

*We acknowledge that our work takes place within the ancestral, traditional and unceded territory of the Okanagan and Secwepemc Nations.*

*2020-2021*

# IMPACT REPORT

Mental health begins where you live, learn,  
work and play.



**Canadian Mental  
Health Association**  
Vernon & District  
*Mental health for all*

[www.cmhavernon.ca/](http://www.cmhavernon.ca/)

# AT CMHA WE

The COVID-19 crisis brought changes to how we live our lives, uncertainty, altered daily routines, financial pressures, and social isolation. Here we are, a year and half later, and we are still in a global pandemic. It is hard to look back and not reflect on COVID-19's impact.

When lockdowns began, none of us could have anticipated what lay ahead. As restaurants, gyms, and other community spaces closed, many of our social interactions shut down with them. Many of our coping mechanisms disappeared, and we realized how much our social interaction kept us healthy and connected. When lockdown went from weeks to months, most of us realized we needed extra support. Our community took action to support their health. People reached out to the Crisis Line, our Nutrition Program, and our wellness education programs – many for the first time in their lives. Our Crisis Line answered 12,258 calls between April 1 2020 and March 31 2021; a 65% increase from last year. Our Bounce Back team handled 1360 referrals, 385 more than the year before.

Everything we stand for is about connecting people to community. When we made the difficult decision to close our doors in March 2020, we feared the impact of the loss of the physical space for participants and volunteers. That fear soon disappeared as we learnt our participants and volunteers have built a community amongst themselves and their connections were strong enough to overcome a physical separation. People stayed connected, volunteered for our virtual outreach programs, and demonstrated their creativity and resilience through this time.

This was all facilitated by an amazing staff team who worked together to launch creative solutions to keep folks connected and healthy. We increased support to participants in their homes, delivered food, and provided people with technology to stay connected to family, friends, and programs. Our teams reached out and found out what the needs were in this new time. We worked with new communities impacted by rapid job loss, illness, isolation, and rapid disruption to routines. Our staff were there for our clients and our community, even while they faced these same stresses, and we could not be prouder of them.



**Julia Payson**  
Executive Director



**Richard Finn**  
President

A handwritten signature of Julia Payson.

A handwritten signature of Richard Finn.

We asked our funders for support for tools we've never needed before, and the response was immediate and humbling. We could not have delivered new, adaptive, and relevant programming without our donors and partners, which have been critical to our ability to respond to our community's increased needs.

The year proved to be a year of unprecedented challenges for CMHA Vernon and the communities we serve in the North Okanagan. Everyone was patient, understanding and supportive as we attempted to navigate the situation from day to day. We are proud to be a part of a network of other non-profit agencies continuously collaborating, advocating, and supporting each other.

We continue to see our community member's mental health significantly impacted by the pandemic, which continues to cause increased fear, social isolation and impacts on economic insecurity, highlighting the increased need for support, particularly mental health.

