

**Provincial Mental Health and Addictions  
Advisory Council**

**ANNUAL REPORT  
April 1, 2013 - March 31, 2014**

## VICE-CHAIRPERSON'S MESSAGE

I am pleased to provide the 2013-2014 Annual Report for the Provincial Mental Health and Addictions Advisory Council in accordance with the requirements of the *Transparency and Accountability Act* for a Category 3 Government Entity. In the development of this report, careful consideration was given to the strategic directions of the Provincial Government, as communicated by the Minister of Health and Community Services.

This annual report, our third such report since the Advisory Council was formed in June 2010, is a significant accomplishment because it outlines not only activities from the past year, but also activities over the last three years. As you will see, this report reflects the Advisory Council's dedication and commitment to informing the Minister of Health and Community Services on key mental health and addictions issues in our province.

I want to take this opportunity to thank Council members for their passion and dedication to improving mental health and addictions supports in Newfoundland and Labrador. Each member voluntarily dedicates their time to Council activities and I want to recognize the effort and commitment this requires.

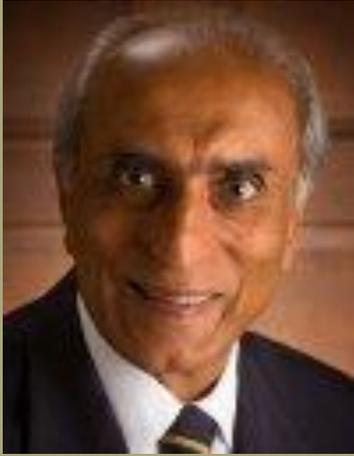
Given the vacancy of the chairperson position, my signature below, as vice-chairperson of the Provincial Mental Health and Addictions Advisory Council, is indicative of the Advisory Council's accountability for the preparation of this report and for the achievement of the specific goals and objectives contained therein.

Sincerely,



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Dr. Nizar Ladha



**Dr. Nizar Ladha**

**Vice-Chair,  
Provincial Mental Health and  
Addictions Advisory Council**

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## 1.0 Overview

The Provincial Mental Health and Addictions Advisory Council (Advisory Council, Council) was established in June 2010 to advise the Minister of Health and Community Services on key mental health and addictions matters in order to enhance services and improve the lives of those living with mental health and addictions issues in Newfoundland and Labrador.

### 1.1 Mandate

The Provincial Mental Health and Addictions Advisory Council advises the Minister of Health and Community Services on key mental health and addictions matters needed to formulate effective policy and decision making.

The Advisory Council specifically advises on matters related to:

- How the Provincial Government can best develop policy to improve and/or prevent mental health and addictions problems
- The process and content of possible revisions to the provincial policy framework for addictions and mental health
- The development, planning, delivery and evaluation of evolving mental health and addictions programs, services and support infrastructures
- The establishment of a set of indicators to measure performance within the policy framework and for service provision throughout the province
- How to increase public awareness and education of addictions and mental health issues in Newfoundland and Labrador.

### 1.2 Membership

The Provincial Mental Health and Addictions Advisory Council is a 13-member group with 1 vacancy. Membership represents persons/families affected by mental illness and/or addictions, Regional Health Authorities (RHA), non-government organizations, and community-based agencies. Membership is voluntary and the Minister of Health and Community Services makes appointments. Current Advisory Council members are listed in Appendix A.

### 1.3 Meetings

The Mental Health and Addictions Advisory Council first met in July 2010. Since membership is geographically representative of Newfoundland and Labrador, members can attend in person or by teleconference. In 2013-14, meetings were scheduled monthly or bi-monthly and attendance was always strong demonstrating the dedication of Advisory Council members. In 2013-14, there were eight meetings in total.

### 1.4 Financial

The work of the Provincial Mental Health and Addictions Advisory Council was supported and funded by the Mental Health and Addictions Division, Department of Health and Community Services. In addition, the Mental Health and Addictions Division within the Department of Health and Community Services also administered clerical support and secretariat services. In 2013-14, the total expenses for the Advisory Council were \$1,376.38 and included transportation, meals, accommodations/meeting venues and other logistical components such as teleconferences.

