



Hope and Possibilities

2021



Hope + Me

Mood Disorders Association of Ontario

Celebrating 36 Years of Hope!
Hope + Me
Support. Recovery. Community.

Mood Disorders Association of Ontario

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Mood Disorders Association of Ontario

Our Vision and Mission Statements

Our Vision

People with mood disorders and their families receive the support they need in order to recover and to lead healthy lives.

We contribute to an Ontario where people with mood disorders and their families receive the support they require. We offer services in a timely, empathetic and compassionate manner. Using evidence-based options that meet our clients' needs, they can create hope for a recovery and a healthy future.

Our Mission

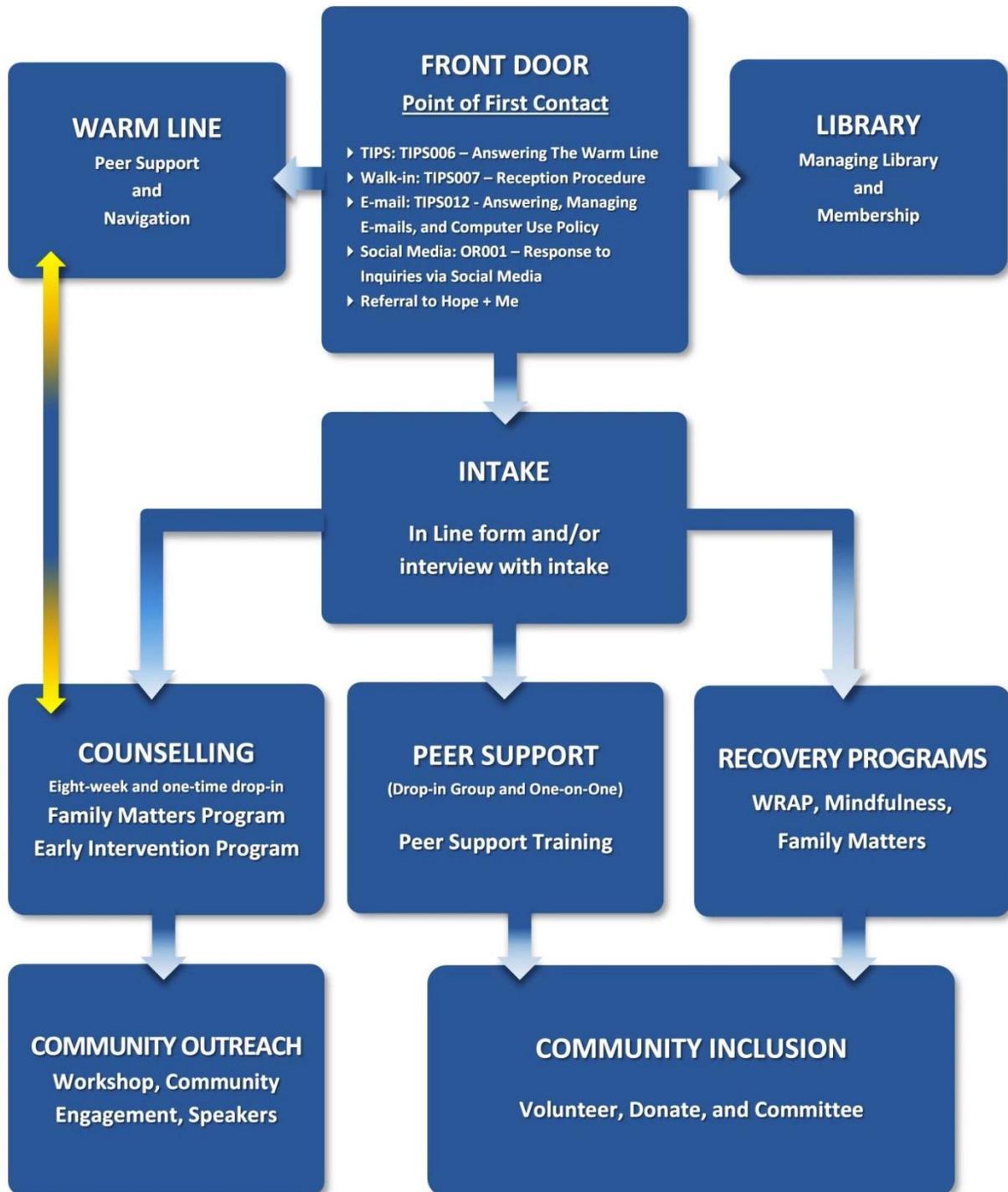
To deliver quality Peer Support, and clinical programs and services, developed through the lens of lived experience; to offer hope to those living with mood disorders and their families and empower their recovery.

