

MENTAL HEALTH IN ONTARIO'S COMMUNITIES

Our Ask

That municipal governments support their local Public Health Unit and encourage the Provincial Government to:

- Implement workplace strategies to address psychological health and safety to protect and promote the mental health of workers throughout the province of Ontario.

That municipal governments:

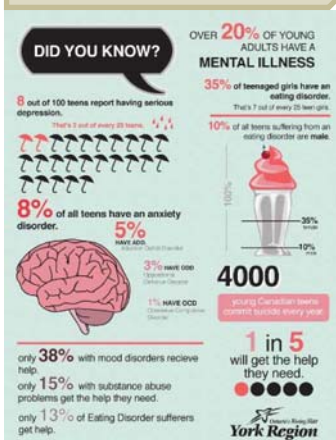
- Commit to building mental health system integration and capacity.
- Support healthy public policies that promote positive mental health.
- Commit to investing in programs and services that promote safe and supportive housing and environments.

Return on Investment



- The economic burden of mental illness in Canada is estimated at \$51 billion per year. This includes health care costs, lost productivity, and reductions in health-related quality of life.
- Overall, the impact of mental health, mental illness, and addictions in Ontario on life expectancy, quality of life, and health care utilization is more than 1.5 times that of all cancers and more than 7 times that of all infectious diseases.
- 60% of adolescents that experience depression have recurrent episodes later on in adulthood; early prevention programmes targeting mental health in preschool and school-aged children.
- In any given week, at least 500,000 employed Canadians are unable to work due to mental health problems.

Background



- The mental health and well-being of Ontarians is heavily influenced by the social, economic, and physical environments where people live, learn, work, and play.
- There have been notable increases in Ontarians who perceive their mental health as fair or poor as well as those who experience mental health problems or illness.
- As Ontario is one of Canada's most diverse provinces, all public health efforts to promote mental health and prevent mental illness require a strong attention to principles of health equity, so that all people can reach their full health potential.
- Promoting the mental health and well-being of Ontarians requires a collaborative, proportionate universalism approach, involving stakeholders across various sectors.
- 70% of mental health problems have their onset during childhood or adolescence.
- 34% of Ontario high-school students indicate a moderate-to-serious level of psychological distress (symptoms of anxiety and depression).
- Over 4,000 Canadians per year die by suicide—an average of almost 11 per day.

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STRONG LOCAL PUBLIC HEALTH

Strong Local Public Health

- Ontario's 444 Municipalities benefit from the many public health programs and services that keep them healthy.
- Under the Health Protection and Promotion Act, municipalities in a health unit are responsible for paying the expenses of the health unit in the performance of its functions and duties that are largely mandated by the province.
- Ontario's 35 public health units work hard to deliver these essential programs and services to prevent disease and promote health in local communities.
- For more than 180 years, Ontarians have enjoyed a strong public health system that puts local communities and their health at the front and centre.

Other Key Public Health Issues



While we have highlighted the health issue on the reverse as a particularly important topic you should be aware of, there are a host of other broad public health issues that may also affect the overall health in your community. Here are a few:

- Tobacco endgame
- Oral health for adults
- Cannabis
- Opioids
- Mental health
- Alcohol
- Food insecurity

About alPHa

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Agencies

- The Association of Local Public Health Agencies (alPHa) is a not-for-profit organization that provides leadership to the boards of health and public health units in Ontario.
- Membership in alPHa is open to the 35 public health units in Ontario and we work closely with board of health members, medical and associate medical officers of health, and senior public health managers in each of the public health disciplines – nursing, inspections, nutrition, dentistry, health promotion, epidemiology and business administration.
- The Association works with governments, including local government, and other health organizations, advocating for a strong, effective and efficient public health system in the province.
- Through policy analysis, discussion, collaboration, and advocacy, alPHa's members and staff act to promote public health policies that form a strong foundation for the improvement of health promotion and protection, disease prevention, and surveillance services in all of Ontario's communities.