

25

Years of Respecting
the Individual



ConnexOntario

Health Services Information
Information sur les services de santé

2016/2017 ANNUAL REPORT

Board Chair/Executive Director Co-Message

'A twenty-fifth anniversary is a good time to reflect...'

In October 2016, ConnexOntario passed a major milestone: It was twenty-five years ago, in 1991, that the Drug and Alcohol Registry of Treatment (DART) was born. A lot has happened since that service, designed primarily to provide a decision support solution to the Out-of-Province branch of the Ontario Health Insurance Plan, was launched.

A twenty-fifth anniversary is a good time to reflect on where an organization has come from, and to look into the future to see where the next milestones will possibly be. It is sobering to realize that when DART commenced operation, the World Wide Web was only just coming into existence. Most business was conducted by telephone, fax machine, and by using a decidedly "clunky" tool called "OATSS" (Ontario Addiction Treatment

Services System). Mobile phones were a rarity and artificial intelligence was something that existed only in science-fiction novels or on television.

One needs only to look at advances in technology to realize just how rapidly the environment in the healthcare sector is changing. An ongoing challenge for ConnexOntario is to keep pace with emerging technologies and to remain conversant with the way people want to access healthcare. ConnexOntario must continue to work closely with our principal funder, the Ministry of Health and Long-Term Care, to identify emerging trends and to embrace the tools and technology that will allow us to best serve the people of Ontario.

ConnexOntario must continue to develop in an ever-changing environment. Our demonstrated ability to do this can be attributed to two constants that have been present in the organization since its inception: Firstly, the growth, energy, and talent of staff in their capacity to think about and adapt to where ConnexOntario should go – and how the organization can do what it does even better and more effectively; secondly, the willingness of a long line of volunteers who have assumed roles with the Board of Directors and have provided excellent governance. So many people and organizations simply get stuck doing the same thing, year after year, but here ConnexOntario is different.

At a strategic retreat held in March it was reaffirmed that ConnexOntario for many years has been providing Ontario with much more than simply information and referral services. ConnexOntario looks forward to working with and expanding into additional elements of the health and human services sector as the role of the organization continues to evolve. The present state of ConnexOntario is a far cry from DART, and it is exciting to try to predict what the organization will look like – 25 years from now – in the year 2042.



TERRI HEGGUM-ALLEN
Board Chair

BRAD DAVEY
Executive Director

ConnexOntario Through the Years...

The '90s

In the early 1990s in Ontario, a lack of accessible information regarding publicly funded addiction treatment services became obvious: thousands of Ontarians were found to be accessing American-based addictions treatment services – costing the Ontario Health Insurance Plan millions of dollars per year. This information gap resulted in an MOHLTC request to CAMH for assistance. The solution, known as the (Ontario) Drug and Alcohol Registry of Treatment (DART) was, after a three-year demonstration period, formally launched in June, 1995.



DART began as a business-hours-available resource for sector professionals, expanded in 1995 to include toll-free, phone-based public access with additional hours of operation and, by 1997, was expanded to 24/7 access and an online search of the services.

1997 also saw the addition of the Ontario Problem Gambling Helpline – increasing the range of addiction treatment services for which Ontarians could receive information and referral.

FUN FACTS OVER THE YEARS

1990



1991



1992



1995



1999



1990

- A loaf of bread could be purchased for 70¢
- Nelson Mandela freed
- Emerson Moser, Crayola's senior moulder, after working 37 years and moulding ~1.4 billion crayons, revealed he was actually blue-green colour blind

1991

- Ontario population is 10,084,885
- The first website (CERN) was created
- First Global System for Mobile Communications (GSM) call made
- Collapse of the Soviet Union

1992

- Roberta Bondar becomes first female Canadian astronaut in space
- NAFTA (North American Free Trade Agreement) signed
- Official end of The Cold War

1995

- Global Positioning Satellite (GPS) system becomes operational
- eBay is founded
- In 1975, Leonard Nimoy published his autobiography I Am Not Spock. In 1995, he published a second volume: I Am Spock

1999

- Wayne Gretzky retires
- The Euro becomes new European currency
- Most Popular Christmas Gifts - Furby Babies, Pokemon, Mary-Kate and Ashley, and Britney Spears dolls

ConnexOntario Through the Years...

