

Mental Health in Motion sets \$275,000 fundraising goal for local programs



By Brock Weir

The local chapter of the Canadian Mental Health Association will mark its first century in our community by lacing up and pumping up the bike tires for Mental Health in Motion.

A Ride, Run, or Walk for Mental Health, the Mental Health in Motion event will take place this Sunday, June 23, at Newmarket's Upper Canada Mall.

Organizers have set a fundraising goal of \$275,000 which will stay in this community, directly benefiting mental health programs across York Region and South Simcoe, including MOBYSS, the Mobile York South Simcoe mobile health clinic for youth between the ages of 12 and 25.

Formerly the 'Ride Don't Hide' fundraiser, the Canadian Mental Health Association (CMHA) has rebranded and rejigged the event for maximum inclusivity.

'This is our seventh annual event,' says Nigel Evans of the CMHA. 'We have been growing this event exponentially year over year and last year [the organization] decided they wanted a message that was all-encompassing for mental health. This is more than just a ride and we changed it around to encompass a run/walk for 5K to get more family involvement. Not everyone has a bike, but everyone is willing to walk or run.'

While the Ride, Don't Hide name was chosen to underscore the ongoing fight to battle stigma around mental health issues, organizers say this is still the focus and the rebrand helps them engage and deliver their message on a whole new level.

?We're not being coy about it,? says Catherine Matzig of the CHMA. ?It's right there in your face in the title of the event, and it is as open as possible. This is a great day for all ages and all athletic abilities. You don't have to be an athlete or have any kind of specialized equipment in order to participate and be a part of the day.?

The day itself has a mission to promote mental health awareness and raise funds for local services designed to improve mental health and addictions care in South Simcoe and York Region. They aim to engage and encourage public awareness around participants' own mental health by being physically active and enjoy quality time with friends and family in a community setting, along with increasing the profile of the CMHA in both communities.

Registration will begin at Upper Canada Mall at 6.30 a.m., along with breakfast and fresh coffee being made available for the early birds. Warm-ups for the 100 km ride will begin at 7.15 a.m. for a 7.30 a.m. departure. Participants in the 60 km ride will begin warming up at 8.15 a.m. for 8.30, with the 20 km ride participants warming up 10 minutes before their 10.10 a.m. start and the 5 km riders holding back until their 10.25 takeoff.

The 5 km run/walk will get underway at 10.35 a.m. after a 10.30 a.m. warmup.

Live entertainment will run from 11 a.m. to 1 p.m. and will feature Juno-nominated singer Tyler Shaw.

?This is a great thing to do with your family or a group,? says Ms. Matzig. ?It is an opportunity to meet lots of new people who live in this community and are interested in activities that grow and boost community involvement. We will have lots of health information and community information there as well. It is just a great way to spend a Sunday morning.?

For more information on how to get involved with Mental Health in Motion ? including registration information and how to donate to individuals or teams, visit cmhainmotion.ca.