



Mental Health  
Commission  
of Canada

Commission de  
la santé mentale  
du Canada



Ontario Shores  
Centre for Mental Health Sciences

# **Schizophrenia Quality Standards**

*National demonstration project to  
advance schizophrenia treatment  
and care delivery in Canada*

*Project Overview - July 2024*



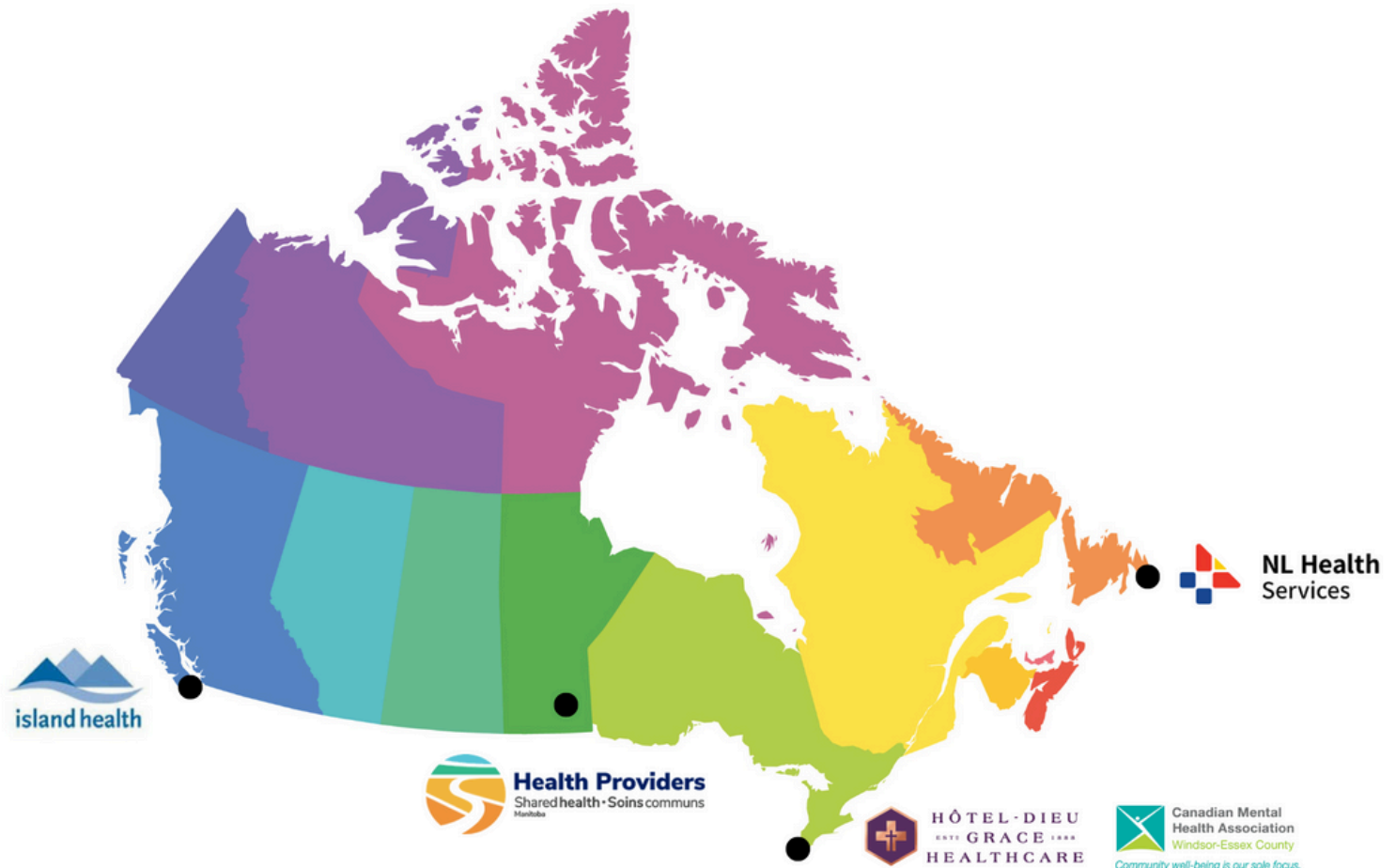
Schizophrenia  
Quality Standards  
National  
Demonstration Project

## About the project

Many people living with schizophrenia do not receive optimal care.

