

# Roots of Hope Early Adopters Backgrounder

## Suicide Prevention Community Council of Hamilton + CMHA Hamilton



### Why Hamilton is participating

The Suicide Prevention Community Council of Hamilton, in collaboration with the Canadian Mental Health Association of Hamilton, is very pleased that the city has been chosen as an Early Adopter for the Mental Health Commission of Canada's Roots of Hope suicide prevention and life promotion program. Together, we share a desire to ground our current and future work in a coordinated, evidence-informed suicide prevention model. We intend to build on existing hospital and community expertise and align ourselves with best practices.

### What Hamilton wants out of the program

We believe the fact that our work falls in line with many of the Roots of Hope's five pillars demonstrates both a community readiness and an opportunity to implement new strategies that will help reduce suicide. Hamilton has a city-wide suicide prevention strategy and has recently engaged the community in identifying practical strategies to reduce suicide through our Community Strategies to Support the Zero Suicide Initiative Conference. We are keen to work with our community partners in implementing new action plans for each pillar.

### Why other communities should consider becoming an Early Adopter

Communities should consider becoming a Roots of Hope Early Adopter for several reasons. First is the value in the program's clearly defined pillars: supports, training, awareness, means safety, and research. Second, by partnering with the Mental Health Commission of Canada, Early Adopters receive access to evidenced-based tools and join a community of practice with other program participants. And third, the model provides a common framework and language for communicating the core elements of suicide prevention, which makes it easier for communities to understand and take part.

### Why it's important to address suicide prevention at the community level

Given that, at its core, suicide prevention is everyone's responsibility, a whole-community approach is required. Such an approach engages priority populations, health-care providers, staff at local agencies staff, educational institutions, public health organizations, first responders, workplaces, and the broader community.

### Why it's important for Hamilton to combat stigma around suicide and mental health

Our community continues to work hard at implementing stigma reduction strategies to improve help seeking and access to mental health services and supports for vulnerable residents. Research continues to show that cultural and self-stigma around suicide and mental health restricts help seeking and access, which several of our proposed action plans will help reduce.

## Contact information

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