this project can be found on the [Social Isolation and Loneliness](#) webpage.

8. Anxiety, BPSD and More!

In late September 2022, CCSMH received a \$2.5 million grant from the Public Health Agency of Canada (PHAC) for an 18-month project, “Moving Evidence to Action for Seniors’ Mental Health Promotion During the COVID-19 Pandemic and Beyond.” The grant covers the development of clinical guidelines on anxiety disorders among older adults; clinical guidelines on behavioural and psychological symptoms of dementia (BPSD) and extensive knowledge translation on these topics as well as on depression and substance use among older adults. The new guidelines are set to be released in early 2024. Ensuring the uptake of these new guidelines, their key messages will be translated into several knowledge products for health care providers and older adults. In addition, knowledge translation products are also being updated for the depression and substance use guidelines. Finally, in collaboration with Baycrest, CCSMH is offering three rounds (eight sessions each) of a National ECHO program with a focus on the mental health of older adults (Spring 2023, Fall 2023 and late Winter 2024). Visit our [Areas of Focus](#) section on the website for more details about these various topics.

In early March 2023, we received an additional new grant to develop a web-based resource library on BPSD geared to health care providers and older adults. It will complement the BPSD guideline and KT work. The landing page for the website can be found at www.behavioursindementia.ca and will be launched early in the new year.

As always, please feel free to reach out to us if you have any questions or suggestions. Our Executive Director, Claire Checkland can be reached at ccheckland@ccsmh.ca or info@ccsmh.ca.

Drs. David Conn and Dallas Seitz, CCSMH Co-Chairs
Claire Checkland, Executive Director