



**Canadian Mental
Health Association**
Haliburton Kawartha Pine Ridge

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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AMALGAMATION OF TWO CMHA BRANCHES CREATES OPPORTUNITIES FOR CLIENTS, STAFF, COMMUNITIES

The Canadian Mental Health Association, Haliburton, Kawartha, Pine Ridge (CMHA HKPR) Branch launched April 1, 2013, with the amalgamation of its Peterborough and Kawartha Lakes Branches.

The new organization now services the counties of Peterborough, Northumberland, Haliburton, City of Kawartha Lakes and the Township of Brock, and covers an area equal to the size of Prince Edward Island - that's 12,000 km² - making it one of the largest branches in Canada, geographically.

The amalgamation process started back in April 2011, through an integration process facilitated by the Central East Local Health Integration Network (Central East LHIN). An integration plan, developed by representatives from the two CMHAs over a 12 month period, provided the information necessary for the two Boards to make an informed decision on the integration of mental health services previously provided by both organizations into one larger organization.

In January 2012, both Boards and the Central East LHIN Board approved the integration of the two branches that led to the amalgamation.

In April 2012, a Joint Executive Governance Committee (JEGC), composed of four Board representatives from each branch along with a Management Integration Team (MIT), was formed to develop an implementation plan to complete the integration by March 31, 2013.

"We all went into this amalgamation with two objectives in mind; improving client service and continuing to be an employer of choice. I think we achieved both," said Margaret Seaton, new Board President of CMHA HKPR. "As an underpinning, our first task was to bring two already highly effective teams together and create a new stronger one. I will admit the journey had its challenges but in the end it was so worth it."

One of the largest funders of CMHA HKPR is the Central East LHIN. Jai Mills, an Integration Consultant from the LHIN sat on the JEGC to assist in the amalgamation process. "The integration work was very complex and very satisfying. All concerned, focused on what was best for the person receiving the service and that made this project a great success," said Mills.



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The new organization now consists of 138 full time employees throughout the region and serves over 2500 individuals within the four counties. The combined operating budget is \$11.1 million.

Newly appointed CEO, Mark Graham stated, “Our new team is not only excited about our new service offerings but also about the benefits, training and career opportunities that become available when you are part of a larger organization. We recognize the sum of two teams is much greater than the original two individual agencies. We have a savings of \$230,000 in back office efficiencies that can be re-invested directly into front line services.”

With the new organization now formed there will be numerous benefits for the community at large.

“Resources are being used more efficiently which means the funding for front line services is maximized. Service users will have access to a wider array of service options. Staff will have more choice and opportunities,” said Graham.

In addition to the two existing branch offices in Peterborough and the City of Kawartha Lakes, CMHA has added a corporate office located at 415 Water Street in Peterborough. This office will provide the back office functions of the organization including Management, Fund Development, Administration, Finances and Communications. With renovations at the Water Street address underway, the office will soon provide Ontario Tele-Medicine Network (OTN) and Early Psychosis Intervention (EPI) Programs.

The OTN Clinic provides local access to over 40 different specialities including: pediatric medicine, pain management, movement disorders, dermatology, psychiatry and others. Attending the OTN Clinic reduces the stress of patients having to drive to Toronto, Kingston and Ottawa. The EPI Clinic provides education, first response, treatment and support services for people experiencing the early stages of psychosis, greatly improving the chances of recovery.

The existing branch offices will continue to operate in the same function servicing clients. Available programs and services include: Mental Health Case Management, Dual Diagnosis Case Management, Family Services, Housing and Support Services, Trusteeship, Support Groups and Workshops, Four County Crisis, REACH, Vocational Support Services, Kids on the Block, Ontario Tele-Medicine Network, Safe Beds, Justice and Court Services, Release from Custody Program.

“Our future is about improving the mental health and well-being for everyone. Our future is about building and maintaining effective community partnerships and truly meeting the needs of people of all ages living with mental health problems and illnesses and their families,” said Graham. “We know that we can play a significant role in meeting the Central East LHIN’s aim of strengthening the system of supports for people with Mental Health and Addictions issues so they spend 15,000 more days at home in their communities by 2016.”



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The new Board of CMHA HKPR will have representation for all areas it services. At the present time there are four representatives from Peterborough and four from Kawartha Lakes including: Margaret Seaton, Chair/President, Judy Dickson, Vice Chair/Vice President, Pat Dunn, Treasurer, Bob Allen, Secretary, Stephen Streeter, Mary Reader, Sue Grant, and Ted Smith. CMHA HKPR is currently looking for Board members from both Haliburton and Northumberland.

With the amalgamation, the organization is working towards developing a new strategic plan. CMHA HKPR has begun gathering input from clients, staff and community partners.

“We look forward to engaging the community in upcoming fundraising events to expand the capacity for programs and services. The next event on our calendar is the CMHA Annual Golf Tournament on June 7th,” stated Kerri Davies, Manager of Development. Anyone interested in entering a team or sponsoring a hole can contact Kerri directly at 705-748-6711.

CMHA HKPR receives funding from a number of different organizations including: Central East LHIN, Ministry of Health and Long Term Care (Housing), Ministry of Community and Social Services, Ministry of Children and Youth Services, Ministry of Training Colleges and Universities, Ministry of Health Promotion and Sport, City of Peterborough, City of Kawartha Lakes, and the United Way in both Peterborough and Kawartha Lakes. The agency also receives grants and donations from various community organizations and individuals.

The agency will be releasing its new strategic plan during the CMHA Kawartha Lakes Celebration on June 20th and the CMHA Peterborough Celebration on June 27th.

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