The New Millennium

Post-Y2K, DART and OPGH entered a period where the important "other piece" of the human-services landscape moved into focus: mental health issues were known as a significant concurrency with addictions, and it was clear that information on MOHLTC - funded mental health services would need to be added in order to serve Ontarians better.

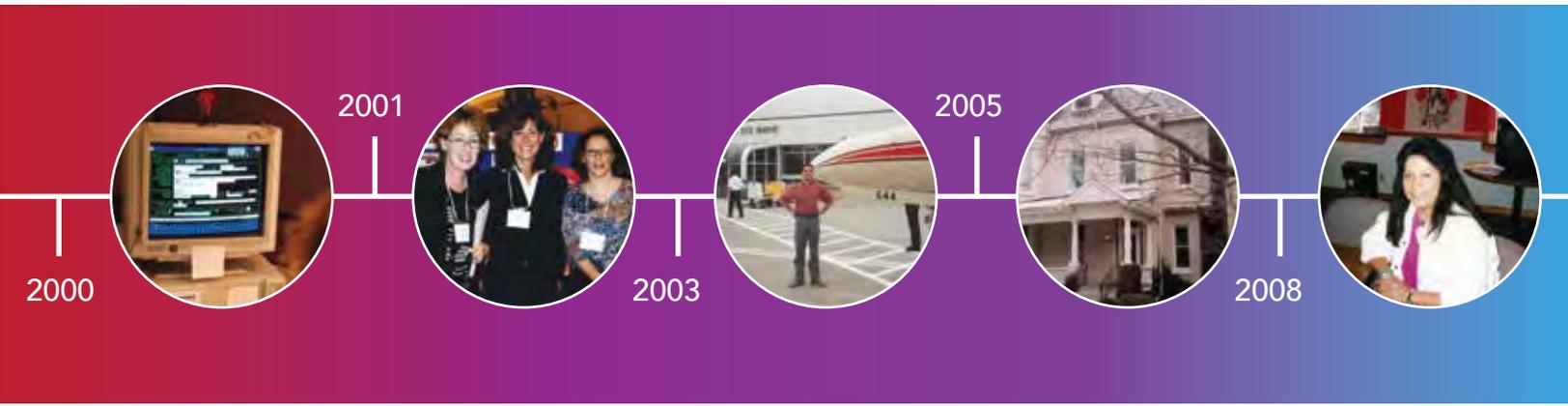
In April of 2005, the "umbrella brand" of ConnexOntario Health Services Information was created as the parent organization. During that period, a DART proposal document for the creation of a mental health information and referral service stated that *"...DART, ...which also operates OPGH...,proposes the development of a provincial registry of mental health services. This would provide streamlined access to the mental health services system, as well as linkage to the*

substance abuse and problem gambling treatment systems, in order to provide coordinated, flexible and effective use of resources required for people with concurrent disorders."



The fruition of this effort was the ribbon-cutting of Mental Health Services Information Ontario in March, 2006. The new information line necessitated the hiring of a new manager and staff, and the full spectrum of publicly funded, mental health and addictions services for adults in Ontario was now represented by three helplines.

As well, in light of the "A-Z" nature of ConnexOntario's database, an extranet application called ConnexOntario eServices followed, and allowed authorized users to view and even update their organization, site, and program data in all three areas of concern.



2000

- A loaf of bread could be purchased for \$1.70
- Homeless persons become able to vote in federal elections

2001

- Ontario population is 11,410,046
- Wikipedia launched
- CC, short for Carbon Copy or Copy Cat (depending on who you ask) was the world's first cloned cat, born December 22, 2001

2003

- Ontario declares a public health emergency as a result of SARS (Severe Acute Respiratory Syndrome) in Toronto, Ontario; 44 persons in Canada die from SARS

2005

- The Civil Marriage Act legalizes same-sex marriage throughout Canada
- Hurricane Katrina floods New Orleans

2008

- Jessica Cox became the world's first licensed armless pilot
- Global financial crisis involving sub-prime mortgage market

ConnexOntario Through the Years...

