

CPMHC Applauds Government's Decision to Fund First Ever National Perinatal Mental Health Guidelines

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE– (May 3rd, 2023, Ottawa, ON) - The Canadian Perinatal Mental Health Collaborative (CPMHC) is thrilled that the Government of Canada is providing \$372,000 to Women's College Hospital to develop the first ever Canadian Network for Mood and Anxiety Treatments (CANMAT) Clinical Practice Guideline for the Treatment of Perinatal Mood, Anxiety and Related Disorders.

"We are honoured to be part of the team at Women's College Hospital moving national guidelines for perinatal mental health forward," say Jaime Charlebois and Patricia Tomasi, CPMHC Co-Founders and Co-Executive Directors. "The work towards a national perinatal mental health strategy starts today!"

The CPMHC was asked to participate in the CANMAT guidelines project in January and provided a letter of support to project leads Dr. Simone Vigod and Dr. Benicio Frey.

"As co-PWLE PAs (People With Lived Experience Principal Advisors), and Knowledge Users, we are committed to the success of the CANMAT guideline," say Tomasi and Charlebois. "This project has the potential to transform the health care system and increase access to evidence-based treatments which is in-line with our call for a national perinatal mental health strategy."

Since 2019, the CPMHC has been calling for a national perinatal mental health strategy that includes guidelines on universal screening and timely access to treatment. The CANMAT guidelines are a precursor to National Standards of Care for perinatal mental health.

As mentioned in the government's announcement, the guidelines will help "individuals, families, and caregivers better understand what to ask for in their care; assist health care professionals in expanding their knowledge of what perinatal care should be offered; and help health care organizations measure, assess, and improve their performance."

Minister of Mental Health and Addictions, the Honourable Carolyn Bennett made the announcement today, at the CPMHC's second annual Flora's Walk for Perinatal Mental Health along with \$279,000 in funding to the Canadian Mothercraft Society, and \$206,000 to the Family Matters Society of Calgary.

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