

2025 Annual Report



Mood Disorders Society of Canada
Société pour les troubles de l'humeur du Canada

Table of Contents

- 03** MDSC Board Chair and NED Message
- 04** About MDSC
- 05** Advocacy
- 06** Veterans | Support, Education & Literacy
- 07** MIRA | Support, Research
- 08** Pathway | Support
- 09** EITR | Reducing Stigma, Education & Literacy
- 10** MDSC Collaborative Research
 - 10** Research
 - 10** Insomnia
 - 11** Access to Medications
 - 11** 2025 Highlights
- 12** Defeat Depression
- 13** NYAC
- 14** Financial Statement
- 15** Sponsors & Donors

A Message from the MDSC Board President & National Executive Director

Throughout 2025, MDSC has been very fortunate to have a dedicated team of people who have an unwavering commitment to serving Canadians and a focused ability to deliver programs and services that have a positive impact on all those we reach. Our staff and hundreds of our stakeholder partners and engaged volunteers have come together to prove that our collaborations showcase our strength and resiliency.

In these times of rising prices, political upheaval, and associated feelings of uncertainty, rates of anxiety and depression increase. Canadians are seeking and relying on their ability to access mental health supports and services more and more. The need for cohesive, well-integrated, accessible mental health care is now a priority for so many families.

Thanks to our partners, MDSC had a tremendous year of growth, impact and success. In 2025, MDSC implemented a number of new, collaborative initiatives. From the expansion of MIRA, our AI-based mental health resource assistant, to the launch of our new disability benefit navigation program, "Pathway to Benefits", MDSC has continued to listen to the voices of people living with mental health challenges and work diligently to develop solutions that fill gaps and help people.

2025 saw an increase in our valuable volunteer base as people from across the country reached out to lend a hand to their friends, family and neighbours. Our youth-led volunteer initiative, the National Youth Advisory Council (NYAC) began an exciting new phase of recruitment and growth, and our Veterans Program launched a new volunteer initiative, the Veterans Volunteer Hub, supporting meaningful volunteer opportunities for Veterans and their family members in collaboration with like-minded organizations from across Canada.

Thanks to our volunteers, grassroots community mental health partners, affiliated researchers, partner organizations, foundations, academia, and Government partners across the country, 2026 brings the promise of new, diverse relationships and initiatives as we continue to work toward and advocate for better mental health care for Canadians.

We also wish to recognize and thank our entire MDSC Board of Directors, who have steadfastly worked diligently to oversee and guide the organization's efforts to ensure we were always delivering on our mission.

Thank you for being with us on this journey.



Cynthia Black
Board President



Dave Gallson
National Executive Director

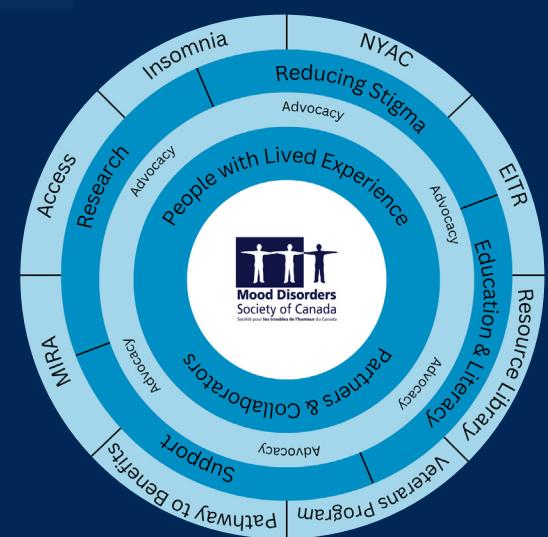
About MDSC

MISSION →

To improve the quality of life of Canadians impacted by mental illness so they can live the most fulfilling life possible.

Mood Disorders Society of Canada (MDSC) was formally launched and incorporated in 2001 with the overall objective of providing people with mood disorders with a strong, cohesive voice at the national level. MDSC's commitment to mental wellness is grounded in our mission driven mandates:

- Advocacy
- Education & Literacy
- Reducing Stigma
- Research
- Support



In collaboration with our community partners and grass-roots service providers – and always with the inclusion of Persons with Lived/Living Experience (PWLE) - **MDSC identifies gaps in mental health services across Canada, and takes the lead in establishing new, innovative programs to help Canadians achieve mental wellness.**

Mood Disorders Society of Canada (MDSC) has evolved to become one of Canada's best-connected mental health NGOs with a demonstrated track record for forging and maintaining meaningful, trusted, and sustained partnerships with the public, private, and non-profit sectors throughout Canada. We have developed **over 370 National Partnerships** and provide services in every Province and Territory of Canada.

