



centre for
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New CEO appointed and potential combination of Centre for Suicide Prevention (CSP) and Canadian Mental Health Association (CMHA) – Alberta Division

We are pleased to announce that Mara Grunau has been appointed Chief Executive Officer of CMHA-AB Division on an interim basis, effective June 19, 2023.

Since 2014, Mara has been the Executive Director of CSP, a role she is maintaining through this interim appointment, while the Boards of both organizations explore a possible combination. There is clear alignment of the mission, vision, and values of both organizations, and a compelling rationale for a combination that will provide benefits to both organizations, and the communities we serve.

Mara comes to CMHA-AB Division with a proven track record of strong organizational leadership. Together with her team, she has transformed CSP, raising its profile and strengthening the organization through collaborative relationships – experiences that will be invaluable as she leads CMHA-AB Division through its next chapter.

Under her leadership, CSP has been an active partner in the suicide prevention landscape nationally, provincially, and locally. Mara is an original, standing member of the National Collaborative for Suicide Prevention where she has also served in a leadership capacity. She is and has been an advisor to many suicide prevention projects and committees, including the National Research Advisory Committee on Suicide and its Prevention; Canadian Institute for Health Information's *Self-harm, including suicide indicator*; Health Standards Organization's working group for the new national standard; 988 and Talk Suicide, Canada's crisis line, where she is also a resource team member of the community of practice; and a guidance group member of Canadian Foundation for Healthcare Improvement's *Promoting Life Together collaborative*.

Provincially, Mara and her team worked closely with Alberta Health and Alberta Children's Services to develop the youth suicide prevention action plan, *Building Strength, Inspiring Hope* and now actively supports its implementation. In December 2022, she was awarded Queen Elizabeth II's Platinum Jubilee medal for this work. Together with Alberta Health, CSP designed a framework for suicide respite care and piloted it with CMHA-Wood Buffalo Region in Fort McMurray.

Locally, Mara contributes to Calgary's *Community Action on Mental Health and Addiction Strategy* at the prevention table and sat on the leadership committee for Edmonton's municipal suicide prevention plan, *Living Hope*, now being combined with Edmonton's Community Mental Health Action plan.

Mara will divide her time between Calgary and Edmonton and both organizations through this interim period.

On behalf of the CSP and CMHA-AB Division Boards, please join us in welcoming Mara.

Sincerely,

Carmelle Hunka, President and Chair
CSP Board

Brent Korte, Chair
CMHA-AB Division Board