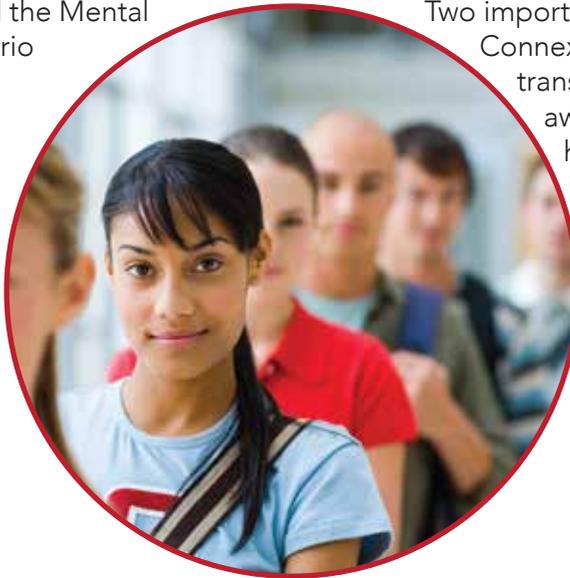
2010 to Date

Organizational restructuring, a rebranding of the helplines, and product and service expansion marked this key period in ConnexOntario's history. Two new helpline names were determined: the Drug and Alcohol Helpline, and the Mental Health Helpline – with the Ontario Problem Gambling Helpline retaining its name.

New processes included warm-line transfer to ConnexOntario from TeleHealth Ontario, new offerings included a flexible appointment-booking application – called DirectConnex – for service

organizations, and new connections in the justice sector yielded useful tools for professionals liaising with those presenting with mental health issues.

Two important recent additions to ConnexOntario's purview were the transfer in of mindyourmind (an award-winning youth mental health service), and ConnexOntario's taking on of Thames Valley-based crisis calls via the Reach Out program, which provides after-hours crisis support to the Oxford, Elgin, and London-Middlesex regions.



2010



2011



2013



2014



2016



2010

- A loaf of bread could be purchased for \$2.50
- The Winter Olympics are held in Vancouver, BC; Canadian Alexandre Bilodeau wins the first ever Olympic gold medal won by a Canadian on Canadian soil

2011

- Julian Assange called Facebook the "most appalling spying machine that has ever been invented."
- Tsunami in Fukushima, Japan

2013

- Stompin' Tom Connors country singer/songwriter passes away at 77
- Boston Marathon bombing

2014

- At least 50 people burned themselves trying to throw boiling water in the air during the Polar Vortex
- Fast food giant Burger King agrees to acquire Canadian coffee giant Tim Hortons for \$11.4 billion and move its headquarters to Canada.

2016

- Ontario population reaches 13.98 million
- Chicago Cubs win their first World Series since 1908, defeating the Cleveland Indians 4 games to 3

ConnexOntario Through the Years...

Current and Future

The last year has seen ConnexOntario at a crossroads of sorts: a detailed consideration of the addictions and mental health environment has been undertaken, and this assessment will determine what aspects of the organization will be best leveraged as ConnexOntario moves forward.

To assist with this process, a Toronto-based marketing firm conducted a literature review and market research – where focus groups, composed of ConnexOntario’s public and professional product and services users, were utilized. The results of this research will inform recommendations to be reviewed by the ConnexOntario Board of Directors. In turn, the approved recommendations will help determine how ConnexOntario’s offerings are most effectively developed and distributed.

Interviews took place with over 150 people from diverse backgrounds and having had lived experience with mental health and addictions issues. This included patients, caregivers, general practitioners, nurse practitioners, LHIN mental

health and addictions leads, ministry professionals, board members, and other healthcare professionals working directly in the mental health and addictions sector.

