

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Tuesday, October 19th, 2010

Dr. Nancy Hall to Receive Highest Award from Canadian Mental Health Association

Vancouver –Dr. Nancy Hall will be awarded the C.M. Hincks award at this year's 2010 National Conference on Mental Health. The award will be presented by Gordon Matheson, Chair of the National Board at a Special Gala and Awards Dinner being held at the London Convention Centre on Friday, October 22nd. Dr. Nancy Hall is receiving this award in recognition of her personal and professional experience.

In addition to being an advocate, researcher, Nancy is a family member of someone who lives with a serious mental illness. This struggle helped her decide it just had to be better for folks with brain irregularities. She has a Ph.D. in medical sciences from McMaster University and spent her career working on large scale public health programs for different age groups or settings. Dr. Hall has held university appointments at Dalhousie, UBC and Simon Fraser Universities and taught courses to public health students in health promotion and communications students in innovation and social change in a post carbon world with an emphasis on improved responses to the mental health of our citizens. She has also chaired numerous provincial level committees in seniors and Women's Health. Nancy has worked to provide improved supports to people with complex needs who have extraordinary needs for physical and health supports. She is a convener of change for health to make the system work better for those with mental health issues that it is designed to serve.

Nancy brings a professional and family member voice to issues that need to be addressed in ways that professional and the public can understand. She is grounded in the lived experience of people and has a strong core value of empowerment. She brings new learning and research to the attention of local, provincial, and national health leaders and is a trusted advisor and a promoter of CMHA's core values.

About C.M. Hincks Award

The C.M. Hincks award honours the founder of the Canadian Mental Health Association, Clarence Meredith Hincks, for his spirit and social commitment. It is our highest Award and it is presented annually to one outstanding individual or organization which has advanced mental health in Canada through their work/volunteer activities by working on behalf of people with mental illness.

About Dr. Nancy Hall

From 1998 – 2001, Nancy brought attention to issues through her role as the only ever appointed Provincial Mental Health Advocate in BC. In 2001, the Liberal government eliminated the position but Nancy has continued to work to improve the public's mental health through convening, facilitating and planning collaborative approaches in the community. She has been a thought leader in developing the Healthy Minds Healthy Campuses Community of Practice to link the mental health support counselors, students and administrators work to support improved mental health and substance use for students at the 22 post secondary institutions in BC. She was an expert witness for CMHA at the Braidwood Inquiry which examined the role of the RCMP, tasers and training of police in support of people with a mental illness. This provincial inquiry has had and will have national implications on the training and role of police in their interactions with people with a mental illness. She is a community member of the BC Mental Health Review Board.

From 2004 until 2010 Nancy has been involved with Simon Fraser University's Future Dialogue: Imagine BC, a dialogue on the future of our province. She prepared a think piece on Mental Health as part of Imagines' final proposal to British Columbians. It involves starting with the idea that recovery is possible and providing safe places for people to live with more community mental health supports at the community level is what is needed. She sees a different mental health system for our post carbon world one closer to the original vision of Clarence Hincks, the originator of the Canadian Mental Health Association. A system that will walk beside people and lift them up is required.

In 2008 Nancy consulted with the Street to Home Foundation in Vancouver to help with their five year plan to end homelessness in Vancouver. She is active at St Andrew's Wesley United Church in Vancouver as part of the End Homelessness Now Ministry, a community ministry working to educate the public about solutions to homelessness and to organize the Faith community in Vancouver to respond as an alliance to End Homelessness in Vancouver.

In 2009 Nancy was awarded the BC Public Health Association's President's award for her career in improving the public health of British Columbians.

Nancy is currently living with a diagnosis of metastatic breast cancer. She is bringing her message of positive mental health as a volunteer at Vancouver's Inspire Health, Canada's first integrated Cancer Care Centre where she speaks with newly diagnosed patients at the Fire Side Chats and enrolls them in managing their mental and spiritual health to enjoy good health and keep their spirits strong.

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