



Mental Health
Commission
of Canada

Commission de
la santé mentale
du Canada

Consensus Conference on the Mental Health of Emerging Adults

Making Transitions a Priority in Canada

The Mental Health System

What needs to change?

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Mechanisms For Improving Mental Health System Responsiveness

Theme and policy question(s)

What needs to change?

- What is needed at each tier, and across the continuum of mental health care, to ensure appropriate services are available to support emerging adults?
- How can the system's capacity issues be addressed in a way that works across the country?
- What needs to be done to ensure professionals have the competencies to provide the best care to emerging adults?

Objectives

What do we need to focus on?

Improving clinical outcomes for emerging adults who are experiencing mental health issues and addiction problems.

What we know

We know that...

- Our mental health “system” does not function as a system.
- Evidence is lacking related to which interventions work in which circumstances with this population.
- Clinicians rarely receive feedback related to the impact of their interventions.
- The stigma experienced by emerging adults accessing mental health and addiction services is real.
- We have many mental health strategies, frameworks and plans across the country with little evidence of disciplined implementation and evaluation.

Implications

We have room to improve but it will require a culture shift!

- We need to measure, monitor and report on client outcomes using evidence based tools that measure symptoms, functionality and patient reported outcomes.
- We need to ensure that foundational knowledge of early childhood development, the affects of adverse childhood events and trauma and the plasticity of the brain is understood by health care providers and cross sectoral partners.
- We need to better understand how emerging adults and their families are currently experiencing the “system” and develop pathways that improve outcomes during this transition.
- We can use service redesign strategies to increase system capacity across the tiers of care.
- Additional resources can be used where they will make the biggest difference when we better understand how clinical outcomes can be improved.

Recommendations

Focus on our common goal of improved clinical outcomes

- Provincial ministries of health to support Regional Health Authorities to implement interventions that have been shown to improve outcomes for emerging adults, beginning with early psychosis programs.
- MHCC work with Accreditation Canada to incorporate standards that require evidence that client focused mental health outcomes in the emerging adult population are being measured and monitored.
- Regional Health Authorities work with clinicians to develop processes that provide individualized feedback on performance to providers.
- MHCC to develop a “Choosing Wisely” approach for mental health that encourages a dialogue between patients, families and providers.