

October 21, 2025

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

RE: Concern about dissolution of the Asian Initiative in Mental Health (AIM)

Dear Dr. Smith,

I am writing to express my grave concern for the closure of the Asian Initiative in Mental Health, a well-established service in Toronto. This clinic has provided culturally safe services to countless patients for many years. To absorb these services into a larger matrix is to dilute the culturally nuanced care that is necessary and desirable within the Canadian diaspora.

Several models of culturally competent care have been tested worldwide, demonstrating the need for both broad cultural sensitivity as well as culture-specific services. The latter has been a successful model in areas where there are larger concentrations of specific communities. Such clinics also provide invaluable opportunities for training psychiatry residents and other learners to provide culturally appropriate consultations. Such skills are difficult to achieve in general psychiatric settings.

AIM has been a community driven, institution-supported Centre of Excellence that many experts worldwide look to as a role model of providing efficient and effective psychiatric services. Its work is rooted in evidence-based healthcare that brings together academic rigour and stakeholder engagement. Indeed, AIM is a program that our patients and their families - our taxpayers - value.

I hope that you will continue to demonstrate national and international leadership in mental health by reinstating AIM as a vital part of the mental health care landscape.

Sincerely,



Azaad Kassam MD FRCPC
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