

Communiqué to the community: COVID-19

Number 4, April 21, 2020

It's OK if you don't feel OK: Support is available

Many of us are feeling a new sense of stress during the COVID-19 pandemic. Uncertainties that lead to fear and anxiety may be related to our health, unemployment and finances, services that are no longer available, inability to go out for necessities, concern for family, and feeling isolated.

Unfortunately at times like this, people who already struggle with addictions may relapse despite their best efforts, and others may unknowingly develop substance abuse issues as a coping strategy for handling their stress, shares Kim MacLeod, Service Director Addictions Treatment Service at RVH.

Addictions Treatment Service (ATS) is one program that is there to help during the COVID-19 pandemic, providing telephone and video conferencing to clients, as well as safe access to nicotine replacement therapy (NRT) products to those already enrolled in their smoking cessation program.

"We are still fully functional, doing all outpatient treatment by phone," says MacLeod. "We are still accepting intakes and our counsellors will get back to anyone who calls to set up an appointment within two business days."

ATS is a county-wide service available to anyone 12 years or older who is experiencing problems with alcohol, drugs or gambling by calling 613-432-9855 or 1-800-265-0197.

Ways to cope with stress

- ✓ Rest your mind: take breaks from watching, reading, and listening to the news
- ✓ Take care of your body: take deep breaths, stretch, eat well-balanced meals, exercise regularly, get plenty of sleep
- ✓ Connect with others: call, email, Skype, Zoom, FaceTime with family and friends
- ✓ Ask for help—there are many sources available

ADDITIONAL RESOURCES:

In our community

- For up-to-date information and answers to your questions, visit the Renfrew County District Health Unit website <https://www.rcdhu.com/novel-coronavirus-covid-19-2/>
- If you have a health concern, (including COVID-19 related) and need to speak to a physician, first call your family physician's office. If you do not have a family physician or cannot access your family physician, call the Renfrew County Virtual Triage and Assessment Centre at 1-844-727-6404.
- Community Support Services is there to help older adults during this difficult time (urgent transportation to medical appointments, frozen meal delivery, grocery delivery, telephone assurance security calls). In Renfrew call 613-432-7691 if you /someone you know needs these services.

Phone

- If you are experiencing feelings of stress, anxiety, worry or anger, the Mental Health Crisis Line (ages 16 or older) is available 24/7 at 1-866-996-0991; <https://www.crisisline.ca/>
- If you are lonely and needing to talk, you can call "A Friendly Voice" (8 a.m. – midnight) a toll-free phone line for seniors feeling isolated: 1-855-892-9992.
- 211 operates 24/7, and is committed to supporting communities throughout Ontario during the COVID 19 pandemic with referrals to a broad range of services.
- Telehealth Ontario 1-866-797-0000
- Kids Help Phone 1-800-668-6868
- Connex Ontario mental health, addictions and gambling helpline 1-866-531-2600

Online

- Bounce Back free program for youth and adults managed by Canadian Mental Health Association BounceBackontario.ca

Text

- National Crisis Line – text CRISIS to 741741