Peer Support through the lived experience is our role and what we do every day. It is the supportive relationship between people who have the lived experience in common: that is, personal knowledge about mental illness gained through direct, first-hand experience; or experience supporting a loved one, family member, or a friend.

Peer Support is an important contributor toward recovery. Through our Pathways to Care Recovery Model, Hope + Me - MDAO provides services and programs in support of people with mood disorders; and their families.

Our programs must meet the highest of standards. Hope + Me - MDAO provides the evidence that demonstrates the effectiveness of our programs while epitomizing and championing the value of lived experience. This standard is reflected in all our programs and services.

Streams of Recovery Map



Our Values

The following five core values embody the attitude and behaviour we promote and encourage across our organization. They are fundamental to our relationship with our stakeholders.

The Hope + Me - MDAO team demonstrates its commitment to these core values through our decisions, daily activities, and interactions with our partners, clients, and each other.

Lived Experience

People who have lived experience with a mental illness are valued and respected members of Hope + Me. We are empathetic to their journey. We recognize and value the diversity of individuals' lived experiences and strive to ensure our services are integrated and designed to meet their needs.

Through peer support, Hope + Me - MDAO provides the power of sharing the lived experience. This is a source of hope and support for recovery, and values the shared empathy that comes from lived experiences.

Compassion

We intend that everything we do is with compassion and empathy for our clients. Hope + Me honours interpersonal relationships that value authenticity, trust, and respect.

Accessibility

We strive to be accessible, inclusive and responsive to people who come to Hope + Me when they need help. We honour and value every individual's independence, self-determination, and intrinsic right to make their own choices as they establish their path to recovery.

Collaboration and Integration

We understand the importance of building effective vertical and horizontal partnerships with other health services providers. This practice allows Hope + Me to leverage the strengths and capacity of our organization, and others, in the overall provision of mental health services in our communities.

We value honesty, consistency, and accountability in all our partnerships.

Innovation

Hope + Me recognizes the need for continuous challenge through the development of new ideas. Our innovative program and service offerings are designed to foster resilience and to meet diverse needs across many communities.

Strategic Goals Model



Our Impact

We emphasize lived experience as a powerful pathway to hope, healing, and recovery.

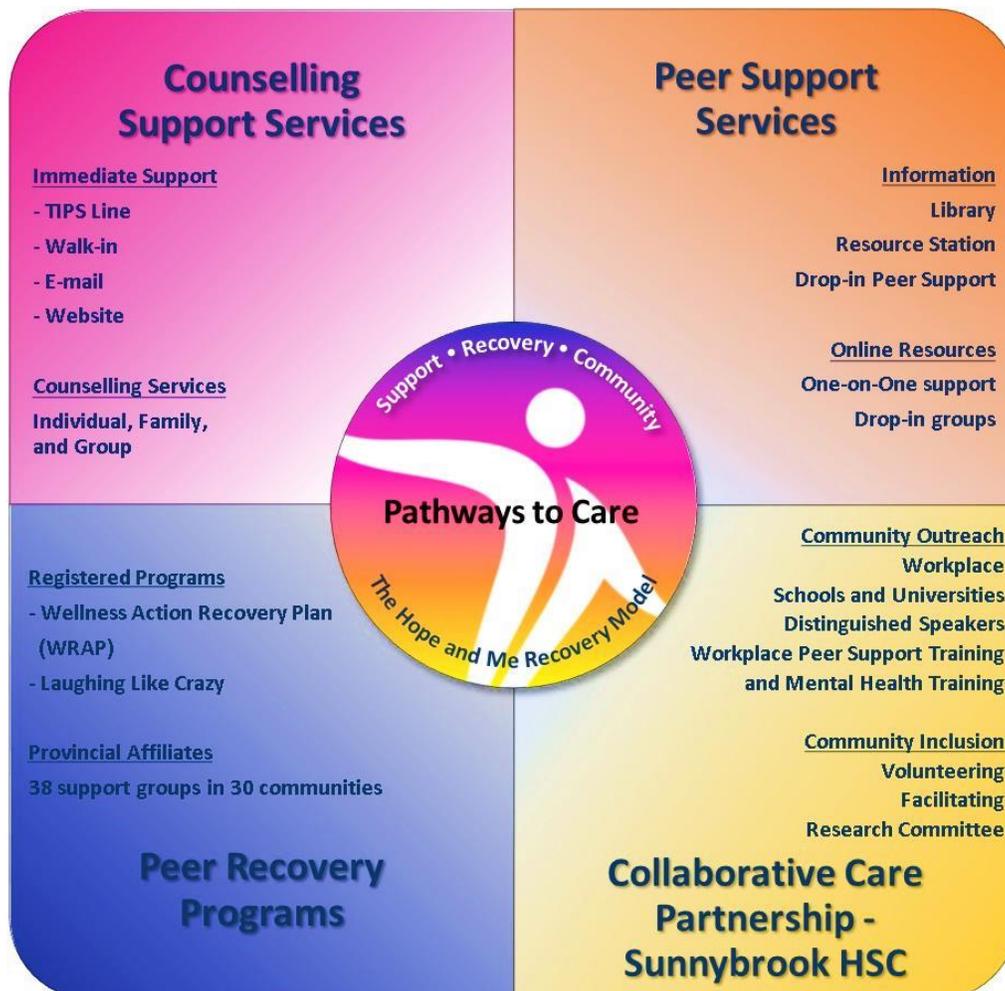
Hope + Me have been offering **support to individuals living with mood disorders since 1985**. Our programs and services are offered free of charge in communities across the province.

