

Ontario Providing Faster Access to Mental Health Services for Thousands of People

Province Investing in More Psychotherapy, Supportive Housing and Services for Youth
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Ontario is providing faster access to mental health and addictions services across the province, with new investments that will ensure thousands more people can get the support they need when they need it.

Dr. Eric Hoskins, Minister of Health and Long-Term Care, was at Routes - Social Resource Centre today to announce that Ontario is supporting:

- More access to therapy to help thousands of people living with conditions like anxiety and depression learn strategies to improve their mental health and be more successful in their daily lives. Ontario is working with Health Quality Ontario and other stakeholders to develop a provincial structured psychotherapy program, while also supporting the expansion of structured psychotherapy offered through existing partners. Structured psychotherapy offers evidence-based therapies, such as cognitive behavioural therapy, to people online or in-person through individual or group sessions.
- Up to nine hubs where young people aged 12 to 25 can receive walk-in, one-stop access to mental health and addictions services, as well as other health, social and employment supports under one roof. These integrated youth service hubs help with early identification and intervention to prevent more serious issues from developing later in life. Funding will help expand and improve youth service hubs, while exploring the creation of up to five new sites across the province.
- Up to 1,150 additional supportive housing units across Ontario for people living with mental illness and addictions, especially those who are homeless or at risk of becoming homeless. These housing units would provide a secure and affordable place to live, as well as services such as counselling.

The province is working to transform the mental health and addictions system into one that is equitable, high-performing and recovery-oriented, where every person in Ontario can access consistent, high-quality services, no matter where they live. This includes ensuring mental illness is treated like any other chronic disease.

Expanding access to mental health and addictions services is part of the government's plan to build a better Ontario through its [Patients First: Action Plan for Health Care](#), which is providing

patients with faster access to the right care, better home and community care, the information they need to stay healthy and a health care system that's sustainable for generations to come.

QUOTES

" Ontario's plan to transform our mental health and addictions system will ensure that every person in Ontario who needs it will have access to high quality, evidence-based care that is accessible and equitable. By expanding effective mental health and addictions services, people living with mental illness and addiction will be able to access services in their community earlier, helping to address challenges before they become a crisis."

- Dr. Eric Hoskins

Minister of Health and Long-Term Care

" Our government continues to work to address gaps in the mental health system, and increasing the number of Integrated Youth Service Hubs is one example of how we're doing just that. These hubs are great resources for youth and their families, and will help improve outcomes for those most at risk."

- Michael Coteau

Minister of Children and Youth Services

" Ontario's Mental Health and Addictions Leadership Advisory Council has worked very hard over the past two years to provide our best advice to Minister Hoskins so we are very pleased to see his leadership on this important part of the health care system."

- Susan Pigott

Chair, Mental Health and Addictions Leadership Advisory Council

" Today's announcement is a welcome signal of the government's commitment to mental health and addiction. It's a great first step towards implementing the recommendations of the Mental Health and Addictions Leadership Advisory Council to address critical service gaps in the areas of supportive housing, psychotherapy and children and youth services. We're pleased that the Minister has listened to the Council, and we look forward to continuing to work with all levels of government so that we can make positive, substantive change for the people in Ontario struggling to access addiction and mental health services and supports."

- Gail Czukar

CEO, Addictions and Mental Health Ontario

" These investments in housing, psychotherapy and youth hubs indicate that the government has taken the advice of the Mental Health and Addictions Leadership Advisory Council, and prioritized its funding accordingly. We believe today's announcement is evidence of a

commitment to mental health and addictions funding, which will help us to better serve Ontarians who are in growing need of our services."

- Camille Quenneville

CEO, Canadian Mental Health Association, Ontario

" Today's investment is a significant step toward improving access to mental health care. Making life-saving therapies and supportive housing available to more Ontarians, and supporting youth with the right tools and programs will put us on the right path."

- Dr. Catherine Zahn

President and CEO, Centre for Addiction and Mental Health

QUICK FACTS

- Ontario is investing \$140 million over three years to support these initiatives, which will be followed by a sustained increase in funding of \$50 million annually. This investment is in addition to the \$3.7 billion that Ontario invested in mental health and addictions services in 2015-16.
- These measures respond to recommendations released by the provincial Mental Health and Addictions Leadership Advisory Council in its second annual report, [Moving Forward: Better Mental Health Means Better Health](#).
- Approximately 30 per cent of people in Ontario will experience a mental health and/or substance abuse challenge at some point in their lifetime.
- With this new investment, the Ministry of Health and Long-Term Care will provide almost 17,000 units of supportive housing for people living with mental illness or addictions, and other vulnerable people.
- This investment is part of a [cross-government effort](#) to support people living with mental illness and addictions as well as their caregivers, which includes recent initiatives such as [making the corrections systems more responsive to mental health and addictions](#) and improving access to [local mental health services for children and youth](#).
- Ontario's Mental Health and Addictions Leadership Advisory Council was formed in 2014 and consists of representatives from diverse sectors, including mental health and addictions experts and people with lived experience.

LEARN MORE

- [Patients First: Action Plan for Health Care](#)
- The [next phase](#) of [Open Minds, Healthy Minds: Ontario's Comprehensive Mental Health and Addictions Strategy](#)
- [Find help for people experiencing problems with alcohol, drugs, mental health or gambling](#)

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