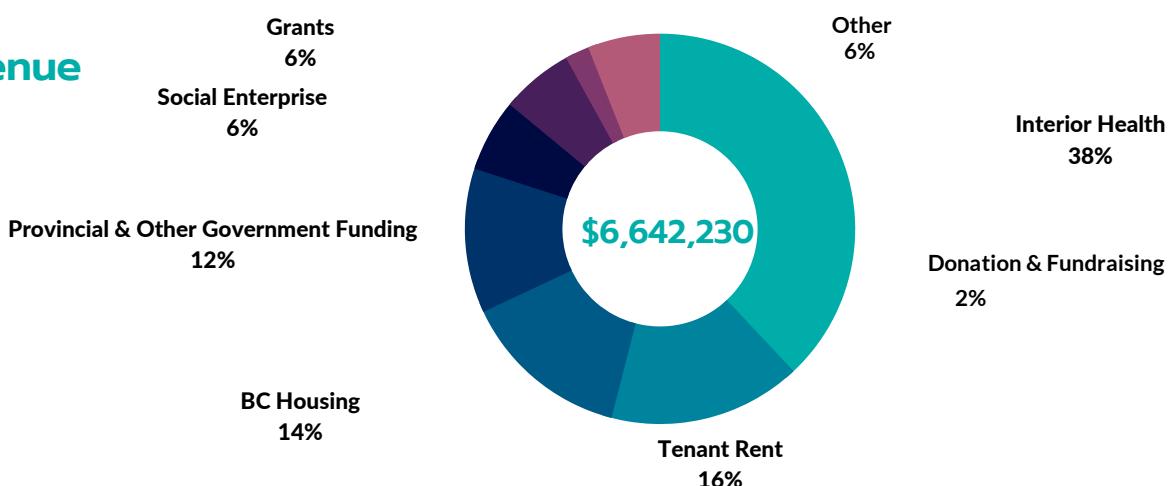
We will continue to find ways to support our community and thank you all for your role in this. While we are proud of the work of our board, staff, volunteers, and participants since the start of the pandemic, we recognize that many are still struggling, and this year will still be a difficult year for many. With the vision and support of our Board of Directors, incredible staff and volunteers, and our engaged participants and community we look forward to continuing to build mental health for all.

