



ELEANOR McMAHON, MPP

Burlington

Expanding Access to Mental Health and Addiction Services in Burlington

Province Providing More Mental Health and Addictions Support for Burlington Residents

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NEWS

Ontario is working to improve access to mental health and addiction services for about 300 people each year in the Burlington area.

Today, Eleanor McMahon, MPP for Burlington, was at Joseph Brant Hospital (JBH) to announce the government's investment in the hospital's new Prioritizing Health through Acute Stabilization and Transition (PHAST) program. Ontario, through the Hamilton Niagara Haldimand Brant LHIN, is investing \$96,525 in base funding, annualized to \$579,151 beginning in 2018-19. The province is also investing \$29,810 one-time funding in 2017/18.

The PHAST program operates at JBH's Community Health Centre, and is designed for individuals ages 16 and older with mental health and/or addiction concerns who have an urgent need for acute stabilization and intervention.

PHAST provides fast, integrated and comprehensive treatment through a combination of group and one-on-one sessions for individuals in the program and their families. The program offers a multi-disciplinary model which includes addictions specialists, social workers, a child and youth worker, a peer support worker, a registered nurse and an occupational therapist. Once the participants achieve stabilization, PHAST is designed to connect them to less intense health care services provided by partners in the community.

Over the next three years, Ontario is investing more than \$222 million province-wide to combat the opioid crisis in Ontario. This includes expanding harm reduction services, hiring more front-line staff and improving access to addictions supports across the province. Additionally, in Fall 2016 the government announced Ontario's comprehensive [Strategy to Prevent Opioid Addiction and Overdose](#). This strategy will ensure people in pain receive appropriate treatment, increased access to holistic treatment for those with opioid use disorder, and improving the safety and health of people who use opioids, including access to the life-saving drug naloxone.

Expanding access to mental health and addictions services is part of Ontario's plan to create fairness and opportunity. The plan includes a higher minimum wage and better working conditions, free tuition for hundreds of thousands of students, easier access to affordable child care, and free prescription drugs for everyone under 25 through the biggest expansion of medicare in a generation.

QUOTES

"It is encouraging to see our government take action and help those who face mental health and addiction issues in Burlington. The PHAST program means those who need help are able to

receive collaborative and extensive treatment. As MPP for Burlington, I want to recognize and thank all of the community partners involved in this initiative and their commitment to collectively support those in need.”

— Eleanor McMahon, MPP for Burlington

“Prioritizing Health through Acute Stabilization and Transition (PHAST) fills a critical need for a community-based alternative to in-patient mental health admissions. PHAST offers a person-centred approach with multiple points of access, including self-referral. By providing access to timely, integrated and comprehensive treatment in an out-patient setting, this program improves care for residents of Burlington with mental health and/or addictions concerns.”

— Janine van de Heuvel, HNHB LHIN Board Chair

“We would like to thank our local Burlington MPP Eleanor McMahon and the provincial government for the new mental health and addiction funding for the PHAST program. In collaboration with our community healthcare partners this new funding will help individuals with mental health and addiction concerns access the most appropriate care through timely assessment and intervention, preventing unnecessary ED visits and hospital admissions while ensuring a warm transition to the needed next stage service(s).”

— Eric Vandewall, Joseph Brant Hospital President and CEO

QUICK FACTS

- Ontario is establishing an Opioid Emergency Task Force that will include a province-wide representation of front-line workers and people with lived experience to strengthen the province’s coordinated response to the opioid crisis.
- Naloxone kits are distributed for free across Ontario. [Find the location nearest you.](#)
- Approximately 30 per cent of people in Ontario will experience mental illness and/or substance abuse at some point in their lifetime. Ontario is the first province in Canada to commit to developing a province-wide, publicly funded psychotherapy program. As a first step, the government is funding initiatives that will help 100,000 people access treatment for common mental health conditions such as anxiety and depression.

LEARN MORE

- [Faster access to mental health services for thousands of people through psychotherapy, supportive housing and services for youth](#)
- [Ontario’s Strategy to Prevent Opioid Addiction and Overdose](#)
- [Patients First: Action Plan for Health Care](#)
- [Find help for people experiencing problems with alcohol, drugs, mental health or gambling](#)

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