

CMHA Sask Division Branch Reports

CMHA Saskatoon Branch Annual Report 2024-2025

As we reflect on our programs and impacts over the year, we recognize that mental healthcare has largely been shaped by Western understandings, often leaving out the knowledge, traditions and holistic approaches that Indigenous communities have carried for generations. With this we are grateful to live, work and walk on this land and carry a responsibility to protect, respect and learn from Indigenous world views and ways of knowing by acknowledging the harms done by colonialism.

This year was one of growth and deepening our impact on those we serve and our communities. **1600 individuals** and **60 organizations** received mental health education. CMHA Saskatoon delivers Mental Health First Aid as well as custom workshops and education. Our most requested workshop is ***Mental Health in the Workplace***, reflecting the growing awareness that mental wellness is the cornerstone of a healthy, productive workplace. With approximately \$50 billion lost each year to the Canadian economy as a result of mental illness, the importance of these workshops has never been greater.



Our third Annual ***In the Spotlight*** event brought together community members, professionals, and families to listen to Naomi's personal journey of recovery. We also heard from Lucy, a mother who spoke of her son's legacy and establishing CMHA Saskatoon's first fund to support people served by CMHA Saskatoon to improve their quality of life. We are pleased to work with Lucy as clients access ***Sean's Fund***.

Our work with Insightrix allowed us to ask Saskatoon residents the question, ***How are we doing, really?*** We wanted to better understand how people experience mental health support, what's working, what's missing and how can we do better. We learned that:

- 33% had difficulty accessing services, including experiencing long wait times
- 29% felt stigma prevented or made them uncomfortable when reaching out for help
- 54% cited limited availability of services as a barrier to access
- 36% felt there are insufficient mental health services and supports
- 37% cited financial constraints as a barrier to access
- Only 10% were confident in finding support for mental health challenges

These numbers speak to a system under pressure, reflecting the reality that too many people fall through the cracks. Not because they aren't trying, but because there are real gaps in care.

Our fourth **Annual Shoppers Drug Mart Run for Women** hit a new record, raising **\$94,000** for CMHA Saskatoon. These funds support programs like **More Than Mamas**, a postpartum education and support resource for mothers. **More than Mamas** launched a new partnership with BabyBean Play Cafe this year, too! The Run for Women fosters community solidarity, reminding us of the importance of supporting women's mental health.



Year 2 of the **Push Up Challenge**, organized by CMHA National, was another resounding success. In the first year we raised \$26,000 and this year \$46,000. The momentum is growing as Canadians focus on improving their mental and physical well being and raise much needed funds for CMHA Branches across the country.

This year's Mental Health Week embraced the theme of **Unmasking Mental Health**, inviting the community to break down stigma and explore the masks we all wear and what it means to take them off. In collaboration with 6 local agencies, we hosted the **Walk 4 Mental Health** from City Hall to a community BBQ in Kinsmen Park. With over 300 people joining the walk and 450 for the BBQ we brought together our community in a visible show of solidarity, support and shared experience.

Supporting individuals and families to access affordable, inclusive, quality housing is a growing challenge across Saskatchewan. Our **Coming Home** supported independent living program continues to grow and see firsthand the impact that finding quality housing can have. When Zama connected with us, she was living in transitional housing with her newborn twins. She was here to build a new life for her family, while paving the way for her husband and daughter to join her. Zama connected with our More Than Mamas' program and then Coming Home. Through the Coming Home program Zama signed a lease on her new townhouse. While she hopes to unite her family soon, she finally feels at home.

This past fall, **Teenz Table Talk (TTT)**, our youth mental health initiative, received a National Philanthropy Award for outstanding work in youth mental health. Guided by the motto **for youth by youth**, TTT creates space for open, honest conversations in schools and community centres about mental health from a youth perspective.

Talking about wills and estate planning can feel overwhelming, but it's a conversation that bring clarity and peace of mind.

We had a full house at our first wills and estate workshop, **Planning for Your Loved One's Future**, with attendees having the opportunity to learn from experts, including a lawyer and financial planner. Attendees expressed feeling grateful for a chance to access important information at no



Members of Teenz Table Talk

cost, talk openly about their concerns and get practical guidance on wills and financial planning for their loved ones with mental health concerns. This session turned what can feel like a daunting topic into an empowering experience.

Volunteers continue to be the heart of our movement. They are more than helpers; they are champions of mental health and building community connections. Whether serving on our board of directors, guiding support groups, packing wellness hampers, or helping shape events and campaigns, our volunteers bring commitment, compassion and capacity to our work.

Their contributions aren't just generous, they're essential.

We extend our gratitude to our community partners, grantors, donors, supporters, the Saskatchewan Health Authority, and the Government of Saskatchewan, whose contributions enable us to continue our vital work in enabling access to mental health support for all.

Our dedicated and resilient staff are the backbone of our organization. Their commitment and passion continue to drive our mission forward.

We extend our appreciation to our Board of Directors for their guidance, leadership, and stewardship, ensuring the governance and strategic direction of our organization.

As we look ahead, we remain committed to our mission of mental health for all and building a community where everyone can truly belong.



CMHA Saskatoon Volunteers