**Last year was extraordinary in so many ways. It demanded flexibility, humility, and resilience.**

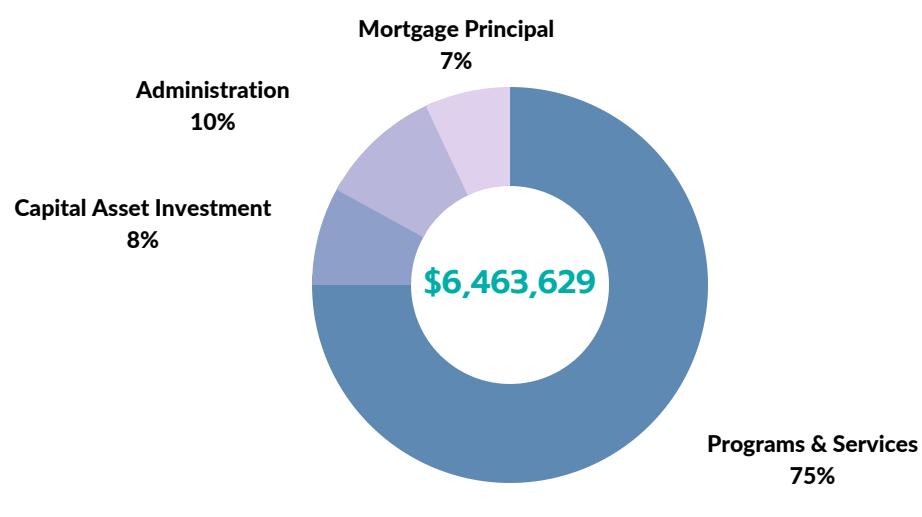
# LEAD

# AT CMHA WE

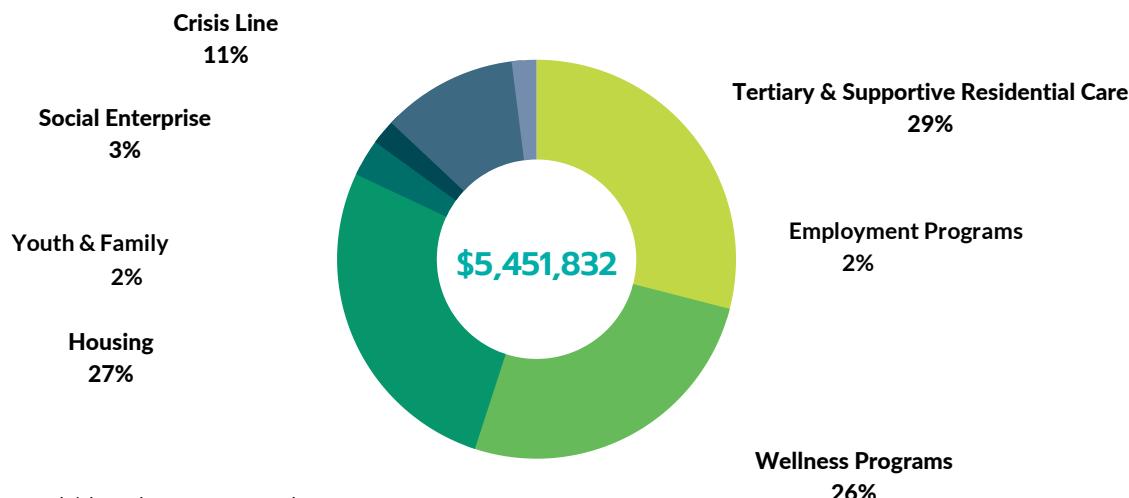
## Revenue



## Expenses



## Programs & Services



Full financial statements are available online at [www.cmhavernon.ca](http://www.cmhavernon.ca)

# REFLECT

# AT CMHA WE

## OUR VISION

Mentally healthy people in a healthy society.

## OUR MISSION

As the nation-wide leader and champion for mental health, the Canadian Mental Health Association facilitates access to the resources people require to maintain and improve mental health and community integration, build resilience, and support recovery from mental illness.

## OUR VALUES

- Embrace the voice of people with lived experience of mental health and substance use issues
- Promote inclusion
- Work collaboratively
- Influence the social determinants of health
- Focus on the mental health needs of all age groups
- Use evidence to inform our work
- Be transparent and accountable



CMHA Vernon & District Service Area

## BOARD OF DIRECTORS

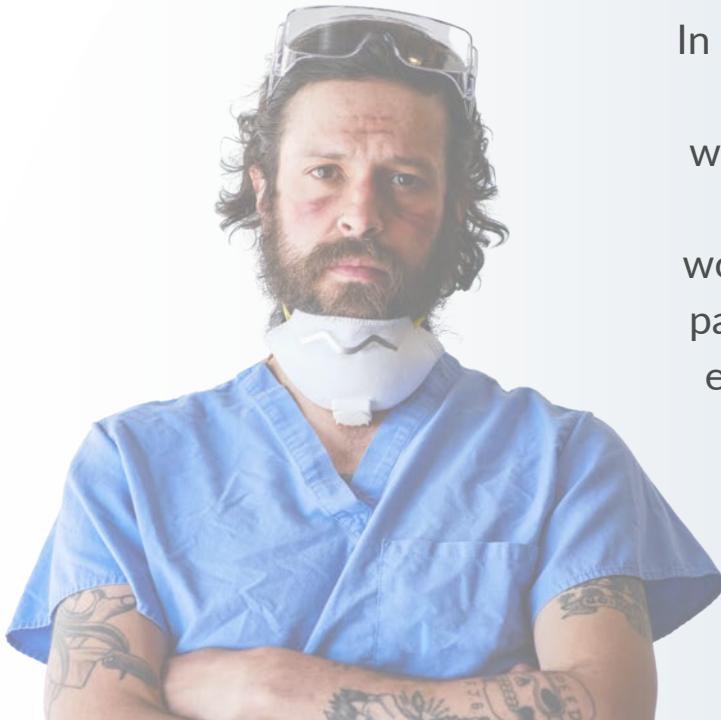
Richard Finn, President  
Tom Christensen, Vice President  
James Schneider, Treasurer  
Twylla Genest, Secretary

Dave MacKenzie  
Tom Nolan  
Matt Garcia  
David Service

Robert Carscadden  
Jodi Cunningham  
Scott DeLong  
David Penner

# SUPPORT

# AT CMHA WE



In June, Care to Speak launched; a peer support service to protect and support the mental well-being of health care workers impacted by the personal and professional demands of working on the front line during the COVID-19 pandemic. Care to Speak is run by people with experience in long-term care, home care and other front-line health care roles.



**125**

Care to Speak  
Calls

During the pandemic, when social distancing was the norm, the Phone Buddy Program was created; to offer social support over the phone to those who felt isolated in our community.

