

The Metabolic Health Monitor at CAMH (2009)

The Metabolic Health Monitor (MHM) is one example of the Centre for Addiction and Mental Health's (CAMH) commitment to health promoting services and care at the clinical level. The MHM is a groundbreaking electronic tool used across CAMH that tracks potential metabolic health risks for clients with serious and persistent mental illness. Clients who have serious and persistent mental illness are at an increased risk for metabolic problems like diabetes, hypertension, heart disease and cholesterol due to the effects of antipsychotic medications, high rates of substance use, and issues relating to healthy eating and physical activity. The MHM assesses risk factors such as obesity, high blood pressure, and high glucose and creates opportunities for clients along with clinicians to establish strategies to reduce risks.

Applying the MHM is a team activity that involves primary care physicians, nurses, pharmacists and case managers who input client data into the program. The data required for the MHM includes a client's medical history, family history, medications, laboratory results and body measurements. The MHM then processes this information to create a profile. The profile identifies specific risks to each client which then allows the interprofessional team to develop health promotion interventions to mediate or reduce the risk of metabolic health problems. For example, interventions might include strategies to encourage healthy eating and increases in physical activity. At CAMH all clients identified as receiving second generation psychotropic medications are assessed by the MHM initially and then afterwards on an on-going annual basis.

Two years since its implementation, the MHM has seen successes and health care providers across Canada are requesting access to its use. At CAMH, 1300 tools have been completed, helping to identify numerous clients who are pre-diabetic. At the same time, the MHM considers the mental health treatment needs of clients in the broader context of their overall health. According to Elizabeth Budd, Registered Nurse at CAMH, "The MHM is an excellent example of integrating physical care and mental care". Ultimately, recognizing the holistic nature of health issues is essential when delivering care within a health-promoting health services framework. In this way, the MHM stands out as evidence of a more holistic view of health care provision at CAMH.