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For Immediate Release

## **Closing the gap for vulnerable youth**

*Supporting youth with mental health and/or addiction challenges as they transition to adult programs*

Transitioning to adulthood is a challenging and complex process for all youth. Transitioning to adulthood for youth with mental health and/or addiction issues can and often does involve overcoming additional obstacles.

The [Mississauga Halton Local Health Integration Network](#) (MH LHIN) is pleased to announce the creation of more programming serving young men and women (16-24) struggling with mental health and/or addiction challenges as they transition to adult services.

Transitional Aged Youth (TAY) programming builds on the strengths of local health organizations that provide existing mental health and/or addiction services for children and adults in both community and hospital settings. This initiative will ensure there is enhanced support in the community to enable the youth living in the LHIN to seamlessly transition to adulthood. The new programming focuses on:

- Enhanced services for youth and young adults;
- Improved access for youth to mental health and addiction services;
- Prevention and management of chronic conditions.

This announcement sets the stage for increased awareness and commitment from over twenty service providers to increase the capacity to provide the transitional aged youth more services by promoting continuity of service through the provision of flexible supports to ensure successful engagement with adult services.

Funded by the Mississauga Halton LHIN, this mental health and addictions programming is focused on enhanced services for youth. The Mississauga Halton LHIN believes that this new programming provides faster access to high quality services and closes critical service gaps for vulnerable youth at key transition points. This helps to build a system where access will be easier, services are more effective, and stigma toward those with mental illness no longer exists.

The investment has allowed local health service providers to hire new staff – case managers and coordinators, career planners, clinicians/therapists and other health care providers – and train them to provide timely, quality, integrated, cost-effective services for our local youth who have mental illnesses and/or addiction.

This programming is a partnership between our local mental health and addictions service providers, Mississauga Halton LHIN and [Halton Healthcare Services](#), [The Credit Valley Hospital and Trillium Health Centre](#), [Support & Housing Halton](#), [STRIDE - Supported Training and Rehabilitation in Diverse Environments](#) and [ADAPT - Halton Alcohol Drug and Gambling Assessment Prevention and Treatment Service](#) who have received funding through this new initiative.

## Quotes

As the Chair of the Select Committee on Mental Health and Addictions, I often heard the difficulties that youth face transitioning into adult services. Far too often young people found themselves unaware of where to turn next. The Mississauga Halton LHIN saw this as a challenge to overcome and is taking the lead in creating a seamless transition for young people into the adult sector by bringing together community agencies and service providers.

– **Kevin Flynn, MPP, Oakville**

“The Mississauga Halton LHIN has a shared commitment to strengthen the continuum of care for its youth, fostering an environment that will encourage timely intervention and management leading to positive long-term outcomes. The Transitional Aged Youth programming is addressing the complex needs unique to these young adults.”

– **Bill MacLeod, CEO, Mississauga Halton LHIN**

## Quick Facts

- One in five Canadian youth suffer from a mental or psychiatric disorder, and 70% of all psychiatric disorders have an onset occurring in childhood or adolescence;
- These conditions are chronic and can impact negatively on youth’s social, interpersonal and vocational development;
- Major mental illness often occurs at the ages when youth are transitioning from child to adult mental health services, thereby exacerbating their vulnerability and potentially jeopardizing personal life success;
- It has been well accepted that early and timely access to care can contribute to positive outcomes;
- Supporting the transition from pediatric to adult mental health services represents one of the most important ways that mental health promotion, mental illness prevention and recovery can be facilitated.

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