
PANDEMIC RECOVERY WILL DEPEND ON OUR MENTAL HEALTH INVESTMENTS

April 21, 2021 (Ottawa) – Yesterday’s federal budget provided the people of Canada with a roadmap to recover from the COVID-19 global pandemic through investments in a series of targeted measures to improve our quality of life and future prosperity.

The pandemic has taken an increasing toll on the nation’s mental health and its mental health impacts have yet to be fully felt. The CPA is pleased with planned investments in national standards for mental health services; projects for innovative mental health interventions for populations disproportionately affected by COVID-19; mental health programming for populations at high risk of trauma and post-traumatic stress disorder; the Wellness Together Canada portal; crises hotlines; veterans’ mental health; and the mental health in First Nations, Inuit, and Métis Nation communities. The CPA applauds the government’s commitment to revise the eligibility criteria for the Disability Tax Credit, creating parity and fairness for people living with mental disorders.

While welcome, however, these investments stop short of delivering better access to the services of regulated mental health providers for people who need them. They also stop short of recognizing the need to invest in psychological research to help us understand and better respond to a pandemic – as individuals, families, workplaces and communities. Psychosocial research is the foundation of good public policy whose aim is to support wellness for people and the communities in which they live and work.

“The economic, psychological and social impacts of living through a prolonged pandemic will remain long after vaccination and population immunity,” said Dr. Karen Cohen, CPA CEO. “Public health innovations and programmes will address the needs of many, but some people will need individualized care from regulated mental health professionals and our publicly funded health systems simply do not provide it. We strongly encourage the federal, provincial and territorial governments to work together to invest in the mental health care the people of Canada need now.”

“There is no health without our mental health, and now, more than ever, we need governments at all levels to continue to invest in our most important assets...the people of Canada,” said Dr. Kim Corace, CPA President. “For too long, mental health and substance use have been orphans of Medicare. We stand ready to work with all governments and others to find innovative and sustainable solutions that keep the people of Canada mentally as well as physically healthy – our success as a country depends on it.”

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About the CPA

The Canadian Psychological Association is the national voice for the science, practice and education of psychology in the service of the health and welfare of Canadians. The CPA is Canada’s largest association for psychology and represents psychologists in public and private practice, university educators and researchers, as well as students. Psychologists are the country’s largest group of regulated and specialized mental health providers, making our profession a key resource for the mental health treatment Canadians need.

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