



Children's Mental Health Ontario
Santé mentale pour enfants Ontario

2016 REPORT CARD: CHILD & YOUTH MENTAL HEALTH

PROMOTING A SEAMLESS,
COORDINATED SYSTEM OF CARE
THAT PUTS CHILDREN, YOUTH
AND FAMILIES FIRST

SINCE 2006-07, THERE HAS BEEN A
54% INCREASE
IN EMERGENCY
DEPARTMENT VISITS
AND A **60% INCREASE**
IN HOSPITALIZATIONS
FOR CHILDREN & YOUTH SEEKING TREATMENT
FOR MENTAL HEALTH ISSUES IN ONTARIO.



THIS YEAR ALONE,
WE COULD PREVENT UP TO
40,000
CHILDREN & YOUTH
FROM SEEKING
TREATMENT
IN HOSPITALS
THROUGH STRATEGIC INVESTMENTS
IN EFFECTIVE COMMUNITY-BASED
MENTAL HEALTH TREATMENT.



**THIS WILL SAVE THE ONTARIO
GOVERNMENT \$145 MILLION THIS YEAR.**





ACHIEVEMENTS



NEEDS IMPROVEMENT

ACCESS

- ✓ Government spends \$6M to hire 80 more youth mental health workers
- ✓ Stigma continues to decline; more children are seeking treatment



- ✗ Demand for treatment increases by 10% per year as mental health stigma falls
- ✗ Community services cannot keep up with rising demand and inadequate funding
- ✗ Wait lists for treatment in the community continue to grow – over 6,500 children and youth are waiting over a year for treatment
- ✗ Youth's mental state likely to deteriorate while they wait, causing hospital visits to skyrocket



SYSTEM COORDINATION

- ✓ Mental Health and Addictions Leadership Advisory Council releases *Better Mental Health Means Better Health* which highlights opportunities to strengthen our system
- ✓ The government's *Moving on Mental Health* strategy enters its 4th year – more Lead Agencies are identified and Community Mental Health Plans are developed



- ✗ Lack of coordination of treatment – family physicians, child psychiatrists, hospitals, schools, children's mental health centres don't plan, design or work seamlessly together as one big system
- ✗ Lack of clear pathways and programs for youth transitioning from child and youth system to adult system

QUALITY

- ✓ Accreditation in community agencies continues to help identify current strengths and areas that need improvement

- ✗ Quality improvement efforts happen only in individual agencies; there is no comprehensive provincial plan for quality improvement

ACCOUNTABILITY

- ✓ Government provides \$2 million to Indigenous organizations to fund the collection of feedback and recommendations on mental health issues facing Indigenous peoples
- ✓ Government identifies and collects 13 "Key Performance Indicators" to measure how well agencies and the system are doing their jobs



- ✗ At the service level, clinicians are not able to access provincial data and benchmarks to assess and improve performance
- ✗ At the system level, there is a lack of performance measures and provincial benchmarks focussed on consistency, equity and quality
- ✗ Youth and families need to be involved in developing measures to assess whether the system is working



REQUIRED ACTION

6,500+
children & youth
are waiting over
a year



! A \$65 million investment in community-based children's mental health centres will reduce wait times and ensure that kids receive timely access to the treatment they need
This investment will save the province up to \$145 million in hospital costs



“ Youth are waiting for life saving treatment. We see the statistics and talk about how tragic they are. **Youth are sick of waiting.**”

– Travis, youth from Amherstview

“ The number of adolescents accessing our emergency room for psychiatric help has skyrocketed in the past few years. In large part this reflects **a limited access to community resources**: this is a direct result of lack of understanding by families and health care providers of what is out there, **long wait lists** and, frankly, lack of services in common and disabling conditions.”

– Dr. Anthony Levitt, Chief, Brain Sciences Program, Sunnybrook Health Sciences Centre

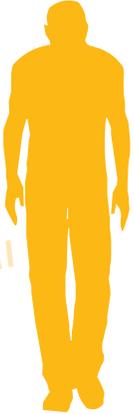
“ There are lots of really great services but **sometimes people just don't know about them**. An ideal system is one where people actually know about the services.”

– Travis, youth from Amherstview

“ Ontario **lacks a seamless system of mental health and addictions services and supports**. Individuals and their loved ones face a confusing and unconnected collection of programs spread out across different provider groups and settings.”

– **Better Mental Health Means Better Health**, 2015 Annual Report of Ontario's Mental Health & Addictions Leadership Advisory Committee

! Develop consensus around a vision of one big system by engaging youth, families and service providers across the children's mental health system including, physicians, hospitals, children's mental health treatment centres, addiction specialists and schools



! Development of a comprehensive provincial quality plan to work toward ongoing system improvement

! Fund a program in partnership with Health Quality Ontario to strengthen the sector's ability to improve service and system quality

“ Ensuring that children and youth in Ontario have access to high-quality mental health care and services (no matter where they live), requires **evidence-based measurement and reporting on how well the system is performing**. This type of routine performance reporting helps identify and drive needed improvements at the service and system levels.”

