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CASA Mental Health plans youth treatment facility in Fort McMurray

October 16, 2025 – CASA Mental Health is steps closer to breaking ground on a new youth mental health care facility in Fort McMurray.

CASA is an independent and accredited non-profit Alberta provider of mental health treatment for kids age three to 18 and their families. The new mental health care facility – CASA House – will be located in the south end of Fort McMurray, between Quarry Ridge Road and Highway 63. CASA House will provide much-needed services, close to home, for about 80 youth patients and their families each year through an adolescent day treatment program and more intensive live-in care.

“Alberta is seeing an increasing severity and need for mental health services closer to home for patients and families,” says CASA Chief Executive Officer Bonnie Blakley. “Fort McMurray families in particular have experienced ongoing trauma from wildfires, and stress and isolation from the COVID-19 pandemic. With intergenerational trauma and stress from economic cycles tied to local industries, increasing access to timely youth mental health services is more important than ever.”

“Alberta’s government is making significant investments into mental health services for young people and their families,” says Rick Wilson, Minister of Mental Health and Addiction, Government of Alberta. “A new CASA House in Fort McMurray will help Albertans in the area access these important services closer to home.”

Mental illnesses commonly treated at CASA include depression, anxiety, attention deficit hyperactivity disorder (ADHD) and bipolar disorder. CASA House will serve up to 57 live-in patients and 24 Adolescent Day Program (ADP) patients each year, plus their family members/caregivers. Both programs combine medical and therapeutic treatment from a multidisciplinary team of trauma-informed professionals. Teens stay at CASA House for an average of four months for support with significant mental health challenges. Youth attend ADP daily during the school year to improve social and learning skills for serious mental health challenges.

“CASA is meeting the need for more mental health services through programs that treat mental illness in what we call ‘the missing middle’ of the mental health care system,” adds Blakley, “meaning more services than what are available at home or in primary care, but not as acute as in hospital wards or emergency rooms. Albertans in the north absolutely need better access closer to home, and that’s why CASA is expanding its circle of care across the province, including Fort McMurray.”

CASA Mental Health secured land in Fort McMurray earlier in 2025 and completed initial design on a 3,240 square metre (34,875 square foot) facility, which is set to start construction in spring 2026 and open in fall 2027. Clark Builders was awarded the contract to lead CASA’s capital expansion project.

“This project represents the next chapter in a partnership that began nearly a decade ago with the CASA Centre in Edmonton, and we’re proud to help bring CASA’s vision to life once again—this time in Fort McMurray,” says Steve Lenarduzzi, President, Clark Builders. “Collaboration is a value we



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share with CASA and the Fort McMurray construction community, and it's reflected in our Integrated Project Delivery approach. For us, construction is more than building structures, it's about enriching lives and strengthening communities. We look forward to seeing how these new centres will create brighter futures for young people and families who need these supports the most."

CASA will open three new CASA House facilities across the province over the next four years, as well as a new Edmonton-area building. The Government of Alberta has generously committed \$75 million toward these facilities, and CASA will seek donor and community support to fundraise the remaining amount. Once all CASA House programs are fully operational, they will be able to serve 324 more severely complex youth per year.

CASA House will employ about 40 staff members in Fort McMurray, plus a multidisciplinary team available across programs. The team will include mental health therapists, behaviour specialists, psychiatrists, therapy support navigators, nurses and many other professions and support staff who provide wraparound services for families.

CASA Mental Health has been serving the community since 1988, founded *by families for families*. CASA Mental Health is expanding its circle of care around the province to provide much needed mental health services to as many families as possible – where they need it, when they need it. This is part of our vision of a community where all children, youth and their families are provided with timely mental health care and empowered to thrive. Please visit casamentalhealth.org to learn more about CASA Mental Health and how we're expanding much-needed mental health care services across Alberta.

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