



Equity & Reconciliation

Strategic Plan 2024 - 2028



Canadian Mental
Health Association
York and South Simcoe
Mental health for all



A Message from Rebecca

On behalf of the CMHA YRSS, I am ready to present our renewed Equity and Reconciliation Strategy. This plan was developed by listening and learning and identifying to where we can and must do better.

Equity, Diversity, Inclusion, Accessibility and Reconciliation must all lead towards justice. When we started this work in 2014, we were committed to improving the experiences of our clients and staff. Today, a decade later, we are building on what we learned but also acutely aware of where we have fallen short.

I am proud of our brave staff that have challenged leadership to do more. There is a demand to take actionable steps that lead to measurable results. Our strategy is to make the foundational changes in policy, resource allocation and governance accountability that will enable us to take on the hard work and sustain it over time.

This plan demonstrates the unwavering commitment of CMHA YRSS to improving our equity and reconciliation efforts, both externally and internally, as we continue to modernize, learn and grow. This strategy signifies my hope to build trust with you, the staff, clients, families and the communities we serve who have been and will continue to be heard so that together we can create a more equitable, diverse and inclusive organization.

Our journey is a commitment that goes beyond mere words; it is my promise to continue to create a community where everyone feels respected, valued and included. I am dedicated to fostering an environment rooted in equity and reconciliation, ensuring fair access to resources and opportunities for all.

This plan is also an invitation to join in and collaborate, to monitor, to advise and to evaluate. There is much work ahead, and together, we will succeed. Failure is not an option. This journey requires dedication, continuous learning and transformation. How we started, by listening, learning and acting together, is how we will go forward in our 2024-2028 journey over time.

In solidarity!

Rebecca Shields, CEO

How we got here



POLICY REVIEW

External Consultant reviews
20+ policies to date



VIRTUAL INTERVIEWS

30+ participants from across
the organization



FOCUS GROUPS

- Affinity Groups
- Client & Family advisors
- Departments/teams



PREVIOUS INITIATIVES

- Diversity and inclusion taskforce
- #StopTheHate

Highlights of Past Efforts: 2013 - 2024

- ✓ Cultural Competency Strategy and Taskforce Initiatives
- ✓ Client Service Expansions
- ✓ Comprehensive Training Programs
- ✓ Affinity Groups Expansion and Initiatives
- ✓ Establishing the #StopTheHate Group
- ✓ Board of Directors' Focus on Equity and Reconciliation
- ✓ Launch of the Equity and Reconciliation Committee (ERC)



Commitments for 2024 - 2028



ORGANIZATIONAL TRANSFORMATION

We will continue to embed E&R principles in our organization's core structure and governance to create an inclusive and equitable environment.



EMPOWERING OUR PEOPLE

We will continue to foster a supportive, inclusive and fair workplace that empowers all employees through continuous learning, development and recognition.



ENHANCING OUR SERVICES

We will continue to make our services inclusive, accessible and responsive to the diverse needs of our clients.

How We Will Succeed

- ✓ Set clear, measurable goals for each commitment area.
- ✓ Develop a system for tracking progress and collecting data.
- ✓ Regularly report on progress to our Board of Directors, management, staff, clients, and the community.
- ✓ Seek feedback through surveys, focus groups, and other means to inform our progress.
- ✓ Use data and feedback to make continuous improvements to our E&R strategies and actions.

Our Phased Approach / PHASE 1: Foundation 2024 - 2025

Focused Efforts

ORGANIZATIONAL TRANSFORMATION

- Create E&R Steering Committee
- Catalogue and report on E&R milestones
- Develop E&R strategic plan with established communication cadence
- Assign accountability to EMT
- Create land acknowledgment guide with guidance with FNMI knowledge holder
- Conduct annual demographic survey and create dashboard
- Update governance policies as per E&R best practices
- Update mission, vision, and values to reflect E&R principles and integrate into new strategic plan
- Implement equitable communications platforms

EMPOWERING OUR PEOPLE

- P&C to analyze feedback from FNMI, Black, 2SLGBTQ+ staff and leaders
- Update P&C policies to reflect E&R best practices based on audit findings
- Advocacy and Training Focus: Update E&R training for all staff
- Review TOR, budgets, and expectations for affinity groups, and provide support and resources including for our Indigenous, BIPOC and 2SLGBTQ+ groups
- Recognize, share events, and encourage staff attendance as per E&R priorities
- Leverage annual demographic survey data when making hiring and promotion choices

ENHANCING OUR SERVICES

- Establish a community engagement approach based on best practices
- Assign FNMI lead to coordinate engagement and service planning demands
- Explore how the Health Equity Impact Assessment (HEIA) Community of Interest can inform our E&R best practices

Measures of Success

- ✔ E&R strategy launched with timelines & priorities
- ✔ E&R Committee established with a yearly work plan
- ✔ Yearly work plan milestone and accomplishments shared with board & staff
- ✔ Set up EMT accountability & reporting to Board of Directors
- ✔ Conduct the first staff demographic survey
- ✔ Design the E&R dashboard
- ✔ Review CMHA Board Governance policies and board manual to reflect E&R values
- ✔ Align new organizational strategic plan with E&R efforts
- ✔ Update communications strategies to include Voices of Inclusions and create a global events communications guidance document

