

# Mental health and addictions

## Supporting community-based care

### Policy opportunity and solutions

To ensure the strength of the health system in Peel and across Ontario, it is important that provincial investments and ongoing support for mental health and addictions match service needs. Achieving this shared goal can be accomplished with support from the Province to:

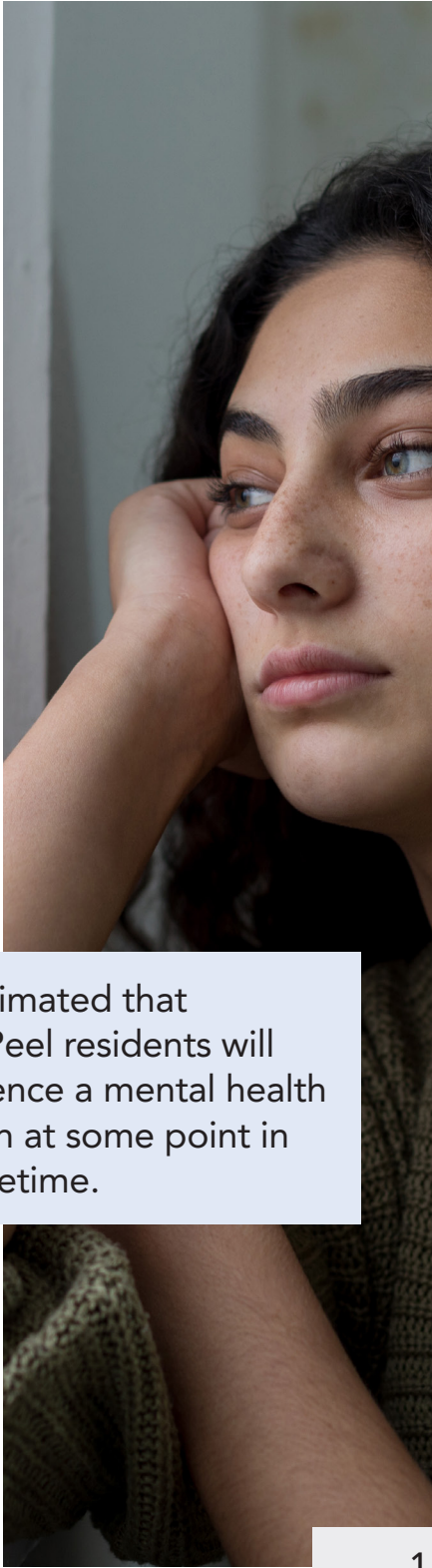
- Implement a funding formula for mental health and addictions services that considers population and demographic factors, and community need.
- Provide targeted, specific and sustainable investments to Peel's community-based mental health and addictions services to address growing waitlists.

### Background

Peel Region appreciates the level of engagement and ongoing collaboration with the Province to advance mental health and addictions supports. We welcome the base funding commitment for community mental health and addictions care made in the 2023 Provincial Budget. It is an acknowledgement of the pressures articulated by mental health and addictions service providers across Peel Region.

The Roadmap to Wellness plan and new investments in the sector represent a step forward. However, Peel communities are currently experiencing sustained growth and are dependent on provincial support for critical frontline services – including mental health and addictions – which are desperately needed in rapidly-growing communities.

Mental health and addictions funding is not keeping pace with Peel's growing population and unprecedented demand for increased access to under-resourced health care services. It is estimated that 1 in 5 Peel residents will experience a mental



It is estimated that 1 in 5 Peel residents will experience a mental health concern at some point in their lifetime.

health concern at some point in their lifetime. There are approximately 20,000 emergency department visits per year for mental health related disorders by Peel residents. In response, Peel Region is requesting the following provincial support:

- A population-based allocation approach and needs-based operational funding increases to reduce the funding disparity between service areas.
- Catch-up funding to correct for Peel's historical underfunding.
- Investment in innovative and integrated approaches to reduce the burgeoning reliance on acute care services and create new models of care for complex clients.


Service providers in Peel receive less funding per capita for adult mental health and addictions supports compared to the rest of Ontario. This funding inequity also impacts children and youth mental health services – Peel's average per capita funding for child and youth mental health is significantly lower at \$76.38, while average per capita funding in Ontario is \$152.48. A population-based funding approach that considers funding needs based on population size and demographics, with adjustments for socioeconomic and geographic factors is required. Based on current service demands, Peel needs more funding to ensure no resident is left behind and is provided with the care and support they need.

### Targeted, sustainable investments

Through implementation of an updated funding formula that responds to Peel's population size and needs, Peel's community mental health and addictions system will be able to reduce wait times and waitlists, improve care options, and reduce the burden on the acute care system.

There are several opportunities for increased provincial investment in evidence-based and community-based programming, including:

- Cognitive behavioural therapy for children and youth (ages up to 24 years old).



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- Rapid access addiction medicine (RAAM) clinics to provide clinical supports and mobile crisis rapid response teams (MCRRT).
- 24/7 crisis walk-in services.
- Stepped care programs which provide a system to deliver and monitor treatments based on intensity of need and reduce wait times for psychiatric supports.
- Supportive housing, as a key determinant of both mental health and well-being.
- Culturally inclusive peer programs and services – especially for youth, adults and caregivers.

Despite ongoing advocacy, existing disparities for those facing mental health or addictions challenges are amplified in Peel, where the rates of depression, anxiety, substance-related harms, and opioid-related deaths have increased. These challenges emphasize the urgency and need for continued collaboration and sustainable funding from the provincial government.

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