



Minister Deb Matthews
Ministry of Health and Long-Term Care
10th Floor, Hepburn Block
80 Grosvenor Street
Toronto, Ontario M7A 2C4

January 19, 2011

Dear Minister Deb Matthews,

It has recently come to the attention of the Canadian Psychological Association (CPA) that the Ontario Mental Health Foundation's (OMHF) grant and fellowship program for new awards will be suspended for 2011-2012, resuming again in 2012-2013. We understand that this suspension is due, in part, to reduced earnings by the Foundation's endowment, as well as a 10% reduction in transfer from the Ministry of Long-Term Care (MOHLTC).

One in five Canadians will experience a mental health problem in their lifetimes at tremendous personal, social and economic costs to individuals and society. How people think, feel and act are the cornerstones of a society's human infrastructure and all of its systems (health, social, educational, community, economic). Mental health research is critical to promoting mental health, preventing and treating mental disorders, and improving diagnosis, evidence-based practice and rehabilitation. Further, our understanding of people, human problems and the many environments in which we live and work depend upon sound peer-reviewed research.

Research funding is not only essential to the advancement of knowledge, but it also provides the platform within which graduate student research takes place and hence is critical to the future of Canada's and Ontario's health human and research resource; a 1-year interruption in funding will have consequences that last much longer, as researchers may need to relocate, abandon local research, stop providing services to clients, etc. Researchers are facing funding cuts by Canada's federal granting councils. The decision to reduce a transfer to the OMHF, thereby contributing to a suspension of the OMHF's grant and fellowship program for 2011-2012 means that Ontario researchers have lost yet another important source of potential funding.

For nearly forty-five years, the Ontario Mental Health Foundation has provided funding to support critically needed mental health research in Ontario; for example, in 2010, the Foundation awarded over \$3,000,000 in grants and fellowships. The loss of these awards in 2011-12 will be felt significantly.

The Canadian Psychological Association calls upon you to support continued mental health research in Ontario. This can be done by ensuring that stable Ministry funding is in place so that the OMHF can continue to achieve its mission to promote the mental health of people living in Ontario, to prevent mental illness and to improve diagnosis, treatment and rehabilitation through excellent, peer-reviewed research. Threats to funding not only compromise developments in mental health and disorders but also critically affect the training, recruitment and retention of mental health researchers and practitioners in Ontario.

Sincerely,

Peter Graf, Ph.D.
President
Canadian Psychological Association

Karen Cohen, Ph.D.
Executive Director
Canadian Psychological Association

CC:
William R. Avison, Ph.D.
Chair, Ontario Mental Health Foundation

About the Canadian Psychological Association

The Canadian Psychological Association (CPA) was organized in 1939 to improve the health and welfare of all Canadians; to promote excellence and innovation in psychological research, education, and practice; to promote the advancement, development, dissemination, and application of psychological knowledge; and to provide high-quality services to members. For more information about CPA, please visit: www.cpa.ca. For additional information on the CPA or to discuss issues raised in this letter, please contact Dr. Karen Cohen, Executive Director, CPA, at executiveoffice@cpa.ca.

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