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Centre for Addiction and Mental Health
Centre de toxicomanie et de santé mentale

A Pan American Health Organization /
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How long will I have to wait?

Some services can see you right away, especially if you are in crisis. For others, the wait can be longer. If you do need to wait, the service can help you plan how to cope in the meantime; for example, by joining a support group or connecting to mutual-aid (self-help) online supports. In many cases, a therapist, family doctor, nurse practitioner or counsellor may be able to help.

Can my family or family members be involved?

Yes, often—if they want, and if you agree to it.

Some services also offer help for family members, friends and anyone else affected by your situation to help them with their own coping. They may need to go through their own recovery process.

Can my children be with me while I’m getting help?

Some programs—particularly ones geared to pregnant mothers or new parents—may have some child care on-site. But generally, child care is limited.

What if I need other kinds of supports?

Call 211 (available in many Ontario communities) for information on various community, health and social services—anything from legal aid to budget counselling to subsidized housing. You can also check the Yellow Pages. Or speak to your family doctor or another health care professional who may be able to help. Services are available to help you to cope with

difficulties in other areas of your life created by your substance, gambling and/or mental health problem.

Will treatment help?

Yes. But nothing works for everyone all the time. Your problem may have taken some time to develop, and you may similarly take some time to get on the road to recovery. Relapse can happen. If you run into trouble after leaving treatment, don’t look at it as a failure—look at it as a way to find out what areas of your life still need attention, and how to get the additional help you need and deserve. Treatment is more likely to be helpful if you can work with someone you trust and feel comfortable with.

FINDING
TREATMENT
FOR
SUBSTANCE USE,
CONCURRENT
DISORDERS AND
PROBLEM GAMBLING
IN ONTARIO

GETTING
THE HELP
YOU
NEED



GETTING THE HELP YOU NEED

Finding Treatment for Substance Use, Concurrent Disorders and Problem Gambling in Ontario

Finding help for a particular problem can be very frustrating. Sometimes it can be hard to find just the right services, but treatment *is* available. Though the road to recovery can feel lonely, you are not alone. This brochure offers ways to make your search easier.

If any of the following are causing problems for you and/or the people in your life, now is the time to get started. **It’s never too late to get help!**

PROBLEM SUBSTANCE USE

Misusing alcohol, a prescription drug, over-the-counter medication, inhalant or solvent; or using a “street drug.”

CONCURRENT DISORDERS

Having substance use and mental health problems.

PROBLEM GAMBLING

Gambling to the extent that it is affecting your mental or physical health, relationships with family and friends, ability to function at work or school, and/or finances.

Where do I start?

Contact ConnexOntario Health Services Information as a first step to finding out what’s available. You can go to the website www.connexontario.ca for information about services in your area. Or call any of the following free, confidential and anonymous Connex-Ontario services to find out what openings are available for your specific needs:

Drug and Alcohol Registry of Treatment
1 800 565-8603

Mental Health Service Information Ontario
1 866 531-2600

Ontario Problem Gambling Helpline
1 888 230-3505

- A qualified professional will work with you to:
- learn more about your particular problem and identify what kind of help you need (for instance, residential, community or outpatient services), how much, and ways it can fit in with the rest of your life (e.g., work, school)
 - find out about your strengths and the supports you already have in place to help you in your recovery
 - address the things that may make it harder for you to get treatment (e.g., legal problems, lack of transportation or child care) so together you can come up with solutions.

What does it cost?

Most services are funded by the government, so you won’t have to pay for them. You may need a valid OHIP (Ontario Health Insurance Plan) card to access some programs. If you are accessing services that charge an additional fee, any concerns can be discussed during your first meeting with the helping professional.

What happens in treatment?

- Depending on the kind of problem you are getting help for and the level of support and treatment you need, services usually involve:
- gathering information to understand your concerns
 - looking at how the problem affects your life
 - building a treatment plan outlining the specific kinds of help you need
 - helping you use your strengths and develop new coping strategies.

Specific things included in treatment will depend on your individual needs

- Treatment can include:
- counselling with you on your own and/or as part of a couple, family or group
 - helping you learn to lead a healthy, balanced life (e.g., how to eat right, form friendships, get exercise)
 - addressing employment issues and training, and making related referrals if necessary
 - helping you to avoid a “slip” or return of the problem
 - support and information for your family (and sometimes treatment as well)
 - linking you to other services (e.g., withdrawal management, self-help) and helping you to co-ordinate these services.

My situation is unique. Can I still get help?

Yes. Some services focus on helping people with only one of the problems this brochure discusses. Others help people who have a combination of these problems. There are also specialized services for people from different backgrounds and with different problems.

- Services may specialize in helping:
- men- and women-only groups
 - people of a particular age, including children, youth (including those living on the street) and older adults
 - family members
 - people who speak languages other than English
 - Aboriginal people
 - people in trouble with the law
 - people with disabilities
 - people from different cultures, including those of a particular race, religion, ethnicity and sexual orientation
 - people who are experiencing homelessness
 - people using a particular substance (e.g., solvents, cocaine, prescription medicines).

Where will I go to get help?

Treatment is provided in offices, hospitals, clinics, public health units, community agencies and schools. It is available in cities, towns and some places in the country.

Often you can live at home and get services in the community. However, if you need more intensive, ongoing care, you may live temporarily in the facility providing the care. You may get help in more than one place.

What can I expect?

You should expect to be treated respectfully and non-judgmentally in a safe, friendly environment. Except when there are certain legal conditions, services are confidential. Treatment could mean as little as one hour-long meeting per week to as much as round-the-clock care in a residence or hospital.