

# Ottawa City Council Candidate Survey

Mental health has never been as important as it is now.

As a candidate for Ottawa City Council (HCC), we here at the YMHM Canada ask that you please complete the following survey to the best of your ability regarding mental health and what you would work to do to ensure mental health in Ottawa if you are elected this October.

Your answers as well as your name and ward, as well as your answers will appear on our website at [www.yhmcanada.ca/ottawa](http://www.yhmcanada.ca/ottawa).

## Sections

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Name \*

Mike Maguire

I'm running for \*

Mayor

Councillor

If Councillor, what Ward are you running in?

**Campaign Email \***

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**Mental Health in Youth**

A recent report has shown that 1 in 5 students has a diagnosed mental health problem and that about 27% of students between grade 9-12 reported poor mental health and 16% seriously considered suicide in the past year. If elected, what are you going to do to ensure better mental health within not only highschoools within Ottawa, but all schools?

With the limited power the municipality has over health, I would work to limit/prevent any further school shutdowns. Also, the science around the mask mandates is unclear and needs to be far more transparent. The mental health experts I've read (Health Canada, CDC, European Health Agency) all agree that the lockdowns/school shutdowns were a mistake.

If elected, what would you advocate for better to ensure the mental health of youth in Ottawa?

Lowering the overall causes of stress will surely contribute to better overall wellness. My campaign focuses on improving Transit, addressing housing affordability and making Ottawa a safer community. Successful implementation of these goals will provide a far less stressful environment for all Ottawa residents.

If elected, would you support the creation of a City of Ottawa Youth Mental Health Plan to better support youth and their mental health?

I support any initiative that can have a positive, measurable effect on youth mental health. We must hear in mind that the province has to be an active participant in any such initiative but, I think great things could be accomplished.

**Mental Health in Marginalized Communities**

Members of marginalized groups are at a higher risk for mental health-related disorders, suicide, and more. If elected, what are you going to do to help ensure the mental health of those in marginalized communities?

Helping all residents of Ottawa to feel that they are in a single community is one of my goals. The very idea of being marginalized raises concerns about not only mental health but also economic opportunity and social cohesion. I want to remove the barriers that keep any member of our community from feeling that they're a part of the overall community.

Indigenous rates of suicide can be as high as 9 times non-Indigenous peers, and LGBTQ youth can be as high as 14 times more at risk for suicide than straight counterparts. If elected, what are you going to do to reduce the rates of suicide within marginalized communities in Ottawa?

Please see answer above.

## Mental Health in Seniors

The COVID-19 pandemic has disproportionately affected the Senior population and has led to more people having feelings of depression and loneliness. If elected, what are you going to do to ensure the care of seniors and their mental health?

As discussed above, one of the key causes of senior depression and loneliness was the social lockdowns. I will work to limit/end any further lockdowns while also working with Ottawa Public Health to address services for those seniors who are at risk. The key to getting seniors on a healthy path is engagement - I will do whatever it takes to empower the community to engage with our senior population.

Older adults, men in particular, have among the highest suicide rates in the world according to the WHO. If elected, what are you going to do to help ensure the reduction of senior suicide and self-harm in our community?

Please see above.

According to CCSMH, substance misuse and dependency among older adults is a growing but neglected issue. If elected, what are you going to do to help ensure the reduction of senior substance misuse and/or dependency that could possibly lead to an overdose in our community?

Please see above

## Mental Health Services and Supports

If elected, what are you going to do to ensure that hospitals are properly supported by the city to provide help to people seeking mental health treatment or programs?

Yes.

Wait times in Ontario for mental health services can be as high as 919 days. If elected, would you commit to working with all levels of government to ensure that people within your ward and Ottawa are able to access services within a shorter amount of time?

Yes.

The House of Commons has approved a National 988 Suicide and Mental Health Crisis Line (as of 2020). Do you support such a number and if elected, will you commit to working with all levels of government to help ensure such a number is implemented?

Yes.

There are little to no supports for youth transitioning from youth mental health services to the adult sector. If elected, what will you do to bridge this gap in service for young people?

The premise of the question is false. I have personally assisted troubled youth transition to adult care. A large part of the issue relates to privacy concerns as once the youth is legally an adult the care provider can't share information with the parent or guardian. If there is any solution to this it will have to come from the province.

If elected, would you commit to working with and listening to mental health advocacy groups in Ottawa to help aid in giving input into mental health policies for the city?

Within reason yes. I'm only interested in groups that actually provide front-line care. Advocacy groups that provide no services and exist only to lobby are of limited value in my experience.

### Addiction Services and Supports

If elected, would you commit to working with and listening to addiction and harm reduction advocacy groups in Ottawa to help aid in giving input into addiction policies for the city?

Yes. In the past I've worked with Operation Go Home as well as Harvest House Ministries and the Union Mission for Men. Each of these excellent organizations are examples of the tremendous knowledge base that is available in Ottawa to guide policy formation.

Do you support safe injection sites in Ottawa and/or in your ward (if elected)?

Absolutely not. There is no evidence that 'safe injection sites' reduce harm and ample evidence that they destabilize communities. On this subject I would defer to the advice of the harm reduction experts who advise against these practices.

According to the Office of the Chief Coroner, in Ontario up to and including 2020 acute drug toxicity has been the number one cause of death in youth 15-24 years old since 2017. Education about overdose prevention and response with naloxone, harm reduction, and how to use drugs safely can reduce the number of overdose-related deaths in young people as they will have the knowledge and tools to make informed choices about drug use. If elected, how will you ensure that highschool curriculum includes better education about substance use in a non-judgemental safe space?

Your statistic is incorrect. The leading causes are 'Unintentional Injury' followed by suicide, cancer and homicide. Acute drug toxicity is not in the top 10. I support education that explains the risks with illegal drug use - there is no such thing as 'informed choice', street opioids are insanely addictive and everyone should be aware that they must be avoided at all costs. To suggest that there is such a thing as 'use in a non-judgemental safe space' borders on pathological irresponsibility. Lastly, as you already know, the municipality has no role in school curricula

Additional

Is there anything else that you wish to add?

I'm disappointed at the political slant to these questions - you could have added so much more real value to the discussion by avoiding the partisanship.

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