Participants were matched with a volunteer based on shared interests and hobbies such as gardening, reading or travelling. The phone calls were much more than a simple phone conversation; meaningful connections were made through sharing stories and laughter.



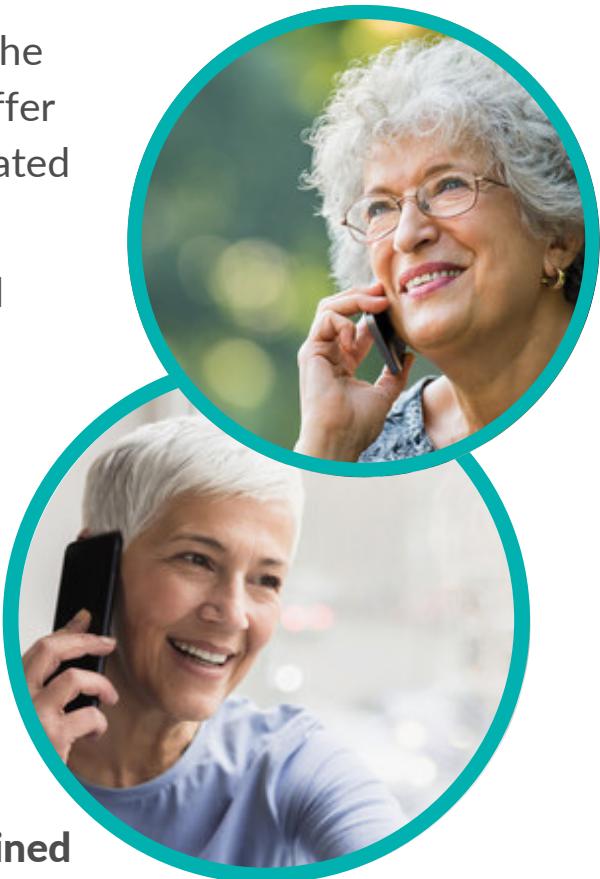
**2,030**

Phone Buddy  
Check in Calls



**30**

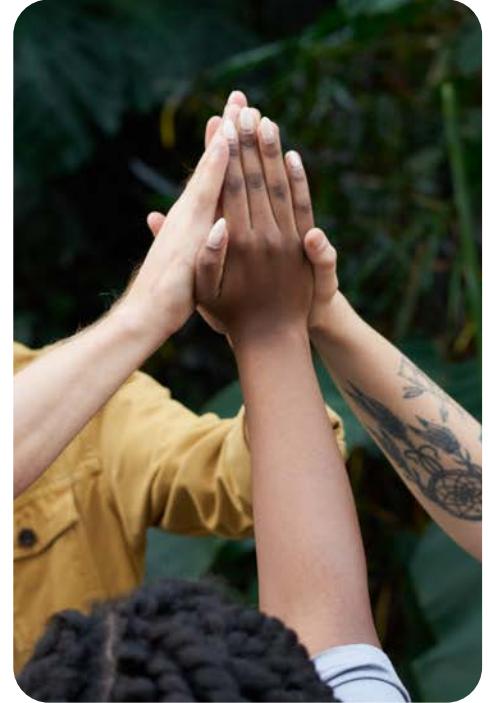
Phone Buddy  
Volunteers Trained



# ESTABLISH

# AT CMHA WE

We welcomed Restorative Justice to CMHA Vernon this year. Over the past few years, there has been an increase in referrals with mental health, substance use, and poverty-related issues. This vital program encourages meaningful engagement and accountability and provides an opportunity for healing, reparation and reintegration. Having restorative justice closely integrated into mental health services helps foster community cohesion in safe, inclusive spaces where we can enhance understanding, healing and growth for those impacted by harm and those who have caused harm.



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CMHA is pleased to announce the addition of the new Trans Peer Support program. Trans Peer Support provides one-on-one virtual support for folks who identify as Trans, Gender Diverse, or Two-Spirit and families from the Trans community. We offer a safe space that provides an opportunity to engage in knowledge exchange, resource sharing, social connection, mentorship and personal growth.

