

Webinar Recap for September 13th, 2021

LTC+ Acting on Pandemic Learning Together

TOPIC

Wellness Together Canada – a mental health portal for everyone in Canada

KEY AREA(S)

Prevention, People in the Workforce

SPEAKER(S)

- AnnMarie Churchill, PhD, Executive Director for Stepped Care Solutions

OBJECTIVES

- To present the Wellness Together Canada website's mental health and substance use supports and resources.

SUMMARY

- Wellness Together Canada is a free, online mental health and substance use support service available nationally available 24 hours a day, 7 days a week and are designed for youth and adults. It is supported by Kids Help Phone, Homewood Health and Stepped Care Solutions. The site provides evidence-based resources for self-directed learning, peer-to-peer connections, coaching and counselling. Wellness Together Canada is a population based virtual expression of the SC2.0 model and is designed to align processes with SC2.0 principles and core components.
- Stakeholder feedback informs the design and types of services included as part of Wellness Together Canada's resources and interventions, which increases the flexibility and adaptation of the website's content. Federal public servants, health care workers, veterans, older adults, substance use programs and first responders have collaborated and/or co-designed the tailored programming for the Wellness Together Canada site.
- At present, national polling has revealed the following common concerns: anxiety, stress, depressive symptoms, substance use, as well as grief and loneliness. As such, the site's resources and interventions are designed to aid with these concerns and are flexible to change.
- The Wellness Together Canada website mainly addresses the following topics:
 - Coping with Covid-19

- Managing low mood
- Managing worry
- Coping with stress
- Strengthening relationships
- Managing substance use
- Mental health and substance use resources and supports include:
 - Immediate text support
 - Self-assessment and tracking tools
 - Tools and apps for concerns such as anxiety, low mood, and substance use
 - Peer-to-peer mental health and substance use supports
 - Coaching and e-courses
 - One-on-one professional, free counselling where privacy is protected
 - Live group support
- The mental wellness self-assessment on the website provides information about the person's mood, well-being and functioning, which can be tracked over time It is also possible to receive reminders to retake the assessment on a regular basis and track the individual's wellness progress.
- The website has received a recent upgrade and has added a section for Residential School Crisis Support which was co-designed with Indigenous artists, advisors, and Indigenous Services Canada.
- Future anticipated developments for the site include:
 - Improved user experience through the portal
 - Local and specialized resources and links
 - Wellness Together companion app

Questions

1. **Have you been noticing from your review of trends if you are, for example, in long term care, reaching primarily leaders, frontline team members and are you capturing that data for online users?**

- As there is a lack of information gathered for privacy reasons, Wellness Together Canada uses Google analytics and so is only able to track geographical location, ages, gender; it cannot track the careers or roles of its users. They are working with a user experience team to get more information on those using the site without interfering with those accessing care. A further question remains as to whether those accessing the website would want to provide more information.
- 2. Will WTC be reaching out to health profession regulators in the future so that they can share this resource?**
 - Discussions are being held at present with a stakeholder engagement team on how to approach groups. There is currently a partnership with a group of pharmacies and Health Canada have also been a large promoter.
 - 3. For older adults isolated in their homes or are not computer savvy, how do they learn about your service so that they can reach out?**
 - Wellness Together Canada is currently reaching out to subject matter experts to better understand how to reach this demographic. There is a phone number available to reach the counsellors and efforts are being made on how to get the phone number to areas older adults can access. This phone number may be possibly promoted on TV shows most likely watched by older adults.
 - 4. Do you have posters or knowledge materials that can be used to share more widely?**
 - Wellness Together has developed a tool kit. For questions, engagement and feedback, contact Annmarie Churchill (annmarie.churchill@steppedcaresolutions.com) or Missy Scherkenback (missy.scherkenbach@steppedcaresolutions.com). Also, Julie Drury from Health Canada has a team who can provide information.
 - 5. Are there any considerations for providing programming specifically for family caregivers of those older adults in long term care?**
 - Wellness Together Canada is seeking representatives from this group to provide guidance/co-design appropriate tools. A future offering may be to provide peer-to-peer support for family and information caregivers.
 - 6. Has Wellness Together Canada looked at issues most troubling for older adults?**
 - Wellness Together Canada will be assessing issues specifically related to older adults in the future. Homewood Health, the counselling resource, has data on the topic, but has been less used by older adults. They will also be using Google metric to track which groups are accessing their resources.

7. Do you have trained peer support workers available? Do you have a peer support training partner?

- Wellness Together Canada uses trained peer support workers through Progress Place (Ontario), Channel (NFLD/Labrador) and l'Association québécoise pour la réadaptation psychosociale (AQRP). Future consideration will be to work with peer support training groups/trainers for older adults.

8. How does a person become a trained counsellor on the site?

- Contact Progress Place to learn more about training.
- It is possible to sign up right away with Together All (volunteer opportunity) and help support people online.

9. What has been the cost to date to develop the site?

- \$65,000.00 covers all elements of the portal.

10. Has there been any support to provide resources in languages other than English and French?

- Not at this stage but Wellness Together Canada has been reaching out to partner with other community organizations and tailor when possible.

RESOURCES SHARED

Listed below are the resources mentioned during the webinar:

- [Wellness Together Canada](#)
- [Mieux-Être Canada | Accueil](#)
- [Togetherall](#)

WEBINAR RECORDING

- [Watch the full webinar here!](#)

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