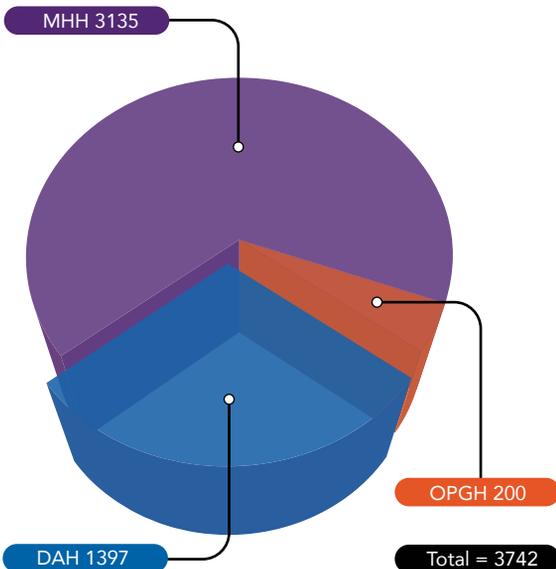


Gathered insights led to extensive discussions involving all ConnexOntario departments as to how the organization could improve its products and services to better meet the needs of the general public, and both healthcare and ministry professionals.

Recommendations and the development of key priorities – involving both advertising and intra-organizational operations – will further support ConnexOntario’s efforts to assist those seeking help and/or information on mental health and addictions services in Ontario.

As stigma around mental health decreases, more “open conversations” are occurring, and a desire for greater action in mental health and addictions is taking place. These trends support the endeavours of ConnexOntario.

Number of open programs in the database



Helplines: Fiscal Year Total Calls and Email+Webchat Total, and Percentage Change Over Prior Fiscal Year

DAH Toll Free	25486	5%
DAH Webchat + E-Mail	3380	10%
MHH Toll Free	36008	11%
MHH Webchat + E-Mail	10089	24%
OPGH Toll Free	6602	-5%
OPGH Webchat + E-Mail	312	3%
Reach Out	9825	N/A
Reach Out Webchat + E-Mail	432	N/A



Number of Referrals to Mental Health and/or Addictions Support Within Housing Programs – Fiscal Year

Up 106% from previous fiscal year



Number of Direct-Connex Appointments Booked – Fiscal Year

Up 87% from the previous fiscal year



New Program Data Points

- Substances - Fentanyl
- Provisions - Behavioural Issues
- For Educational Use checkbox
- Grief Counselling Offered
- Language – Specialized – indicates the language in which the program is primarily offered, and by which the client can access it.

Financial Review

Revenue	DAH Fund	OPGH Fund	MHH Fund	Time-Limited Initiatives	Total 2017	Total 2016
Provincial Government Grants	\$936,049	\$1,212,368	\$1,603,293		\$3,751,710	\$3,763,810
Time Limited Initiatives/Projects				928,886	928,886	354,317
Less: Capital Purchases	(48,240)	(57,517)	(79,781)	(86,280)	(271,818)	(30,865)
Add: Amortized Provincial Grants	4,296	5,123	7,106	76,433	92,958	131,134
Investment and Other Income	45,830	52,729	73,141		171,700	108,695
Total Revenues	\$937,935	\$1,212,703	\$1,603,759	\$919,039	\$4,673,436	\$4,327,091
EXPENSES	940,123	1,215,211	1,607,241	919,039	4,681,614	3,924,269
Surplus/Deficit	(2,188)	(2,508)	(3,482)		(8,178)	\$402,822

Mission Statement

Through the use of leading-edge technology, ConnexOntario provides hope, early help and a human voice 24-hours per day to all individuals seeking information on, for example, mental health, drug, alcohol, and gambling problems. ConnexOntario also provides data to service planners seeking access to quality health and human services information.





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www.MentalHealthHelpline.ca
www.ProblemGamblingHelpline.ca

**Drug & Alcohol
Helpline**

**Mental Health
Helpline**

**Ontario Problem
Gambling Helpline**