*It is very important to us to ensure that we have program options for everyone no matter where they are at in their mental health journey and to ensure that no one feels alone in what they are going through.*

We also started the journey of adapting our existing Wellness Education into the direction of a Recovery College. This will enable people to become experts in their self-care and develop their skills for living and working. Courses will be designed in partnership with people with lived experience and professional experience of mental health issues. Working together and supporting each other will foster and break down barriers.

# BUILD

# AT CMHA WE



Our Social Recreation programs saw continual adaptation to shift with Covid restrictions to ensure safety while also providing supportive programming for those most isolated in our community. When July came around and restrictions lifted, we were so excited to see everyone again!



# CONNECT

# AT CMHA WE

# 11,000+ MEALS prepared and delivered



Our CMHA Kitchen has long been a community hub for those living with mental illness, providing not just nutritious meals, but meaningful social connection with opportunities to learn life skills and take part in meal preparation. When the pandemic hit, and the economic crisis deepened, more and more reached out for help. We moved to curbside appointments, deliveries for our homebound friends, we were able to serve our community.

With a huge amount of help from our volunteers, staff, participants, donors and partners, we transformed, we continued offering service with safety for everyone who relies on the CMHA Kitchen as a critical support. We turned to you, the community, for help. And you answered!



*life  
is beautiful  
because of people like you.  
Thank you so much for all the  
tasty meals and delivery. You  
are so appreciated!*

# CREATE

# AT CMHA WE



**12,258**  
Crisis Line Calls



**54**  
Volunteers  
Trained



**10,504**  
Good Morning  
Wellness Calls



**52**  
Good Morning  
Participants  
Connected

Our Crisis Line began receiving a record amount of calls. The COVID pandemic had been announced and our community, country and the world were gripped with uncertainty, fear and anxiety in a way we had not experienced before. Crisis Line was there to ensure the many voices calling for help were heard, and given the assistance they needed.

**“ I wouldn’t be here if weren’t for a Crisis Line Worker willing to pick up the phone at 2 am when I didn’t think I was worth it. Just by being there they reminded me that I was. ”**

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Although the Good Morning Program looked different this year, we could still support those with high health risks living alone or those feeling isolated in our community. Daily phone calls were made to ensure participants were safe and to offer a social connection. In addition to a daily phone call, participants could connect through socially distance activities such as Christmas baking deliveries and volunteer update cards.

**“ This program gives me a feeling of confidence that I am important and that I count for something. ”**

# ANSWER

# AT CMHA WE



Driver Dispatcher and Rice Box owner On Ouch fundraised \$2,371.



Okanagan Spirits Craft Distillery donation of hand sanitizer.



North Okanagan Valley Gleaners donated 12 large bags of potatoes, 12 large bags of golden beets, and 2 huge bags of the mashed potato extender.

“*helping hands  
are a gift from  
the heart*”



Jenna Gordon gifting \$500 from the Village Green Shopping Centre's Pay it Forward Contest.



Shepherd's Hardware Ltd in-kind donation of over \$16,000 of flooring to those living in our residential facilities and affordable housing.

# GIVE THANKS

# AT CMHA WE



TD Canada Trust Branch-  
Anderson Way donated \$1,000.



Dorado Drilling LTD generous donation of  
\$10,000 to CMHA suicide prevention  
programs.



Okanagan Learning Foundation  
funded training for our Family  
Support and Youth educators for  
emotion-focused therapy.

“ stigma ends  
where  
community  
begins ”



Nixon Wenger LLP donated \$3,000.

# APPRECIATE

# AT CMHA WE



Richard Rolke went from fuzzed to buzzed-raised over \$3,000 for the Crisis Line.



