**Neighbourhood Effects on Health and Well-being (NEHW)**

**Background:**
It is estimated that at least one in five Canadian adults experience a mental illness. A high proportion of people who have a mental illness suffer multiple disorders and have serious deficits in lifetime achievement and functioning. Mental disorders are among the costliest health conditions to Canada.

A large body of literature now firmly establishes that urban neighbourhoods affect physical and mental health. Most of this research, however, has been conducted outside of Canada. High-quality research is needed to inform Canadian programs and policies to improve residential environments that impact mental well-being.

**Study Goals:**
To better understand:
- The individual and neighbourhood factors that affect people’s health and well-being, both at the individual and contextual level.
- Why some people choose to access mental health resources close to their neighbourhoods, while others do not.
- Whether the use of mental health resources is the same across neighbourhoods, and across various social groups (e.g. men, women, minorities, immigrants).

**Methods:**
The CRICH Survey Research Unit is implementing a cross-sectional survey, interviewing 3000 adults across 100 random Toronto neighbourhoods. We are also using the latest research tools in neighbourhood studies, such as the systematic social observation (SSO) of block faces, to comprehensively characterize communities. The use of multi-level modeling will allow us to investigate not only the main effects of neighbourhood factors on mental health status, but also the effects of cross-level interactions.

**For More Information:**
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**Overview:**
This study will combine large-scale survey data with structured observation to describe neighbourhood factors that promote - or diminish - mental health.

Our goal is to produce evidence that can inform neighbourhood-level interventions to improve mental health and well-being.

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**Funders:**
- Canadian Institutes of Health Research
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**Research Partners:**
- Institute for Clinical Evaluative Sciences
- Centre for Addiction and Mental Health Foundation
- Department of Sociology, University of Toronto