

## CCSMH Annual Report to CAGP October 2024 to September 2025

### PREAMBLE

This report provides a brief summary of the initiatives undertaken by the CCSMH since our last report in September 2024. We are currently funded by our Social Isolation and Loneliness (SIL) Project which is staffed by a project manager, and three SIL Coordinators. In addition to these project staff we have 1.5 staff until March 2026 (our ED, Claire Checkland and our Admin and Operations Coordinator, Monique Beneteau).

### GENERAL WORK

#### 1. Communications and Outreach

**Monthly e-newsletters.** In January 2025, we moved from quarterly to monthly [e-newsletters](#). Every quarter, we rotate through three different themed newsletters: 1) **CCSMH Corner: Community and Conversations** which provides an in-depth look at the activities that CCSMH is undertaking; 2) **CCSMH News** which shares quick updates from CCSMH and our partners, including CAGP and I-GeMH, as well as research study and professional development opportunities, and; 3) **Head and Heart** which provides a deep dive on a particular issue. The latest one on being a non-familial care partner was authored by our own Monique Beneteau and was read by many people. Our subscriber rate increases continuously--over 4,000 to date. If you haven't already, you can [subscribe here](#).

**Website and Social Media.** On average, we have just under 6,000 users who visit our website every month. Not quite half of these visitors have our site bookmarked. We established a [YouTube channel](#) in 2023 and now have over 750 subscribers. We left X (Twitter) in March 2024 and created an account on [Bluesky](#). We continue to be active on [Facebook](#) and [LinkedIn](#) as well. If you don't follow us, please consider doing so.

**Conferences and Presentations.** With the release of three new clinical guidelines last year, we continued to receive requests from various groups to have in-person and online presentations on them. In the past year, the CCSMH was represented at several conferences including the CAGP-CCSMH ASM as well CGS, CAG, CGNA, and more.

#### 2. CAGP-CCSMH Awards

The CCSMH oversees two annual [CAGP-CCSMH awards](#). This year's **Vision award** recipient is The Exchange. Initiated by Dr. Lara Nixon and Dr. Martina Kelly, it is a collective of people with lived expertise in experiences of homelessness as older adults. The Geriatric Outreach Program to Shelters, led by geriatrician, Dr. Jillian Alston is the recipient of the **Seniors' Mental Health Outstanding Care and Integrative Practice Award**. The recipients will be formally recognized at the

ASM's Celebration Dinner as well as in our newsletter, on our website and in social media this fall. [Click here](#) to learn more about the 2025 recipients.

### **3. Partnerships, Public Policy Work and Publications**

The CCSMH continues to participate in projects led by third-party partners. Often, the CCSMH's role includes participating on advisory groups and providing knowledge translation services to support the projects. The issues addressed over the last year include:

- Canadian Longitudinal Study on Aging (CLSA) project looking at social participation and connection (SIL)
- Participating in the Dementia Research and Innovation Funders Alliance working group focused on mapping the dementia ecosystem (ED)
- Trauma-informed care practice in LTC (ED)
- Brainwell's National Dementia Coalition (ED)
- National Institute on Ageing Social Inclusion Indicators (SIL)
- Health Standards Organization's Crisis and Distress Lines Technical Committee (ED)
- Canadian Coalition Against Ageism (ED)

In addition, the CCSMH has been represented at the following tables: Canadian Aging Action, Research and Education (CAARE) for Mental Health Group (ED) and the Federal Government's round table on National Research Priorities for Cannabis (ED).

Journal articles continue to be published supporting CCSMH work on various topics, many related to the development of last year's guidelines. A listing of the articles can be found on the [Published Articles webpage](#) of our site.

### **4. Digital Store**

A reminder that many of the CCSMH resources, including guidelines, pocket cards and brochures, are available for purchase in bulk through our [store](#). Our hope is that individuals, organizations, and educators will order multiple copies to make available to colleagues, patients, partners and students.

### **5. Project Funding Applications**

As the CCSMH's funding is limited solely to identifying and submitting successful grant proposals, we are always on the lookout for opportunities that are well suited to our work and mission. Some of the areas that we currently have proposals in on (or are working on) are:

- Mental health in long-term care;
- The mental health of informal care partners;
- The impacts of financial fraud on the mental health of older adults, and;
- Preventing, mitigating and recovering from the mental health impacts of serious situational stressors such as natural disasters, financial fraud, and abuse.

