

Alberta's Strategic Clinical Networks

EMPATHY

(Empowering a Multisectoral Pathway towards Healthy Youth)

The Goal

EMPATHY is a research project aimed at enhancing the mental well-being of youth. The project is a stepped model of care which involves schools, families, primary care, and community supports that serve youth and their families.

The Process

The project, beginning in the school environment, includes various approaches to enhance mental well-being including:

- Resiliency lessons for middle school students taught in the classroom by trained staff.
- Universal screening for mental health on an iPad app for all students in middle and high school.
- Guided online interventions for students who are identified as being at risk for developing a mental health problem.
- Referral into community supports such as primary care and specialized mental health services for students who don't respond to the online interventions.
- Cross-ministry collaboration to ensure services are centered around the youth.



The Outcome

EMPATHY was piloted in Red Deer from 2014 to 2015. Early results identified improvements for students involved in the project, including decreased symptoms of depression by 15 per cent over all.

Further results will be evaluated to inform how the project can be adjusted to best meet the needs of diverse communities across Alberta.

The Team

This project is led by the Addiction and Mental Health Strategic Clinical Network (SCN) with support from Zone operational teams.