Advocacy

2025 Advocacy Highlights

In order to ensure that Canadians' have access to the mental health care, supports and services they need, governments need to make policy decisions that provide health care and programs that address the needs of their constituents. Oftentimes, rather than proactive policy decisions, these come about as a result of successful advocacy efforts by organizations such as MDSC.

This is ongoing work, and we take this responsibility seriously. This year, we have seen some great achievements.

For the election, we created and provided an election advocacy tool kit that supported individuals and organizations with the tools and communication resources to effectively engage candidates on mental health issues.

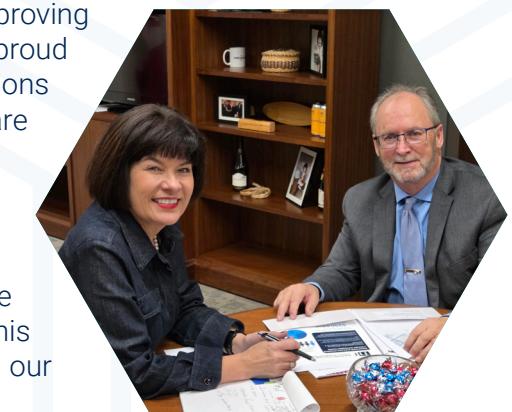
Through the full year, MDSC has taken part in discussions, roundtables and meetings with stakeholders, partners and our government relations team. We have conducted research to develop our priorities for our policy recommendations.

MDSC and many stakeholder partners, again gathered in Ottawa in November to hold our official "Hill Day". We had 24 meetings with MPs, Senators and Government policy makers and associated department bureaucrats. These meetings were well received, and we felt listened to, heard and valued. We presented our priority recommendations and 'asks'. We are now holding our follow-up meetings where we are actively working hard to move these discussions and recommendations forward.

We have engaged with key government departments on a crucial area of improving access for mental illness medication for those who require it. We are very proud of our collaboration with many stakeholder professionals and organizations who have come together to make the case for changes in policy, and we are very pleased to inform you that this has indeed seen significant success.

We have seen policy changes that are leading to meaningful benefits for those whose lives are most directly affected. We can state that after over 15 years of effort, we are now seeing long overdue improvements. We recognize and express our sincere appreciation for all those involved in this effort for their commitment as we are all after the same goal: to improve our health care system for those who need this access.

We will continue this work through 2026 and beyond!



The Honourable Ginette Petitpas Taylor, Member of Parliament with Dave Gallson, National Executive Director, MDSC



“Hope is the starting point from which a journey of recovery must begin - peer supporters can inspire hope and be able to demonstrate the possibility of recovery”

~ Holt-Lunstad et al., 2010

In 2025, MDSC expanded a number of our existing initiatives and launched several exciting, new complimentary initiatives for Veterans and their Family Members.

2025 Highlights:

- 320 one-on-one Companionship Calls
- Expansion from 4 to 8 PATSS Level 1 Workshops
- Launched PATSS Level 2 (Advanced) Workshops
- Launched PATSS T3 Train-the-Trainer Program
- Launched Veteran Volunteer Hub



PEER SUPPORT TRAINING

100% No cost
for Veterans & Veteran Family Members

LEARN MORE

VeteransPeerSupport.ca



Mood Disorders Society of Canada
Société pour les troubles de l'humeur du Canada



What is the Veteran Volunteer Hub?

