



**Canadian Mental
Health Association**
Prince Edward Island

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***CMHA Launches New Training Program, “suicide to Hope”,
on World Suicide Prevention Day, September 10th***

Charlottetown, Prince Edward Island, Canada- September 10th is World Suicide Prevention Day (WSPD). It is a day that brings individuals and communities together to raise awareness and show their support for suicide prevention efforts and for those whose lives have been affected by suicide.

The theme for this year’s WSPD is, *“Connect. Communicate. Care.”*, as announced by the World Health Organization (WHO) and the International Association of Suicide Prevention (IASP), and adapted by the Canadian Association of Suicide Prevention (CASP).

Information released by CASP says fostering connections with those who have lost someone to suicide or who have been suicidal themselves is critical to suicide prevention efforts. Likewise, good communication is vital and we need to equip people to have compassionate, helpful conversations with those who are vulnerable. Finally, all the connecting and communicating in the world will have no effect without the final ingredient – care. We need to care enough about each other and about suicide prevention efforts to make it a priority.

The Canadian Mental Health Association/PEI Division (CMHA) has been involved in community-based suicide prevention, intervention and postvention (aftercare) efforts for more than a decade. The organization is marking this year’s WSPD by launching a new training program, entitled ***“suicide to Hope” (s2H)***.

“suicide to Hope: A Recovery and Growth Workshop” is a one-day workshop designed for clinicians and other professional caregivers who work with persons recently at risk and currently safe from suicide. This kind of work is done on a longer-term basis and is beyond the suicide first-aid emergency situation.

CMHA has been hosting ASIST (Applied Suicide Intervention Skills Training) Workshops since 2002, training hundreds of Island caregivers to intervene with persons at risk of suicide. Suicide to Hope builds on the suicide intervention skills and experiences learned in ASIST and are applicable to caregivers from a wide variety of disciplines.

CMHA’s suicide prevention coordinator, Pat Doyle, explains, “This program offers helps a unique model and tools for working with persons who have previous experiences with suicidal behavior and who want to move through those experiences to a more hopeful place - one that is recovery and growth-oriented.”

CMHA's Suicide Prevention Committee, has recognized the need to increase our province's capacity for working with individuals with lived-experiences with suicide. The volunteer committee is made up of individuals from a variety of perspectives, including clinicians from mental health and addictions.

Committee member and clinician, Debbie Flood-Vickerson, says, "suicide to Hope' is a new way of working with individuals with past experiences with suicide. I hope to add it to my toolbox in the near future."

CMHA's first **s2H** workshop will be held on November 22nd at Murchison Centre in Charlottetown and space is limited. To register or to learn more about s2H, WSPD or CMHA's Suicide Prevention efforts, visit their website at www.pei.cmha.ca or call 902-566-3034.

Also on WSPD, all are welcome to take part in a community event entitled, "***Sharing Hope on World Suicide Prevention Day***" to be held at Queen Elizabeth Park on Saturday, September 10th from 6-7:30 pm (rain or shine). For more information about this event, please visit the Facebook event page www.facebook.com/events/289954728049405/