

# 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

1. Mental Health in Youth
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Name \*

Patty Searl

I'm running for \*

Mayor

Councillor

If Councillor, what Ward are you running in?

Ward #21

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?

Within our ward we need more programs available to assist along with a school liaison to help staff as needed. I also believe alot more programs and activities are needed in the ward.

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

More activities to support healthy living and programs in community centres that they can turn to.

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 absolutely would indeed. With three children myself I want to ensure they too have what they need to figure out this complex word and know they are normal and not alone ever.

## 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?

Along with a youth program plan there has to be appropriate outreach and strategies so these communities feel heard and welcomed to participate. Marketing and awareness campaigns must be part of rolling out anything of this nature.

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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?

As communities become identified as an elected official the outreach has to come from us and become more involved. I have worked at first Nations Inuit health branch many decades ago and awareness of issues. This is not an easy one nor will be solved over night but we must be there - listen and appreciate their culture and be available to assist when they reach out and offer ways we can help so they know they have support from an elected official.

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## 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?

Absolutely, more and more seniors have become trapped at home I hear from some. When they used to visit friends at the Legion of seniors centres to play cards or pool diminished to phone calls or meet ups in their cars at a coffee shop parking lot.

As much as there is emphasis this n programs for youth there also needs to be community outreach for seniors.

Seniors have worked so hard their whole lives and I would love to see more community gardens and art craft pottery or stained glass classes in all our communities.

Engagement is key for longevity and a sense of purpose.

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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?

I have recently thought of this particular topic and know so many men who live alone and feel it doesn't matter to reach out and share or it's not masculine enough and also share they are ok when in actual fact our society as a whole needs to do more for men - gender and identity has changed so much that they must have a community /group who are there for them has to be in place. This actually is on my priority list to look into.

Thank you for asking me which also reminded me.

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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?

Community programs and I could take a look at their process and propose an additional check to watch and identify such.

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## 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?

Advocate to the other levels of government for assistance immediately and advocate for more community health hubs to triage in a way to navigate more citizens away from hospitals and to properly trained facilities to better help with treatments and plans.

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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?

Happy to speak to groups and find out what more I can do to expedite an streamline quicker to reduce this time.

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?

Along with reaching out to friends campaign I would love to see more done where people can reach out and request someone to help.

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

I was unaware of this. I would look into should I become elected.

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?

Absolutely I would as indicated throughout this survey.

## 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 I would.

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

They have proven to work but caution locations and ensure no harm to those around and curation where children would play or be..

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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?

Awareness through education and at least speaking about it could save lives.

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Additional

Is there anything else that you wish to add?

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