

The Honourable Carolyn Bennett  
Minister of Mental Health and Addictions and Associate Minister of Health  
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November 5, 2021

Dear Minister Bennett,

The [Ending Violence Association of Canada](#) congratulates you on your appointment as Minister of Mental Health and Addictions and Associate Minister of Health. We would like to take this opportunity to introduce our organization to you, and to express our interest in working collaboratively with you and your team to address the many pressing mental health and addictions challenges facing Canadians.

The Ending Violence Association of Canada (EVA Canada) is a national organization that works to address and respond to gender-based violence. EVA Canada strives to strengthen collaboration among national, provincial, and territorial organizations to build understanding about gender-based violence and advocate at the national level. With representation from sexual assault, domestic violence, and gender-based violence organizations and regional and provincial networks from all of the provinces and the Yukon, EVA Canada members have a long history of advocating for changes to strengthen policies, legislation, and systems to better respond to the needs of survivors of gender-based violence across the country.

EVA Canada is looking forward to supporting you in your work to address mental health and addictions. In our work, we regularly witness how challenges related to mental health and addictions are a troubling reality for many survivors of gender-based violence. Ensuring that survivors of gender-based violence have access to timely, free, trauma-informed, and specialized mental health and addictions supports is an important and powerful step in lessening the long-term impacts of violence, and in preventing violence in the first place.

Furthermore, as a national organization that works closely with community-based sexual assault centres and provincial and regional sexual assault networks, EVA Canada takes a special interest in working to develop the distinct strategies that are necessary to address sexual violence. To this end, we have prepared and enclosed an overview of the key areas that we believe must be addressed to make progress toward ending sexual violence, including ensuring access to mental health and addictions supports.

As an organization, we deeply value collaboration and engagement. We would be honoured to meet with you and your team to further discuss some of the pressing issues facing anti-violence advocates and organizations across the country, and to further discuss how our work to end sexual violence relates to the mandate of your office.

Sincerely,



Erin Whitmore, MSW, PhD  
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Enclosures: (1) Sexual Violence: A Public Health Crisis in Need of a Proportional Response; (2) La violence sexuelle: Un enjeu de santé publique qui exige une réponse proportionnée