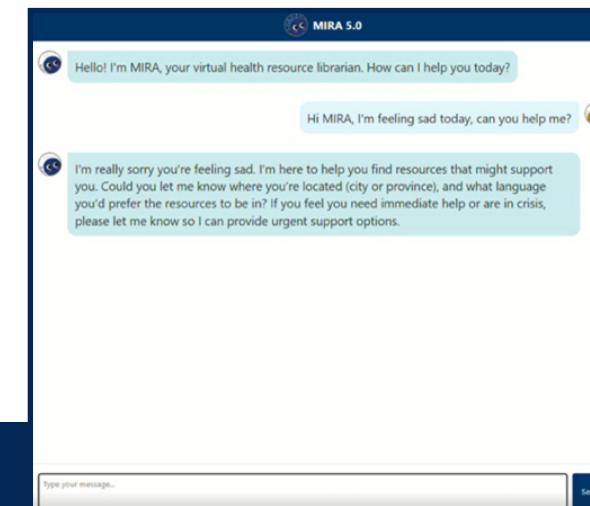
The Veteran Volunteer Hub connects Veterans with meaningful and impactful volunteer opportunities. In addition to MDSC opportunities, MDSC has partnered with like-minded organizations seeking volunteers to offer a variety of options to participants.

What is PATSS?

Peer & Trauma Support Systems workshops have been highly successful in training veterans and their Family Members in becoming effective Peer Supporters within their own Veteran Networks.

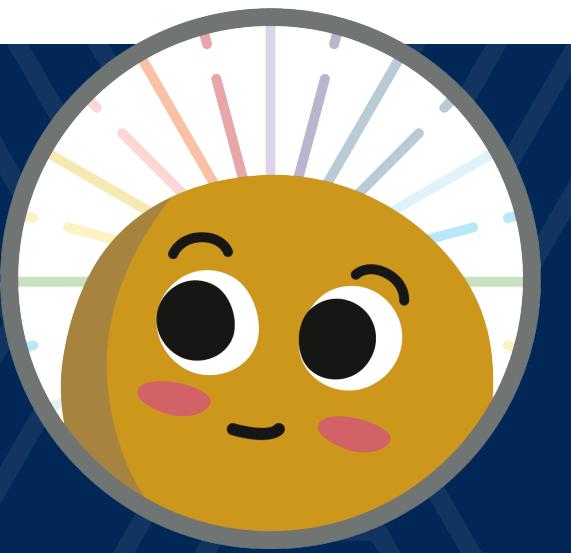
2025 marked a turning point for MIRA.

With the launch of MIRA 5.0, the project advanced its mission to deliver safe, transparent, and locally grounded AI for mental health navigation, strengthening partnerships, expanding impact, and laying the groundwork for long-term growth.



2025 Highlights:

- 4,700 chatbot conversations facilitated in 2025.
- Nearly 25,000 mental health resources retrieved.
- Full deployment of MIRA 5.0, the first LLM-powered (natural language) version of the platform.
- Introduction of enhanced safety classifiers to detect discrimination and misuse.
- Presentations at major national and international conferences, including eMHIC Global Congress, and NAISA International Conference on Indigenous Studies.
- Over 33 volunteers working on resources including specialists in French, Veteran, and Indigenous initiatives.



Looking Ahead

In 2025, MIRA secured a \$250,000 multi-year sponsorship from TD Bank Group through the TD Ready Commitment, supporting MIRA 5.0 & Beyond. This funding will accelerate national growth, advance empathetic AI development, and expand accessibility through features such as a mobile app and offline mode for underserved communities.



"I'm not entirely sure how to navigate the future and have worries.... I probably qualify for some benefits.... I applied for the new disability benefit, but I have never applied for the DTC. Would truly appreciate some guidance!"

Pathway to Benefits: Making Access Simple

Launched in 2025, MDSC's Pathway to Benefits, funded by the Government of Canada through the Social Development Partnerships Program – Disability Benefits Navigation, helps Canadians with disabilities, and their families, navigate the often-confusing world of financial supports, from the Canada Disability Benefit to provincial programs. With accessible, community-informed guidance, the initiative ensures that Canadians get the benefits they need, when they need them, reflecting MDSC's trusted national leadership and commitment to meaningful impact.

Milestones for 2025

- Pathway to Benefits website launched in September 2025, attracting over 18,776 visitors and 34,700+ pageviews by year-end!
- Reached over 1.25 million people on Facebook since launch, spreading awareness nationwide.
- Released 8 accessible, downloadable resources to support Canadians and their families.
- Hosted monthly webinars, connecting participants with expert guidance and practical tools.
- Onboarded volunteers to expand navigation support services.
- Developed and implemented 2 research frameworks to guide program impact and innovation.



