

December 5, 2022

Honourable Sylvia Jones, Minister of Health
Ministry of Health
777 Bay Street, Floor 5
Toronto, ON M7A 1N3

Dear Minister Jones:

Re: Request for Meeting regarding decision to establish Consumption and Treatment Services in Barrie, ON

On behalf of the Canadian Mental Health Association-Simcoe County Branch (applicant) and the Simcoe Muskoka District Health Unit (collaborator), we are formally requesting a meeting to discuss the status of our application for a consumption and treatment services (CTS) site at 11 Innisfil Street in the City of Barrie. The opioid poisoning crisis remains unabated and of huge concern in our region, and the CTS is a key missing component of locally available services.

Over the past year, we have met twice with Barrie MPPs - Minister Downey and MPP Khanjin - we truly appreciated their interest in these issues, and we sought to address their questions.

We have worked diligently with Ministry of Health staff to finalize all requirements for the CTS application and develop an in-year operating budget. Notably, the federal exemption from the Controlled Drugs and Substances Act (CDSA) has been granted as of September 9, 2022, pursuant to section 56.1 of the CDSA, for CMHA-SCB to operate the CTS in Barrie at 11 Innisfil Street. Written confirmation of the operational budget from the Ontario Ministry of Health is the final step required to move forward with the Capital Project process, allowing the doors to open in 2023 in order to meet local needs.

We have just surpassed the 14-month mark since CMHA-SCB submitted the 2021 provincial and federal applications for the CTS, and CMHA-SCB has been paying rent since September 1, 2021 (15 months) to secure the location for the proposed CTS site. The property owner/landlord has been supportive of the short-term lease agreement and extension with the hopes that the Ministry of Health would move forward with this critical service. As each month passes, more lives are lost in Barrie to the opioid crisis, which is a significant source of frustration for community members and organizations engaged in this issue. We hope to have a discussion to understand if there is more that our organizations can do to support the Ministry of Health to move forward expeditiously on this critical decision.

We trust you appreciate the alarming mortality and morbidity related to the opioid crisis and we look forward to a future meeting regarding our CTS application at your earliest convenience.

Yours sincerely,

ORIGINAL Signed By:

Dr. Orlena Broomes
Board President
Canadian Mental Health Association-Simcoe County Branch

ORIGINAL Signed By:

Anita Dubeau
Chair, Board of Health
Simcoe Muskoka District Health Unit

cc. Minister Downey and MPP Khanjin
Dr. Kieran Moore, Chief Medical Officer of Health