



加拿大華人專業人員聯會 (安大略省)
The Federation of Chinese Canadian Professionals (Ontario)



EDUCATION FOUNDATION 加華專業聯會教育基金
THE FEDERATION OF CHINESE CANADIAN PROFESSIONALS (ONTARIO)
1108-45 CARLTON STREET, TORONTO, ON, CANADA M5B 2H9

August 4, 2025

Dr. Kevin Smith Sent by email to: Kevin.Smith@uhn.ca
President & CEO
University Health Network
200 Elizabeth Street
Toronto, ON M5G 2C4

Dear Dr. Smith:

Re: Request for Reconsideration of Closure of Asian Initiative in Mental Health (AIM)

We write on behalf of the Federation of Chinese Canadian Professionals (Ontario) ("FCCP") and our charitable foundation, The FCCP Education Foundation (Ontario) to urge a reconsideration of UHN's recent decision to close the Asian Initiative in Mental Health (AIM).

AIM is a very successful, needs-based, program that made consequential mental health care accessible to thousands of patients through language and culturally-sensitive accommodation. It is beyond comprehension how AIM would be closed given its compassionate modality which achieved the oft-touted goals of health equity in a cost-effective manner. It is not only a disheartening message to the Chinese Canadian community but also to other racialized groups who continue to face barriers to receiving mental health care because of language and cultural challenges.

The sudden dismantling of AIM—a program with over two decades of history, recognized for its excellence in community-based psychiatry, public education, and cultural psychiatry training—undermines that trust. The Chinese Canadian population in the Greater Toronto Area exceeds 680,000, yet research has consistently shown that this group reports the lowest levels of mental health service use and weakest sense of belonging in Canada. This is not because Asian Canadians do not need suffer from mental illness--- of course not. The barriers to seeking treatment and obtaining treatment for our members are significantly based on language and stigma. Mental health under-diagnosis and under-treatment leads to heavy burdens placed upon the community, family members and social services. AIM provides a safe and familiar

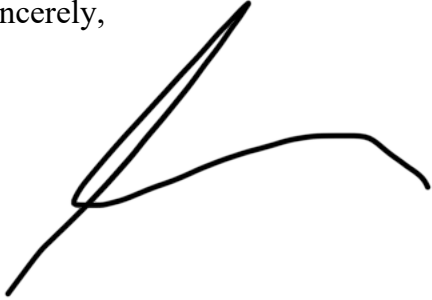
place for clients and their families to access for mental health supports, diagnosis and treatment. These are clients who might never, otherwise, seek or receive care.

Moreover, the closure of AIM comes at a time when diversity, equity, and inclusion efforts are being challenged and dismantled across North America. It sends a troubling message that culturally specific programs are expendable when systems seek to “standardize” care. As professionals who have long worked to address inequities within our own disciplines, we also know how rare and precious programs like AIM are in breaking through systemic barriers—what many refer to as the “bamboo ceiling”—that continue to limit representation and leadership opportunities for Asian Canadians in healthcare and academia. The elimination of a program like AIM not only disrupts clinical services but also erases a critical pathway for supporting culturally-competent practitioners and future leaders.

Founded in 1975, the FCCP comprises professionals across medicine, dentistry, biomedical sciences, physiotherapy, law, engineering, and other fields, united in our mission to promote excellence, inclusion, and community advancement. We have long advocated for the development of systems that reflect the diversity of our society—not only at the front lines, but also in leadership and decision-making. Our charitable arm, the FCCP Education Foundation, provides scholarships to students of all backgrounds at post-secondary institutions across Ontario, including the University of Toronto, reflecting our belief in the transformative power of equitable opportunity. Our members understand that culturally-competent care is not an optional enhancement to clinical services, but a fundamental requirement for effectiveness, dignity, and trust.

We urge UHN to take this moment as an opportunity for principled leadership. We respectfully call on you to work with community and professional stakeholders to restore AIM and to invest in a sustainable model of culturally grounded mental health care. We also encourage UHN to reaffirm its commitment to equity and inclusion—not only through policy, but through meaningful action that includes protecting essential cultural programs, diversifying leadership, and listening to the communities most affected by systemic barriers. FCCP (Ontario) stands ready to support this work and would welcome a dialogue with your team to discuss how we can contribute to a shared vision for an inclusive, community-responsive health system.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, consisting of a large, stylized 'S' followed by a horizontal stroke that curves upwards at the end.

Sue Chen, Barrister and Solicitor
President
[Federation of Chinese Canadian Professionals \(Ontario\)](#)
email: sue@suechen.com

A handwritten signature in blue ink, featuring a stylized 'R' followed by a series of loops and a final horizontal stroke.

Roslyn M. Tsao, Barrister & Solicitor
President
[FCCP Education Foundation \(Ontario\)](#)
email: rtsao@epsteincole.com

cc: [Ms. Grace Ivo](#), UHN

[Dr. Lisa Robinson](#), Dean, Temerty Faculty of Medicine, University of Toronto

[Dr. Lisa Richardson](#), Associate Dean, Inclusion and Diversity, Temerty Faculty of Medicine, University of Toronto

[Dr. Melanie A. Woodin](#), President, University of Toronto