



Canadian Mental  
Health Association  
Waterloo Wellington



Monday, June 28, 2021

**Sent via email to: [michael.tibollo@ontario.ca](mailto:michael.tibollo@ontario.ca)**

The Honourable Michael A. Tibollo  
Associate Minister of Mental Health and Addictions  
Ministry of Health  
99 Wellesley St. W  
Toronto, ON M7A 1A2

Dear Minister Tibollo,

**RE: Expansion of IMPACT program to 24/7 coverage in Guelph**

On behalf of the City of Guelph, the Guelph Police Service and the Canadian Mental Health Association Waterloo-Wellington, we write to you today to discuss the successes of the Integrated Mobile Police and Crisis Team (IMPACT) program here in Guelph and to jointly ask for your support in piloting IMPACT on a 24/7 basis in our community.

IMPACT has been transformative for Guelph residents experiencing mental health emergencies. The program pairs highly trained Mental Health Clinicians with police officers during calls for service involving a mental health crisis. This means that vulnerable residents involved in 911 calls have access to mental health professionals trained in providing crisis support, reducing unnecessary hospital trips as well as intrusive apprehensions. Currently, IMPACT in Guelph operates from 8 am until midnight. With provincial support, we could expand the program to 24/7 coverage.

Currently, the limited capacity and operating hours of the IMPACT program create challenges for vulnerable community members, and significant expenses for both the Guelph General Hospital and the Guelph Police Service. Over the last four years we have seen a notable uptick in mental health crisis-related calls for service. In 2018, Guelph saw 1988 requests for mental health services and was able to divert 82.3% of them from the hospital through IMPACT. So far in 2021, this number has increased to 2544 and IMPACT has only been able to divert 30.2% of mental health crisis-related service calls. In this same timeframe, Guelph saw a 31.3% increase in calls for service between midnight and 8:00 am, outside of IMPACT hours. Not only would piloting 24/7 IMPACT lead to a reduction of police hours spent in hospital, it would also generate significant savings for our health system. We estimate that

offering IMPACT 24/7 would generate up to \$3.6M in savings a year for Guelph General Hospital while only costing approximately \$1.6M in additional annual expenses.

Provincial support for 24/7 IMPACT would also contribute to the objectives of "Roadmap to Wellness: A Plan to Build Ontario's Mental Health and Addictions System." We welcome the Plan's focus on funding innovative solutions that will fill urgent service gaps while improving both the quality of and access to mental health supports in local communities. IMPACT aligns perfectly with these provincial priorities, and would allow the province to test a promising local solution that could be implemented province-wide.

Thank you for considering our call for provincial funding to operate a 24/7 IMPACT pilot in our community. We would welcome the opportunity to meet with you to discuss this matter directly. City staff will follow up with your office to propose potential scheduling options. Working together, we can make a real difference for the people of Guelph, while learning important lessons that may benefit all of Ontario.

Sincerely,

**Mayor Cam Guthrie**

Guelph City Hall, 1 Carden Street, Guelph, ON N1H 3A1  
519-837-5643  
mayor@guelph.ca  
guelph.ca

**Helen Fishburn**, Chief Executive Officer

Canadian Mental Health Association, Waterloo-Wellington  
47 Wyndham Street N, Guelph, ON N1H 0A1  
844-264-2993  
hfishburn@cmhaww.ca

**Chief Gordon Cobey**, Chief of Police

Office of the Chief of Police  
Guelph Police Service, 15 Wyndham Street south, Guelph, ON N1H 4C6  
519-824-1212 extension 7268

CC The Honourable Doug Ford, Premier of Ontario; the Honourable Christine Elliott, Minister of Health; the Honourable Sylvia Jones, Solicitor General; and Mike Schreiner, Member of Provincial Parliament for Guelph.