

NEWS

MCGUINTY GOVERNMENT FUNDS SUPPORTIVE HOUSING FOR HEALTHIER COMMUNITIES

July 13, 2009

The South East Local Health Integration Network (LHIN) is pleased to announce \$205,300 in funding to help support 16 supportive housing units to be located across the region to help people living with addictions increase stability and security in their lives and reduce pressure on hospital emergency rooms.

Ontario is providing \$16 million province-wide over three years to fund 1,000 supportive housing units for people with substance use issues. The program is targeted to help people who are homeless or at risk of homelessness and who may have one of the following characteristics:

- Repeat users of addictions treatment system;
- Complex addiction problems;
- A concurrent disorder.

This funding comes as Minister of Health and Long-Term Care David Caplan launches a discussion paper towards the development of a 10-year mental health and addictions strategy this week at his *Open Minds. Healthy Minds*. Summit in Toronto.

QUOTES

"I'm pleased this client-centred initiative is part of our commitment to improve mental health and addictions services in Ontario. Providing stable, safe and supportive housing not only improves the mental health and well-being of those who need the service, but also opens doors to healthier communities."

– David Caplan, Minister of Health and Long-Term Care

"We are proud of the innovative solution that is being developed by the addictions agencies across our LHIN. They are working well together on a strategy that will benefit some of our most vulnerable citizens," says Georgina Thompson, Chair, South East LHIN.

QUICK FACTS

- Ontario has approximately 8,500 supportive housing units for people with a serious mental illness.
- In 2006/07, 9,650 clients receiving addiction treatment stated 'no fixed address' when asked where they live.

LEARN MORE

Find out more about the health care services in your [LHIN](#).

Find out more about [addiction treatment services in Ontario](#).

Get more information on [Minister Caplan's Advisory Group on Mental Health and Addictions](#).

Supportive Housing for People with Substance Use Issues

July 13, 2009

Ontario is providing \$16 million over three years to fund 1,000 supportive housing units for people with substance use issues or concurrent disorders.

This client-centered supportive housing program includes services based on the “Housing First” model for a harm-reduction. This model provides supportive housing to homeless people with substance abuse issues, whether or not they are enrolled in treatment programs. The housing is integrated into the community so that clients can feel safe and secure in the housing environment.

The funding also provides for case managers who provide support on issues such as landlord-tenant relations, budgeting and crisis intervention.

Housing supports reduce homelessness and introduce stability into peoples' lives. Flexible and tailored to each client, it builds on existing links to other community supports, such as social assistance, affordable housing, and life skills and education /employment counselling.

Effective treatment for people with chronic substance use problems or concurrent disorders requires comprehensive, integrated and client-centred services, and stable housing:

- Most people who have substance use issues or concurrent disorders can be successfully housed if they are given the right supports when they want them (e.g. harm reduction approach);
- Most people with concurrent disorders will not accept an environment that is too restrictive or rigid and heavily controlled.

Minister's Advisory Group on Mental Health and Addictions

The Minister of Health and Long-Term Care has created the [Minister's Advisory Group on Mental Health and Addictions](#) made up of consumers, family members, health care providers and researchers from across the province. It includes a range of perspectives such as children and youth, Aboriginal peoples, seniors, women and adults in the workplace. Input from this group, the Select Committee and the Interministerial Committee will be used to develop a long-term strategy for mental health and addictions for the province.

Five working (theme) groups have been established to support the Advisory Group, including; system design, healthy communities, consumer partnerships, early identification and early intervention, and strengthening the workforce.

The Advisory Group recognizes that people with varied backgrounds, life experiences and expertise can make an important contribution to their work, and plan to engage stakeholders across the province.

Select Committee on Mental Health and Addictions

An all-party committee has been formed by the Ontario legislature to help develop ways to improve access to mental health and addictions services in the province.

[The Select Committee on Mental Health and Addictions](#) – with representatives from all three political parties – will work with consumers, health care providers, experts and other interested parties to determine the mental health and addictions needs that currently exist. The committee is expected to issue a report in 2010 that will:

- Determine the mental health and addictions needs of children and young adults, First Nations, Inuit and Métis peoples as well as seniors
- Explore innovative approaches to delivering services in the community
- Identify ways to leverage existing opportunities and initiatives within the current mental health and addictions system.