As part of a nationwide effort to advance schizophrenia care, the Mental Health Commission of Canada (MHCC) and Ontario Shores Centre for Mental Health Sciences (Ontario Shores) are collaborating to support the implementation of Ontario Health's Schizophrenia Quality Standards (Standards) at four health-care demonstration sites:

1. Adult Forensic Mental Health Services, Manitoba
2. Hôtel-Dieu Grace Healthcare and Canadian Mental Health Association, Windsor Essex, Ontario
3. Newfoundland and Labrador Health Services, Newfoundland and Labrador
4. Seven Oaks Tertiary Mental Health Facility, British Columbia



## Project goals

- Advance schizophrenia treatment in Canada by supporting organizations in the implementation and measurement of practices based on current research and evidence
- Strengthen patient outcomes and quality of life for those living with schizophrenia
- Reduce variability of care in nationwide treatment practices for schizophrenia
- Customize and evaluate the effectiveness of interventions tailored to regional and cultural contexts
- Develop a national toolkit for organizations across Canada interested in implementing the Standards, to be launched in the summer of 2025

## The need for quality standards

There is substantial variability in care throughout Canada, and many people living with schizophrenia do not receive optimal care. It takes 14-17 years for clinical evidence regarding schizophrenia care to be implemented in routine clinical practice. Quality standards synthesize the best available clinical evidence and help close this gap. They are intended to reduce variability and ensure that a minimum standard of care is established for each person.

## The benefits of the Schizophrenia Quality Standards

The Standards provide benefits to people living with schizophrenia, those with lived experience and care providers:

- Patients, families, and caregivers know what to ask for in their care.
- Health-care professionals know what care to offer on the basis of evidence and expert consensus.
- Health-care organizations measure, assess, and improve the quality of care they provide.

The Standards were developed by Ontario Health and informed by guidance from the National Institute for Health and Care Excellence (NICE). Adapted to the Canadian context and local conditions, the Standards include a series of [11 statements for schizophrenia care for adults in hospitals](#) and [15 statements for schizophrenia care in the community for adults](#). The statements are actionable, measurable, and grounded in the best available evidence.

## Implementation support for demonstration sites

The MHCC and Ontario Shores are supporting the demonstration sites by providing resources and guidance on all of the quality statements in the Standards. The primary focus of the demonstration project is the implementation of the four quality statements that have a significant impact on schizophrenia care and patient outcomes and require considerable resources for education, training, and measurement:

- Treatment with clozapine
- Treatment with long-acting injectable antipsychotic medication
- Cognitive behavioural therapy for psychosis
- Family intervention

Each demonstration site will receive support through a customized and regional approach to deliver evidence-based care and to strengthen patient outcomes through these four core statements. Some of the benefits of participation in the project include learning events and core training as part of a National Community of Practice, tools and materials for implementation and data collection, and change management support.

## Nationwide expansion

The demonstration project will serve as a platform to develop a bilingual implementation toolkit to support national scale-up for other organizations interested in implementing the Standards. The input of subject matter experts, including patients, families, caregivers, and health-care providers, will be included to inform the successful scale-up of the project.

## Project plan pillars and activities (2024-2025)



### ***Demonstration***

- Implementation of Standards and measurement-based tools
- Maintain an effective governance operating model and foster continued collaboration

- Deliver core trainings
- Co-lead Community of Practice
- Provide implementation support and resources

### **Evaluation**

- Lead the Evaluation Working Group
- Lead the co-creation of data collection tools
- Develop an evaluation report

### **Scale-Up**

- Establish a Toolkit Working Group
- Develop a bilingual implementation toolkit
- Develop a sustainability plan
- Build and nurture partnerships for uptake

## **About the partners**

### [Mental Health Commission of Canada](#)

The Mental Health Commission of Canada (MHCC) leads the development and dissemination of innovative programs and tools to support the mental health and wellness of Canadians. Through its unique mandate from the Government of Canada, the MHCC supports federal, provincial, and territorial governments as well as organizations in the implementation of sound public policy. The MHCC's current mandate aims to deliver on priority areas identified in the [Mental Health Strategy for Canada](#) in alignment with the delivery of its [strategic plan](#).

Since 2007, the MHCC has developed experience and expertise in accompanying and supporting individuals, organizations, and systems across Canada in implementing tools, resources, and processes to improve mental health, care, and services. Examples of past and ongoing projects include housing and homelessness, recovery-oriented practice, stepped care, quality mental health services, suicide prevention, the intersection of mental health and substance use health, stigma reduction, mental health awareness and literacy training, and psychological health and safety in the workplace.

