

Collaborative Quality Improvement Plan Change Concepts

Increasing overall access to community mental health and addictions services

In quality improvement, a change concept is a general notion that can be used to develop more specific ideas for changes that lead to improvement.

This document outlines change concepts that can be used to address the collaborative Quality Improvement Plan (cQIP) goal of increasing overall access to community mental health and addictions services (one of the three priority areas of focus for this year's cQIPs).

The change concepts in this document are intended as a starting point to achieve progress toward this goal. Change concepts and ideas should always be customized based on local context.

***About the indicator:* Rate of emergency department visits as first point of contact for mental health and addictions-related care**

This indicator measures the number of individuals for whom the emergency department was the first point of contact for mental health and addictions care.

When access to timely community-based mental health assessment and treatment is insufficient, people who require services may use the emergency department as their first point of contact. Therefore, a high rate of use of the emergency department as a first point of contact for mental health and addictions care may indicate inadequate access to outpatient physician- and community-based care.



Support early recognition of patients/clients at risk for emergency department visits

Use community programs and primary care screening to identify patients/clients at risk for crisis to determine and set up appropriate supports

- [Incidence of Access to Ambulatory Mental Health Care Prior to a Psychiatric Emergency Department Visit Among Adults in Ontario, 2010-2018 by Dr. Paul Kurdyak et al.](#)



Improve access to complex and crisis care

Seek out and establish partnerships in the community to provide increased access to complex and crisis mental health care (e.g., ride-along services, mobile crisis units, drop-in services)

- [Mental Health Services in Canada: Barriers and Cost-Effective Solutions to Increase Access by Nicholas Moroz et al.](#)



Provide education, training, and guidance to health care providers

Provide general education, training, and clinical guidance to providers on early recognition of imminent mental health risks and actions to take

- [Review of Coordinated/Centralized Access Mechanisms: Evidence, Current State, and Implications by Dr. Brian Rush and Birpreet Saini](#)