

Terms of Reference

- I. **Background/Context:** In 2015, an international task force set forth to proclaim the first Wednesday of May as World Maternal Mental Health Day. The campaign works to raise awareness of maternal mental health issues so that more women will get treatment and fewer women will suffer. The research shows that upwards of 75% of women do not get diagnosed with the mood and anxiety disorders that affects them during pregnancy and the first postpartum year. These untreated illnesses have far-reaching impacts on their children and families as well as on themselves.

A network of Maternal Mental Health professionals and other advocates in Canada recognized the need and opportunity to champion a Maternal Mental Health Day nationally.

- II. **Purpose:** The purpose of the '*Canadian Alliance for Maternal Mental Health*' is:
- to engage a national network of mental health professionals interested in mental health promotion and advocacy for pregnant women and mothers of young children
 - to facilitate opportunities to increase awareness and knowledge of perinatal mental health conditions and different treatment options,
 - to decrease stigma relating to perinatal mental health conditions,
 - to share perinatal mental health research being carried out in Canada and internationally,
 - to establish a list of perinatal mental health care providers who are CAMMH members,
 - to increase awareness of virtual support options, and
 - to lead more women to maternal mental wellness.

III. **Goals and Objectives:**

- i) Promote World Maternal Mental Health Day on the first Wed of May each year;
- ii) Promote education around best practices for the assessment, diagnosis, and treatment of perinatal mental health conditions – e.g., by way of webinars, meetings, conferences, etc;
- iii) Share research currently being done in the area of perinatal mental health, and promote perinatal mental health research by providing support letters to researchers when requested and appropriate (and agreed upon by the Board), both in Canada and internationally;
- iv) Strengthen the relationships and collaboration amongst the network of professionals who treat families struggling with perinatal mental health disorders;

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- v) Establish a resource list of perinatal mental health providers; and
 - vi) Support professionals to guide families towards perinatal mental wellness.
- IV. Scope:** The Canadian Alliance for Maternal Mental Health focusses on increasing education among maternal mental health providers in Canada to support families before and after delivery who are experiencing perinatal depression, anxiety disorders, OCD, bipolar disorder, psychosis, and substance use disorders. We aim to be a non-discriminatory organisation.
- V. Accountability:** The project teams or working groups are accountable to the CAMMH Board of Directors, which bears the responsibility to adhere to our goals and objectives and to foster a collaborative professional environment. Minutes of meetings shall be maintained.
- VI. Term:** These Terms of Reference are effective unless terminated by agreement amongst the Board of Directors.
- VII. Membership:** The membership will be composed of a multidisciplinary group of professionals who work in this area, with efforts made towards national representation. A membership benefit will be that they can have their name and contact information on CAMMH's website, which will facilitate patients finding perinatal mental health care closer to home or virtually.
- VIII. Roles and Responsibilities:** The role of the Board of Directors and project teams will be actionable engagement in initiatives related to maternal mental health as set out by the Canadian Alliance for Maternal Mental Health.
- IX. Decision Making Process/ Governance:** Board Members share accountability for decisions. All perspectives will be heard through open and direct communication based on honesty, transparency and respect. Decisions will be made by consensus whenever possible. If voting is required, all Board members will have a single vote.
- X. Conflict of Interest:** Board Members shall disclose to the group, without delay, any actual or potential situation that may be reasonably interpreted as either a conflict of interest or a potential conflict of interest.
- XI. Meeting Schedule:** Meetings will be scheduled regularly – in general, they may be approximately monthly between Jan and May, and less frequent between June and Dec.

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- XII. Quorum requirements:** A majority of Board members must be in attendance for a meeting in order to satisfy the meeting quorum.
- XIII. Resources and Budget:** *(TBD)*