



Guiding Council for Mental Health and Addictions - November 2023

Anyone experiencing a mental health or substance use crisis in Ottawa deserves a compassionate, caring response. Ottawa’s Safer Alternate Response for Mental Health and Substance Use Crises will be launched in Centretown in July, 2024 and will build on what community members and their families have said they need to access and receive the right services.

Our Members

The membership of the Guiding Council is made up of representation from Ottawa-based community, health and social service networks working to respond to mental health crises and public institutions that have mandated responsibilities to respond to mental health and substance use crises.



Our Journey



Our Community's Concerns

People experiencing mental health or substance use crises prefer to reach out to people and services they know and trust. Negative experiences of racism, discrimination, stigma and the police's use of force, discourage people from seeking crisis response services. People are not getting the help they need.



Our Response

The Guiding Council's recommendation for an alternate response service includes an alternate number that is not 9-1-1 and 24/7 community-based mobile crisis teams, that include peer support workers.

In July 2023, Ottawa City Council approved the Safer Alternate Response for Mental Health and Substance Use Crises Response report and strategy. As a result of our advocacy, City Council approved \$3 million in funding annually for three years to implement the first phase in one initial geographic area of Ottawa.

Centretown was selected by the Guiding Council as the location for the first phase of implementation based on evidence from research data, consultations with community stakeholders, existing resources and other factors.

Every neighbourhood deserves an effective mental health and substance use crisis response service that meets community needs. Starting in Centretown allows for a thorough testing of the crisis response service's effectiveness and impact on a smaller scale before implementing it across the city.

Where we are now

Determining the Call Intake/Triage/Dispatch Team

The City of Ottawa released the Advance Contract Award Notice (ACAN) to notify the public of their intent to award the contract for the Call Intake/Triage/Dispatch Team to Community Navigation of Eastern Ontario (CNEO)/211 is now closed.

Determining the Community Crisis Response Team

The Response Service Delivery of the Safer Alternate Response for Mental Health and Substance Use Crises Request for Proposals is now closed. Thank you to all the collaborators who submitted a proposal. An Allocation Committee will review all proposals and make a recommendation to the General Manager, Community and Social Services at the City of Ottawa.



What's coming next

- The lead organization for the Community Crisis Response Team will be announced in December 2023.
- The organization for the Call Intake/Triage/Dispatch Team will be announced in December.
- Funding will be disbursed to the organizations in late December.
- Implementation of planning for Call Intake and Community Crisis Response Teams takes place from January to June, 2024.
- Launch of the service in Centretown is scheduled for July 2024.

How to get involved

E-Newsletter Sign Up



Everyone in our city has a role to play in addressing mental health and substance use crises. Some of the ways you can get involved includes:

- You can contribute to our Communications and Advocacy, Fundraising, Evaluation or Implementation working groups by contacting guidingcouncil@cesoc.ca.
- Share information about mental health crisis supports with others
- Subscribe to our newsletter for updates or visit www.ottawagcmha.ca
- Follow Ottawa Guiding Council on social media

Meet the Secretariat Team



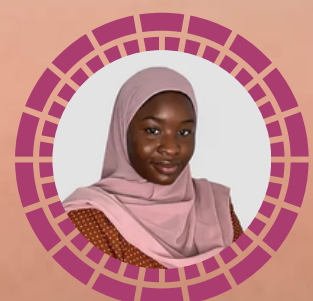
Liz Wigfull

Secretariat Director



Sahada Alolo

Secretariat Director



Liberasse Diallo

Administrative Officer



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