More recently, we have focused on initiatives that encourage routine mental health screening and early intervention. These initiatives help to identify mental health issues as they arise, and help to mitigate their progression and impact. **In 2020, Hope + Me contributed to bettering the lives of more than 78,000 adults, youth, and their families across Ontario.**

Our Programs

Hope + Me - MDAO offers a wide range of programs both registered and non-registered.

Pathways to Care: the Hope + Me Recovery Model



Peer Support Programs at Hope + Me

Our Ontario-wide and evidence-based peer support programming is pivotal to fostering resiliency, promoting self-care, instilling empowerment, and building hope.

Telephone Information and Peer Support (TIPS)

The Hope + Me 'Warm Line' is operated by our trained volunteers. These peer support workers identify as peers having lived experience with mood disorders such as depression, anxiety, or bipolar disorder.

Workers on the TIPS Warm Line provide an empathetic, listening ear to callers. They also provide information on services and programs at Hope + Me and other resources available in Ontario. Our TIPS phone line is also open to family members and supporters of people living with mood disorders.

Our toll-free number (1-888-486-8236) allows free telephone access to helpful information and support for callers from across the province.

The TIPS phone line is open Monday to Friday from 9:30 AM to 5:00 PM.

Drop-In Peer Support Groups

Drop-in groups at Hope + Me - MDAO provide safe, supportive, and comfortable spaces to share experiences and mental health challenges with a group of peers. **We offer a variety of groups for depression, bipolar disorder, and anxiety, and social groups for women, men, members of the LGBTQ community, and much more.**

Groups are administered by two trained peer facilitators who are either a staff or volunteer member of the organization. Our facilitators ensure each group runs smoothly and that everyone in attendance has an equal opportunity to share their experiences and challenges.

There is no registration required for our drop-in groups. **Currently, through 2020-21, all groups are offered in a virtual, online format as part of our response to the public health crisis.**

Testimonials for Hope + Me Peer Support

"Thank you for offering these services. I've learned that peer support is a valuable resource in healing. It's helped me to recognize that I'm not alone in my fight. As well as recognize new strengths in me, as reflected by others who can relate. These experiences don't happen often in my life, and it is a gift unlike any other to be able to access" – a Peer Support participant

"Please keep online groups going. It's safer and easier to attend." – A Peer Support Participant

One-on-One Peer Support

This Peer Support program at Hope + Me provides one-to-one support for individuals coping with current mental health difficulties, or supporting someone with mental health challenges.

Our Peer Supporters identify as having lived experience with mental health difficulties, or identify as having provided such support. They are trained to utilize their experiences in the support of others who need assistance with mental health difficulties.

The On-on-One program aims to support individuals who are interested in receiving support and working on an area of difficulty they are currently coping with. Peer Supporters within this program utilize a strengths-based, holistic perspective when offering support, and draw upon personal experiences while empowering individuals to create positive change.