### 1.5 Primary Client

The primary client of the Provincial Mental Health and Addictions Advisory Council is the Minister of Health and Community Services. By fostering an environment of understanding within the Provincial Government about mental health and addictions, all persons in the province are also served.

## 2.0 Shared Partnerships 2013-14

In 2013-14, the Advisory Council partnered with several organizations with the goal of improving mental health and addiction services in Newfoundland and Labrador. In addition to mental health and addiction service improvements, the 2013-14 partnerships supported the strategic directions of population health and access to priority services as communicated by the Minister. The work of the Advisory Council supported the strategic direction of the Department by aiming to improve population health and access to mental health and addictions services.

Mental Health Commission of Canada (MHCC): The Advisory Council partnered with the MHCC for information sharing and knowledge exchange purposes. The Provincial Mental Health and Addictions Advisory Council, with the support of the Department of Health and Community Services partnered with the MHCC and initiated a recovery project for Newfoundland and Labrador. The purpose of the recovery project is to provide a recovery curriculum to clinical leaders in mental health and addictions services, both within RHAs, community agencies, and correctional settings throughout the province.

Community Support Groups (CSG): By the very nature that Advisory Council membership included representatives from community support groups (CSG), partnerships between CSG and the Advisory Council were strong. In 2013-14, five of the 13 members belonged to one of the following organizations at the community level:

1. Choices for Youth
2. Canadian Mental Health Association- Newfoundland and Labrador (CMHA-NL)
3. Eating Disorder Foundation of Newfoundland and Labrador (EDFNL)
4. Stella's Circle Community Services
5. Turnings

Department of Health and Community Services: The Department of Health and Community Services and the Advisory Council maintained a strong partnership in 2013-14. The Mental Health and Addictions Division provided secretariat support and also organized meetings, based on consensus from the Advisory Council. In addition to logistical work, the Advisory Council reported to the Minister and informed policy makers on pertinent issues related to mental health and addictions.

The Advisory Council participated in one formal planning session with the Minister of Health and Community Services. The Advisory Council presented many items of significance with notable items including recommendations for the policy framework document, support for the Recovery Project, and the need to work collaboratively across Provincial Government departments.

### 3.0 Highlights and Accomplishments

The list below describes several notable accomplishments and highlights of the Council over the past year.

#### Supported and informed the Recovery Project

In 2013–14, the Advisory Council continued to support the Recovery Project. The goal of the Recovery Project is to transform the current mental health and addictions service system into a recovery-oriented system. Facilitating recovery is an evidence-based and necessary component of mental health systems and is supported by the Mental Health Commission of Canada (MHCC), the World Health Organization (WHO) and other leading mental health researchers and organizations worldwide.

Over the past year, the Advisory Council informed the development of the Recovery Project and several council members were also a part of the Stakeholder Network group that informed project components. The movement towards a recovery-oriented system is a long-term, cultural shift and the Advisory Council is committed to supporting this project in the long term.

#### Informed by various groups

In 2013-2014, several groups presented to the Advisory Council on various topics of interest. These presentations represented areas of priority/concern and the Advisory Council will continue its support of these initiatives.

<b>Group</b>	<b>Presentation Topic</b>
Pharmaceutical Services Division, Department of Health and Community Services	Approval process for drug coverage/Newfoundland and Labrador Prescription Drug Program (NLPDP)
The College of Physicians and Surgeons	New regulations regarding methadone maintenance treatment
Department of Health and Community Services and Department of Education	Social and Emotional Learning: the PATHS Curriculum
Eastern Health	Methadone Tapering

## 4.0 Report on Performance

### Vision

The Advisory Council supports the vision of the Department of Health and Community Services, and has adopted it as follows:

***The vision of the Department of Health and Community Services is for individuals, families and communities to achieve optimal health and well-being.***

### Mission

The Advisory Council has also adopted the Department of Health and Community Services' Mission:

***By March 31, 2017, the Department of Health and Community Services will have provided leadership to support an enhanced health care system that effectively serves the people of the province and helps them achieve optimal health and well-being.***

The Advisory Council members, individually and collectively, contributed to the Department's mission by providing advice, and at times, participating in the review of the current policy framework, *Working Together for Mental Health*. The provision of advice and the collaborative efforts to inform policy development and the delivery of programs and services furthered positive mental health and well-being throughout the province.

