



Mood Disorders Society of Canada
La Société Pour Les Troubles de L'Humeur du Canada



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PRESS RELEASE

For immediate release

Group leading global super cluster in mental health innovation calls on Premiers and Prime Minister for targeted mental health funding; welcomes federal Finance committee recommendations

OTTAWA, DEC. 9, 2016—On behalf of the APEC Digital Hub on Mental Health, chief financial officer Phil Upshall congratulates the House of Commons Finance committee for its important recommendations for Budget 2017, calling on the federal government to invest in mental health as part of a new national Health Accord. As the First Ministers Meeting takes place in Ottawa, Upshall also says that Prime Minister Justin Trudeau and provincial and territorial premiers must take action on innovative ways to address mental health issues affecting one in five Canadians today and millions more globally. This action must be targeted and it must be measurable.

Upshall called on governments to change the way they do business and invest in superclusters made up of private, non-profit, public and academic researchers and stakeholders that will change the game on making Canada a truly innovative nation.

“The future is in multi-stakeholder collaboration in order to conduct ground-breaking research, produce the best outcomes and develop the most innovative products that are useful and relevant to our communities,” Upshall said. “The government can look no further than the APEC Digital Hub on Mental Hub as a prime example of innovation and world-leading partnerships if it wants our country to lead on global innovation.”

The APEC Digital Hub on Mental Health, a global supercluster in which Canada is playing a leadership role, is made up of more than 100 domestic and global partnerships that will serve as an incubator of new ideas and practices. The Digital Hub is an important platform for Canadian scientists, innovators, businesses, industry, health institutes and governments to share knowledge, research, data, public policies and best practices while helping those suffering from mental illness and contributing to economic growth. In the process, it will shape mental healthcare through global science excellence and world-leading partnerships and clusters that will allow us to successfully compete in the digital world.

The Digital Hub, housed at the University of British Columbia, puts Canadians’ and global patients’ needs first. “As the host country, Canada will work with its APEC partners to create products in collaboration with the public and private sectors and produce tangible economic benefits in science and innovation,” Upshall said. “The First Ministers Meeting must prioritize investments in mental health care. Investing in superclusters such as the Digital Hub is vital to Canada’s economic growth and to our efforts to address mental illness at home and abroad.”

Among the 81 recommendations from the Finance Committee’s pre-budget consultations, Upshall urged the federal government to implement the following:



- Contribute to cluster capacity–building through the establishment of a small cluster coordinating office. The Government should also develop tools to collect and share data about the performance of globally competitive innovation clusters;
- Continue to work towards the implementation of a national post-traumatic stress disorder program for veterans, as well as other safety and security personnel under the federal jurisdiction (MDSC continues to play a leading role in this area);
- Focus a new Health accord’s priorities on a mental health strategy; and
- Put in place investments in information technologies that support improved management and accountability measures.

Upshall also noted that any pharmacare plan must put the needs of mental health patients first.

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For more information

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Website: <http://mentalhealth.apec.org/>

Video: <http://bit.ly/APEChub>

Finance Committee pre-budget submission on APEC Digital Hub: <http://bit.ly/APECDigitalHub>

Finance Committee pre-budget submission on PTSD: <http://bit.ly/MDSC-Budget2017-PTSD>

Health Committee submission on a national pharmacare program: <http://bit.ly/MDSC-pharmacare>