



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

National Addictions Awareness Week 2021: Driving Change Together

OTTAWA (November 24, 2021) – This week marks National Addictions Awareness Week (NAAW), a campaign that highlights solutions to help address harms related to alcohol, drugs and other addictions. The Canadian Counselling and Psychotherapy Association (CCPA) supports this initiative and to increase access to mental health and addiction services for all Canadians. #NAAW, #CCPA_ACCP

Addiction is involvement in specific behaviours that individuals repeat continually, but fail when they attempt to reduce or stop, despite the adverse consequences such behaviours create for them. Emerging studies indicate that Canadians are coping with stress from the COVID-19 pandemic through increased substance use and misuse¹; this is reflected in an increase of over \$2.6B in alcohol and cannabis sales during the pandemic².

“CCPA believes that mental health, including addiction, needs to be treated as a health priority,” said Dr. Kevin Alderson, CCPA Director for Alberta and Northwest Territories, “Prevention, treatment and recovery are all essential to combatting this public health crisis.”

The theme of this year’s NAAW is ‘Driving Change Together’, reflecting how the complexities of addiction requires a multifaceted approach that brings together multidisciplinary practitioners, researchers, policy makers and people with lived experience. Counsellors and psychotherapists are available to help clients address the causes of addiction and to work toward recovery from addictive behaviour in collaboration with other practitioners. The Canadian Counselling and Psychotherapy Association wants to make sure Canadians can get the help they need, when they need it.

“In Canada, counselling is the most prevalent but least likely fulfilled mental health care need³,” lamented CCPA President Dr. Kathy Offet-Gartner, “Counsellors and psychotherapists are in a position to assist in reversing this trend, and provide one of the most cost-effective mental health services available. In response to the pandemic, an increasing number of practitioners have begun offering telehealth, and/or virtual care, making their services even more accessible, timely, and readily available, even in the most remote areas of our country. Help is more available and more needed than ever before.”

If you or someone you know is looking for support, please go to www.ccpa-accp.ca/find-a-canadian-certified-counsellor/ where you can search for a counsellor or psychotherapist specialized in addictions in your region.

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The Canadian Counselling and Psychotherapy Association (CCPA) is a national bilingual association providing professional counsellors and psychotherapists with access to exclusive educational programs, certification, professional development and direct contact with professional peers and specialty groups. CCPA promotes the profession and its contribution to the mental health and well-being of all Canadians. For more information, please visit www.ccpa-accp.ca.

For further information, please contact:

Ben Howe, Impact Public Relations
ben@impactcanada.com | (613) 697-2105

¹ <https://www.ccsa.ca/covid-19-stress-amplifying-mental-health-and-substance-use-concerns-leger-poll>

² <https://www.cbc.ca/news/canada/hamilton/alcohol-cannabis-sales-rise-1.6236852>

³ <https://journals.sagepub.com/doi/full/10.1177/0840470420933911>