## 5.0 2013-14 Progress

### GOAL 1: Provincial Policy Framework Annual Objectives

The 2005 policy framework, *Working Together for Mental Health*, was the Government of Newfoundland and Labrador's response to the long acknowledged challenges faced by those who use the mental health and addiction system. The policy directions in *Working Together for Mental Health* are:

- Prevention and early intervention
- Bridges for better access
- Quality mental health and addiction services
- Consumers and significant others
- Accountability and measuring progress

Under this policy framework, \$43 million over the past four years was invested by the Provincial Government to support mental health and addiction services throughout the province. Investments include the development of two youth treatment centres for youth with addictions and complex mental health issues, early planning for the replacement of the Waterford Hospital, and additional case manager positions among many other initiatives. In order to have continued benefits from these investments, the Advisory Council saw the revision of the 2005 policy framework as a natural opportunity. When the Advisory Council reviewed the existing 2005 framework, they identified strengths and achievements as well as areas for change and revision. Progress towards achieving this goal in the first of three years is documented below.

This goal supports the strategic direction of *Accountability and Stability of Services* by addressing mental health and addiction concerns in the province.

#### **GOAL 1: THREE-YEAR REPORTING**

**Goal:** By **March 31, 2014**, Provincial Mental Health and Addictions Advisory Council will have reviewed the existing provincial policy framework for addictions and mental health.

**Measure:** Reviewed the existing provincial policy framework

<b>Indicator</b>	<b>Actual Activity</b>
Reviewed existing policy framework (2005).	Over the last three years, the Advisory Council reviewed the 2005 policy framework and provided input into how the document could be updated.
Identified Advisory Council specific involvement.	The Advisory Council specified their impact on policy development by informing government and submitting various policy statements. In total, 13 policy statements were submitted for consideration.
Provided ministerial advice on the content for suggested revisions.	Council members provided ministerial advice and suggestions for revisions for a future Mental Health and Addictions Provincial Policy Framework.
Participated in related meetings, discussion forums.	The Advisory Council participated in the review of the existing policy framework, provided advice and informed policy development for the delivery of mental health and addictions programs and services.
Identified impact on policy	The Advisory Council provided advice to the minister on potential

directions.	policy directions for the framework to help determine how these directions would impact services and support. The framework was modified based on this input.
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Discussion of Results:

Over the past three years the Advisory Council has had the opportunity to see huge policy changes within the Department of Health and Community Services. While a new policy framework document was not developed over the three-year span, the Council worked within the existing policy framework document to provide advice to the Minister. In addition, the Council provided recommendations to the Minister should the Department chooses to develop an updated policy framework.

**2013-14 ANNUAL OBJECTIVE**

Annual Objective: By **March 31, 2014**, the Provincial Mental Health and Addictions Advisory Council will have continued to provide advice for select improvements/revisions to the Policy Framework.

Measure: Provided advice on select improvements/revisions.

<b>Indicator</b>	<b>Actual Activity</b>
Reviewed Policy Framework.	The Council continued to review the 2005 policy framework and provide feedback to the department.
Provided advice on select improvements and final revisions to the Policy Framework.	Council provided advice and recommendations on potential improvement to the provincial policy framework.

Discussion of Results:

The Advisory Council continued to provide input into policy directions for a new mental health and addictions Policy Framework through bi-monthly Council meetings and discussions with the Director of Mental Health and Addictions. The Advisory Council also provided guidance and oversight on two Policy Framework directions (recovery and stigma reduction) through its ongoing work with the Recovery Project and the E-Mental Health and Awareness program.

## GOAL 2: Pervasive Stigma Associated with Mental Health, Mental Illness, and Addiction

Stigma and discrimination associated with mental health, mental illness and addictions are significant barriers to accessing help. One in five people experience a mental illness in their lifetime and many people living with mental illness say the stigma of the disease is often worse than the illness itself.

