

Media Advisory
For Immediate Release
September 19, 2016



Toronto – The Ontario University and College Health Association (OUCHA) which represents health care professionals working in health and counselling centres in post-secondary institutions, has released data from the Ontario Reference Group of the National College Health Assessment (NCHA) 2016, in which more than 25,000 students from 20 Ontario institutions participated. This is the second time the survey was administered at post-secondary institutions in Ontario – the first was in 2013.

The survey results suggest that depression, anxiety and suicide attempts are trending up among Ontario's post-secondary students.

OUCHA is committed to promoting student safety and wellbeing. OUCHA urges the Provincial Government to reconsider the existing funding models so that the necessary health and mental health care services for Emerging Adults in Ontario may be delivered. The NCHA report demonstrates unmet need among the post-secondary Emerging Adult population.

REPORT DETAILS

WHAT: The report provides data on health post-secondary student health behaviours.

WHEN: Data was collected during the Spring of 2016.

KEY FINDINGS:

- 65% of students reported experiencing overwhelming anxiety in the previous year (up from 57% in 2013)
- 46% of students reported feeling so depressed in the previous year it was difficult to function (up from 40% in 2013)
- 13% of students had seriously considered suicide in the previous year (up from 10% in 2013)
- 2.2% of students (or 558 students) reported a suicide attempt within the previous year (up from 1.5% in 2013). 9% of students (or 2,245 students) indicated that had attempted suicide, but not in the previous year.

ACTION REQUIRED:

OUCHA is calling on the government and stakeholders to:

1. Prioritize Mental Health and Addictions in Emerging Adults by creating and committing to a standalone provincial action plan that recognizes the key role of post-secondary education institutions in supporting Emerging Adults.
2. Support the development of Mental Health and Addictions regional strategies and services for Emerging Adults with post-secondary education institutions as key partners that will improve access to high quality, timely services and appropriate transitions between locations and systems.
3. Develop and provide new funding models that support and sustain clinical hubs located on post-secondary education campuses and are tied to relevant population needs.

MEDIA CONTACT: Email President of OUCHA at: ouchaontario@gmail.com