



**Alternate  
Inpatient  
Milieu  
(AIM)**

**Mood and  
Anxiety  
Program**

**Information for clients**



Centre for Addiction and Mental Health  
Centre de toxicomanie et de santé mentale



The Centre for Addiction and Mental Health (CAMH) provides what we term an “Alternate Inpatient Milieu” (AIM) for the effective treatment and recovery of clients from the mood and anxiety community. Recovery is easier when there is an environment of mutual respect and dignity. To ensure the environment is therapeutic, we have established this Code of Conduct to give clear expectations for your behaviour in this milieu.

“In my experience with health care, both public and private, in and outside of Canada, I would have to rate my experience in the AIM program at CAMH as the single most positive. This is due to the most educated and sympathetic staff that has provided me with a new outlook. AIM staff have not only saved my life, but they have also given me back hope and joy and set a positive example which I will forever treasure.”

— a client

**The information booklet consists of five parts:**

- client safety
- expectations for clients
- group norms
- guidelines regarding boundaries
- grounds for discharge.

## Client safety

In AIM, we focus on providing a safe therapeutic environment for both clients and staff. This requires that everyone participate in maintaining a safe environment and that staff are alert to any issues that could compromise clients’ safety. Confidentiality will be maintained at all times.

Please tell the staff if you notice:

- any client engaging in unsafe behaviours
- any client who seems to be getting agitated or upset
- any damage to the unit or CAMH property
- any street drugs or alcohol on the premises
- anyone taking photographs on the premises
- anyone engaging in bullying or harassing behaviours
- anyone trying to solicit you for money
- anyone using racist, sexist or homophobic language
- anyone in possession of weapons.

## Expectations for clients

Please follow these guidelines to create a safe and comfortable environment for all clients, staff and volunteers at CAMH.

*To ensure a co-operative atmosphere where people are regarded with respect, we expect you to:*

- be courteous to and considerate of others
- refrain from using foul or abusive language or gestures.

*To ensure that the program runs smoothly and efficiently and that you have the best possible experience, we expect you to:*

- attend the program sessions on time and stay for the entire session
- respect the confidentiality and privacy of others
- delay telephone calls and personal appointments until after program hours
- refrain from getting romantically or sexually involved with other participants
- participate in community meetings on Mondays from 1:30 to 2:30 p.m. in the 3rd floor lounge area
- attend all meals in the dining room (unless leaving the site)

- be on your floor preparing for sleep by 9:30 p.m., Sunday through Thursday, and by 11:30 p.m., Friday and Saturday
- keep the volume down when you're listening to the radio or watching television
- ensure that televisions, computers and personal cell phones are off by 11:00 p.m. daily
- keep voices at a conversational level.

*To assist staff in performing their duties, we expect you to:*

- wear your client identification wristband at all times
- keep your room tidy so it can be cleaned and vacuumed
- sign out for the day or for weekend leaves, including leaving your swipe card and lockbox key with staff
- arrive on time for prescribed medication.

## NIGHT CHECKS

AIM recognizes the importance of sleep for people's physical, psychological and spiritual health—and healing. Because hourly nightly patient checks can disrupt important restorative REM sleep, we try to limit hourly checks to the first three days of a client's stay, once the client has established a therapeutic relationship with the care team and it feels safe to do so. After this time, clients are observed only twice (at 11:30 p.m. and 7:00 a.m.), which is at the beginning and end of the night shift.

If nursing staff have concerns about a client's safety, they have the right to continue nightly checks beyond the prescribed three days. Similarly, if clients want nightly checks to continue beyond the three days, or to be restarted, they should speak directly with their care team so we can work together to address their concerns. Client safety is always our priority.

Night checks involve nursing staff entering client rooms. Before coming in, staff will knock twice, and wait for a few seconds to hear a verbal response from the client, indicating that he or she is aware that staff will be entering the room. If the client does not respond in those few seconds, staff will enter.

They will avoid turning the light on and instead use a flashlight or pen with a light to check on clients. AIM understands that clients may have a history of trauma. If you do, please discuss any concerns you have with the nursing staff so we can be sensitive to ways to make your stay more comfortable.

## SMOKING

**CAMH is a smoke-free environment.** People who choose to smoke may do so outside in the designated smoking areas (the Paul Garfinkel Park and the Shaw Street Smoking Hub). Clients can leave the building for a cigarette until 10:45 p.m. Nicotine replacement therapy is available from staff if you wish to reduce or stop smoking.



## CONFIDENTIALITY

Please respect the confidentiality of other clients. Do not repeat other clients' stories; and avoid gossiping and discussing other peoples' issues. If you receive information that compromises client or community safety, please discuss with staff.

Like clients, staff are required to maintain clients' confidentiality. If they discuss a client's recovery, this will be part of the team's case planning. The following are exceptions to confidentiality—times when staff are legally required to report information:

- If there is a concern about the safety of a child (neglect or abuse), staff are legally obligated to report this information to a child welfare agency.
- If a client's chart is subpoenaed by a court of law, we must release the document to the party requesting it.
- If there is a concern about safety to self or others (suicidality or homicidality), staff may refer the client to a psychiatrist to be assessed for safety.
- If the client reports having been sexually abused by a regulated health professional and provides the counsellor with the name of that professional, the counsellor must report this information to the relevant authorities.

## VISITOR POLICY

All visitors are permitted **during visiting hours only, between 9:00 a.m. and 9:00 p.m. daily**. When you are expecting visitors, you must inform staff who may visit during your stay. When visitors are here, you may only visit in common areas or outside on the grounds, not in your room.