- ✔ Identification and creation of an action plan with 3-5 strategies to improve FNMI, Black, and 2SLGBTQ+ staff and volunteer experience at CMHA
- ✔ P&C policies reflect E&R values
- ✔ 100% staff completion of assigned E&R training
- ✔ Supported affinity groups with dedicated resources
- ✔ Annual recognition of events as informed by affinity groups & E&R priorities
- ✔ Utilize annual survey data for hiring & promotion decisions

- ✔ Updated community engagement plan
- ✔ FNMI engagement in OSP, regional programs and development of Hub
- ✔ Operations Leadership Team to review the HEIA tool and establish a process to test and evaluate the use of the tool in assessing and improving program delivery

Our Phased Approach / PHASE 2: Acceleration 2025 - 2027

Focused Efforts

ORGANIZATIONAL TRANSFORMATION

- Integrate E&R into governance, change management, continuous improvement, and risk management frameworks
- Develop a plan linking E&R deliverables to senior leaders and departments
- E&R Committee has a yearly work plan
- Conduct annual demographic survey

EMPOWERING OUR PEOPLE

- Set targets for hiring and placement of EDG identified individuals in the FMT
- Create a measurement and reporting framework to address organizational disparities
- Update performance appraisals to include E&R goals for all staff
- Continuously update P&C policies to reflect E&R best practices
- Advocacy & Training Focus: end micro aggressions through ongoing E&R training and incident reporting structure
- Provide resources and support for affinity groups
- Consistently recognize significant EDG events according to E&R priorities

ENHANCING OUR SERVICES

- Prioritize Anti-Indigenous, Anti-Black Racism, 2SLGBTBQ+ oppression in alignment with Ontario Health Equity Framework through training and development
- Benchmark and evaluate services utilization by FNMI, Black and 2SLGBTBQ+ communities
- Implement the Ontario HEIA tool in our regional services
- Update service policies to reflect E&R best practices as per audit findings

Measures of Success

- ✔ Establish E&R best practices in governance, change management, quality improvement models, and risk management frameworks
- ✔ E&R strategy and deliverables linked to senior leaders and departments
- ✔ E&R Committee completed last year's deliverables and has a new work plan

- ✔ Deliver on action plan with 3-5 strategies to improve FNMI, Black, and 2SLGBTBQ+ staff and volunteer experience at CMHA
- ✔ Use annual survey data to guide hiring and promotion of EDG individuals
- ✔ Inclusion of E&R goals within staff performance framework
- ✔ Monitor reporting of micro aggressions as a category of incident reporting and address issues
- ✔ 100% completion of assigned E&R training
- ✔ Fully supported affinity groups with dedicated resources
- ✔ Annual plan to recognize key events based on affinity group and E&R priorities

- ✔ Create a dashboard and services map and match external partnerships/services to improve service delivery for York Region and South Simcoe's diverse communities
- ✔ Operations Leadership Team to review the HEIA tool and establish a process to test and evaluate the use of the tool in assessing and improving program delivery
- ✔ Review and update practices of one programs service policy based on HEIA

Our Phased Approach / PHASE 3: Scalability 2027 - 2028

Focused Efforts

ORGANIZATIONAL TRANSFORMATION

- Fully integrate E&R principles into organizational decisions
- E&R Committee has an annual work plan
- Create an annual plan linking E&R priorities to each senior leader and department
- Make equity informed decisions based on data from PDS and community engagement survey
- Center E&R priorities in future organizational strategic plans
- Conduct an annual demographic survey

EMPOWERING OUR PEOPLE

- Continuously update P&C policies to reflect E&R best practices
- Maintain a comprehensive E&R training program
- Continue to support and resource affinity groups
- Consistently recognize significant E&R priorities
- Prioritize hiring and promoting FNMI and Black peoples in all roles
- Eliminate career progression disparities with reasonable accommodations to address historical inequities

ENHANCING OUR SERVICES

- Expand strategies to EDG inclusive of Anti-Black, Anti-Indigenous Racism, 2SLGBTQ+ oppression in alignment with Ontario Health Equity Framework through training and development
- Continuously update service policies with input from Senior Directors of Services to reflect E&R best practices
- Compare CMHA services using the PDS against population data and set strategies to close the gaps
- Strengthen relationships with external partners/services to improve service delivery for EDG population

Measures of Success

- ✔ Fully evaluate the effectiveness of E&R actions
- ✔ Last year's deliverables completed and new work plan created by E&R Committee
- ✔ E&R strategy and deliverables linked to senior leaders and departments
- ✔ Link population health data to our internal dashboard and review progress to improve health outcomes for FNMI and Black communities
- ✔ E&R efforts continue to be central to the organization's mission, vision, and values

- ✔ Survey outcomes used to guide hiring and promotion of EDG identified individuals
- ✔ Set targets for hiring and placement of EDG identified individuals in frontline, leadership, and governance roles
- ✔ All new P&C policies reflect E&R best practices
- ✔ 100% staff completion of assigned E&R training
- ✔ Fully operational affinity groups supported with dedicated resources
- ✔ Development and leadership opportunities provided for under represented employees through Leadership Edge

