

Mental Health Impacts during Pandemic

Overview of Data: MHCC, CMHA Ontario and CMHA Peel Dufferin

The Mental Health
Commission policy brief:
“COVID-19 and Suicide:
Potential Implications and
Opportunities to Influence
Trends in Canada - Policy
Brief”

- Recession aggravates existing stressors (food security, employment) combined with mental illness amplifies distress and substance use
- More anxiety as a result of the COVID-19 pandemic, a higher number are reporting suicidal thoughts and/or behaviors.
- Sub groups (racialized, 2SLGBTQ+, Indigenous, disabilities 2-4 times greater risk of self harm and suicide during COVID
- Canadians reported worse mental health during COVID
 - increase in moderate to severe symptoms of anxiety including depression and insomnia

CMHA and UBC: Survey On Impact Of COVID

10% of Canada's population
are experiencing recent
thoughts or feelings of
suicide

Suicide is up 6% (2.5%
increase since pre-
pandemic)

In Ontario

44% mental health has
deteriorated since March 2020

40% are worried about finances

22% have increased alcohol use

12% increased use in Cannabis

8% increased prescribed med use

In CMHA Peel Dufferin

50% more calls for support

60% more crisis calls

16% increase in the number of visits

7% increase in Substance Use support

*Symptoms of serious mental illness
and housing continue to increase
as top presenting issues

How Can We Help

** MHCC and CMHA/UBC policy
briefs and survey reports*

- Develop and tailored efforts to support individuals within each subgroup that are a high risk
- Increase governmental social spending to mitigate economic recession on suicide
- Increase crisis and virtual supports provides access to services when needed
 - Current barriers: long waitlists, inequity and underfunding
- Increase public health and prevention efforts
 - Public Education Campaign