

CCSMH Annual Report to CAGP October 2023 to September 2024

PREAMBLE

The first half of this reporting year saw the culmination of the fruitful efforts of CCSMH's largest team to date. The Social Isolation and Loneliness project, a Dementia fund project and a large PHAC project technically ended on March 31, 2024. As a result, we had to say goodbye to many excellent colleagues as they moved on to other challenges. Trying to keep up with the momentum generated by these projects has been a challenge in the second half of the reporting year but the legacy of all of that hard work will keep us in good stead moving forward. A great deal was accomplished and we are proud to share an accounting of what was completed.

GENERAL WORK

1. Communications and Outreach

The CCSMH is sporting a new look with an updated logo.



The CCSMH [English](#) and [French](#) websites have been refreshed with our new branding and includes all the new resources produced over the past year. Our social media ([Facebook](#), X ([Twitter](#)) and [LinkedIn](#)) engagement has increased significantly due to the concerted efforts of a Communications Manager and the material produced by the Knowledge Translation team all of whom left us in April. 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, posters and presentations. From October 2023 to September 2024, either CCSMH staff or guideline working group representatives have shared our resources and presented our work via 19 conferences and numerous presentations and webinars. The audiences included older adults, seniors serving agencies, health and social services organizations, medical professionals, psychologists, researchers, advocates, and policy-makers. With attention that the new guidelines garnered, working group members for all three topics (anxiety, behaviours in dementia and social isolation and loneliness) have delivered many talks in person and virtually.

2. CAGP-CCSMH Awards

The CCSMH leads the work on two annual [CAGP-CCSMH awards](#). This year's Vision award recipient is Schlegel-UW Research Institute on Aging (RIA) and Debra Walko is the recipient for the Seniors' Mental Health Outstanding Care and Integrative Practice Award. The

recipients will be formally recognized at the ASM as well as in our newsletter, on our website and in social media this fall.

3. Partnerships, Public Policy Work and Publications

In this past year, the CCSMH has endorsed several project proposals submitted by stakeholders to various funding bodies. Projects focus on such issues as climate change and mental health of older adults; suicide prevention, and; medication use in LTC. If these partners' proposals are successful, the CCSMH's role will likely involve being on advisory groups and providing knowledge translation services to support the projects. Current active third-party partnerships include a project focused on equity and older adults with experiences of homelessness, and another on developing a knowledge mobilization hub on brain health and cognitive impairment.

Over the course of the past year, the CCSMH has been represented at the following tables: Canadian Aging Action, Research and Education (CAARE) for Mental Health Group (Checkland); an advisory panel on delirium care for older adults in the community (Benjamin); COURAGE: Canada's Aging Plan Working Group (Checkland); Aging in Place – Community Engagement Sessions (Grief), and; Canadian Guidelines on Post COVID-19 Condition (Benjamin).

The CCSMH also partnered with the Public Health Agency of Canada (PHAC) on a short-term project to conduct a literature review on concepts/indicators of positive mental health among older adults.

The research completed by the working groups has resulted in several journal articles being published. In addition, other articles recently published focused on Canadian standards on long-term care homes; an evaluation of the National ECHO program; principles to accelerate health information flow, and; the presentation of a pluralistic framework for optimizing older adult mental health.

4. Digital Store

With no physical office or storage space, the CCSMH has struggled with how to manage the physical resources that we produce. In late 2023, we began the process of working with Lowe-Martin to host a digital store that would carry several of our resources. The arrangement includes Lowe-Martin printing and storing resources and filling online orders. The [store](#) is now "open." Our hope is that individuals, organizations, and educators will order multiple copies to make available to colleagues, patients, partners and students.

PROJECT WORK

As mentioned, the projects described in items 6 – 8 below wrapped up on March 31, 2024. Three sets of new clinical guidelines were created by individual working groups that included members of the CAGP. Companion resources were also created by KT staff. Once the guidelines

were released, each guideline was showcased in an English and a French webinar featuring the co-leads of their respective working groups.

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

This privately funded project produced [clinical guidelines](#) and several companion resources including a brochure for older adults and their care partners and a pocket card summarizing the recommendations from the guidelines. This team has done extensive outreach to groups across the country offering presentations, webinars and discussions.

Waltons Trust, the private foundation supporting this work has granted funds for a second phase of this project that will focus on knowledge mobilization and uptake of the guidelines among practitioners and educators. This second phase is supported by a manager and three health promotion co-ordinators. More details about this project can be found on the [Social Isolation and Loneliness](#) webpage.

6. Anxiety, BPSD and KT

Funded by the Public Health Agency of Canada, this large project entitled “Moving Evidence to Action for Seniors’ Mental Health Promotion During the COVID-19 Pandemic and Beyond,” resulted in the completion and launch of two new clinical guidelines on [anxiety](#) and [behavioural and psychological symptoms of dementia](#). In addition, the knowledge mobilization team produced several resources—some intended to be accessed only virtually and others that have been printed and made available for order. A [clinician pocket card on anxiety](#) is available along with other clinical tools and checklists. A [Behaviours in Dementia brochure](#) was created for older adults and their care partners along with updated brochures on [alcohol](#), [cannabis](#) and [depression](#). All of our resources are available in French as well. In addition, the depression brochure was translated into [Hindi](#), [Simplified Chinese](#) and [Traditional Chinese](#). Requests for virtual and in-person presentations on both anxiety and BPSD have been filled by the co-leads and members of their respective working groups.

7. Behaviours in Dementia Toolkit

In under one year, a new website was built and populated with over 340 vetted resources addressing various aspects of behaviours in dementia. This online toolkit is intended for health care providers as well as older adults with dementia and their care partners. The website, www.behavioursindementia.ca enjoys an increase in use each month. Analytics of the site show that those individuals visiting the site are staying for a while which we hope means they are finding valuable information.

8. Other Projects

a) National ECHO Program

In collaboration with Baycrest, CCSMH offered two rounds of a [National ECHO program](#). In Fall 2023, the session focused on Geriatric Mental Health. In early 2024, it was Advanced Topics in Older Adult Mental Health. Recordings of the didactic presentations are available on our [YouTube channel](#).

b) Updated delirium pocket card

Drs. David Hogan, Sophiya Benjamin, Chris Frank and David Conn volunteered their time to update the guidance in the [clinician pocket card on delirium](#). Drs. T.T. Minh Vu and Marie-France Rivard assisted in ensuring that the French translation was accurate and relevant.

Please feel free to reach out to us if you have any questions or suggestions (info@ccsmh.ca) and Executive Director, Claire Checkland can be reached at ccheckland@ccsmh.ca.

Respectfully submitted,

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