- ✔ Review and update practices of 3 additional program/service policies based on HEIA
- ✔ Increased partnerships with communities serving EDG

Strategic alignment

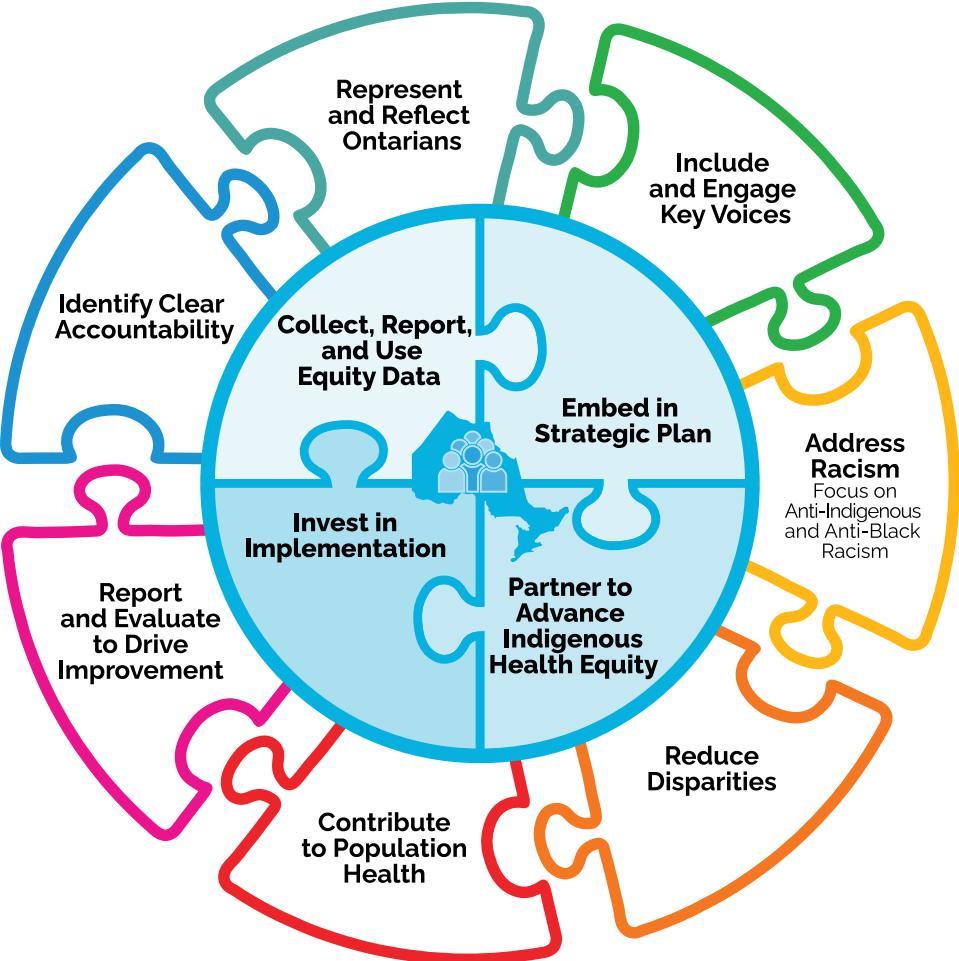
with the Ontario Health Equity, Inclusion, Diversity and Anti-Racism Framework

Our strategic plan is in alignment with Ontario Health’s Equity, Inclusion, Diversity, and Anti-Racism Framework to address anti-Indigenous and anti-Black racism with a focus on reducing inequities within the health system.

By aligning with provincial frameworks and incorporating best practices, we are committed to fostering a culture where all individuals feel valued, respected and empowered to thrive. This strategy underscores our dedication to continuous improvement and our commitment to provide accessible, culturally responsive mental health services to the communities we serve.

The path ahead will be one of continuous improvement and ongoing transformation. We are committed to incremental progress and equitable outcomes in both the organization and services we deliver.

Together, we will build a future where our staff, clients, families and communities we serve feel acknowledged, valued and supported.



Future State

Our three commitments will ensure the longevity of our equity and reconciliation efforts by creating a sustainable plan that is fundamental to our organization’s mission, vision and values.

This plan will help us move forward so that our equity and reconciliation efforts are deeply ingrained in the organization’s DNA, impacting decision making, policies, and daily practices to improve the health equity of our clients.



Acronyms

BIPOC:

Black Indigenous and People of Colour

EDG:

Equity Deserving Groups that include BIPOC, 2SLGTBQ+ and People Living with Disabilities

EMT:

Executive Management Team

E&R:

Equity and Reconciliation

FMT:

Full Management Team

FNMI:

First Nations, Metis, and Inuit

HEIA:

Health Equity Impact Assessment

PDS:

Provincial Data Set

P&C:

People and Culture

OSP:

Ontario Structured Psychotherapy Program

SMT:

Senior Management Team

2SLGTBQ+:

Two Spirited, Lesbian, Gay, Transgender, Bisexual, Queer, and Others

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