

Supporting Integration and Coordination between Addiction and Mental Health Services and Supports for Children and Youth: School Mental Health

March 10, 2020

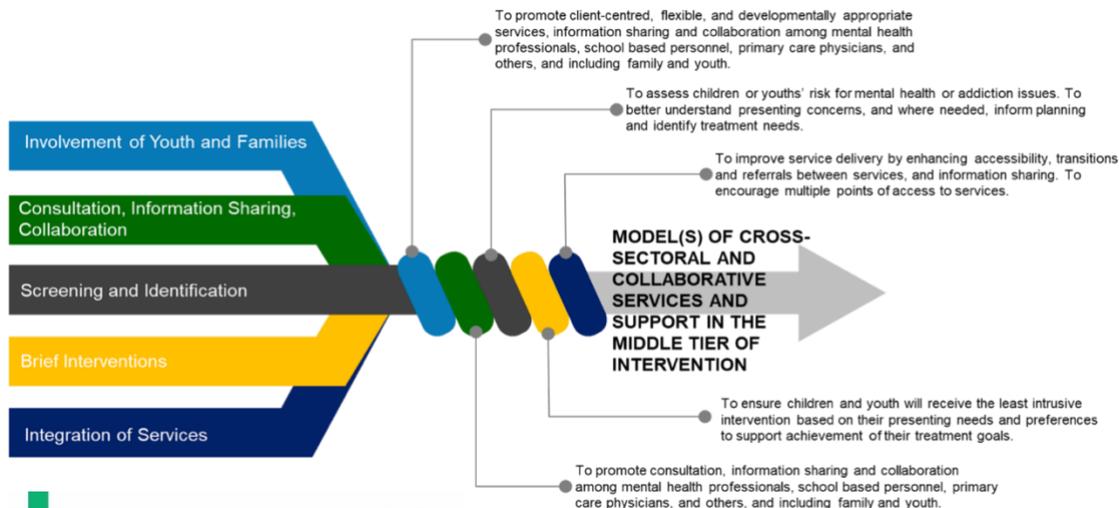
What's this project about?

It is estimated that 10-20% of Canadian youth are affected by a mental illness or disorder, while only 1 in 5 will receive the treatment they need (Mental Health Commission of Canada, 2013). In 2017, the Alberta Mental Health Review Committee called for the health system to “Develop pathways to and from primary care to support coordination within, and transitions between, health and community settings (including schools)” (Alberta Health, 2017). In support of this recommendation, the Addiction and Mental Health SCN entered into a grant agreement with the Ministry of Health to undertake processes leading to the development of a Child and Youth Integrated Mental Health and Addictions Pathway.

How will we do this?

In Phase One we laid the foundations by conducting a comprehensive literature review and environmental scan to identify the models of care that contribute to integrative service delivery and improved outcomes for Albertans. As the deliverable of Phase One, the *Integration of Addiction and Mental Health Services in Schools, Communities, and Primary Care* report summarizes the evidence for mental health and addictions service integration in schools and provides recommendations to inform the development of a child and youth mental health and addictions integrated care pathway.

In Phase Two we partnered with PolicyWise for Children & Families and convened an advisory committee (Design Team) of educational and clinical experts to translate the recommendations from Phase One into a conceptual model for the integration of mental health and addictions services in school settings.



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Where are we now?

In January 2020 we launched Phase Three of this project in which we have partnered with cross-sectoral stakeholders in education and health to implement the recommendations for integration in eight regions spanning Alberta. Core integration strategies currently being implemented include:

- Developing collaborative relationships between schools, families, AHS, and community services
- Developing a standardized process for identification and screening of youth in need of support
- Delivering targeted psychosocial education and brief interventions to high-risk youth
- Developing a standardized referral process to addiction and mental health services in the community

The expected outcomes of Phase Three include:

- The meaningful engagement of youth and families in the design and implementation of new integration platforms
- The implementation of standardized and evidence-based processes for identification, screening, and referral
- Realignment of existing resources to sustain the efficient integration of middle tier supports & services in school settings
- Improved health and educational outcomes for children and youth



Moving Forward

The final Phase of this project will take place January - March 2021 in which we will consolidate the learnings from our regional implementation projects into a provincial pathway, including models of service and support, promoting integrated addiction and mental health care for children and youth for spread and scale throughout Alberta.

Who is involved?

AMH SCN, Government of Alberta Ministry of Health, PolicyWise for Children & Families, and RCSD councils.

For more information on this project, please contact the Addiction and Mental Health Strategic Clinical Network™: AddictionMentalHealth.SCN@albertahealthservices.ca