

CASE STUDY

Canadian
Mental Health
Association
(Durham)



How Ricoh helped the CMHA Durham's Recovery College Wellness Centre break down barriers between adult educators and students using remote-ready whiteboards.



Canadian Mental
Health Association
Durham
Mental health for all

Association canadienne
pour la santé mentale
Durham
La santé mentale pour tous

CMHA Durham launched the Recovery College Wellness Centre and wanted to build excitement around the new program. They brought in Ricoh interactive whiteboards to make their classrooms more engaging and eliminate the tech headaches that took time away from learning.

About the customer

The Canadian Mental Health Association (CMHA) Durham is an integrated community mental health and primary care hub that has provided services to the Durham Region in Ontario for over 60 years. The new Recovery College Wellness Centre gives individuals the tools and skills to manage their mental health through a series of classes where students interact with their peers through creative and innovative programs designed to meet their diverse mental health needs.



Challenges

- Raise the profile of CMHA's new Recovery College Wellness Centre
- Break down barriers between adult educators and students
- Make learning engaging and accessible
- Eliminate tech issues that forced instructors to take time away from students

“We wanted our community to see the new Recovery College Wellness Centre as a legitimate educational program. However, we didn't want to create an overly formal space that could discourage students from engaging and connecting as part of their recovery journey.”

- Tracey Hardinge

Performance Manager for Clinical Programs and Services, CMHA Durham

Before the Recovery College Wellness Centre, CMHA Durham had an unstructured program where students could drop in and engage with peers in an informal setting.

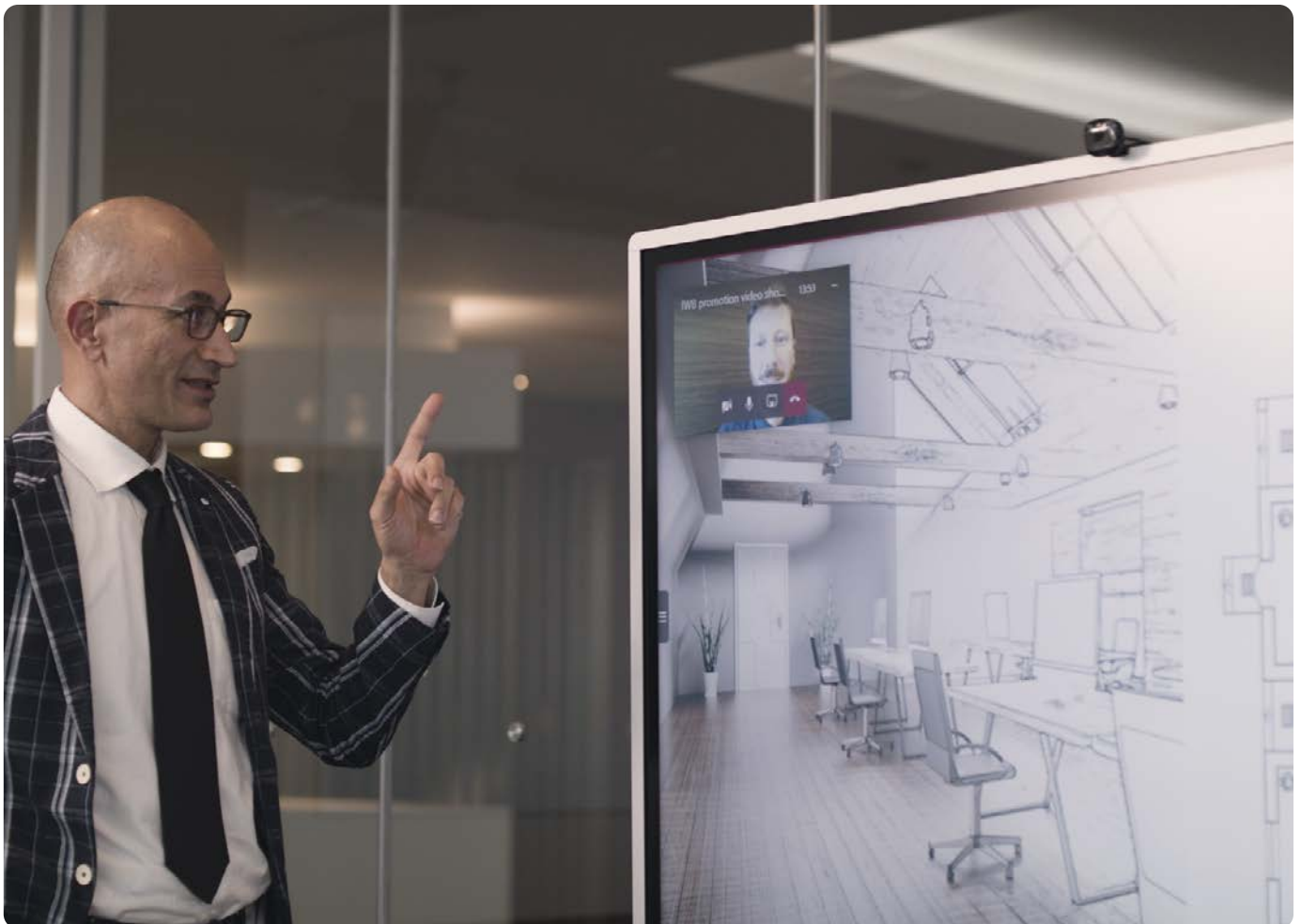
In early 2020, CHMA Durham launched a more structured program called the Recovery College Wellness Centre (RCWC). The program includes a series of mental health and wellness courses. Facilitators who have real-life experiences with mental health lead the classes and offer students a supportive environment where they can learn new skills.