– Dr. Joshua Tepper, President and CEO, Health Quality Ontario

! Build a system level accountability plan and support tools to ensure that the system is always responsive, effective and high quality

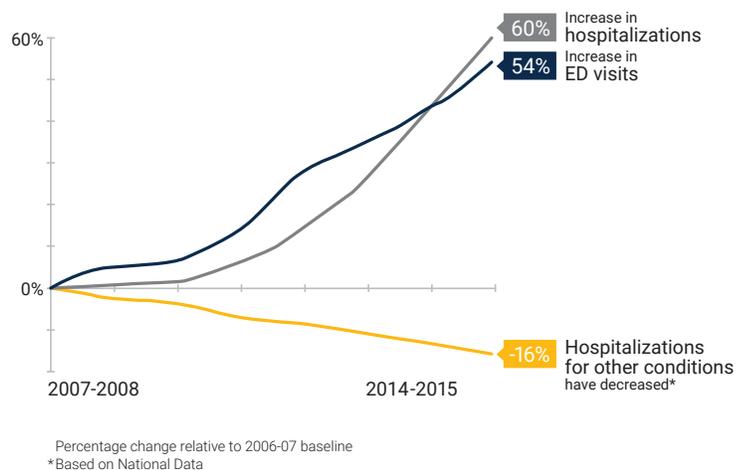
! Establish meaningful engagement with youth and families by embedding permanent structures across the province to ensure their voices are heard

“ Our research suggests there has been a recent increase in children and youth seeking mental health services in Emergency Departments. On the one hand, it is good that children and youth are more likely to seek help when they are struggling with mental illnesses and addictions. However, **it is imperative that we have a system in place where children and youth, and their families, have access to services in addition to Emergency Departments**. Timely access to care early on in the development of mental health and addictions can prevent these disorders from developing into more serious and chronic problems.”

– Dr. Paul Kurdyak, Director of Health Systems Research at CAMH and Lead, Mental Health and Addictions Research Program, ICES

MOVING TOWARD A COORDINATED, EFFECTIVE AND AFFORDABLE CHILD AND YOUTH MENTAL HEALTH SYSTEM

The Canadian Institute for Health Information (CIHI) has released data showing that emergency department visits and hospitalizations for children and youth seeking mental health treatment continue to rise at an alarming rate. This data indicates that our current system is not working. A fully functioning system of care is one where children and youth with their families can easily access the treatment they need from a coordinated team, including physicians, hospitals, children's mental health centres and schools.



What services do children, youth and families struggling with mental health issues need?

We know that 1 in 4 children will experience a mental health issue by the time they are 18. An estimated 11% of children and youth with mild to moderate mental health issues may need a few sessions of counselling from a mental health professional. An estimated 14% will need more intensive treatment from mental health professionals and, perhaps, a child psychiatrist. A small percentage of children have very complex issues and may need a hospital stay or 24/7 treatment at a children's mental health treatment centre with a full team of professionals. Children and youth need the right combination of services at the right time in the right place.

What services are provided at children's mental health centres?

Children's mental health centres are the backbone of Ontario's community-based child and youth mental health system. They provide a complex array of programs and services delivered by trained mental health professionals including: targeted prevention; brief services; counselling and therapy; family capacity-building and support; specialized consultation and assessments; crisis support services; and intensive treatment services.

I'm transitioning from under 18 care to 18+ care. And I've been waiting for a year and five months. And it's supposed to be at least six more months.”

– Shannon, youth from Orangeville

The challenges that families have securing community-based mental health treatment for their children is a real problem impacting real people. Every day in our emergency department we see the hopelessness and frustration as children and their families reach desperation in finding the care they need. The time is now to pay greater attention to children with mental health issues and create a more accessible, coordinated, and capable system for them.”

– Dr. Mike Apkon, President and CEO, SickKids

Mental health should be as high a priority as physical health.”

– Beth, youth from Keswick

Collectively as clients, family members, caregivers, providers, advocates and decision-makers, we have a unique opportunity to help guide the transformation of Ontario's mental health and addictions system to ensure that it is meeting the needs of all Ontarians today and into the future.”

– Susan Pigott, Chair, Mental Health and Addictions Leadership Advisory Council



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Children's Mental Health Ontario (CMHO) works to identify and develop solutions to important policy issues affecting the child and youth mental health sector. We represent more than 90 accredited children's mental health agencies that provide treatment and support to children, youth and families. This includes targeted prevention, early intervention, short- and long-term counselling and therapy, and intensive services such as residential care.