

Mental Health and Addiction Services in London and Middlesex:

ADDICTION SERVICES OF THAMES VALLEY	519-673-3242
ADULT MENTAL HEALTH CARE PROGRAM	519-667-6551
CHILD AND ADOLESCENT MENTAL HEALTH CARE PROGRAM	519-667-6640
CANADIAN MENTAL HEALTH ASSOCIATION	519-434-9191
CHILDREN'S MENTAL HEALTH CRISIS INTAKE TEAM	519-433-0334
DAYA COUNSELLING CENTRE	519-434-0077
DRUG & ALCOHOL HELPLINE	1-800-565-8603
FAMILY SERVICE THAMES VALLEY	519-433-0183
LONDON & DISTRICT DISTRESS CENTRE	
• CRISIS RESPONSE LINE	519-433-2023 1-866-933-2023
• DISTRESS LINE	519-667-6711
• SENIORS HELPLINE	519-667-6600
MENTAL HEALTH HELPLINE	1-866-531-2600
MUSLIM RESOURCE CENTRE FOR SOCIAL SUPPORT AND INTEGRATION	519-672-6000
ONTARIO PROBLEM GAMBLING HELPLINE	1-888-230-3505
WATCH COMMUNITY MENTAL HEALTH SERVICES	519-668-0624

For help navigating mental health and addiction services in London and Middlesex please call 211 (a free call) to speak directly to a person 24 hours a day.

This pamphlet was adapted from: Navigating Mental Health Service in Toronto: A Guide For Newcomer Communities, produced by Community Resource Connections of Toronto available online at www.crct.org; Mental Health & Addictions 101 series: Introduction to Addiction, designed and developed by Mark Fernley, Education Services Program Development from the Centre for Addiction and Mental Health, available online at www.camh.ca; and Health Information: Information in other languages: Asking for help when things are not right, from the Centre for Addiction and Mental Health webpage, available online at www.camh.ca.

Seeds of Change Seeds of Change is a collaborative community project to support immigrants and refugees with mental health, mental illness and addiction problems.

This project was made possible by the funding from:



To access a PDF or place an order for this resource visit:
<http://immigration.london.ca/LMLIP/Publications/newcomers.htm>

How do you feel today?



Assisting immigrants and refugees to learn more about mental health, mental illness and addiction

Seeds of Change

Mental illness and addiction problems can happen to anyone regardless of age, gender, sexual orientation, income, education or where they were born.

Immigrants and refugees may face additional stress and worries that can make it hard to ask for help.

Our community wants people to be healthy. We want to help people with mental illness and addiction problems.

When help is offered it is to make the person feel better, not to “spy” on their life.

Having a mental illness or an addiction is the same as having any other physical illness like asthma, diabetes or heart disease. Illnesses need medical attention.

It's okay to ask for help. A person with a mental illness can get Canadian citizenship if they meet all of the other requirements.



Mental Health

Being healthy is feeling good. All parts of your body are working well. You have very few aches and pains. You are able to sleep well and it feels good to get up in the morning.

Mental health is also about feeling good, but it is more about how your mind feels.

When your mental health is good, you feel that life is good. You do not feel sad all the time or worry about everything. You do not think the world is against you. Life may be hard, but most of the time you enjoy being alive.

Mental Illness

When people's minds are experiencing mental health difficulties, we say they have a mental illness. Some mental illnesses change how people think, some change people's moods, and some change what people do. Mental illness can be mild or serious.

What can you do to help yourself?

- Remember that you have managed difficult situations in the past
- Learn about your mental illness and/or addiction
- Ask for help when you are not doing well
- Be aware of negative thinking and learn ways to change your thoughts
- Believe that things can get better
- Don't be afraid to ask for what you need when getting help

Addictions

Addiction is something that can hurt your relationships and physical health. If you have an addiction, you may use alcohol or other drugs too much or too often. You may also do an activity too often, like gamble and lose too much money.

It is easy to become addicted to these things. It isn't always easy to know that you have an addiction. Even people close to you may not know there is a problem.

Addiction can affect your physical and mental health. It also affects the way you make decisions about things like work, school, friendships and how you spend your money.

Some mental illness and addiction problems change how people think, some change people's mood, and some change what people do.

Signs and Symptoms of Mental Illness and Addictions

Everyone may experience these changes from time to time. You need to ask for help when these feelings and behaviours begin to affect your quality of life. People with a mental illness or addiction may have a variety of signs and symptoms.

People with a mental illness may:

- Feel stressed or worried
- Feel nervous and fearful
- Feel angry or aggressive
- Feel really tired or have too much energy
- Lose interest in what they enjoyed in the past
- Stop taking care of themselves
- Stop spending time with family and friends
- Hear or see things that other people don't
- Believe that something or someone is trying to hurt them

Some warning signs of addiction are:

- Missing work or school
- Running out of money with no explanation of how the money was spent
- Stealing money or items to sell
- Sudden change in friendships or activities
- Getting into trouble more than usual (fights, accidents, illegal activities)
- Unexplained change in personality or attitude (fear or anger)

Some people experience both mental illness and addiction problems at the same time, which can make the symptoms much worse. Professionals call this having concurrent disorders.

Suicide

Feeling sad or worried are normal reactions to living in a new country. It is a good idea to ask for help if you feel this way for more than a few weeks.

When you get help for mental illness and addiction problems, it is normal to be asked questions about suicide.

Suicide is when you end your own life on purpose. Most often, people turn to suicide when they have lost hope and feel helpless. This happens to people of all ages, rich or poor, from any country or of any faith.

In Canada, it is okay to ask for help when we are dealing with mental illness or addiction problems and there are many services available to you.

If you are thinking about killing yourself, **THERE IS HELP.** Start by letting someone know how you are feeling:

- Talk to someone you trust, such as a family member or friend
- Tell your doctor, teacher, spiritual advisor, counsellor
- Call 911 or go to the emergency department
- Call a distress line - in London the number is 519-667-6711

1 in 5 Canadians will experience a mental illness in their lifetime.

Stigma

Some people think that mental illness and addiction problems bring shame, dishonour or disapproval. This negative way of viewing mental illness or addiction is called stigma.

Beliefs that lead to stigma are often not based on facts.

Stigma starts when people feel uneasy or embarrassed to talk about something. This may prevent them from seeking help for themselves or a family member.

In Canada, it is okay to talk about mental illness and addiction. We need to talk about these things so that people can feel safe to ask for help.

Don't let stigma get in the way of asking for help!

