

MEDIA RELEASE

Canadian Mental Health Association Alberta Division

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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Edmonton, Alberta, June 6, 2005 –

NEW LEADER FOR MENTAL HEALTH

The Canadian Mental Health Association (CMHA) today announced that Jodi Cohen of Calgary has assumed the presidency of the Association's Alberta Division.

Ms. Cohen succeeds Aleck Trawick, who recently resigned following his relocation to Victoria, BC.

Ms. Cohen has been a volunteer with CMHA for the past nine years and a member of CMHA's Calgary Region Board of Directors since 1997. She has served on the Alberta Division Board of Directors since 2001, and as Executive Vice President since last year. Additionally, Ms. Cohen serves as a director-at-large on CMHA's National Board. She is a 24-year employee with the City of Calgary.

A co-facilitator of the National "Citizens for Mental Health" project, Ms. Cohen is passionate about the need for enhanced public awareness and education on mental health and mental illness issues. She takes over the leadership of CMHA's Alberta operations at a particularly significant time in the evolution of Alberta's mental health system. Taking their lead from Alberta's new "Provincial Mental Health Plan", Regional Health Authorities are completing their mental health service delivery plans under a restructured delivery model. New money for innovation in mental health has been provided in this year's provincial budget; and the Minister of Health and Wellness, Iris Evans, is committed to seeing the process of needed reforms in mental health in Alberta concluded quickly, thoroughly and effectively.

"There has probably never been a better time to be working in mental health in Alberta," says Cohen. "What the Romanow Report identified as the "orphan child of the health care system" – mental health – has finally found its rightful home within the overall health care system in this province, and CMHA intends to make sure that it stays there."

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In Alberta, CMHA delivers programs and services through its eight regional centres to those whose lives are touched by mental illness. The Association maintains vigorous mental health public information and awareness programs. CMHA Alberta Division employs over 200 staff province-wide, and has a total annual operating budget of \$10.7 million.

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FOR MORE INFORMATION, CONTACT:

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