NOT ALL HEROES  
WEAR CAPES

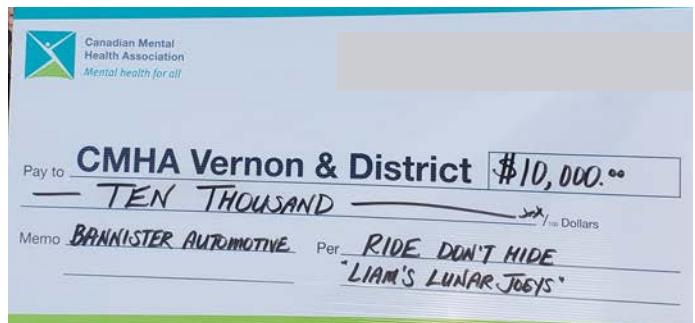


SOME WEAR  
APRONS

SOME WEAR  
HEADSETS

CMHA Vernon Fundraiser-In This Together COVID-19 Community Crisis Response raised \$71,962.

Although Ride Don't Hide did not occur due to COVID, Bannister still donated \$10,000 supporting youth mental health.



Dave DeShane, Justin Sharma & others from our community provided freezers for our Nutrition Program.

“We are stronger together than we are alone”

# GIVE THANKS

# AT CMHA WE



Vernon Punjabi Heritage Society donated over \$4,000 from their samosa sale.

The Royal Canadian Legion Branch 25 provided a \$1,000 donation to the Crisis Line.



Eagles Vernon 3557 donated \$1,000.

The Room Collection donated \$1,600 from their winter auction.



Thank you to the new Netflix TV Show "Firefly Lane" for purchasing clothes from the Georgette Shop. On the left is a volunteer in the Georgette modelling the beautiful sweater, and on the right is actress Katherine Heigl wearing the same sweater in the show.

# GIVE THANKS

# AT CMHA WE

“

I look forward to many things as we move forward through the pandemic.. but I would have to say I cannot wait to see everyone being able to enjoy lunch together in our kitchen space! I know our participants have missed the sense of community and connection that the kitchen brings.

“

I look forward to begin answering text interactions for the Canadian Suicide Prevention service in the new year.

”

Alyssa Christmas  
Manager of Mental Health Promotion and Education

Lenai Schmidt  
Manager of Wellness and Rehabilitation Programs

“

I look forward to connecting individuals and their families with on-going supports and services, many of which are available through CMHA Vernon.

”

“

I look forward to our continued support from our community and our funders, and growing these relationships.

”

Heather Philips  
Director of Finance

“

I look forward to the potential expansion of our lawns maintenance program to include snow removal and to see the impact of the new Online Sales position to overall profitability of the Georgette Store

”

Samantha Beeson  
Manager of Employment Services

Margaret Clark  
Manager of Restorative Justice

“

I look forward to housing families and individuals in our new housing complex slated to open in spring of 2022.

”

Ellen Meyer  
Housing Manager

“

I look forward to supporting our staff with new training initiatives to serve our community better.

”

Nicole Zelez  
Human Resources and Operations Manager

# LOOK AHEAD

# AT CMHA WE



With the announcement of a global pandemic, our residential facilities team continued providing incredible support to our clients. Through the most stressful pandemic period, when most were directed to "stay home, save lives," our team showed up day after day, delivering services and supports. In so many ways, it defines who we are and what we stand for as an organization.

## Let's Talk

If you are feeling stressed, struggling to cope or anxious, you are not alone. You don't need to be in crisis to reach out, there is support! We are available to listen and help any time.

Interior Crisis Line 1-888-353-2273

Interior Crisis Chat [www.interiorcrisisline.com/crisischat](http://www.interiorcrisisline.com/crisischat)

B.C. Crisis Line (no area code needed) 310-6789

Canadian Suicide Prevention Service 1-833-456-2566

Suicide Crisis Line 1-800-784-2433

Care to Speak: 1-866-802-7337 (PEER)

Care to Speak Chat [www.caretospeak.ca](http://www.caretospeak.ca)

# ARE HERE



**Canadian Mental  
Health Association**  
**Vernon & District**  
*Mental health for all*

**Canadian Mental Health Association**  
**Vernon & District**

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