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## **IMPROVING MENTAL HEALTH AND ADDICTION SERVICES**

February 24, 2009

The Ontario government is developing a long term strategy for mental health and addiction services in the province.

The strategy will focus on people with mental illness, problematic substance use and gambling. Its scope will include issues that impact on family, community and the workplace. It will address the governments' two core priorities of:

- Reducing emergency room wait times
- Improving access to family health care

### **Select Committee on Mental Health and Addictions**

The Ontario legislature is forming an all-party Select Committee on Mental Health. The committee will:

- determine the mental health and addiction needs of children and young adults; First Nations, Inuit and Métis peoples; and seniors
- explore innovative approaches to delivering services in the community
- identify ways to leverage existing opportunities and initiatives within the current mental health and addiction system
- identify opportunities to improve co-ordination and integration across the sectors for all people including those with concurrent mental health and addiction problems
- recognize the importance of early intervention and health promotion with respect to diagnosing and treating mental health and addictions issue
- consider the mental health and addiction needs of Francophone and Ethnic minorities facing linguistic and cultural gaps.
- examine access to care issues for persons with mental health and addictions issues including primary and emergency care
- examine the existing continuum of social services and support for those with mental health and addictions issues. This would include justice, supportive housing, education and vocational support.

Its work will be used in the development of a long term strategy for mental health and addiction along with the work of the Minister of Health and Long-Term Care's Advisory Group on Mental Health and Addictions.

Members of the Select Committee include:

Kevin Flynn, MPP Oakville  
Liz Sandals, MPP Guelph  
Bas Balkissoon, MPP Scarborough Rouge River  
Maria Van Bommell, MPP Lambton-Kent-Middlesex  
Helena Jaczek, MPP Oak Ridges Markham  
Christine Elliott, MPP Whitby Oshawa  
Sylvia Jones, MPP Dufferin Caledon  
France Gelinis, MPP Nickel Belt  
Jeff Leal, MPP Peterborough

### **Advisory Group on Mental Health and Addictions**

The Minister's Advisory Group on Mental Health and Addictions is made up of consumers, family members, providers and researchers from across the province. It includes a range of perspectives such as children and youth, aboriginal, workplace and women. Its focus includes:

- system design
- consumer partnerships
- early identification and intervention
- increasing capacity and competencies in mental health and addiction health human resources, and
- healthy communities

**For public inquiries call ServiceOntario, INFOline at 1-866-532-3161 (Toll-free in Ontario only)**

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