



CANADIAN COALITION FOR SENIORS' MENTAL HEALTH  
To promote seniors' mental health by connecting people, ideas and resources

COALITION CANADIENNE POUR LA SANTÉ MENTALE DES PERSONNES ÂGÉES  
Promouvoir la santé mentale des personnes âgées en reliant les personnes, les idées et les ressources

## Fact Sheet:

### A GROWING NEED TO PROMOTE SENIORS' MENTAL HEALTH

Seniors' mental health affects us all. Especially when you consider that more seniors are living longer, there is a high prevalence rate of mental illness and cognitive disorders among the elderly, and despite a growing need for an appropriate range of mental health services for seniors in long-term care settings and the community, our health care system is limited in its capacity to meet these needs.

#### Research

There has been a lack of comprehensive research and data available on seniors' mental health - particularly in long-term care.

#### Education

Despite a need for education in the effective management of mental health and behavioral problems, this information has not been readily available for physicians, nurses, therapists and direct care providers in long-term care settings.

#### Human Resources

The shortage of specialized training in geriatric mental health for formal health and social service providers is a significant barrier to providing effective mental services to seniors in both the community and long-term care settings.

#### Family Caregivers

Caring for a family member or loved one may cause enormous stress. Many caregivers become depressed or anxious. Others report physical ailments associated with the stress of caregiving. Identifying, obtaining or accepting resources to help with coping, especially respite can be very difficult.

#### Public Awareness and Understanding

Stigma associated with mental illness may foster disrespect or disregard, instill fear of discrimination, and discourage individuals and their families from getting the help they need. Public education can dispel stigma as well as encourage people to seek treatment or support.

#### Coordination

Some organizations and individuals possess a wealth of information and knowledge regarding seniors' mental health. The challenge is to find the means and tools to allow this knowledge to be shared and used in various settings across the country. Through effective networking and collaboration, providers, consumers, educators, researchers and policy-makers can work together to accomplish goals they could not reach in isolation.

for more information, visit [www.ccsmh.ca](http://www.ccsmh.ca)