

## **Ontario Investing in 1,000 Supportive Housing Units**

*Expanding Mental Health Services Across the Province*

December 16, 2015 11:00 A.M.

Ontario is investing \$16.2 million in 1,000 supporting housing units across the province, including \$4 million for 248 supportive housing units in 2016-17.

Supportive housing is critical to reducing homelessness among people with mental illness and addictions. Housing with supports, such as counselling or addictions treatment, delivers better outcomes for individuals with mental health and addictions challenges, and reduces the risk that people will become homeless.

As part of the continuing expansion of mental health services, Ontario is also providing \$2 million to 10 Indigenous organizations to examine the unique mental health and addictions issues facing Indigenous peoples across the province. These organizations will seek input and advice from their local communities and membership, and provide key recommendations to the Ontario government.

Investing in supportive housing spaces, and understanding the challenges faced by Indigenous peoples, are critical parts of the government's [Poverty Reduction Strategy](#). The strategy aims to create a province where every person has the opportunity to achieve his or her full potential and contribute in a prosperous and healthy Ontario.

Expanding access to mental health and addictions services is also part of the government's plan to build a better Ontario through its [Patients First: Action Plan for Health Care](#), which is providing patients with faster access to the right care, better home and community care, the information they need to stay healthy and a health care system that's sustainable for generations to come.

### **QUOTES**

" Thank you to the Mental Health and Addictions Leadership Advisory Council for their thoughtful recommendations that will help our government make significant improvements to Ontario's mental health and addictions system. Investing in services that target our most vulnerable, like supportive housing, ensures that those who need care the most have the

access they need. By supporting Indigenous communities to engage their membership on what they need from their health care system, we are investing in a system that is more equitable and working toward solutions that work for patients."

- Dr. Eric Hoskins

Minister of Health and Long-Term Care

" We have set a bold commitment to end chronic homelessness within 10 years. Investing in supportive housing spaces is an important part of this plan. We know that Housing First works, and not only are people better off when they have the appropriate supports in place, it also saves money in the health care and justice systems."

- Deb Matthews

Deputy Premier, President of the Treasury Board and Minister Responsible for the Poverty Reduction Strategy

" Supportive housing offering wrap-around services is a key element of our efforts to end homelessness. Every person should have an affordable and stable home, especially the most vulnerable among us."

- Ted McMeekin

Minister of Municipal Affairs and Housing

" Over the past year, the Leadership Advisory Council has been encouraged to see that this Ontario government seems to be making a concerted effort to improve mental health and addiction services. We have a long way to go until we achieve an accessible high quality mental health and addictions system but this seems to be a priority for the government so that's great news."

- Susan Pigott

Chair, Mental Health and Addictions Leadership Advisory Council

" Taking Stock underscores the need for the kind of focus the government is bringing to mental health and addictions in Ontario. As the provincial advisor on health care quality, we intend to make this topic an area of focus and look forward to working with our partners to support a comprehensive system that provides early and effective treatment for all Ontarians."

- Dr. Joshua Tepper

President and Chief Executive Officer, Health Quality Ontario

## **QUICK FACTS**

- As the government continues to expand mental health services, it will take into consideration advice from a number of sources, including: [The Expert Panel on](#)

[Homelessness; the first annual report from Ontario's Mental Health and Addictions Leadership Advisory Council](#); and [Health Quality Ontario's report](#) on the quality of mental health and addictions services in Ontario.

- By 2017, the government will have increased annual funding for mental health and addictions services by a total of \$172 million since it launched the [Comprehensive Mental Health and Addictions Strategy](#) in 2011.
- Approximately 30 per cent of Ontarians will experience a mental health and/or substance abuse challenge at some point in their lifetime, with one out of 40 Ontarians experiencing a serious mental illness.

## LEARN MORE

- [Patients First: Action Plan for Health Care](#)
- The [next phase](#) of Ontario's comprehensive mental health and addictions strategy.
- [Find help for people experiencing problems with alcohol, drugs, mental health or gambling.](#)

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