

Mental Health and Addictions

Supporting community-based care

Policy opportunity

To ensure a responsive mental health and addictions system for Peel residents, policy solutions that provide population needs-based funding are needed for mental health and addictions services that considers population and demographic factors, including high growth and culturally diverse communities, and reflects community needs.

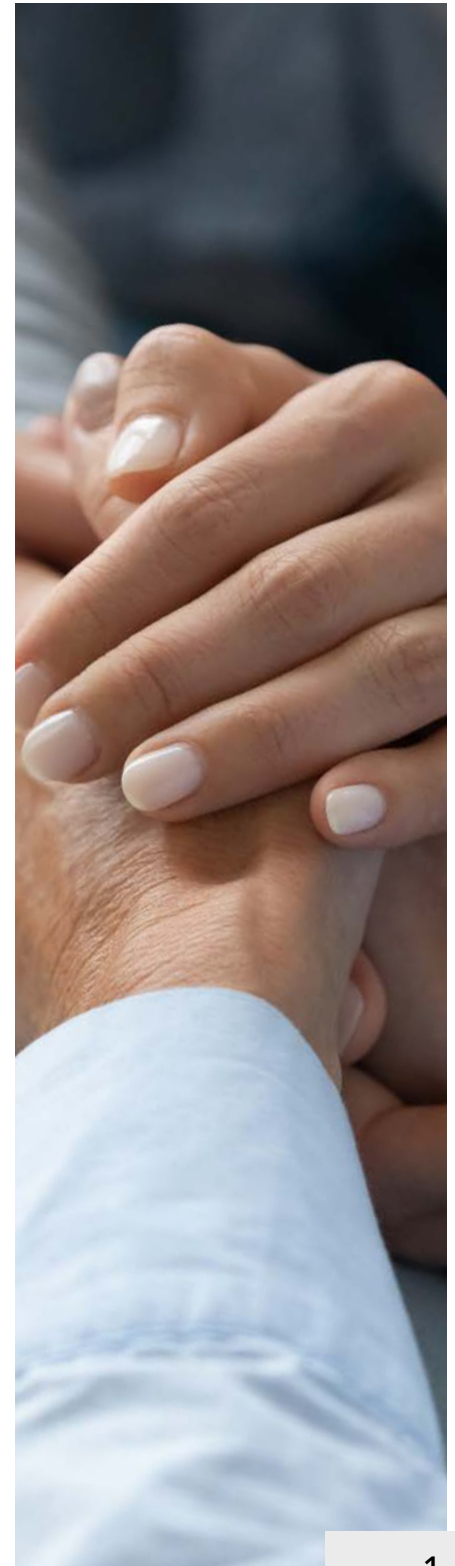
Funding opportunities

- **Provide funding allocations that address historical underfunding** so that community mental health and addictions services can expand capacity, bridge critical service gaps and reduce wait times and waitlists for essential supports.
- **Provide targeted, specific and sustainable operational funding** to meet the growing demand for mental health and addiction services and to address growing waitlists.

Background

Peel Region is facing a mental health and addictions crisis. Despite being one of Ontario's fastest growing communities, Peel residents have fewer community mental health and addictions services available to them.

- In 2021, adult mental health and addictions (MHA) service providers in the Central West and Mississauga Halton Local Health Integration Network (LHINs) received per capita funding of \$51.35 and \$35.94, respectively. **This is well below Ontario's average of \$88.10 per capita.**
- From 2017 to 2022, Central West and Mississauga Halton LHINs' average per capita community mental health and addictions (CMHA) funding was **\$47.11 and \$35.93, respectively; both of which were lower than Ontario's average per capita CMHA funding (\$81.98).**



- In 2022-23, child and youth MHA providers in Peel received average per capita funding of **\$91.25 compared to the Ontario average at \$179.68.**

The impact of this underfunding has translated into concerning service pressures and challenges in Peel, including unsustainable emergency department capacity and long waitlists for children and youth.

Achieving a sustainable, population-based funding approach

Peel Region applauds provincial investments towards an improved and integrated mental health and addictions system. The Province's engagement with community partners and service providers in Peel through forums, such as the recent discussion during a tour of a Peel Paramedics station, as well as investments in local services such as the Youth Wellness Hub in Brampton, are welcomed. However, sustainable, and consistent funding for the sector, as well as other targeted investments, are necessary to bridge existing and historical service gaps for Peel.

Population-based funding

A population-based funding approach will ensure that the Province's Roadmap to Wellness can achieve greater impact within Peel's community. Formulating funding allocation based on population size and demographics, will reduce wait times and waitlists, improve care options, and reduce the burden on the acute care system. This approach will also improve the capacity of the community-based mental health and addictions sector in supporting the Province's vision for greater integration and wrap-around supports for all residents.

Targeted, sustainable investments

As the rates of depression, anxiety, substance use-related harms, and opioid toxicity have increased in Peel, there has been urgency for responsive funding. There are immediate and targeted opportunities to help to reduce current waitlists and capacity challenges in Peel, including the points listed in the right hand column.

Investment Opportunities

- **A 24/7 crisis walk-in service model:** to reduce the burden on emergency departments while ensuring wrap-around services for residents.
- **Stabilizing health human resources:** to build recruitment and retention of workforce talent.
- **Building capacity for high-demand, low-availability services:** so that there is increased availability of programs and services.
- **Supports to prevent harms from opioid toxicity and substance use:** through evidence-based harm reduction best practices.

