

April 20, 2023

Honourable Sylvia Jones, Minister of Health and Deputy Premier
Ministry of Health
777 Bay Street, 5th Floor
Toronto, ON M7A 1Z8

Dear Honourable Minister Jones:

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

On behalf of the Canadian Mental Health Association, Simcoe County Branch (applicant, CMHA SCB) and the Simcoe Muskoka District Health Unit (collaborator), we are following up regarding our request to you on December 5, 2022 for a meeting, with follow-up communications to you on January 13, 2023. Four months have passed since we requested 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, evidence-based services.

We recently met with Ministry of Health staff and they have confirmed that all requirements for the CTS application and operating budget are finalized and the only outstanding item is the Ministry approval. As you are aware, more than seven months have passed since the federal exemption from the *Controlled Drugs and Substances Act (CDSA)* was granted on September 9, 2022, pursuant to section 56.1 of the CDSA, for CMHA SCB to operate the CTS in Barrie at 11 Innisfil Street, and more than **19 months** have passed since the application was originally submitted to the provincial and federal governments. As we await provincial approval, CMHA SCB has sustained **\$72,948.52** (current monthly rate is \$3,862.34) in rental expenditures since September 1, 2021 (15 months) to hold the proposed CTS site. As you are aware, following Ministry approval we will face another waiting period to initiate the Capital Project planning process. As each month passes, the applicant is concerned about the fiscal prudence of paying rent for a space the Ministry has yet to approve for its intended purpose.

The property owner/landlord has been supportive of another 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. Not having this essential service is a significant source of frustration for family members, community members and organizations engaged in this issue. As a next step, some of these individuals will be publicly communicating their perspectives on the need for this CTS to proceed in Barrie.

At the 19 month mark with many more months anticipated for the Capital Project planning process, we request that the Ministry of Health move with more urgency on this critical decision. We trust you appreciate the alarming mortality and morbidity related to the opioid crisis and we look forward to receiving your response on the funding decision for 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:

Ann-Marie Kungl
Chair, Board of Health
Simcoe Muskoka District Health Unit

C. Minister Downey
MPP Khanjin
Minister Dunlop
Minister Mulroney
MPP Saunderson
Minister Graydon Smith
Associate Minister Tibollo
Dr. Catherine Zahn, Deputy Minister
Dr. Kieran Moore, Chief Medical Officer of Health
City of Barrie Mayor and Council Members