

## **Recovery is Possible:**

### Schizophrenia Society of Canada Celebrates Mental Illness Awareness Week and Recognizes There is No Health Without Mental Health

**October 6, 2020 (Winnipeg, MB)** – This week is Mental Illness Awareness Week (MIAW), a week in which we raise Canadians awareness about mental illness.

MIAW is organized by the Canadian Alliance on Mental Illness and Mental Health (CAMIMH), a coalition of different mental health organizations including the Schizophrenia Society of Canada (SSC).

“We want to remind Canadians dealing with early psychosis, schizophrenia, and other mental illnesses that they are not alone and that with the proper treatment they can recover and live successful lives,” said Chris Summerville, CEO of SSC.

As a part of MIAW, CAMIMH selects five Canadians from across Canada to share their stories as a part of its Faces of Mental Illness campaign. One of CAMIMH’s 2020 Faces, Keith Lyon, has experienced psychosis and paranoia, starting in his 20s. Keith spent 10 years in and out of mental health hospitals and found that the stigma about needing medication and feeling that people didn’t understand him were barriers to his recovery. With the support of his family and close friends, his faith, work and community engagement support, Keith has spent the last several years on a positive path of recovery, now working at a local supermarket.

“Keith’s story is an inspiration to us and those struggling with early psychosis and schizophrenia. There are so many stories like Keith’s out there and we hope those currently struggle find inspiration in hearing of others journeys,” Summerville said.

While raising awareness is important, SSC wants to go beyond awareness. We want to see parity in mental health funding and for improvements in access to mental health care. In the Prime Minister’s recent Speech From the Throne SSC was pleased to hear commitments such as the Disability Inclusion Plan and a national universal pharmacare program.

“These commitments are a step in the right direction, but we need to make sure every person experiencing a mental illness receives excellent primary care as well as the community supports and services that enable them to reach their potential,” said Hazel Meredith, President of SSC.

We encourage Canadians to spread the message that there is no health without mental health, and to prioritize mental health.

To register for the program and to receive program material please email Chris Summerville, CEO of SSC, at [chris@schizophrenia.ca](mailto:chris@schizophrenia.ca). More information is available at [schizophrenia.ca](http://schizophrenia.ca).

- 30 -

#### **Schizophrenia Society of Canada**

*The Schizophrenia Society of Canada (SSC) exists to "Build a Canada where people living with early psychosis and schizophrenia achieve their potential." This is possible with early intervention and recovery focused mental health services. The heart and soul of SSC is the conviction that things can be better for those experiencing early psychosis and schizophrenia. Hope changes everything.*



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