

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.

Sections

1. Mental Health in Youth
2. Mental Health in Marginalized Communities
3. Mental Health in Seniors
4. Mental Health Supports and Services
5. Addiction Supports and Services

Name *

Matthew Luloff

I'm running for *

Mayor

Councillor

If Councillor, what Ward are you running in?

1

Campaign Email *

Matt@mattluloff.com

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?

As a mental health advocate, I speak very openly and candidly about my struggles with mental health following my service in Afghanistan. I often times find myself with the opportunity to speak to students at the local high schools about local politics. I always take the opportunity to talk about mental health and to share my experiences struggling with it. I try to be a positive example for those struggling, and show that by speaking up and asking for help, you can manage and overcome and accomplish anything you put your mind to.

I will also continue to work in my community to ensure that mental health remains a priority at all levels of government.

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

I provide my constituency office for counselling services, will continue to speak about my own experiences to show that mental health issues can affect everyone, and will continue to advocate for more and better services.

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

When it comes to policies like this, execution is key. I am very interested in exploring this idea.

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?

Speaking honestly and openly about my experiences allows me to reach a wide variety of people. I am very lucky to have a strong relationship with many marginalized communities in the East End, and will continue my honesty and advocacy when it comes to mental health.

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 the chair of the Ottawa Library Board, I have worked to foster inclusive programming and will continue to do so. Deep, meaningful conversations, available to everyone, can make a big difference in fostering understanding and showing that people are not alone in their struggles.

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?

I will continue to support seniors programming at the OPL, continue to work with seniors organizations in my area, and work with my resource centres to meet the needs of our seniors. Activities, close to home, go a long way to building strong, meaningful relationships in our seniors community.

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?

Connection is key. Working to keep seniors connected to the community through programming and other opportunities like participating in the seniors round table and other initiatives can provide a valuable resource while making use of the experience of our seniors.

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?

Substance abuse is a symptom of poor mental health. It is not a standalone issue, it is a comorbidity. Working to improve the root issue will reduce the instances of substance abuse.

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?

The provision of mental health services is a provincial responsibility, however as an advocate, I will continue to call for further investment in mental health services.

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?

Frankly, I was not aware of this issue. Therefore, I am not certain as to the issues in continuity. I commit to learning more, and doing my best to ameliorate the issue.

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?

Yes.

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?

I will commit to continuing engagement with those working on mental health and addiction issues.

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

I support the provision of services that lead to people leading a healthy, productive and fulfilling life. It is so important that we ensure that those suffering from mental health in addiction have the opportunity to attend treatment and find fulfillment and meaningfulness in their lives.

Soboxone, methadone and other replacement therapies should be considered.

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?

Let me be perfectly clear. No healthy human wakes up in the morning and decides that today is the day that they are going to try harmful street drugs. Drug abuse is the symptom of an underlying mental health issue. We need to tackle the root cause. Without providing proper mental health services, those affected will find coping mechanisms, and often times will turn to drugs.

The only informed choice on drug use is to not use drugs.

I am not naïve. I realize that young people, including myself at one age, take the rebellious and experimental years of teenage youth to try different substances. But there is a big difference between youthful rebelliousness and escapism.

Promoting a healthy mental health environment is prevention. And an ounce of prevention is worth a pound of cure.

I do not support teaching children how to safely do drugs. The fact of the matter is that drugs are not safe. You cannot safely do hard drugs.

I do support teaching everyone how to respond to an overdose. I do support promoting mental health awareness, and properly funding programs to deal with mental health issues. Drug abuse is a symptom of a mental health issue.

Additional

Is there anything else that you wish to add?

I appreciate the hard work of everyone working on youth mental health or mental health in general. Thank you very much for the opportunity to fill out your survey.

I realize some of the things that I've said here can be easily taken out of context, so if you wish to follow up with me please call anytime.

I have a deep and personal understanding of mental health and substance use. My opinions are based on quite a bit of reading, and my own experiences. I realize that not everyone will agree, but that is the wonderful thing about living in a free democracy. We can agree to disagree on some premises well working together to solve issues.

This content is neither created nor endorsed by Google.

Google Forms