Elephant in the Room: Anti-Stigma Campaign – rebranding a national movement!

MDSC is revitalizing its Elephant in the Room (EITR) program to better support workplaces, schools, and communities with practical, accessible mental health resources.

IN 2025, MDSC began the process of redesigning and rebranding the EITR Campaign in partnership with a marketing and creative agency. 2026 will bring a relaunch of a refreshed national campaign with updated educational and promotional materials.

EITR empowers individuals and organizations to recognize and address mental health stigma. Through its signature blue elephant symbol and educational resources, the program encourages open, supportive dialogue, helping Canadians create environments where it is safe to talk and seek help. The upcoming rebrand will enhance the program's look and resources, strengthen partnerships, and further MDSC's ongoing commitment to awareness, understanding, and inclusion across the country.

CCMHN | Advocacy, Research, Support



Key Highlights:

- Advancing collaborations between community mental health organizations, physicians and other health care providers.
- Detailed 3-year strategic plan developed.
- Continued advocacy for community mental health funding at the Federal Level via meetings with industry stakeholders, Members of Parliament and other government officials.

MDSC Collaborative Research

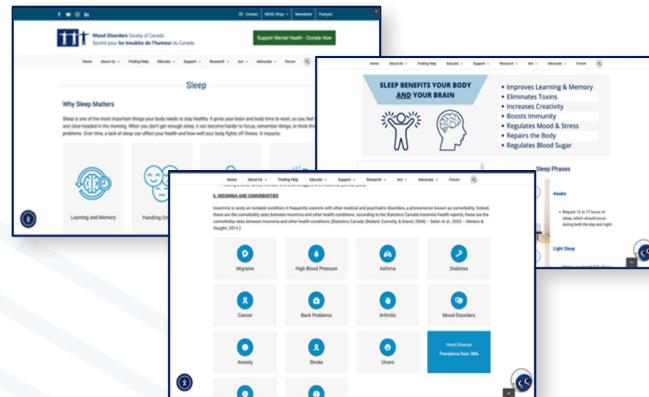
Research

At MDSC, we passionately believe in advancing our understanding of the causes, impact, and treatments of mental illness, through rigorous research that is both relevant and outcomes-based. We are firm advocates for the inclusion of Persons With Lived Experience (PWLE) at every stage of research. Our research priorities are driven by a deep commitment to address the pressing challenges of improving our collective mental health, and to ensure that our findings lead to tangible and meaningful benefits for those affected.

In addition to MDSC-led initiatives, MDSC also participated as a Collaborator in nineteen additional research initiatives across Canada. In partnership with academia, healthcare, government and private sector, MDSC advances knowledge on mental health challenges and solutions, and ensures that PWLE have a seat at the table for discussions surrounding

Insomnia | Research, Advocacy & Reducing Stigma

Insomnia, characterized by difficulty initiating or maintaining sleep and impaired daytime functioning, remains widely misunderstood and under-recognized in Canada. People living with insomnia often face barriers to timely diagnosis, appropriate care, and effective treatment, despite the condition's high prevalence and significant impact on quality of life. In response, MDSC launched its Insomnia Awareness and Advocacy initiative in 2025, focused on education, awareness, and systems-level change.



Key initiatives and impact in 2025 included:

National Insomnia Microsite: Launch of insomnia.mdsc.ca, a one-stop, evidence-informed hub providing information on insomnia, treatment options, and trusted resources. The site attracted 4,416 visitors in December 2025 alone.

Public Perception Survey: A national survey of 800+ participants diagnosed with mental illness examining awareness of insomnia, its impact on quality of life, and gaps in care and treatment.

Workplace Education Program: Development and pilot of a train-the-trainer workplace program addressing insomnia's impact on mental health, well-being, and productivity. The 2025 pilot showed strong engagement, with 100% of respondents indicating they would recommend the program. National expansion is planned for 2026.

National Media & Social Campaign: A multi-channel awareness campaign featuring six people with lived experience and six health care providers, generating 106 media stories and over 112 million media impressions nationwide, alongside coordinated social media outreach. Selected stories can be viewed, read, or listened to via the Insomnia microsite.

Government Submissions: Completion of multiple submissions in 2025 related to insomnia medications, access to care, and policy considerations at both provincial and national levels.