Key features of One-on-One Peer Support at Hope + Me - MDAO:

- Either volunteers, or staff (not necessarily the same person each time).
- Professionally trained in the delivery of peer support.
- Can collaborate with you to help work towards personal goals, or lend an empathetic ear.

Testimonial for One-on-One Programs

“The strengths of peer support, in my experience, are that it can make people feel less alone and isolated, that it can help people realize that they are not the only one experiencing these mental health struggles, peer support can provide much needed empathy, sympathy and understanding, it can bring up new and interesting views to consider, and in peer support you can help someone else even while you are struggling and that is rewarding and can feel great.”

– A Peer Support Participant (**Partnerships in Peer Support**)

In addition, Hope + Me has established partnerships with **Sunnybrook Hospital, St. Michael’s Hospital, Hong Fook Mental Health Association, and University of Toronto Scarborough campus**. We support our partners with development, training and supervision of their own various peer support programs.

Recovery Programs

Recovery programs at Hope + Me - MDAO require telephone or online registration. Program facilitators are peer supporters who have undergone specialized training and/or have substantial personal experience. Programs are offered periodically and run for a specific length of time. They are more structured than drop-in peer support groups and have a range of formats.

The following lists our current suite of recovery programs at Hope + Me.

Wellness Recovery Action Plan®

Wellness Recovery Action Plan (WRAP®) is a non-clinical, non-diagnostic recovery program lasting eight weeks that explores key recovery concepts and tools that people can use to keep themselves well. This program helps participants to develop their own plan for recovery using the principles of hope, responsibility, education, self-advocacy, and support.

The benefits of WRAP are:

- Increases in positive attitudes and knowledge about recovery and self-advocacy;
- Significant improvements in symptoms including greater reductions in depression and anxiety scores;
- Preparedness and crisis planning, and a greater belief in the possibility of recovery; and
- Hopefulness, higher personal confidence and goal orientation, and increased ability for self-management.

A WRAP Testimonial

“I believe in wellness and recovery because I have experienced them myself. After years of struggling with mental health issues, I decided I needed to focus on my personal wellness goals. I took WRAP, and my control over my wellness increased once I made the daily maintenance plan. To me, hope is not so much a feeling as the action of taking responsibility for my wellness, which is why I am so grateful for the WRAP Program at Hope + Me.” – Jenny R.

Laughing Like Crazy (LLC)

Laughing Like Crazy is an intensive, group program of 16 weeks duration that teaches participants how to develop a stand-up comedy routine based on their experiences with mental health and the mental health care system.

Each meeting combines mutual support and group building while participants learn to write, hone, and perform a stand-up comedy routine. The culmination of the program is a public showcase where participants perform to a live audience.

For both individuals and communities, these showcases raise awareness, reduce public stigma, and are an opportunity to create a meaningful dialogue, all on the issues and impacts of mental health. There are now over one hundred graduates of this intensive program who can be booked for public and private performances.

Laughing Like Crazy Testimonial

“I think [peer support] was a vital part of the LLC program, because we were going to be delving into very personal, very specific experiences around mental health, mental health professions and our experiences with it. So, I don’t think I could have done it with a group of people that didn’t understand what it was. I believe that comedy is a major factor in managing the wellness of my mood disorder. I hope others find it as valuable as I have.” – Rob C.

Managing Your Depression and Anxiety

Managing Your Depression and Anxiety is an educational recovery group for those interested in understanding and developing tools to cope with depression and anxiety.

Through the eight-week program, participants will learn:

- how thoughts, feelings and behaviours contribute to depression and anxiety;
- how to manage thoughts, feelings and behaviours related to depression and anxiety;
- strategies to manage stress, worry and anger.

Other Recovery Programs and Partnerships

Hope + Me offers additional recovery programs including:

- ***Strengthening Families Together***
- ***Chaos to Calm: Developing Stronger Boundaries***
- ***Mindfulness Based Cognitive Therapy***
- ***Laughing Like Crazier***

We offer several recovery programs in collaboration with our partners at St. Michael's Hospital, Sunnybrook Hospital, and Unison Health and Community Services.

Counselling Programs

Early Intervention Program

The Early Intervention Program provides support to people ages 14 to 35 who are experiencing early symptoms of psychosis, or who have been diagnosed with psychosis. Formal diagnosis is not required to access services. The program also supports individuals with other mental health issues, substance use concerns, or dual diagnoses. Family members can also receive support and guidance.

