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Atlantic Summer
Institute on
Healthy and Safe
Communities

l'Institut d'été sur les
collectivités sûres
et en santé au
Canada atlantique

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COMMUNITY MENTAL HEALTH: AN INCREASING CONCERN DURING COVID-19

The ASI 2020 online policy forum (August 24-26) presents an opportunity for diverse, intersectoral, and multigenerational perspectives on mental health and wellness during a global pandemic.

[Charlottetown, PE] COVID-19 is increasing public awareness about mental health and wellness, and the need for upstream investment in mental health promotion.

Throughout the pandemic, as we have experienced increased isolation, increased economic stress, and decreased availability of support systems, the widespread impact of social distancing on child and youth mental health particularly has become clear. According to results of a survey in May by the Canadian Association for Mental Health, women, youth, and people with children in the home have experienced increased anxiety and depressive symptoms since the pandemic began. Between one fifth and one quarter of respondents reported moderate to severe anxiety, loneliness, or depression, and youth are more likely to feel both depression and anxiety.

In this context, the Atlantic Summer Institute for Healthy and Safe Communities (ASI) announces the 6th in a series of mental health promotion events – now online.

Taking place from August 24 to 26, the Atlantic Policy Forum on Mental Health Promotion will be entirely online, allowing for increased regional collaboration in light of COVID-19. The theme of this year's forum is *Upstream Investment in Mental Health Promotion: The Answer to the Mental Health Crisis*. Upstream investment in policy that promotes mental health creates resilient communities capable of responding to shocks like the COVID-19 pandemic, and the ensuing economic and social impacts.

ASI is excited to welcome Trish Hennessey as this year's keynote. As the Director of Upstream, a project dedicated to policy solutions that foster a healthy society and community wellbeing, she will discuss systemic issues underlying mental health challenges including income inequality, precarious and low-paying work, lack of access to early

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ASI 2020
**Atlantic Policy
Forum on Mental
Health Promotion**

IÉA 2020
**Forum sur les politiques
pour la promotion de la
santé mentale dans
la région atlantique**

Upstream Investment in
Mental Health Promotion:
The Answer to the
Mental Health Crisis

Investissements en amont
pour la promotion de la
santé mentale : la réponse
à la crise en santé mentale

August 24-26, 2020
online

24-26 août 2020
en ligne

#ASI2020 www.asi-iea.ca

learning and education opportunities, and housing and food insecurity, as well as the compounding effects of race, gender diversity, and physical or emotional challenges. With the COVID-19 pandemic forcing us to situate mental health in its broader context, Trish advocates for a collectivist and societal point of view and encourages us to move from “me” to “we”.

The Youth Leadership Program, a key component of ASI programming, returns for its seventh year. The program engages young advocates, bringing them together virtually to have a voice in shaping the future agenda for children and youth in Atlantic Canada. It is paramount to include youth voices in this discussion, as youth are direct stakeholders in the future of mental health and will feel the effects of policy changes for years to come. Youth delegates will attend ASI 2020 at no cost. Applications will be accepted until July 15.

In keeping with the ASI’s commitment to inclusion and reduction of barriers to participation, a subsidy fund is available to assist with ASI 2020 registration fees. Applications will be accepted until July 27. Details about subsidies and registration can be found at www.asi-ica.ca.

ASI 2020 is made possible through contributions from: Medavie, Presenting Supporter; TD, sponsor of the Youth Leadership Program; Bell Let’s Talk, Bronze Sponsor; and a number of local

and regional businesses. Generous support has been provided by the Secrétariat du Québec aux relations canadiennes. Organizing Partners include: the Mental Health Commission of Canada; A Way Home; the Atlantic Council for International Cooperation; the Atlantic provincial governments; and the Government of Canada.



FOR MORE INFORMATION, PHOTOS & INTERVIEWS, CONTACT:

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