Access | Research, Advocacy

Equitable access to the right medications remains essential to effective mental health care, yet many Canadians continue to face delays and inequities. Building on the momentum of our System Broken / Système Brisé whitepaper and our bilingual Health System Roundtable Recommendations, MDSC strengthened its leadership in 2025 by convening a new cross-sector Working Group (WG) dedicated to advancing practical, system-level solutions that improve access to medications nationwide.

The Access to Medication WG brings together 15 members from across the health system, including people with lived/living experience (PWLE), clinical experts, government and Ministry of Health representatives, public and private reimbursement leaders, HTA contributors, industry partners, and an engagement specialist. Throughout 2025, the WG collaborated to co-develop guidance defining what constitutes "clinically meaningful" outcomes for people living with mental illness. This work is now being translated into actionable recommendations for governments. As part of its knowledge-translation efforts, the WG will present its progress at the CDA-AMC Symposium in April 2026.

Working Group on Access to Medications Overarching Goal

Improvement in the front-line voice (People With Lived/Living & Psychiatrist) within the reimbursement review process is at the core of the recommendations.

Our overarching goal is to create meaningful improvements in the Canadian reimbursement process to:



Improve timely access to medications for mental illnesses



Reduce inequity in funding access to medications for mental illnesses



Defeat Depression

The Defeat Depression Campaign empowers Canadians to take action against mental illness, dismantle stigma, and support mental health programs through engaging activities like walks, personal challenges and community events. Together, we're creating a future where no one faces mental illness alone.

Community Impact Highlights:

Educational Resources: 7,000+ downloads of mental health materials.

Volunteer Support: 100+ dedicated volunteers across Canada

14 Years and Running: Over \$3,750,000 Raised for Mental Health, and 130+ community organizations helped.



Amplifying Awareness

Our campaign's message reached far and wide this year:

- **Total Social Media Reach:** 1,386,478+
- **Impressions:** 3,679,729+

Over \$250,000 Raised in 2025

Illuminating Hope:

Landmarks lit up to support mental health awareness:

- **CN Tower**
- **Niagara Falls**
- **BC Place**

11th Annual Canal Pursuit for Mental Health

The 11th Annual Canal Pursuit for Mental Health was reimagined into an exciting new format as a series of 7 community-based runs along the Trent Severn and Rideau Canals. Leader Clay Williams honoured the spirit of the original Canal Pursuit by completing an 80 km long-distance run from Merrickville to Parliament Hill. Over \$15,000 was raised in 2025, honouring First Responders and Military Members.

NYAC

The **National Youth Advisory Council (NYAC)** of MDSC is a group of passionate youth from across Canada (coast-to-coast-to-coast).

In 2025, NYAC re-imagined their place at the table, and is using their collective voices and lived-experience to lead and participate in robust advocacy and policy change initiatives and meaningful research as active and equal participants.

The current NYAC MDSC council is led by 2 National Co-Chairs and 12 core council members with an additional 35 youth volunteers from around the country.

- Participated in the Young Canadians Roundtable on Health
- Collaborated with the GI Society to present a lecture at McMaster University on Understanding the Link Between IBD and Mental Health
- Collaborated on projects with Sandbox Project and the Douglas Research Centre
- Launched the NYAC mental health Storybook, a resource book about the dimensions of health featuring information, activities, and testimonials
- Updated the NYAC National Resource Directory, our publication on national and local resources for youth mental health support
- Launched a new recruitment and growth phase to increase youth impact on mental health initiatives



Financials

Mood Disorders Society Of Canada
Statement of Operations and Changes in Net Assets
For the Year Ended March 31, 2025

Revenue

Grants and contributions
Donations
Grants - Hope Rising
Grants - Improving Veterans Wellness
Grants - Enhancing Connections
Other income
Conference registration fees

	2025	2024
Grants and contributions	\$ 1,103,288	\$ 1,041,815
Donations	240,228	263,118
Grants - Hope Rising	237,106	331,568
Grants - Improving Veterans Wellness	125,597	85,085
Grants - Enhancing Connections	105,000	0
Other income	50,062	38,431
Conference registration fees	0	1,951
	\$ 1,861,281	\$ 1,761,968

