



# Mental Health Care Access

OMSA Day of Action 2024

## Background



Every year, **more than One Million Ontarians** will require mental health and addictions care. Waiting times can range from **months to years**.



Canadians spend **\$950 million annually** on psychotherapy. Private insurance coverage ranges from **\$400 to \$1500 / year (which typically covers only 2-8 therapy sessions)**.



**47% increase** in Emergency Department visits for mental health care between 2009-2017. **13%** are readmitted within 30 days.



**The North West LHIN region** has the longest wait times and the fewest number of mental health professionals. Suicide rates among children/youth are **~6 times higher**.



**28 000 children are on waiting lists**, with average times of 70 days for counselling and 95 days for more intensive care. There was a **~90% increase** in Emergency Department visits between 2009-2017.

## Our Asks

Expand the Ontario Structured Psychotherapy Program

1

- Reduce waiting times, especially in Northwestern Ontario.
- Relax exclusionary criteria and offer in person/virtual therapy for those aged 10-17.
- Performance measurement to advance health equity goals.

Enable children and youth to access care within 30 days

2

- Strengthen the capacity and standardize the quality of community-based programs.
- Continued investments in school-based mental health care.

Create greater integration across different settings and providers

3

- Approve additional Ontario Health Teams.
- Develop data sharing across hospitals, community care and primary care
- Incentivize provision of mental health care within primary care settings

Improve service quality and access for Rural and Northern communities

4

- Continued investments in mobile mental health clinics.
- Increase recruitment and retention of mental health professionals.
- Expand coverage of virtual care to include allied health providers.