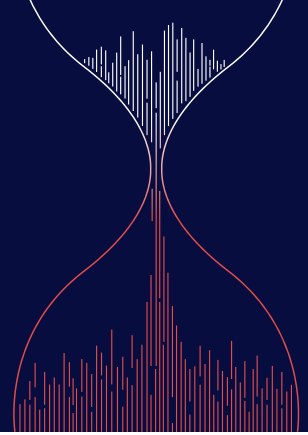


No Time To Wait



Today, in Ontario as much as 20 per cent of our population — 2.9 million people — are struggling with their mental and substance use health. The demand for mental health and substance use health supports has never been as high as it is right now.

While some are fortunate enough to get access to publicly funded mental health, substance use health and addiction supports through community-based organizations, specialty hospitals or pay for private care — many more are sitting on wait lists.

Without timely access to the right supports, where and when they need it, Ontarians are facing worsening health conditions. This leads to increased medical leaves from work, lost jobs, fractured relationships with families and support systems, repeated visits to emergency rooms, and in the worst cases overdose or suicide.

As part of our 2023 budget submission, we are calling on the Ontario government to:

- 1** Provide community organizations delivering mental health and substance use health services with a base funding increase of 8% — or approximately \$130 million annually — to address critical capacity challenges within the sector and help ensure all Ontarians have access to high-quality, easily accessible support throughout their lifetime, where and when they need it, as envisioned in the Roadmap to Wellness; and,
- 2** Develop a staffing strategy to address the low and inequitable wages, and supply of workers within the sector, that impact mental health, substance use health and addictions organization's ability to attract, recruit and retain staff.

There is a **mental health and addiction crisis** in Ontario

- 1 in 2** people have – or have had – a mental illness
- 128 days** the average wait time for mental health support
- 23.3%** Home and community care nurses make, on average, 23.3% less than nurses working in hospitals
- 6,647** opioid-related deaths since June 2020

Addictions and Mental Health Ontario (AMHO) represents nearly 200 organizations that provide front line substance use, addiction, and mental health support and services.

AMHO members are on the ground in communities across the province, supporting Ontarians through their mental health and substance use health challenges by providing community-based treatment, counselling, structured psychotherapy, case management, withdrawal management services, residential treatment, peer support, family support, harm reduction supports, and supportive housing.