



CANADIAN MENTAL  
HEALTH ASSOCIATION  

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L'ASSOCIATION CANADIENNE  
POUR LA SANTÉ MENTALE

**Attn: Assignment Editors**

**CANADIAN MENTAL HEALTH ASSOCIATION, WINDSOR-ESSEX COUNTY**  
**ACCREDITED BY THE CANADIAN COUNCIL ON HEALTH SERVICES**  
**ACCREDITATION**

**Windsor, ON (September 14, 2005)** – The Canadian Mental Health Association, Windsor-Essex County Branch (CMHA-WECB) announced today they have been granted a three-year accreditation from the Canadian Council on Health Services Accreditation (CCHSA). This milestone event indicates the local branch's ability to meet national standards of quality for health services set by the council, the same organization used by hospitals.

"This is a significant achievement for a community mental health Agency and we are very proud that the work we do – the quality of care our staff provides and services offered - has been validated," said John Clark, President of the Board of Directors. "We are only the second CMHA in Canada to achieve accreditation."

The CMHA-WECB made the choice to voluntarily participate in an intensive, on-going accreditation cycle. The cycle begins with the preparation for accreditation. Teams of managers, staff, and support staff work together to set objectives, gather information, and conduct a self-assessment where compliance is measured against national standards. Following completion of the self-assessment the organization undergoes an independent peer review survey. The organization receives a report detailing findings of the survey, acts on the recommendations and prepares for accreditation again. In this way, the accreditation cycle serves as a tool for continuous quality improvement. "CCHSA has confirmed that our Agency is a reflection of the very best standards in health care services," added Clark.

The CCHSA granted accreditation to CMHA-WECB with the condition of several progress reports throughout the term of accreditation, 2005 to 2008. To maintain accreditation, the Agency will be required to once again complete the process in 2008. Only 41% of organizations receive a three-year approval on their first effort while 58% receive a one-year accreditation.

"Seeking accreditation is a long and intensive process for any organization and our staff and community partners deserve tremendous credit for completing the self-assessment in a very short time frame," reflected Pamela Hines, Chief Executive Officer. "We are simply delighted with CCHSA's decision and this accreditation reaffirms that we have a team of committed, talented and professional staff who provide quality care for individuals experiencing a mental illness in our community."

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The Canadian Council on Health Services Accreditation is the leading body for accreditation of health services in Canada. CCHSA aims to assist organizations in examining and improving the quality of care and services provided to their clients. Their program is based on standards established and updated by experts in the field, peer review and knowledge exchange.

The Canadian Mental Health Association, Windsor-Essex County Branch was established in 1971 and is part of a national voluntary organization that provides mental health service to Canadians in 135 communities.

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