

MINISTER'S ADVISORY GROUP ON MENTAL HEALTH AND ADDICTIONS TERMS OF REFERENCE

Background:

The Ontario government is committed "to continue to enhance the strength of mental health and addictions services with increased funding and strong provincial policy direction." (Liberal Platform 2007)

Mental illness, problematic substance use and gambling have a significant impact on Ontarians. Individuals, families and communities are affected by these issues and live with a range of associated impacts including reduced quality of life, health, finances and relationships. People living with mental illness, problematic substance use and gambling problems are provided service by the traditional health care system, the specialized mental health and addiction systems and often come into contact with other systems such as income support and the justice system.

Ontario has an opportunity to develop a new 10 year strategy that builds on the efforts of the past decade, integrates mental health and addictions and provides strong direction for the future to improve and enhance services and care available to Ontarians. The focus will be on taking a systemic approach to:

- Consumers, their families and their needs, incorporating a strong recovery and harm reduction approach to address the health and social outcomes as well as long-term consequences associated with living with mental illness, problematic substance use or gambling problems,
- Improved service co-ordination and integration across the sectors for all people including those with concurrent mental health and addiction problems,
- Leveraging existing opportunities within the current system as well as other parts of the health care system as well as other partnerships at the local and national level,
- Innovative approaches to service delivery, and
- Ensuring a compassionate response to people with mental health, problematic substance use and gambling issues.

Mandate:

The purpose is to provide the Minister of Health and Long-Term Care with advice on:

- Directions for a new 10 year strategy for mental health and addictions
- Provincial priorities, actions and expected results building on people's strengths, evidence and leveraging existing resources
- Sequencing of actions on priorities, roles of various partners and monitoring results

The focus will be on people with serious mental illness, complex problematic substance use and problem gambling issues as well as people with less serious problems that impact on the family, community and workplace.

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Objectives:

1. To provide advice on an overall 10 year strategy for mental health and addictions in Ontario that provides strong direction for the future. Areas of interest are quality of service and adherence to best practices; appropriate safety for clients, their families, providers and the community; innovative practices; sustainability of services; enhanced system access and capacity.
2. To provide advice on actions and expected results for reducing emergency department wait times and improved family health care for people with mental health and addiction problems as well as integration of mental health and addictions services.
3. To provide advice on other priorities, actions and expected results which address specific populations and an effective, equitable and efficient continuum of care and supports for people with mental health and addictions (from early identification and intervention to complex services).
4. To provide advice on sequencing of actions on priorities including early opportunities for improvement; roles of various players such as the Ministry of Health and Long-Term Care and other ministries, Local Health Integration Networks, health service providers and other community service providers; and monitoring results including the development of performance indicators.

Deliverables and Timelines:

Progress report/presentation on themes and process	February 2009
Discussion papers on themes	March – June 2009
Public discussion paper	Summer 2009
Broad consultation with stakeholders	Fall 2009
10 Year Strategy	2010

Composition:

This group will be chaired by the Minister of Health and Long-Term Care and will consist of consumers/families, providers and others from across the province.

Participants were selected for their specific experience, geographic location and are expected to provide their perspectives (not their organizations) to contribute to direction and advice to the Minister.

Operations:

Meetings will be held every other month over the next year. Additional meetings will be arranged as required.

Time-limited theme groups will be established to develop discussion papers which explore the theme and contribute to the development of the strategy and identification of priorities, actions and expected results. Theme groups will be chaired by a member of the overall group and can involve additional consumers, providers and researchers with experience in the area.

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Local Health Integration Networks will be involved/consulted as appropriate. Other experts may be consulted as required.

Invitations, submissions and or presentations from interested people or conduct consultations to inform their work will be accepted.

The Ministry of Health and Long-Term Care will provide support to the process.