### [Ontario Shores Centre for Mental Health Sciences](#)

Ontario Shores Centre for Mental Health Sciences (Ontario Shores) is a leader in mental health care, providing a range of specialized assessment and treatment services for people living with complex mental illness. Patients benefit from a recovery-oriented environment of care, built on compassion, inspiration, and hope. Ontario Shores engages in research, education, and advocacy initiatives to advance the mental health care system.

Ontario Shores first implemented the Quality Standards in 2016 and since that time has developed expertise in its application of the Standards with an ongoing focus on monitoring, quality improvement, and delivery sustainability of the most effective treatments for schizophrenia. In 2019, Ontario Shores partnered with 15 health-care organizations across Ontario to lead a Community of Practice as part of facilitating the implementation.

## About the demonstration sites

### **Adult Forensic Mental Health Services, Manitoba**

Adult Forensic Mental Health Services is a single centralized entity spanning two hospitals (the [Health Sciences Centre Winnipeg](#) and the [Selkirk Mental Health Centre](#)) and [community services](#). The program provides service across the spectrum of forensic mental health care, including court-ordered assessments, intervention supports for individuals who come under the Criminal Code Review Board (not criminally responsible or unfit to stand trial), and assertive engagement supports for people within the [Winnipeg Mental Health Court program](#).

The majority of the people who receive treatment in the program are living with severe and persistent mental illness. Care is grounded in person-centred approaches to support people to reach their full potential. Safety is managed through risk mitigation planning, and individuals are provided with support to access all eligible resources as they reintegrate into the community.

### **Hôtel-Dieu Grace Healthcare and Canadian Mental Health Association, Windsor Essex, Ontario**

[Hôtel-Dieu Grace Healthcare](#) is committed to improving the health and well-being of the Windsor-Essex community through the delivery of person-centred, value-based care. Hôtel-Dieu Grace Healthcare is a specialty hospital offering services in mental health and addictions, rehabilitative care, complex medical and palliative care, and children and youth mental health. Hôtel-Dieu Grace Healthcare offers a unique blend of services including but not limited to community- and home-based services. In collaboration with their health-care and intersectoral partners, Hôtel-Dieu Grace Healthcare is providing care in new ways and in new locations throughout the region to address barriers, improve access and patient outcomes, and improve the overall patient experience.

The [Canadian Mental Health Association \(CMHA WECB\)](#) is the lead provider and advocate of specialized community mental health services integrated with comprehensive primary health care and concurrent services in Windsor-Essex. All services are provided from the perspective of a trauma-informed recovery philosophy. CMHA WECB collaborates with a variety of health-care and social

service partners to provide comprehensive support for clients. As an integral partner of Hôtel-Dieu Grace Healthcare, CMHA WECB facilitates community care for clients who may have received care as inpatients or outpatients at Hôtel-Dieu Grace Healthcare. With the proximity and integration of mental health leadership between the two organizations, clients can experience supported transitions between CMHA WECB and Hôtel-Dieu Grace Healthcare programs to facilitate their recovery.

### **Newfoundland and Labrador Health Services, Newfoundland and Labrador**

Newfoundland and Labrador Health Services ([NL Health Services](#)) brings together five formerly separate health entities: Eastern Health, Central Health, Western Health, Labrador-Grenfell Health, and the Newfoundland and Labrador Centre for Health Information. The creation of a provincial health authority was announced following recommendations from Health Accord NL. NL Health Services is responsible for delivering health and community services to more than 528,000 people living in Newfoundland and Labrador and employs over 22,000 people.

### **Seven Oaks Tertiary Mental Health Facility, British Columbia**

[Seven Oaks](#) provides individualized treatment based on clinical best practices and employs psychosocial rehabilitation approaches using a combination of modelling, support, encouragement, education, vocational readiness training, and independent living skills acquisition and enhancement to enable each resident to achieve their maximum independent functioning and ongoing success in the community.

Seven Oaks is part of Island Health's Adult Tertiary Mental Health program, which also includes services available at [Cowichan Lodge Adult Tertiary Mental Health Facility](#) in Duncan, B.C.

## **How to stay involved**

- Sign up for our [Newsletter](#) for exciting updates on the Schizophrenia Quality Standards National Demonstration Project.
- Read our [press release](#).
- Stay tuned for the release of a toolkit to support the national scale-up for organizations interested in implementing the Standards in the summer of 2025.
- If you are a person living with schizophrenia, a caregiver, a health-care provider, or someone affiliated with an organization that would like to learn more and/or to get involved with the project, please contact us at [mha@mentalhealthcommission.ca](mailto:mha@mentalhealthcommission.ca).