All clients who wish to have visitors must provide staff with the name of the guest and the estimated time when their guest will arrive. *Clients are expected to meet visitors at the front entrance of 30 White Squirrel Way*. When guests arrive, they need to sign in, in the visitors' book adjacent to the elevator. Visitors who drop in without notice will not be given any information about whether the client is in treatment.

Clients should be with their guest(s) at all times and are responsible for them. Children must be supervised by an adult and be within sight of their guardian at all times. Visitors must sign out upon departure. Staff will ensure no visitors are left in the building after 9:00 p.m. daily. To assist staff with this process, please remind your guests that visiting hours finish at 9:00 p.m. daily. *Signing in and out, and leaving by 9:00 p.m., are rules that apply to all visitors, whether they are visiting with day clients or outpatients, or are former clients.*

AIM is committed to maintaining the confidentiality of everyone at the facility. It is the responsibility of visitors not to reveal to anyone, except AIM staff, any information about others in the facility.

Staff may reserve the right not to permit visitors on the premises based on safety concerns for clients, staff, volunteers or other visitors of AIM.

## Group norms

AIM groups revolve around a four-week cycle to coincide with clients' 28-day stay. At the start of your stay, you will receive a group schedule and group handouts. You will also be given a calendar of events listing leisure and educational activities and

outings, so you can sign up for these in advance. This calendar is also posted in the 3rd floor community lounge and in the main AIM group room in Unit 1 (Day Treatment Area).

- Don't discuss anything that happens in the group outside of the group.
- Respect the confidentiality and privacy of others.
- Keep a non-judgmental attitude.
- Avoid talking while someone else is speaking.
- Avoid interrupting others.
- Be patient.
- Listen to others.
- Turn off cell phones and other electronic devices.
- Be on time.
- Enter and exit quietly. We understand that people may need to leave the room as part of self-care, but this must be done discretely and respectfully of those remaining.

## Guidelines regarding boundaries

It is important that we create a safe and comfortable environment for all staff, clients and volunteers at CAMH. To ensure this, we have established guidelines that outline ways we can respect our own and other people's boundaries around physical touch and affection.

AIM provides clients an opportunity to develop a better understanding of themselves, and work on boundaries as part of their recovery process. Many clients will never have had an opportunity to develop and assert boundaries before.

Often, when people come for treatment, and as they get to know one another, it can feel natural to want to offer each other a friendly hug or a social kiss in greeting. But these kinds of gestures can be misconstrued by the person receiving the gesture, as in the following examples:

- Some clients have had difficult experiences with touch and may perceive your touch as a threat.

- Some clients may perceive a friendly hug or kiss as romantic or sexual.
- Not all clients may feel comfortable or assertive enough to refuse or stop your well-meaning touch, even if you ask in advance.
- People come to CAMH from a variety of cultures and backgrounds and have varying norms and expectations regarding physical touch and greeting one another. These cultural norms may make physical touch acceptable or unacceptable.
- Giving massages to another client is considered unacceptable touch as it is one kind of behaviour that can easily lead to unhealthy crossing of boundaries or to serious misinterpretation.

Given this, we expect that you will exercise caution when interacting with others.

- Take your time to get to know people, so you can understand their limits and boundaries around physical touch.
- Respect others' limits regarding physical touch and personal space.
- Ask for permission before hugging someone.

Because boundaries can be confusing, there may be times when a staff member may approach you to discuss a situation of concern, or to resolve a misunderstanding.

Feel free to openly discuss any concerns or questions you have about boundaries and physical touch in your group or with your therapist.

## Grounds for discharge

The following behaviours may result in immediate discharge:

- 1) any use of mood altering substances not prescribed or approved by CAMH staff
- 2) possession of alcohol or other drugs on CAMH property
- 3) trafficking or any activity associated with dealing in illegal substances
- 4) offering prescribed medication to other clients

- 5) failure to provide a supervised urine sample, when required, within two hours of a request
- 6) physical violence or threats of violence to other clients or to staff
- 7) harassment or threatening sexual aggression
- 8) verbal abuse: racist, sexist, homophobic language or behaviour
- 9) trespassing in others' rooms or stealing their things
- 10) behaviour that compromises fire safety, including:
  - tampering with fire or smoke alarms or another emergency system
  - smoking in the building
  - lighting fires
- 11) possession of weapons of any type on CAMH property
- 12) viewing or downloading pornography on any CAMH computer.

## What you can expect from us

- Staff will treat clients with consideration, respect, dignity and compassion.
- Staff are committed to providing client-centred, holistic and culturally competent care to our diverse client community.
- Staff will offer understanding and support and display patience as clients work toward recovery.
- Staff will commit to meeting clients regularly and be reasonably accessible to them.
- Staff are committed to open communication and problem solving that includes the client's perspective as well as team considerations.
- Clients have the right to ask about and be informed of their medical diagnosis, treatment options, risks and prognosis. Staff will impart this information in terms and language that clients can understand.
- Staff recognize that clients have the right to self-determination and to participate in planning their health care.
- Clients have the right to expect that all communications and records regarding their care will be treated as confidential, and they have a right

to be informed of exceptions to this (see section on confidentiality).

- Clients have the right to make a complaint through channels provided for this purpose by the hospital and/or program, and to have any complaint dealt with promptly and fairly.





**Alternate Inpatient Milieu (AIM)**

**Mood and Anxiety Program**

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