## UPDATES ON PREVIOUS PROJECT WORK

### 6. Anxiety and BPSD Clinical Guidelines

While funding for this project has ended, the interest and demand for the content is still strong. From October 2024 to July 2025, there were over 2,770 and over 900 downloads of the English and French anxiety guidelines, respectively. Even more impressively, the BPSD guidelines continue to be the number one downloaded resource on both the English and French sites. The English BPSD guidelines were downloaded over 8,200 times between October 2024 and July 2025 and the French guidelines were downloaded over 1,250 times over the same time period.

### 7. Behaviours in Dementia Toolkit

In the monthly analytics we receive for the Behaviours in Dementia Toolkit website, the top 10 search terms are shared. From October 2024 to July 2025, the terms paranoia, hallucinations and delusions accounted for 864 searches. The next most searched terms were sundowning and sleep (239 searches). Other search terms including antipsychotics, apathy, wandering/desire to move, anxiety and depression and anger/physical aggression were each searched over 100 times.

## CURRENT PROJECT WORK

### 8. Implementation of the Canadian Clinical Guidelines on Social Isolation and Loneliness in Older Adults (SILOA)

This guidelines mobilization project is funded by The Waltons Trust Foundation for three years (2024-2027) and follows the March 2024 launch of the first Clinical Guidelines on Social Isolation and Loneliness in Older Adults in the world. The main objectives of this initiative are to:

1. ***Raise Awareness & Deepen Understanding and Uptake of the SIL Clinical Guidelines*** (i.e., share key messages online and in presentations; amplify the work of like-minded initiatives, and; engage with and learn from a diversity of HCSSPs as subject matter experts in this field).
2. ***Support Education and Skill Development*** (i.e., encourage and pilot SIL in curriculum in post-secondary settings; gather insights from clinicians about practice tools, and; contribute to professional development like workshops and conferences).
3. ***Strengthen Systems and Policy*** (i.e., advocate for SILOA to be an integral part of clinical student education; understand the policy landscape and identify areas for policy focus, and; research journals and grey literature to understand the SILOA-related policy opportunities in Canada and other jurisdictions).

The priority audiences for this project are the diversity of health care and social service professionals (HCSSPs) who work with older adults. Other audiences include leaders responsible for the systems, policies and practices that can support HCSSPs as they work together with the older adults in their care.

To learn more, visit the [Social Isolation and Loneliness page](#) on our website.

## 9. Other Projects

### a) ***National ECHO Program (Fall 2024 series on BPSD)***

132 health care and social service professionals participated in our Fall 2024 National ECHO series about Behavioural and Psychological Symptoms of Dementia. There were 11 sessions on various topics such as assessment and management, non-pharmacological interventions, agitation, apathy, sleep disorders, and sexual expressions. The didactic portions of the sessions are available in a [playlist](#) on our YouTube channel. To date, views of each session range from 46 to 170.

### b) ***Forum on Financial Fraud***

The CCSMH received a small grant from Justice Canada for Victims and Survivors of Crime Week. On May 15, the CCSMH, with support from brainXchange, hosted an online forum to discuss the impact of financial fraud on the mental health of older adults. The intention was to start a conversation with health care and social service professionals. Given that nearly 500 people registered for the event and over 250 health care and social service professionals attended the informative and interactive discussion, we are confident that this is an issue of great interest. Evaluations from the event were extremely positive and indicate a need for more work in this area. A [recording of the webinar](#) is available on our YouTube channel. It has been viewed 107 times on our site and 566 times on the brainXchange site.

### c) ***Mental Health Impacts of Climate Change-related Disasters on Older Adults***

The CCSMH is the “principal knowledge user”/community leader on a one-year CIHR-funded project led by Dr. Jennifer Baumbusch at UBC. This photovoice project has just begun but it will engage older adults in British Columbia who have experienced extreme weather events.

### d) ***CCSMH Impact Study***

Colleagues at Baycrest are assisting the CCSMH in conducting an environmental scan to assess the impact of CCSMH’s work in the field of older adults’ mental health. The aim of the scan is to identify key public health, policy, research, and academic activities, resources or communications that reference or directly use CCSMH knowledge products. The final report should be available later this fall. We will continue to welcome stories describing how our resources are being utilized.

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

Respectfully submitted,

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Claire Checkland, Executive Director