The program is structured to provide interventional support for individuals along their journey of recovery. Specifics of the program include assessment, individual counselling, psychoeducation, and referrals for individuals and their family members who need help to understand and cope with their mental health issues and diagnoses.

Testimonial for Early Intervention

"I definitely have more tools in my toolbox to draw from and just the knowing that there are other people like me out there... and even though I knew this before, it's different when you're actually talking to them and hearing their thoughts and experiences and that's been a very important part for me for sure." – Neil M.

The Early Intervention Program is funded by the Toronto Central LHIN. Hope + Me provides program services free of charge.

Family Matters Peer Support and Recovery Program

The Family Matters Program provides support to individuals of ages 16 to 65 who are experiencing challenges related to mood issues, multiple mental health issues, addictions, developmental disabilities, ADHD, and learning disabilities. Clients and their family members do not need a formal diagnosis to access services.

Counsellors can coordinate family sessions to address specific issues or goals, although the program does not offer family therapy. The Family Matters Program does provide one-on-one counselling, education, assessment and referral, as well as open and structured support groups.

This program is funded by the Toronto Central LHIN and services are provided free of charge.

Family Matters Testimonial

“This is such a valuable service for families. I have learned something new, [and] felt challenged and supported every time I come. Everyone has a story and I have learned so much from the other members of the group. It has also been great to share my story and give hope to others on their journey.” – An Open Family Forum Participant

Short-term Programs

Short-term counselling at Hope + Me is a strengths-based and goal-focused service that involves ongoing assessment over eight structured sessions. The emphasis is on working towards goals both in and out of sessions.

Counselling involves approaches such as CBT, solution focus, and mindfulness, all depending on the client’s needs.

Collaborative Care with Sunnybrook Hospital

In collaboration with Sunnybrook Health Sciences Centre, we provide short-term, episodic psychiatric care and follow-up to clients actively engaged in other Hope + Me programs. Referrals to Hope + Me psychiatrists come from our Counselling and Peer Support teams.

Our staff psychiatrists prioritize care for patients and clients who do not currently have their own psychiatrist. As such, our staff do not see patients who are already accessing psychiatric care elsewhere, and do not provide second opinions as to diagnosis or treatment.



Outcomes of Collaborative Care Rotation at Hope + Me

Our accomplishments at Hope + Me – MDAO are made possible through meaningful partnerships in the mental health community. Sunnybrook Health Sciences Centre is one of our most important strategic partners.

In working with Sunnybrook, an innovative collaborative-care service at Hope + Me has been initiated which incorporates the services of fifth-year psychiatric residents to our clinical support team. This initiative is being carefully evaluated and has significantly increased Hope + Me's clinical strength. **Our innovation is one of a very few examples of collaborative care initiatives between acute care institutions and non-medical community-based health services providers.** Features of the initiative are:

- We provide senior psychiatry residents experience within our community organization that demonstrates a pivotal role in education, advocacy, and peer support for people with mood disorders;
- We provide direct and indirect support for Hope + Me clinicians who assess and treat the psychiatric problems of our clients who had limited access to a psychiatrist;
- We enhance the quality of psychoeducation provided to clients at Hope + Me;
- We improve the experience of Hope + Me clients through access to direct psychiatric expertise;
- We educate Hope + Me staff and build capacity to manage psychiatric difficulties experienced by our clients.

Our Video Testimonials

'Jonathan: Peer Support Training Perspectives' (1 minute)

<https://vimeo.com/395563514/1882c56c9c>

'Emily: Peer Support into Practice' (2 minutes)

<https://vimeo.com/395814499/>

Videos © 2019, 2020 Hope + Me – Mood Disorders Association of Ontario

Social Media



twitter.com/mooddisordersON



facebook.com/MoodDisordersAssociationON



instagram.com/mooddisordersassociation

In Conclusion

Hope + Me is committed to providing the **highest quality of programs and services as developed through the lens of lived experience**. We greatly value the benefit of those having direct, first-hand experience with mood disorders, or the experience supporting a loved one, family member, and friend. **Our evidence-based services are designed always to support the recovery of individuals and lessen acute-care utilization in their communities.**

We recognize too that we cannot do it alone, so partnership and collaboration is a cornerstone of the Hope + Me strategic plan. We look forward to continuing and expanding collaboration with other health care providers, research institutions, and our government partners.

Hope + Me - Mood Disorders Association of Ontario will continue to provide excellence in support and hope for recovery from mood disorders to individuals and their families across Ontario.

