



**Canadian Mental  
Health Association**  
Niagara  
*Mental health for all*

# Client Rights and Responsibilities

CMHA Niagara's purpose is to strengthen mental wellness in Niagara, by recognizing, supporting and optimizing mental health. In order to achieve this, we strive to be a safe, inclusive and trauma informed environment for everyone, and we work in partnership to recognize the rights of all, while sharing the responsibility to act in ways that support this environment.

These Client and Family Rights and Responsibilities have been developed through collaboration with the CMHA Niagara Client and Family Advisory Committee, staff and leadership.

**TOGETHER, WE UPHOLD THESE RIGHTS THROUGH OUR SHARED RESPONSIBILITIES.**

## **Clients of CMHA Niagara and their families are responsible to:**

### **1. Be treated with respect and dignity**

We (CMHA Niagara) act and speak with respect and courtesy towards everyone, as people first, regardless of role or involvement with the agency.

### **2. Be free from discrimination on any grounds**

We create an inclusive environment, free from physical or verbal aggression, violence and discrimination based on race, ancestry, religion, place of origin, colour, ethnic origin, citizenship, creed, gender identity, sexual orientation, age, marital status, family status or mental or physical ability, and demonstrate this through considerate and non-judgemental communication.

### **3. Individuality, dignity and freedom of choice**

We work with you as partners in your recovery, by listening to your thoughts and what goals are important to you and sharing insights about service options available to you, to inform your decisions regarding your care. We respect your choices, including requests for changes, and commit to have these requests addressed in a fair and timely manner.

### **4. Privacy and expectation of confidentiality**

We protect your personal information (including personal health information), by maintaining limits of confidentiality and privacy according to legislation and CMHA Niagara's privacy policies. This includes responding to your right to view, receive a copy of and/or request changes to documentation related to planned or received care, within the limits of the law.

## **5. Be Seen, Heard and Understood**

We commit to listening to questions, feedback, concerns and complaints from you and your family members or support persons as an effective way to learn how we might improve individually and organizationally. We provide feedback pathways and processes that are accessible and simple, which will not impact access to, or the quality of, involvement with the agency. We welcome the involvement of others to support you through sharing their perspectives.

We strive to find a shared understanding through the process of asking questions, seeking clarification, or seeking information and assistance from other trusted supports, with consent.

## **6. Equitable access and opportunity**

We recognize individual differences and will work with you to meet your specific needs to ensure barriers to service are minimized, in accordance with relevant legislation (e.g. Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act AODA).

## **7. A safe, clean, accessible environment which is free from aggression and violence**

We respect physical space and property, while following health and safety policies and procedures (e.g. hand washing) and report our concerns when we have safety concerns. . We recognize that aggression, violence or harm, is inclusive of sexual harassment; sexual, physical, financial, or verbal abuse; racism, hate speech, and discriminatory behavior on any grounds. We commit to report situations or incidents where we experience or witness aggressive or violent behaviors, or other health and safety concerns, so that it can be addressed, without consequence to the reporter.

## **8. Be involved, included and participate fully**

We welcome full engagement and participation by all in agency related public events, meetings, and activities.

## **9. Receive effective and timely communication**

We will communicate effectively in a form, language and manner that helps you to understand the information we provide, which may include access to a competent interpreter as needed. We provide an environment that enables open, honest and effective communication. We commit to provide timely information related to any changes at CMHA Niagara that impact you, including changes in programs, policies and staff. We will notify you as soon as possible if we are unable to meet for a scheduled appointment or group session, and work with you to reschedule a mutually convenient time.

## **10. Quality services**

We commit to providing quality services that are professional, respectful, caring and timely and comply with legal, professional, ethical and other relevant standards. This includes respecting your choices about services and supports available at CMHA and assistance to access other community services as relevant to your needs.



## **11. Be informed of teaching or research**

We support student placements to foster the development of mental health and addictions professionals who will share our values. We participate in select research studies which promote the advancement of evidence based knowledge in the mental health and addictions sector. We will ensure informed consent and choice regarding student involvement in services, and research participation, and honor your right to decline involvement. We confirm that decisions to not participate in these activities will not affect your access to, or the quality of, support received from CMHA Niagara.

## **Clients of CMHA Niagara and their families have the responsibility to:**

### **1. Treat everyone at CMHA Niagara with respect and dignity**

You (client) act and speak with respect and courtesy towards everyone, as people first, regardless of role or involvement with the agency.

### **2. Contribute to an environment free from discrimination on any grounds**

You contribute to an inclusive environment, free from physical or verbal aggression, violence and discrimination based on race, ancestry, religion, place of origin, colour, ethnic origin, citizenship, creed, gender identity, sexual orientation, age, marital status, family status or mental or physical ability and demonstrate this through respectful and non-judgemental communication.

### **3. Be an active partner in your recovery**

You will help us understand your recovery needs, goals and priorities. You will be responsible for your choices and the impact they may have on your mental health and well-being, including decisions to decline services at any time. You will work with us to find a shared understanding through the process of asking questions, seeking clarification, and/or seeking out information and assistance from other trusted supports and caregivers with consent.

### **4. Tell us about life changes impacting your care**

You will ensure we are aware of changes in your life and offer opportunity to modify your services and supports to adapt to those changes. When necessary, you will work with us to identify and access other supports and services if we are unable to provide the service needed for your circumstance.

### **6. Discuss any service, safety, or privacy concerns with us as soon as possible.**

You will discuss and/or report any experienced or witnessed concerns about service, safety or privacy at CMHA Niagara, to enable us to address, improve and keep everyone safe physically and psychologically, without consequence to the reporter. You respect physical space and property, while following health and safety policies and procedures (e.g. hand washing) and report concerns when you have safety concerns. You recognize that aggression, violence or harm, is inclusive of sexual harassment; sexual, physical, financial, or verbal abuse; racism, hate speech, and discriminatory behavior on any grounds.



**7. Respect each other's time.**

You will work with us to establish mutually convenient meeting times. You will notify us as soon as possible if you are unable to meet for a scheduled appointment or group session.

**8. Attend programs and services able to meaningfully engage in care.**

You acknowledge the use of substances may negatively impact your ability to be fully involved in discussions, learning or goal setting and group programs and may cause harm to yourself and others. An appointment, or group session may need to be cancelled/rescheduled if you attend while under the influence of alcohol or drugs and it acts as a barrier to effective care.

