

# Campus Suicide Prevention Initiative 2021 Annual Report



The Canadian Mental Health Association's BC Division (CMHA BC), in partnership with BC's Ministry of Mental Health and Addictions (MMHA), invited publicly-funded post-secondary institutions in BC to submit proposals regarding engagement in campus suicide prevention initiatives focused on student populations. The intent of this project is to assist post-secondary institutions in developing and implementing new or expanded campus

suicide prevention frameworks and strategies with assistance from the Healthy Minds | Healthy Campuses (HM|HC) community of practice network. The HM|HC co-leads at CMHA BC and the Canadian Centre for Substance Use Research (CISUR) are providing on-demand technical assistance to support these initiatives throughout the duration of the grant project.

## Insights

**\$1,250,000**  
in campus suicide  
prevention funding  
dispersed

**25** post-secondary  
institutions engaged

**35** jobs created  
or supported on  
BC campuses

Campus collective  
comprised of **12**  
institutions engaged in  
digital assets emerged

**12** campus-  
community  
partnerships

## Background and Timeline

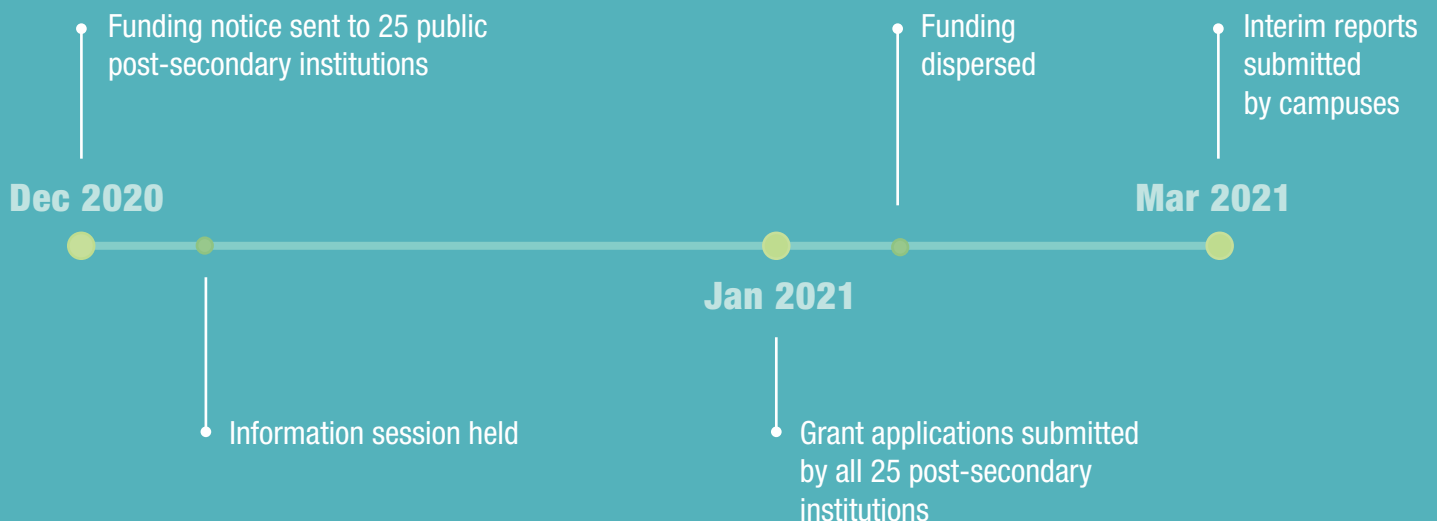
The Campus Suicide Prevention (CSP) Initiative began formally in December 2020 when CMHA BC sent out a notice of funding to all 25 public post-secondary institutions in British Columbia through the Healthy Minds | Healthy Campuses e-newsletter and the BC Council of Senior Student Affairs Leaders mailing list. CMHA BC also created the application form and Granting Guidelines which went out with the funding notice. An information session was hosted soon after by CMHA BC with a panel of Canadian experts on suicide prevention including: Cecilia Marie Roberts, E. David Klonsky and Michael Mandrusiak. This information session served as an orientation for campuses on the initiative as well as to introduce some best practices in suicide prevention and how to apply them within a campus context.

Grant applications were submitted by all 25 public post-secondary institutions in January 2021, with collaborative efforts within and among campuses. CMHA BC then sent feedback to campuses on their

proposals where commitments to health promotion principles, harm reduction frameworks and a 'whole campus' approach were reaffirmed.

Funding was then disseminated to campuses by February 2021 along with the granting contracts. During the 2021 Healthy Minds | Healthy Campuses Summit, the HM|HC Support Team hosted a dialogue session to discuss the application period, highlight three proposals and introduce the upcoming interim report.