The Advisory Council acknowledges reducing stigma as a goal of the Advisory Council's mandate and notes increasing public awareness and education of addictions and mental health issues in Newfoundland and Labrador as a key tactic to reduce stigma and discrimination.

In Budget 2011, the Provincial Government committed to the development of a public awareness campaign supporting the second goal of the Advisory Council (Pervasive Stigma Associated with Mental Health, Mental Illness, and Addiction). The awareness campaign will decrease stigma and discrimination attached to mental illness and addictions and increase understanding of how and when to seek help.

This goal supports the strategic direction of *Access to Priority Services* by promoting positive mental health and decreasing the stigma associated with mental health issues.

### **GOAL 2: THREE- YEAR GOAL REPORTING**

**Goal:** By **March 31, 2014**, the Provincial Mental Health and Addictions Advisory Council will have participated in the development and implementation of a provincial awareness campaign for mental health and addiction issues.

**Measure:** Participated in the development and implementation of a provincial awareness campaign

<b>Indicator</b>	<b>Actual Activity</b>
Met with consultants on scoping the problem.	Council members have met and informed several consultants throughout the development of the provincial awareness campaign. Specifically, the Council worked closely with HealthTrx in 2011 and m5 in 2013. Council members applied their local expertise in mental health and addictions issues to inform the issues around a provincial awareness campaign.
Provided input into all planning stages and key messaging.	Over course of this planning cycle (2011-14), the Advisory Council regularly informed the development of creative materials and web content to be used in the campaign.
Solicited feedback from community groups on campaign.	Aside from its ongoing input into the provincial awareness campaign, Advisory Council members were invited by the department to participate in presentations made to select community partners to garner support for the campaign.
Advised on evaluative criteria.	In consultation with the department, the Advisory Council continues to provide input into the evaluation planning currently underway for the provincial awareness campaign.
Provided input into changes to the campaign	The Advisory Council has been involved in the development of the provincial awareness campaign from the start, and has been regularly involved in viewing campaign concepts and providing feedback on changes and edits as required.
Recommended changes for the	Due to unanticipated delays, Year 1 of the campaign was not completed by the end of this planning cycle, however, upon completion the Advisory

future.	Council will be consulted to determine, what if any, changes are required for the campaign before the start of Year 2.
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Discussion of Results:

Over the past three years, the Council was intimately involved with the development of the awareness campaign.

**2013-14 ANNUAL OBJECTIVE**

Annual Objective: By **March 31, 2014**, the Provincial Mental Health and Addictions Advisory Council will have informed the evaluation of the campaign.

Measure: Informed evaluation of the campaign.

<b>Indicator</b>	<b>Actual Activity</b>
Participated in campaign development	Participated in campaign development, including the development of both strategy and creative concept and provided feedback on both.
Provided input on how to publically launch the campaign.	The Council regularly provided input into the campaign development, including the best approach to publicly launch the campaign.
Participated in program evaluation.	The Council continues to participate in all evaluation planning for the provincial awareness campaign.

Discussion of Results:

The Advisory Council played an active and important role in the development of the provincial anti-stigma social marketing campaign, and provided feedback and input into both the strategic plan and creative concepts. The campaign entitled *Understanding Changes Everything*, included television commercials, online and cinema advertising, as well as promotion through social media, including Facebook and Twitter.

### GOAL 3: Accessibility of Services for Youth and in Rural Areas

Despite the gains that have been made in the recruitment of mental health professionals, challenges with accessibility and gaps in service delivery remain. Innovative methods of service delivery such as the use of e-mental health services and telemedicine can help to address service gaps. These gaps are notable in rural and remote areas of the province where geography and isolation play significant factors with how youth are engaged in traditional services and where cultural barriers, specific to Aboriginal populations, continue to prevent access to help.

In Budget 2011, the Provincial Government committed to the development of an e-mental health and addiction awareness program supporting the third goal of the Advisory Council (accessibility of services for youth and in rural areas). In addition, funding was provided to strengthen tele-mental health services in Newfoundland and Labrador. Both components of e-mental health services support this goal and will positively impact access to services specifically for youth and those in rural areas.