To better serve students, CMHA reviewed every aspect of the RCWC—from its programming to its in-class technology.

Instructors had been projecting course materials onto regular television screens that they plugged into their laptops. But this setup posed challenges. Since the screens were mounted on walls, instructors couldn't rearrange classrooms to promote different learning models. Students had to face the screens at all times.

Setting up the technology also took time away from learning. When instructors connected speakers to the televisions, they never knew which device would carry the sound and often stopped class to troubleshoot issues. Meanwhile, students had trouble reading the small fonts on the screens.

The fixed displays, along with old-school blackboards, also made the classrooms feel formal. Many students were uncomfortable standing in front of everyone and sharing their stories, making it hard for the program to build a sense of community.





How we helped

- Provided two interactive whiteboards (or interactive flat panel displays - IFPDs) with Windows controllers and pen and eraser sets
- Offered tips and inspiration on how CMHA Durham could use the new display technology for engaging students
- Helped the RCWC get the technology set up quickly
- Improved CMHA Durham's sustainability, as classrooms no longer need paper for flipcharts

The RCWC wanted to replace the fixed TV screen with "giant tablets" that are easy to use and offer instructors greater flexibility.



"I had used interactive whiteboards at a previous job and thought they were a dream. I knew they could help us facilitate learning and break down barriers between students and staff."

- Candace Singh
Adult Educator, CMHA Durham

The RCWC team started looking for solutions and chose two interactive whiteboards from Ricoh. They felt that they would make teaching easier and learning more engaging.

Unlike the old televisions, instructors can use interactive whiteboards to access the internet and make classes interactive. Students and adult educators have the flexibility to draw on the screens, mark up documents live and print directly from the whiteboards. They can also move them around the room and entire building to support different activities and adaptive class configurations.



"Using an interactive whiteboard is like using a tablet, which makes the learning curve very short. We were up and running quickly and no longer need to spend tons of time at the beginning of class setting up technology."

- Marie Logan
Lead Adult Educator at the Recovery College,
CMHA Durham





Results

- CMHA built the Recovery College Wellness Centre's reputation in its community and has increased enrolment by 30%
- Students and instructors have a positive, interactive experience in class
- The classes foster a sense of community, as people enjoy collaborating using interactive whiteboards and are more engaged
- Instructors spend more time facilitating conversations and much less time setting up technology

This display technology has helped the RCWC achieve its goal of being seen as a valuable educational program, as they lend a credible feel to the classrooms. But, unlike the old setup, they make the classes seem less stuffy and formal.

Students are excited to use the new technology and love to engage with it during class. The interactive whiteboards have boosted class participation and encouraged students to share their stories with others.

Meanwhile, instructors are saving a lot of time. They don't need to get to class early or stay late to set up and take down technology. They just turn them and start engaging with students.

Other departments have learned about the success of the whiteboards and want to use them for their programs. While the RCWC team is delighted that they are so helpful, they'd also like to keep them a "hidden secret" so they're always available for the program's classes.



"The interactive whiteboards give students a positive learning experience. They also exponentially reduce our instructors' preparation time and make it much easier for them to communicate with students."

- Alec King
Communications Lead, CMHA Durham

Discover how Ricoh can make your educational spaces more interactive and engaging. [Contact us now.](#)

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