

Minister of Health and the Minister  
for the Federal Economic Development  
Initiative for Northern Ontario



Ministre de la Santé et Ministre de  
l'Initiative fédérale du développement  
économique dans le Nord de l'Ontario

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Ottawa, Canada K1A 0K9

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Mr. David Simpson  
Director  
Psychiatric Patient Advocate Office  
P.O. Box 28  
802-55 St. Clair Avenue West  
Toronto, Ontario M4V 2Y7

**COPY**

Dear Mr. Simpson:

Thank you for your correspondence of March 10, 2006, expressing your support for the Canadian Mental Health Commission and the creation of a national strategy on mental illness. The office of the Prime Minister has also written on your behalf. I appreciate your kind words about my appointment as federal Minister of Health, and regret the delay in responding.

Mental health and mental illness are very important issues for Canadians. Governments have the collective responsibility to address the issues associated with mental health and illness, reduce the social and economic burden of mental disorders, and promote mental health. I have made this issue a priority and steps are under way to explore how to address mental health at the federal level and in Canada.

The Senate Standing Committee on Social Affairs, Science and Technology's report *Out of the Shadows at Last* provides important information that will help our government take further action, as appropriate. The Senate Committee's proposals are being studied, and this government is committed to working collaboratively with the provinces, territories, and other stakeholders, including Aboriginal groups, to explore mental health issues. I am pleased to inform you that Canada's new government plans to move forward on mental health issues.

Thank you for taking the time to write.

Yours sincerely,

Tony Clement

c.c. Office of the Prime Minister

Canada