House of Commons
Chambre des communes
Canada

House of Commons Standing Committee on Finance – Pre-budget Consultations 2013

This brief is submitted by:

(•) **an organization** **Organization name:** Canadian Psychiatric Association (CPA)

or

( ) **an individual** **Name:** _____

Topic: Health

*Recommendation 1: Please provide a short summary of your recommendation.

Recognizing the pressing mental health needs of the Inuit and First Nations Peoples of Canada, the high rates of suicide, particularly among Aboriginal youth, and the remoteness of their communities, allocate $2 million to mental health services over the next two years in order to fund 1) $1 million for culturally appropriate services designed to meet new evidence based standards of care 2) $1 million to support the development of evidence-based suicide prevention programming that reflects community priorities, incorporates traditional cultures, and targets at-risk populations.

Expected cost or savings: From the pull-down menus, please indicate the expected cost or savings of your recommendation to the federal government and the period of time to which the expected cost or savings is related.

$1 million-4.9 million

2 years

Federal funding: Please provide a precise indication of how the federal government could fund your recommendation. For example, indicate what federal spending should be reallocated, what federal tax measure(s) should be introduced, eliminated or changed, etc.

Given the Mental Health Commission of Canada's recommendation that funding for mental health services represent nine per cent of health care spending, and its recommendation for a coordinated continuum of mental wellness services which includes traditional, cultural, and mainstream approaches, allocate $2 million for First Nations and Inuit mental health from Health Canada's First Nations and Inuit Health Branch (FNIHB)'s, with multi-year projects funded though the Health Services Integration Fund (HSIF).

Intended beneficiaries: Please indicate the groups of individuals, the sector(s) and/or the regions that would benefit by implementation of your recommendation.

Aboriginal Peoples of Canada for whom the Crown is responsible. Health Canada FNIHB's Strategic Plan (2012) recognizes that to adequately address mental health needs among First Nations and Inuit, it is necessary to build on existing community strengths, and mental wellness programs, and support a comprehensive approach to provide "culturally safe" mental health and addictions services and supports to First Nations and Inuit communities drawing on community, cultural, and clinical approaches to mental wellness services.

General impacts: Depending on the nature of your recommendation, please indicate how the standard of living of Canadians would be improved, jobs would be created, people would be trained, etc.

Given Canada's aging population, Canada needs a new labour source. The Aboriginal population is much younger and is growing faster than the non-Aboriginal population. Estimates are that it will account for 12.7 per cent of labour force growth between 2006 and 2026 and represent almost five per cent of the total working age population by 2026. Given the distribution of Aboriginal Peoples across every region of Canada, Canada will benefit both economically and socially in funding this initiative.

Topic: Federal budgets and the public service

Recommendation 2: Please provide a short summary of your recommendation.

Given that the federal government is the country's largest employer, and that the number of disability claims in the federal government due to mental illness has almost doubled, the federal government should work towards mental health promotion and mental illness prevention by using the processes, practices and tools in the National Standard of Canada for Psychological Health & Safety in the Workplace (the standard) to 1) Launch a pilot project in one department 2) Evaluate the success of the pilot 3) Implement the standard in all federal government departments within two years.

Expected cost or savings: From the pull-down menus, please indicate the expected cost or savings of your recommendation to the federal government and the period of time to which the expected cost or savings is related.

$10 million-$99.9 million

5 or more years

Federal funding: Please provide a precise indication of how the federal government could fund your recommendation. For example, indicate what federal spending should be reallocated, what federal tax measure(s) should be introduced, eliminated or changed, etc.

Incorporate the recommendation as part of Treasury Board of Canada's 2013 commitment to modernize its disability management with an emphasis on prevention, rehabilitation, and productivity.

Intended beneficiaries: Please indicate the groups of individuals, the sector(s) and/or the regions that would benefit by implementation of your recommendation.

The federal public service comprises 0.8 per cent of the Canadian population (2012) . The federal government is the largest operation in this country. As its major funder, the federal government has a leadership role to play in implementing the standard. The public service would benefit from significant cost savings and increased productivity, should the standard be effectively implemented, resulting in major savings for the Canadian government.