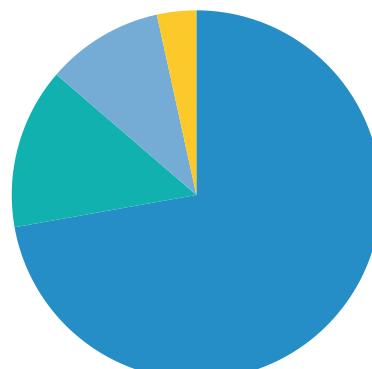
Expenses

Salaries
Project management and consulting costs
Program delivery - Improving Veterans Wellness
Program delivery - Hope Rising
Program delivery - Enhancing Connections
Gifts to qualified donees
Travel and meeting expenses
Fundraising
National campaigns
Office and meeting expenses
Advocacy
Legal and accounting fees
Phone, facsimile and website
Interest and bank charges
Rent

SALARIES	516,285	406,599
Project management and consulting costs	356,321	563,670
Program delivery - Improving Veterans Wellness	224,275	121,925
Program delivery - Hope Rising	190,762	194,920
Program delivery - Enhancing Connections	101,096	0
Gifts to qualified donees	56,666	87,411
Travel and meeting expenses	39,006	45,458
Fundraising	29,680	18,622
National campaigns	29,105	22,643
Office and meeting expenses	28,826	21,863
Advocacy	20,788	44,694
Legal and accounting fees	19,546	17,467
Phone, facsimile and website	18,608	25,383
Interest and bank charges	8,254	8,383
Rent	5,500	6,000
	\$ 1,644,689	\$ 1,585,038
SURPLUS (DEFICIT) OF REVENUE OVER EXPENSES, for the year	216,592	176,930
UNRESTRICTED NET ASSETS, beginning of year	491,256	314,326
UNRESTRICTED NET ASSETS, end of year	\$ 707,848	\$ 491,256

Expenses

Program Delivery (72.20%)
Management and administration (14.11%)
Fundraising (10.25%)
Gifts to other registered charities and qualified donees (3.44%)



Thank You To Our Sponsors.

Significant Donors, Sponsors and Funders contributing to MDSC initiatives in 2025

AbbVie Corporation

Alberta Innovates

Biogen Canada Inc.

Boehringer Ingelheim (Canada) Ltd.

CN

Eisai Inc.

Employment and Social Development Canada

Government of Ontario

Idorsia Pharmaceuticals Canada Ltd

Innovative Medicines Canada

Johnson & Johnson Innovative Medicine

Otsuka-Lundbeck Alliance

Pfizer Canada Inc.

Royal Canadian Legion Dominion Command

Royal Canadian Legion Ontario Command

Social Development Partnership Program

TD Bank Group

Teva Canada Innovation

True Patriot Love Foundation

Vale Canada

Veterans Affairs Canada

A Brighter Future Together

We extend a heartfelt thank you to each of our donors, sponsors and partners who share our vision and dedication. Your unwavering support has been a beacon of hope for many. Together, we are not only addressing the immediate needs of those impacted by mood disorders but also building a foundation for a brighter, more supportive future.

How You Can Help

At the Mood Disorders Society of Canada, we strive to support the needs of Canadians impacted by mental illness. Without ongoing core funding, we rely on generous donations from sponsors, private industry and the general public to assist us in this work. If you would like to support our efforts, you can make a donation on our website.

mdsc.ca/donate



Territorial Acknowledgement

Mood Disorders Society of Canada (MDSC) is a national, non-profit health charity committed to ensuring that the voices of persons impacted by mental illness are heard on issues relating to mental health and mental illness. Doing so requires ongoing understanding and action related to persistent health inequities and injustices.

MDSC is headquartered on the traditional territory of the Anishnabek, Huron-Wendat and Haudenosaunee, covered by the Williams and Upper Canada Treaties. We are grateful to have the opportunity to live and work in the community and on this important traditional territory. We acknowledge our shared obligation to respect, honour, and sustain these lands and the natural resources contained within. MDSC staff, volunteers, and partners live and work from many territories across Turtle Island.

Through ongoing learning and education we can help challenge and dismantle systemic barriers that persist in our society and which are intimately linked to the central mission of our organization in mental health and wellbeing. We commit ourselves to the path of justice, healing, and reconciliation to create a brighter future and mental health landscape for all Indigenous individuals and communities.

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