In March 2021, campuses completed and submitted their interim reports which highlighted aspects relating to Gender-based Analysis Plus (GBA+) principles and Black, Indigenous and People of Colour (BIPOC) engagement within the CSP Initiative. CMHA BC will engage campuses in the upcoming months around the CSP Initiative with learning opportunities, collaborative conversations and mid-point check-ins.



## Trends and Themes

Each public post-secondary institution is unique and serves a diverse student population. The location, school size and surrounding community are all contributing factors that campuses took into consideration when developing their proposals. During the orientation period, the Healthy Minds | Healthy Campuses Support Team guided schools to the [JED Campus framework](#) and the [Zero Suicide toolkit](#) which a majority of campuses ultimately included in their proposals when detailing their goals and actions for the upcoming year. Considerations on the impact of factors such as social connection, peer support and faculty involvement on suicide prevention within the campus context were apparent. While appreciating the diversity of campuses in BC, the Support Team noticed some common themes and trends in the proposals that are detailed below.

- A majority of BC campuses utilized a cross-campus collaborative approach in their proposals which either included input from diverse stakeholders or outlined plans for engagement in the upcoming year. Aligned with the principles of health promotion, campuses outlined how they will work with stakeholders to inform, develop, and activate various suicide prevention activities.
- Mental health literacy by way of learning events and resource creation was a common goal found in the proposals across the province. De-stigmatization or stigma reduction is a major theme within these learning events/resources being planned, with 16 campuses referencing this area.
- A digital collective comprised of 12 campuses has been created which will focus on the development of digital assets to promote suicide prevention education and build capacity among the BC student body.
- Funding has also been utilized by schools to scale up existing services/programs and 35 jobs are being created or supported as a result of this funding.
- 7 campuses will utilize the funding to create an institutional framework or action plan that addresses mental health and well-being on campus and also addresses suicide prevention.
- 21 campuses have outlined suicide intervention plans which include, but are not limited to, gatekeeper training, Mental Health First Aid, safeTALK and ASIST. Two campuses have mentioned creating new, campus-wide intervention programs.
- 14 campuses mentioned substance use in relation to their respective suicide prevention initiatives and detailed plans of encompassing this topic within their broader efforts.
- 12 campuses will be engaging external community members, organizations and/or resources in their suicide prevention efforts.





## Progress and Next Steps

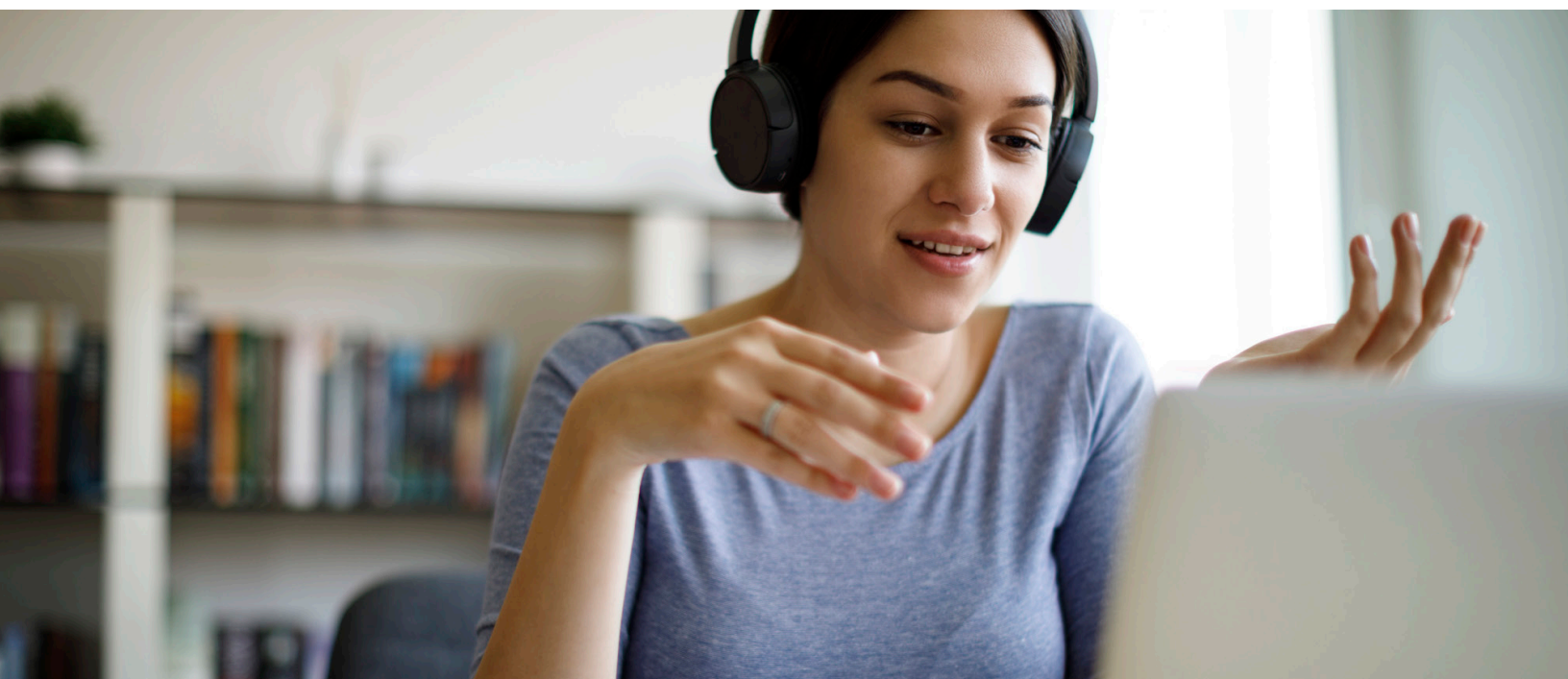
From January 2021 through March 2021 campuses have been hard at work to begin their respective suicide prevention initiatives. At this preliminary stage, campuses are in the process of hiring additional staff, engaging stakeholders across campus and hosting learning events. Suicide intervention activities and trainings (Mental Health First Aid, safeTALK etc.) are being rolled out across various departments and campuses.

