In Canada, many individuals with acute or chronic illnesses have mental health problems that are unrecognized. Patients with – or at risk of developing – simultaneous mental and physical illnesses suffer unnecessarily because they will not receive early and effective treatment for both conditions. This can lead to worsened physical illness, early death, and/or psychological impacts associated with their physical illness. Every time a patient gets transferred within the complex health-care system, this transfer can be confusing to the patients and their families, and costly to the system. The lack of integrated and effective care within our health-care system for individuals with complex mental and physical illness has a major impact on their health and well-being, and imposes an incremental burden on their families. The cost to the Ontario Health system is estimated at $2.57B per year.

The Medical Psychiatry Alliance (MPA), the first of its kind in Canada, is a collaborative partnership whose vision is to transform health care. Supported by The Centre for Addiction and Mental Health (CAMH), The Hospital for Sick Children (SickKids), Trillium Health Partners (THP) and the University of Toronto (UofT) in conjunction with the Ministry of Health and Long-Term Care (MOHLTC) and an extraordinarily generous donor, this Alliance is dedicated to transforming the delivery of health services for patients who suffer mental and physical illness. The MPA aims to:

- Improve the quality of life and increase life expectancy for those with serious, simultaneous mental and physical illnesses while reducing the burden of illness on their families, the healthcare system and society.
- Create a new model of clinical care that will support patients with medical and psychiatric issues.
- Teach current and future health professionals how to prevent, diagnose, and treat mental and physical illness within a novel integrated care model.
- Develop a better understanding of the interaction between the body and the brain regarding co-morbid medical and psychiatric illness.

Within the mandate of the MPA, the Call for Demonstration Projects at SickKids is to form project collaborations within SickKids, or between SickKids and community partners, to address the unique challenges in care for children and youth with mental and physical illness and to customize care practices and pathways for these populations. An MPA demonstration project, whether focused around research, patient care, knowledge exchange, or quality improvement, is a time limited initiative that should transform, support or inform care of patients with mental and physical illness. The MPA recognizes that in order for their transformative work to be sustainable beyond the MPA project term, establishing project collaborations are vital. The MPA is not a funding body; however, the MPA Child and Youth Health Research Program is willing to provide resources (i.e. financial, clinical/research resources, etc.) to support the Child and Youth Health demonstration projects. Projects are not limited to, but can be:

Example A: a request for funding to support a pilot project (i.e. clinical pathway/referral system)
Example B: a request for research resources (people/$) to help evaluate an existing project
Example C: a request for space/staff support to facilitate a clinical project/program

The anticipated outcomes of a demonstration project should result in the creation of new knowledge; the dissemination of existing knowledge; the adoption and utilization of programs by partnering organizations; a pathway to support seamless transition of patients receiving care in the hospital to the community, or from paediatric to the adult health care.
Eligibility Criteria

For a project to be eligible as an MPA Child and Youth Health demonstration project, the following criteria will be considered.

- Project embodies the vision and mission of the MPA
- Project advances one or more of the goals of the MPA
- Project demonstrates collaboration; within SickKids, or between SickKids & community stakeholders/partners
- Project includes resources contributed by collaborators (e.g. new money, in-kind money, space, patients, materials etc.)
- Project leverages research and/or funding opportunities
- Project considers knowledge translation and publication opportunities, or a knowledge translation and publication plan as minimum
- Project addresses sustainability beyond the term of the MPA
- Project life cycle will be completed before the end of the MPA project term (March 2019) including final evaluation/report
- Project has defined & measurable outcomes
- Project deliverables include evaluation of impact on patients/clients with physical & mental illness
- Project considers opportunities for trainees to participate where possible
- Project readiness for implementation

Projects of all sizes and scopes are welcome.

Why collaborate with SickKids on a demonstration project?

Collaborating with SickKids, a health care community dedicated to improving the health of young people both in care and through innovative research, will allow your organization to benefit in a variety of areas. A collaboration would open up opportunities to:

- network with and have access to SickKids’ wide range of multi-disciplinary professionals – clinical and research
- involve funding resources
- engage in knowledge exchange via the dissemination of your project’s work and outcomes both nationally and internationally
- participate in professional development
- align your project and organization with SickKids’ respected and global branding
- increase your project’s ability to access further seed funding from other sources

Application Process, Deadline & Important Dates

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<thead>
<tr>
<th>Date</th>
<th>Event</th>
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<tr>
<td>August 4, 2015 (4:00pm EST)</td>
<td>Applicants must electronically submit a completed application form by August 4, 2015. Late submissions will not be considered. Online application form can be found at: <a href="http://www.sickkids.ca/mpademoproject">www.sickkids.ca/mpademoproject</a></td>
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<td>August 28, 2015</td>
<td>Applicants will be notified by e-mail about the status of their application. Please note: no pre-determined number of applications will be short-listed.</td>
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<tr>
<td>October 16, 2015 (8:00am – 4:00pm)</td>
<td>Shortlisted applicants will have the opportunity to present their proposals to the MPA Adjudication Committee. Maximum 15 minutes per presentation. Please note: no alternate date will be given for proposal presentations. If you are unable to attend, and are unable to send a delegate on your behalf, your project will not be considered as an MPA Demonstration Project.</td>
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<tr>
<td>October 23, 2015</td>
<td>MPA demonstration project partnerships will be announced.</td>
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Questions? Please contact Cassandra Di Clemente, SickKids Medical Psychiatry Alliance Coordinator, at Cassandra.DiClemente@sickkids.ca