This goal links to the strategic direction of access to priority services by providing another avenue of service that will connect individuals to addition services, if desired.

#### GOAL 3: THREE- YEAR GOAL REPORTING

**Goal:** By **March 31, 2014** the Provincial Mental Health and Addictions Advisory Council will have advised on the implementation of an application of web-based mental health and addiction services.

**Measure:** Advised on the implementation

Indicator	Actual Activity
Meetings held	Council members participated in regular meetings with the department throughout the course of this planning cycle.
Informed the provision of advice with consultant reports.	Due to a focus on other priority areas, implementation of an application of web-based mental health and addiction services was postponed. Council members remain committed to meeting with consultants as required when this initiative moves forward.
Submitted ministerial correspondence.	Correspondence was submitted to the minister when required over the course of this planning cycle.

#### Discussion of Results:

Over the past three years, the nature of web-based technology changed substantially. Due to a focus on other priority areas, the implementation of an application of web-based mental health and addictions services has been postponed.

## 2013-14 ANNUAL OBJECTIVE

Annual Objective: By **March 31, 2014**, the Provincial Mental Health and Addictions Advisory Council will have advised on the evaluation of web-based mental health and addiction services.

Measure: Advised on the evaluation.

<b>Indicator</b>	<b>Actual Activity</b>
Advised external consultants.	Due to a focus on other priority areas, this initiative has been postponed. Council members are committed to seeking input and advice from external consultants as this program moves forward.
Provided input into how the program should be evaluated.	As stated above, this initiative has been postponed. Council members will continue to inform the evaluation planning for this web-based service as it moves forward.

### Discussion of Results:

As noted above, due to a focus on other priority areas, the implementation of an application of web-based mental health and addictions services has been postponed, therefore evaluation did not occur. The Advisory Council is committed to the program planning and development of web-based services for youth and will work with the department and external consultants as this project moves forward.

## 6.0 Challenges and Opportunities for 2014-15

### Responsiveness to Identified Issues

The Advisory Council will continue to advise the Minister of Health and Community Services on significant issues in mental health and addictions. An anticipated challenge is being mindful of the number of recommendations provided to the Minister as the breadth of mental health and addictions issues spans many sectors and government departments. The Advisory Council has had access to the Minister over the past three years and this provides an opportunity in the 2014-15 year to once again provide timely advice on key issues.

### Partnerships

Partnerships provide many opportunities for the Advisory Council to partner, communicate and stay informed about the most pertinent mental health and addiction issues occurring in the province and in turn, provide the best advice possible to the Minister of Health and Community Services. An anticipated challenge is to work more collaboratively with community groups and regional health authorities and maintain regular communication with these partners.

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## Appendix A: Advisory Council Membership 2013-2014

<b>Name</b>	<b>Affiliation</b>
Vacant	Chairperson
Dr. Nizar Ladha	Council Vice Chair, General and Forensic Psychiatrist
Jocelyn Greene	Community Service Provider – Adults
Sheldon Pollett	Community Service Provider – Youth
George Skinner	Provincial Mental Health Advocacy, Community Service Provider
Mary Walsh	Actor/Social Activist
Peter Ralph	Provincial Mental Health Advocacy, Consumer Self Help/Peer Support
Des Coombs	Central; RHA Services Provider and Psychologist
Michelle Kinney	Nunatsiavut Government, Northern Region
Ron Fitzpatrick	Community Service Provider – Adults Involved in Criminal Justice System
Thelma Whalen	Education, Western Region
Paul Thomey	Community Service Provider – Individuals with eating disorders
Dr. Ted Callanan	Professor of Psychiatry, Memorial University of Newfoundland and START Clinic, Eastern Health

### Advisory Council secretariat support provided by:

Colleen Simms	Director of Mental Health and Addictions Division, Department of Health and Community Services
Niki Legge/ Courtney Smith	Consultant, Mental Health and Addictions Division Department of Health and Community Services

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