

## **Ontario Making Historic Investment in Mental Health Care**

*Largest Single Investment in Canadian History will Improve Access to Services for Mental Health and Addictions*

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Ontario is making an unprecedented investment in mental health and addictions that will improve care for the one in three people in Ontario who experience mental health or addictions challenges in their lifetime.

Today, Premier Kathleen Wynne visited the Centre for Addiction and Mental Health in Toronto to announce the biggest provincial investment in Canadian history in mental health and addictions services -- a four-year investment of \$2.1 billion that will reframe the system to deliver more accessible and better integrated care.

The investment will make it easier to access services through a local school, family doctor's office or community-based organization. This will mean:

- In 2018-19, more than 12,000 more young people will be able to access community-based services such as therapy and counselling, a number that will grow to about 46,000 by 2021-22
- Every secondary school in Ontario will have access to an additional mental health worker, with about 400 new positions being added within two years
- The province will create at least 15 additional youth wellness hubs over four years to improve access to services, fill critical service gaps for youth aged 12 to 25 and improve transitions to adult services
- Up to 350,000 more people with mild to moderate anxiety or depression across the province will have access to publicly funded structured psychotherapy, including cognitive behavioural therapy, closer to home in settings like their doctor's offices or a community organization
- The province will create 2,475 more supportive housing units over four years for those who require care in safe, affordable and appropriate housing
- Access to withdrawal management and residential and community treatment services for young people and adults living with addictions in Ontario will be expanded, including services in every community and support for more programs and services that are culturally appropriate
- The province will invest an additional \$570 million over the next four years so that young people can access the supports they need.

These historic investments will help reduce wait lists and make it easier for people to access the care they need when they need it. By 2021, people will also be able to quickly get a mental health and addictions screening, crisis counselling and referral services through whichever method they choose through a new help line -- online, by text or on the phone.

This historic investment in mental health and addictions care is part of the government's plan to support care, create opportunity and make life more affordable during this period of rapid economic change. The plan includes a higher minimum wage and better working conditions, free tuition for hundreds of thousands of students, easier access to affordable child care, and free prescription drugs for everyone under 25, and 65 or over, through the biggest expansion of medicare in a generation.

## **QUOTES**

" We know there can be no health without mental health. No one in Ontario should struggle to access mental health or addictions care for themselves or their loved ones. We are making a deliberate choice with this historic investment to shorten wait times and improve access to vital mental health and addictions care. We are working to ensure that whatever your age and wherever you live in our province, you'll have fast and easy access to care that's right for you."

- Kathleen Wynne  
Premier of Ontario

" Our government's historic investment in mental health and addictions takes a comprehensive approach, ensuring Ontarians are supported across their lifespan, no matter what their needs may be. This investment and clear strategy demonstrates our government's commitment to the mental wellness of Ontarians, recognizing that physical and mental wellness must go hand-in-hand for Ontarians to live their best lives."

- Dr. Helena Jaczek  
Minister of Health and Long-Term Care

" It is so important to make sure children and youth have access to quality mental health supports. These investments will provide more young people with the care they need when they need it and strengthen mental health supports across Ontario. This funding will have an immediate impact on young people's lives, and will set the stage for important and necessary long-term changes."

- Michael Coteau  
Minister of Children and Youth Services

" We know many young people in Ontario are facing serious mental health challenges in their daily lives. We must equip educators and students with the tools and resources they need to identify, recognize and access support for potential mental health and addictions issues so our young people can lead happy, healthy lives. This investment ensures that all students have access to the supports they need to succeed both inside and outside the classroom."

- Indira Naidoo-Harris

Minister of Education and Minister Responsible for Early Years and Child Care

## QUICK FACTS

- Ontario is committing an additional \$2.1 billion to mental health and addictions care over the next four years. Ontario has also increased annual operational funding for mental health and addictions care to \$3.8 billion. This brings the total investment in mental health and addictions services in Ontario to more than \$17 billion over four years.
- Nearly one in three people in Ontario will experience a mental health or addictions issue in their lifetime.
- A provincial help line will launch in 2021 and be available 24/7 — online, by text or by phone. It will offer same-day mental health and addictions screening and referrals to appropriate services, as well as immediate crisis counselling.
- Ontario will also invest in more services to help people avoid incarceration or becoming a repeat offender, including integrated programs for shelter-hostel outreach and funding for Mobile Crisis Rapid Response, which offer safe beds for people in crisis and teams with a police officer and mental health worker who respond together to calls involving mental health crises.
- Ontario intends to appoint a Special Advisor to provide recommendations on a proposed structure for a governance model for Ontario's improved mental health and addictions system.
- In 2017, Ontario announced it was investing more than \$222 million over the next three years to combat the opioid crisis, including expanding harm reduction services, hiring more front-line staff and improving access to addictions supports.
- The province's 10-year funding agreement with the federal government will help support these investments.

## LEARN MORE

- [Read the Final Report of Ontario's Mental Health and Addictions Leadership Advisory Council](#)
- [Find help for people experiencing problems with alcohol, drugs, mental health or gambling](#)
- [Patients First: Action Plan for Health Care](#)
- [Helping More Children and Youth Access Mental Health Services](#)

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