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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Atlantic Forum Calls for Whole Society Action on Youth Mental Health

2018 Atlantic Summer Institute on Healthy and Safe Communities (ASI) Forum: *Let's Act Together! Developing a whole society approach to promoting child and youth mental health* | August 20-22, 2018 | UPEI, Charlottetown, PE

CHARLOTTETOWN, PE – Atlantic Canadians are reaching across borders and outside traditional sectors to promote child and youth mental health in the region.

The Atlantic Summer Institute on Healthy and Safe Communities (ASI) is building on a formal Call to Action on child and youth mental health developed as a result of the 2017 ASI event. The 2018 Forum will bring together community leaders, policy makers, youth, researchers, educators and business professionals. Strengthened by diverse perspectives, participants will take steps toward investing in social and economic structures which will decrease barriers and improve supports, making it possible for children and youth to reach their full potential.

One in 5 Canadians has mental illness, but mental health is an essential resource for everyone. The Forum's theme, *Let's Act Together! Developing a whole society approach to promoting child and youth mental health*, highlights the collective responsibility of providing a foundation of good mental health for children and youth, which will have long-term benefits as those children age.

"Investments in mental health promotion need to be appreciated for the benefits they bring to society as a whole," explains Patsy Beattie-Huggan, coordinator of the ASI Forum. "This is essential for Atlantic Canada, as health and wellbeing impact the overall health, prosperity and sustainability of our communities. Working together to promote mental health requires collaboration between government, civil society, philanthropic organizations and the business world, so ASI is bringing these groups together this summer to act."

Registration is now open for the ASI Forum, which runs August 20-22, 2018 at the University of Prince Edward Island in Charlottetown. Programming for this bilingual event builds upon three previous summer events, which focused on investing in youth mental health; and directing conversations beyond issues such as treatment and access to care toward the larger factors that promote positive mental health, such as income, education, housing, nutrition, family and community support.

The Forum will feature keynote speaker Dr. Trevor Hancock who has been described as "one of the ten best health futurists in the world." Dr. Hancock is one of the founders of the global *Healthy Cities and Communities* movement and a former Professor and Senior Scholar at the School of Public Health and Social Policy at the University of Victoria. He will deliver a keynote presentation entitled 'Creating a Mentally Healthy Society: Igniting our Collective Wisdom and Responsibilities'. The Forum will also feature a variety of engaging plenary, panel and roundtable discussions as well as various workshops. This event will inspire participants to invest in our future by working together, promoting the mental health of children and youth to the benefit of the whole population.

Interested participants are encouraged to register for the ASI Forum in advance, due to the popularity of previous years' events. Early bird rates are available until June 30. To register, visit www.asi-iea.ca.

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FOR MORE INFORMATION, PHOTOS & INTERVIEWS, CONTACT:

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