



CMHA.AB ONLINE

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Hon. Dave Hancock

Bill 31 Reviewed

After considerable consideration, with input from CMHA Boards across Alberta, CMHA Alberta Division has taken a position on the proposed Bill 31, containing amendments to the Alberta Mental Health Act, one of which introduces Community Treatment Orders (CTOs).

CMHA recognizes there is a small group of individuals that may benefit from CTOs, and therefore has agreed to support Bill 31 with the suggestion of several amendments, including: setting a date for review of the Act within five years; limiting the time frame for re-imposing a CTO on an individual to those who have been given a CTO within the past two years; and insisting that a client must have access to a psychiatrist within 48 hours of a CTO being issued.

These amendments have been presented to a multi-party committee of the provincial government, which is reviewing the bill. It has been given Second Reading and it is anticipated to be approved, with possible amendments, in the fall sitting of the legislature.

A committee has also been formed to look at the implementation of CTOs. It is in this area where CMHA has its greatest concerns.

CMHA applauded Minister of Health Dave Hancock for ensuring that CTOs can only be issued when adequate resources exist and are accessible within a community. However, CMHA maintains great concern that there are significant shortage of adequate community resources in such areas as: affordable housing; access to medical services, including medication, psychotherapy and psychiatric assessments; community supports to enhance independence and recovery; and guardianship and trusteeship, when appropriate.

Housing First

The recent *Housing First* conference was true to its name. For two days in Red Deer, close to 250 attendees heard a rostrum of excellent speakers from across North America speak to their experiences in putting permanent housing for individuals as a top priority.

From New York to San Francisco, with stops in Ottawa, Toronto, Minneapolis, Red Deer, Vancouver and Seattle, the approaches described varied according to needs and existing resources, but the basic philosophy was the same and it is working in reducing homelessness. Many people, when given the opportunity to live in a residence they can call their own, are then able to begin to turn their lives around and are better able to deal with challenges such as mental illness and addictions.

The conference (June 12 - 13) was superbly organized by CMHA staff from Red Deer, Grande Prairie and Lethbridge, working in conjunction with their respective municipalities.



www.socialhousing.ca/cmha





www.depressionlines.ca

Lifelines for Depression

CMHA Alberta is proud to have participated in the development of a new web site dealing with depression. It offers information on traditional and alternative types of treatment through resources across Canada.

Lethbridge 211

CMHA is leading the way in introducing a 211 service to Lethbridge. [Read more](#)

Word Power

What's in a word? Plenty, when it comes to referencing those people living with a mental illness, according to a recent study from CMHA Red Deer. A group led by **Mary Gardiner** authored *Word Power: Terminology Research in Mental Health* – a thought-provoking study which challenges the appropriateness of using terms such as “consumers.” [Read more](#)

Names in the News

Lyn Smedstad has taken on the role of acting Executive Director as the CMHA Edmonton Region searches for a permanent replacement for **Bill Hofmeyer**, who is returning to Australia.

Randy Findlay, a longtime Board member of CMHA Calgary, has been awarded an Honourary Life Membership by CMHA Alberta.

Austin Mardon, recent recipient of the Order of Canada, will be the guest speaker at Edmonton's celebration of the International Day of Disabled Persons, December 3 at City Hall.

CMHA National has hired **Dr. Taylor Alexander** as its new CEO. Dr. Alexander will work from Ottawa, while overseeing the National office in Toronto. He takes over from interim Executive Director **Glenn Thompson**, effective August 13.



Dr. Taylor Alexander

Alberta Division
Board of Directors,
Sylvan Lake, June
2007





Hon. Michael J.L. Kirby



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Upcoming

The CMHA Alberta Division Annual General Meeting will take place on Saturday, September 29 at the Coast Terrace Inn in Edmonton. Details will follow in the next ONLINE.

The CMHA National annual meetings will take place in Ottawa from October 19 - 21, with the AGM on October 20. Michael Kirby, Chair of the Mental Health Commission of Canada, will be a guest speaker.

The Canadian Association for Suicide Prevention (CASP) conference will take place in Yellowknife, October 5 - 8.

AMHB will hold its Mental Health Research Showcase 2007 from November 21 - 23 in Banff.

The Schizophrenia Society's International Conference will take place in Toronto, September 27 - 30 (web site <http://conference.world-schizophrenia.org> or call 1-800-676-6892.

The Organization for Bipolar Affective Disorders offers peer support meetings for those with mood disorders. Contacts are: Calgary obad@shaw.ca ; Edmonton mzaytsoff@yahoo.com .

SUNGLASSES – ONLINE SPECIAL!

The CMHA Alberta Division is selling sunglasses as a fund-raiser. If you'd like a pair (for yourself, or great as a gift), give us a call at 482-6576. They are UV 400 high density driving lenses – great for summer holidays. Cost to you is \$60.00 (regularly priced at \$129.95) Our summer student, **Heather Lonsdale**, models them below.



Contact us! Give us your ideas!

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