General impacts: Depending on the nature of your recommendation, please indicate how the standard of living of Canadians would be improved, jobs would be created, people would be trained, etc.

Currently, mental health problems cost the economy at least $6 billion a year due to lost productivity and this number is expected to rise. More than half of all disability claims in the Canadian workforce are now due to mental illness Both prevention programs and access to evidence based treatments need to be improved to maintain an effective and efficient workforce across Canada. An investment now could reap large dividends in future savings.

Topic: Health

Recommendation 3: Please provide a short summary of your recommendation.

Given that research focused on patients is the cornerstone of evidence-informed health care, and that this research needs to be translated and integrated into the health care system and clinical practice at a regional level, the federal government should designate 10 per cent of its funding to CIHR's Strategy for Patient-Oriented Research (SPOR) Support for People and Patient-Oriented Research and Trials (SUPPORT) Units to add the requirement for a mental health component to these funds.

Expected cost or savings: From the pull-down menus, please indicate the expected cost or savings of your recommendation to the federal government and the period of time to which the expected cost or savings is related.

$1 million-4.9 million

5 or more years

Federal funding: Please provide a precise indication of how the federal government could fund your recommendation. For example, indicate what federal spending should be reallocated, what federal tax measure(s) should be introduced, eliminated or changed, etc.

Reallocate 10 per cent of the funding for SPOR SUPPORT Units (anticipated to be $2 million – $10 million per unit per year) specifically to mental health patient-oriented research and trials.

Intended beneficiaries: Please indicate the groups of individuals, the sector(s) and/or the regions that would benefit by implementation of your recommendation.

CIHR SPOR SUPPORT Units are intended to be regional centres of excellence that can stimulate, facilitate, support and enhance the conduct of patient-oriented research. Funding this initiative would provide a major boost to mental health research and mental health outcomes on a regional basis, allowing provinces to identify and tackle strategies and priorities at the local level.

General impacts: Depending on the nature of your recommendation, please indicate how the standard of living of Canadians would be improved, jobs would be created, people would be trained, etc.

Through these efforts, mental health care for Canada's population will rapidly improve across the country as research results are more effectively translated into the health care system and clinical practice at a local level.

Please use this page if you wish to provide more explanation about your recommendation(s).

Founded in 1951, the Canadian Psychiatric Association (CPA) is the national voluntary professional association for Canada's 4,500 psychiatrists. As the national voice of Canadian psychiatrists, the CPA advocates for the professional needs of its members and promotes excellence in education, research, and clinical practice.

The costs of mental illness are increasing exponentially. According to the Mental Health Commission of Canada, they now stand at over $50 billion per year, $6 billion alone of which is due to lost productivity. In 2011, this represented 2.8 per cent of our annual GDP. In ten years, this annual cost is expected to rise to almost $89 billion with a cumulative cost of more than $623 billion.

The CPA urges the Government to act on the recommendations of the Commission to increase the funding for mental health from seven to nine per cent of health care budgets. We spend far less on mental health than other comparable nations - just over seven cents out of every public health care dollar, far below the 10 to 11 per cent spent in countries such as New Zealand and the U.K.

The CPA recognizes the support of the Government of Canada in establishing the Mental Health Commission of Canada. It welcomed the announcement of Canada's Mental Health Strategy and National Standard of Canada for Psychological Health & Safety in the Workplace (the standard), and it asks the government to take action on the strategy and to implement the standard, beginning with the federal workplace.

The Commission focuses on First Nations, Inuit and Métis mental health as part of the Mental Health Strategy. The CPA welcomes both the Commission's recommendations and the First Nations and Inuit Health Branch's Strategic Plan (2012) but recognizes that more resources are needed if the objectives identified by Health Canada are to be effectively implemented. With the significance of our Aboriginal Peoples in terms of a potential source of labour, it is imperative that the government act to address the health care deficit on reserves.

The federal government has a pivotal role to play in providing equitable funding to mental health initiatives and in shaping the national agenda at both the federal and provincial levels. One of the areas in which it can act to ensure that mental health is adequately funded is by providing a mandatory mental health component to federal-provincial research initiatives such as CIHR SPOR SUPPORT Units. This will ensure that mental health research effectively targets local and regional priorities.

*Please note that at least one recommendation must be provided