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May 3, 2021

To all Members:

## **Canadian Mental Health Week is May 3<sup>rd</sup> to May 9<sup>th</sup>**

We would like to take this opportunity to acknowledge and thank each and every one of our Paramedics, Dispatchers and Call Takers across BC during the Canadian Mental Health Association (CMHA) <https://cmha.ca/> Mental Health Week <https://mentalhealthweek.ca/>. You continue to step up and serve above and beyond. It is truly inspiring in these increasingly difficult times that your humanity and commitment allows communities to rest easy knowing that you will be there to provide care and timely access to emergency treatment and transport in their emergencies or time of need.

There is no question, physical, emotional and psychological exhaustion have set in among our profession. We are into our second year of the global pandemic and over five years since the Province declared an overdose emergency. Our profession is experiencing unprecedented, staffing, workload, recruitment, retention issues and an increase in stress leaves; all of these have exacerbated a critical shortage of staff. All of which are not isolated to any corner of our Province or any specific demographic of the membership.

We know we are incredibly resilient; however, more than ever, we are seeing our members reaching out for help because their coping skills are being tested and they are psychologically exhausted. Please take the time to reach out and get help and/or support. Please remember that the Peer Critical Incident Stress Management Team is available 24/7 by pager at 1-855-969-4321.

Please use this coming week to raise awareness to eliminate the stigma through programs like Share it, Don't Wear It at <https://bcfirstrespondersmentalhealth.com/>. Continue the conversations to increase knowledge and education. In addition, please see the key resources available through our [www.apbc.ca](http://www.apbc.ca) members only area at: <https://bit.ly/3aSosPe>

A fundamental as a Union and profession is organizational and member mental health and wellness. We need healthy Paramedics and Dispatchers to ensure we provide high level care, treatment and transport to our patients. Increasing support and member wellbeing is a necessity. It's important to access and use the multitude of resources out there. We are very excited we have been able to provide every member the opportunity for Dr Landry's course "Surviving Shift Work- Circadian Rhythms & Sleep Training for Shift Workers" at <https://www.apbc.ca/members-area/programs/health-wellness/>

We know we will continue to see tough times which will continue to test everything we have. We will be on the frontlines with each and every one of you to meet this head on. There is light at the end of tunnel. Please take care of yourselves and your families, take time to restore your buckets and wellness. We need you all.

On behalf of the Provincial Executive Board.

Be well and Safe,  
Troy Clifford, Provincial President

TC/sb/MoveUp