



Impact grants: Mental health, substance use and addictions care

Project summaries

Examining integrated youth services: An evaluation of the reach and delivery of services provided by the Grove Wellington Guelph

Project leads

Dr. Jean Costello, University of Waterloo, Homewood Research Institute; Cyndy Dearden, Canadian Mental Health Association Waterloo Wellington, The Grove Wellington Guelph

What's the issue?

Young people's need for coordinated mental health and substance use health services is growing. Even before the pandemic, divided and fragmented services made it difficult to access high quality care. Young people continue to face these and other barriers, including the transition from youth to adult programs, long waitlists, few culturally and developmentally appropriate services and a general lack of services that reflect their (or their families') preferences and perspectives.

What's the solution?

The Grove Wellington Guelph's integrated approach to wellness was developed for young people by young people, to address care gaps and access challenges. The project team will evaluate the organization's service delivery and reach, as well as the progress made using a local integrated youth service model to improve services and outcomes for young people with both mental health and substance use issues.

What impact is anticipated?

The project team intends to use the results of this project to inform the development of more Youth Wellness Hubs Ontario sites, to guide the delivery and evaluation of the new sites' services and to contribute to the growing body of evidence in support of integrated youth services across Canada.



Community capacity building for trauma informed and addiction approaches for youth in northern Ontario

Project leads

Dr. Tina Benevides, TheFamilyHelpNetwork.ca (Hands); Dr. Andrew Weeks, Nipissing University

What's the issue?

The local health system has limited capacity to respond to the complex mental health needs of young people living in northern Ontario. Many rural, remote and northern communities lack sufficient treatment options and qualified clinicians to identify the early signs of mental health challenges. This means there is a significant service gap for those with complex mental health needs, including those with concurrent mental health and substance use disorders.

What's the solution?

The project team plans to develop a capacity building plan to increase core service providers' competency in providing services to northern Ontario's young people and families. This includes working with agency staff in the region to build their skills and to work more effectively together to provide high-quality services to young people with concurrent disorders.

What impact is anticipated?

This project is expected to help more young northern Ontarians access the care they need in their home communities. Ensuring young people and their families can receive services from their community mental health agencies could transform child and youth mental health and addictions services in northern Ontario, including helping to reduce emergency department visits.