

Peggy Roche, National Chairperson of Education & Health and Carol Richer, Ontario Chairperson of Education & Health have both focused on mental health in their recent articles found in the League magazine and Trillium. The following information is from these articles.

The combined efforts of many – Bell Canada’s “Let’s Talk” campaign, Olympians Clara Hughes, Elizabeth Manley, other groups and our own response to Resolution ON.13.01 ‘Reduce the Stigma Attached to Mental Illness’ – have been instrumental in changing attitudes and in helping to educate the public to the fact that mental illness is an illness not a choice.

At the National CWL convention, one of the speakers was former senator Michael Kirby, who is a strong advocate for mental health care. In 2007, PM Harper appointed him first chair of the newly created ‘Mental Health Commission for Canada’. Since stepping down, he has helped to create **Partners for Mental Health**.

Mr. Kirby states: “An estimated 1.2 million Canadian children are affected by mental illness – one in four gets appropriate treatment – the well to do and middle class are able to pay for care and those without means wait or do without care.”

Canada is failing to meet the mental health needs of children and youth. Suicide is the leading cause of death for young Canadians. As many as 8% of young people try to take their own lives. Only 25% of Canadian children who require mental services receive them. Almost all mental health problems begin in the young before the age of 24. Two initiatives of **Partners for Mental Health** in 2013/2014 were launched:

- **Right By You** which aims to get children and youth experiencing mental health challenges the help they need.
- **Not Myself Today** which helps to build mentally healthy workplaces engaging employees, companies and organizations to address mental health issues and transform places of employment.

We can see how important these initiatives are – one only has to look at newspaper headlines to see the need is there. Examples of two recent headlines are: “Stigma of mental illness keeps police officers silent” and “Mental Health Ignored in Civil Service”. Canadians are stepping up and speaking out against stigma, discrimination and lack of funding and support for mental health. Recently it was announced in the newspaper the Royal Ottawa Mental Health Centre will create a research chair for suicide prevention. Do It For Daron (DIFD) and the Mach-Gaensslen Foundation are each contributing \$1 million to this. In the Pembroke Observer, headline ‘Tackling Youth Suicide’ announced the formation of a Mental Health crisis network for the Renfrew County. One of the members sitting on this committee is Mr. Tom Sidney, who is our guest speaker today. We look forward to his talk on this issue today.

There are municipal elections this Monday October 27, 2014. Get out and Vote. Make your voice heard and Get Involved.

Given the current movements to legalize euthanasia and assisted suicide, it is extremely important that we work to educate the public and our members about the dangers of going down this path. Please see further information pertaining to these concerns in your Blue and Gold.

The CWL is well on its way to reaching the goal of 250 units of blood set in 2014 with **Partners for Life** project organized by Canadian blood services. You can still register and give blood – our CWL partner ID number is **CATH011269**.

We are all busy and have a lot on our plates; we need to TAKE TIME...

Take time to Work – it is the price of success.

Take time to Think – it is the source of power.

Take time to Play – it is the secret of youth.

Take time to Read – it is the foundation of knowledge.

Take time to Worship – it is the highway of reverence and washes the dust of earth from our eyes.

Take time to Help and Enjoy Friends – it is the source of happiness.

Take time to Love – it is the one sacrament to life.

Take time to Dream – it hitches to soul to the stars.

Take time to Laugh – it is the singing that helps with life's loads.

Take time to Plan – it is the secret of being able to have time to take time for the first nine things.

Respectfully submitted,

Sophie