

Better Access for Islanders to Mental Health and Addictions Services and Supports

November 2013

CREATION OF A CHIEF MENTAL HEALTH AND ADDICTIONS OFFICER (CMHAO)

Q: What is the role of the Chief Mental Health and Addictions Officer?

A: The Chief Mental Health and Addictions Officer will have ultimate responsibility for mental health and addictions policy and planning in the province. It is the first time a senior management role has been created to solely focus on improving mental health and addictions services across government.

The officer will work with all departments and community partners, as well as Islanders with personal experiences, to develop a long-term vision and strategy for the province.

Q: What are some of the priorities of the Chief Mental Health and Addictions Officer?

A: The duties will include:

- Establishing goals for supporting and promoting the mental health of Islanders and reducing the prevalence of harms related to substance abuse;
- Creating a long-term collaborative strategic plan for mental health and addictions that offers a vision and actions from prevention to treatment;
- Pursuing policies that support promotion, prevention, early intervention to treatment and recovery;
- Facilitating public awareness of mental health and addictions issues;
- Working to eliminate stigma and discrimination relating to mental health and addictions; and
- Collecting and assessing data on mental health and addictions in the province.

Q: The Chief Mental Health and Addictions Officer will work with an advisory council. Who will be included on this council?

A: The advisory council will have a patient-oriented focus. It will include Islanders with firsthand experiences related to mental health and addictions, community organizations, and representatives of the health, mental health, education and justice sectors, as well as other stakeholders.

Q: Who will the Chief Mental Health and Addictions Officer report to?

A: The Chief Mental Health and Addictions Officer will report to the Minister of Health and Wellness and work closely with the senior leadership of various government departments.