Post-secondary institutions that are creating their own programs/projects relating to suicide prevention are in the early stages of completing literature reviews and needs assessments. Various committees and steering groups on campus are taking shape as diverse stakeholders across campus are being engaged. Campuses are taking GBA+ principles into consideration through various means including: training relevant stakeholders, critically implementing frameworks and policies that follow these principles, and incorporating GBA+ related questions in program delivery and evaluation. Campuses have also incorporated meaningful engagement of BIPOC stakeholders by ensuring representation at various stages of their initiatives and by being mindful of cultural safety and humility. Due to the current reality of the COVID-19 pandemic and various public health orders, some

campuses have mentioned a delay in their timelines. Given the short time period between the funding dispersal (mid-January 2021) and the interim report (due March 31, 2021), there is limited data available on progress and funding impact. However, all 25 post-secondary institutions have submitted their interim reports which are appended to this report.

### Moving Forward

The Healthy Minds | Healthy Campuses Support Team aims to continue to work with campus stakeholders on suicide prevention by utilizing health promotion principles and a harm reduction framework. By nurturing a community of practice that is informed on the best practices of campus suicide prevention, the work and impact of this year can be made sustainable. There will be future learning opportunities on topics such as cultural humility, trauma-informed decisions, and intersectionality for campuses to attend and relate back to their respect initiatives. World Suicide Prevention day will be on September 10, 2021 which the Support Team will leverage as an opportunity to connect with campuses on a larger scale and implement a mid-point check-in by meeting with campuses one-on-one.



## Final Report

In May 2021 CMHA BC will send feedback on campus interim reports as well as a list of criteria for the final report which will include the following (subject to change):

### Track Granting Goals

- 1) How has your initiative addressed both mental health and substance use?
- 2) How have you incorporated a holistic approach in your prevention efforts?
- 3) How has your work been multidisciplinary/cross-departmental in nature?
- 4) How have your efforts been evidence-informed?
- 5) How have your efforts followed principles of EDI?
- 6) How has the work been informed by Indigenous perspectives?
- 7) How has the work included principles of Gender-Based-Analysis?
- 8) How has the work been culturally sensitive and trauma informed?
- 9) How have the initiatives been participatory and included the voices of students and families with lived experience?
- 10) Have the initiatives been accessible and free of cost?

### Track Deliverables

- 1) Estimated # of jobs created/supported throughout the Initiative
- 2) Estimated # of people who will benefit from the initiative. Please describe how you will measure/quantify the # of people that will have benefited from the initiative. Include details on actual vs projected.
- 3) Please begin tracking deliverables in your project by tracking # of resources created, # of workshops/events held, # of campus members taking training sessions, etc.
- 4) Please indicate whether there is interest in further funding after the duration of this project.

### Track Budget

- 1) Please ensure that you keep track of financial expenditures for this project.
- 2) If you have not done so already, please confirm that all funds have been received by CMHA.

Please see Annex for the 25 interim reports from post-secondary institutions.



**Canadian Mental  
Health Association**  
British Columbia  
*Mental health for all*

Funding provided by



**BRITISH  
COLUMBIA**