



Transformational  
Research in  
Adolescent  
Mental Health



Recherche  
transformationnelle  
sur la santé mentale  
des adolescents



## Fact Sheet

### ACCESS Canada A research network developed by TRAM – Transformational Research in Adolescent Mental Health

#### ACCESS Canada

Adolescent/young adult  
Connections to  
Community-driven,  
Early,  
Strengths-based and stigma-free  
Services

**Government of Canada funding through CIHR:** \$12.5 million over five years

**Graham Boeckh Foundation funding:** \$12.5 million over five years

**Total funding of TRAM partnership:** \$25 million over five years

#### **Description:**

Mental illness affects many Canadians, with one-in-five experiencing a mental illness in their lifetime. However, young Canadians are the most profoundly affected, with 75% of mental health problems and illnesses beginning prior to age 25, and more than 50% beginning between 11 and 25 years.

While young people are more likely to experience mental health disorders than any other age group, they have the least access to mental health care. Existing services are designed for younger children and older adults, meaning that the system is weakest where it should be strongest. As a result, mental illness takes an enormous toll on youth and their families, with high levels of preventable mortality and life-long illness.

In response, the Canadian Institutes of Health Research (CIHR) and the Graham Boeckh Foundation (GBF) created the TRAM partnership to find solutions to this problem and, ultimately, to improve mental health outcomes in Canada.

Through a competitive process, TRAM has led to the creation of **ACCESS Canada** – a research network that will seek to address this gap in care. It represents a new way of working collaboratively with the provinces, territories, and partners, to increase resources and support research that will transform Canada's health care system.

ACCESS Canada will bring about transformational change in addressing adolescent and youth mental health and well-being. By connecting patients and youth with researchers, health care professionals, and decision-makers, the Network will bridge the gap between research evidence and health care practice and policy. It will allow patients and families to benefit from research evidence by bringing the most promising interventions to the front lines of health care.

Specifically, the objectives of ACCESS Canada are:

- to improve youth engagement and awareness of mental health issues leading to early identification of those in need; and
- to make appropriate, evidence-informed, youth-friendly mental health care accessible to youth as early as possible.

This pan-Canadian initiative is the first-ever research Network launched under Canada's Strategy for Patient-Oriented Research (SPOR). SPOR is a coalition of federal, provincial and territorial partners – patients, researchers, health care providers, and decision-makers – all dedicated to the integration of research into care. This inaugural SPOR Network is being led by Dr. Ashok Malla, Director of the Prevention and Early Intervention Program for Psychoses (PEPP-Montréal) at the Douglas Institute, Professor at McGill University and Canada Research Chair in Early Psychosis.

**About the Canadian Institutes of Health Research (CIHR):**

The Canadian Institutes of Health Research (CIHR) is the Government of Canada's health research investment agency. CIHR's mission is to create new scientific knowledge and to enable its translation into improved health, more effective health services and products, and a strengthened health care system for Canadians. Composed of 13 Institutes, CIHR provides leadership and support to more than 13,200 health researchers and trainees across Canada. [www.cihr-irsc.gc.ca](http://www.cihr-irsc.gc.ca)

**About the Graham Boeckh Foundation:**

The Graham Boeckh Foundation (GBF) is a private foundation created by J. Anthony Boeckh and his family to fund initiatives in the area of mental health and other related disciplines. Based in Canada and open to the world, GBF aims to be a catalyst in bringing about transformational changes that significantly improve the lives of people with or at risk of mental illness. [www.grahamboeckhfoundation.org](http://www.grahamboeckhfoundation.org)