



Mental Health and Addiction

Ministry Business Plan

Mental Health and Addiction

Business Plan 2024-27

Ministry Fact Sheet – Mandate and Structure

The Ministry of Mental Health and Addiction (MHA) is responsible for leading implementation of Alberta’s recovery-oriented system of care and coordinating all Government of Alberta funding dedicated to delivering mental health and addiction services across the province. In collaboration with partner ministries, MHA is providing support to establish integrated, coordinated networks of community-based services to help Albertans experiencing mental health and addiction challenges achieve sustained recovery and wellness. This Alberta Recovery Model is focused on keeping communities safe while treating mental health and addiction as health care issues by working with health and community service providers to deliver services that span prevention, intervention, treatment, and recovery.

Significant investments and transformational changes are being made to consolidate mental health and addiction services and supports across the province to ensure Albertans have access to vital, high-quality services when and where they need them. Over the next two years, the ministry will establish a new mental health and addiction service delivery organization and a centre of recovery excellence, while ensuring there are no service disruptions. The ministry and new service delivery organization will be responsible for managing over 500 contracts for the delivery of mental health and addiction programs and services previously managed by Alberta Health Services (AHS). MHA will continue to invest in Albertans by removing barriers and expanding access to a range of recovery-oriented services and providing system oversight to support better outcomes for those experiencing addiction and mental health issues.

The shift in mental health and addiction service delivery acknowledges that response efforts are broader than the health system, and that resilience and long-term recovery from addiction and mental health challenges requires a shared philosophy and shared outcomes across the entire support system, from health, to public safety, to housing and beyond.

Success in creating a coordinated and comprehensive mental health and addiction system includes:

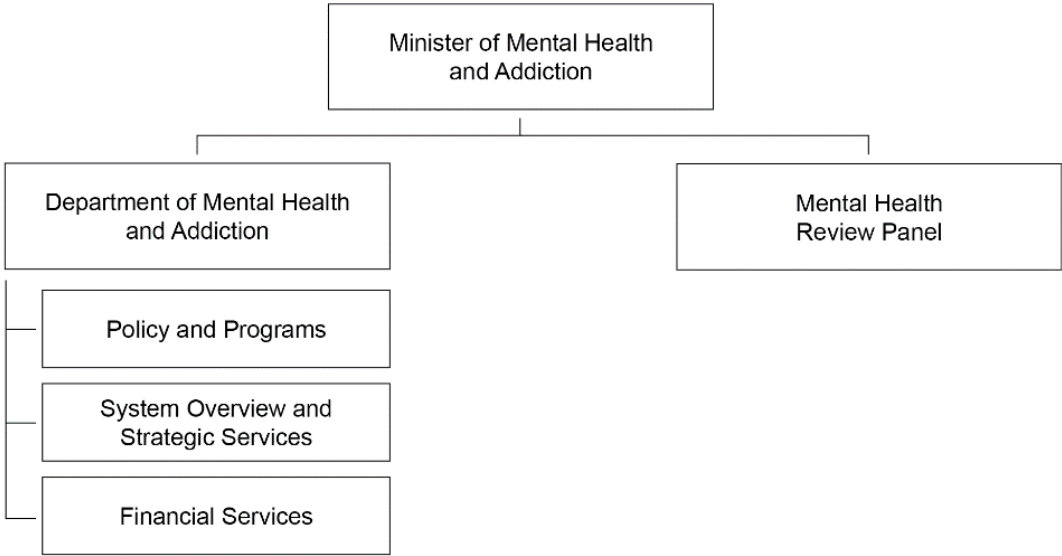
- Helping more Albertans pursue recovery from addiction through increased access to medical detox and long-term addiction treatment.
- Providing therapeutic living units and access to discharge planning and transitional supports for clients in Alberta remand centres and correctional facilities.
- Supporting children and youth with complex mental health needs with more mental health classrooms and community-based programs.
- Working alongside police services to add more outreach teams to city streets and new mental health and addiction supports for people in police custody.
- Increasing culturally safe and land-based healing for Indigenous people in Alberta by building recovery communities in partnership with First Nations and Métis communities.

The Department of Mental Health and Addiction is responsible for establishing the Government of Alberta’s strategic direction for mental health and addiction, including: providing policy advice and recommendations; drafting legislation and standards; providing oversight and ensuring regulatory compliance and accountability; licensing service providers; setting policy direction; developing and evaluating programs; and participating in intergovernmental forums to advance Alberta’s priorities with other federal, provincial, and territorial governments. In addition, the Department is accountable for responding to addiction or mental health-related recommendations from the Office of the Child and Youth Advocate.

MHA works closely with health, public safety, justice, and social sector ministry partners, all of which have an active role in establishing recovery-oriented services and policies for Albertans experiencing mental health and addiction challenges. The ministry also relies on collaboration with external organizations responsible for service delivery; academic and research institutions; a range of health professionals; Indigenous communities; and other government jurisdictions to deliver high-quality mental health and addiction services and improve the recovery capital¹ of Albertans and Alberta communities.

The Mental Health Advocate reports annually through the Minister of Mental Health and Addiction and is responsible for responding to concerns regarding Albertans’ navigation of the addiction and mental health system and access to the appropriate resolution service to address concerns, including those specific to the *Mental Health Act*.

The Ministry of Mental Health and Addiction consists of the Department of Mental Health and Addiction. In November 2023, government announced a health care system refocusing initiative intended to improve health outcomes for Albertans and empower health care workers to deliver quality care across the province. In spring 2024 a new organizational structure will be implemented to support this initiative. A new mental health and addiction organization will lead service delivery across a continuum of recovery-oriented services to Albertans. A centre of recovery excellence will improve the quality of mental health and addiction service delivery in Alberta. A separate integration council will be formed to ensure system alignment, identify efficiencies, remove barriers, and make sure the system is delivering better health outcomes and seamless patient care. These structural changes will be reflected in future business plan organizational charts.



A more detailed description of Mental Health and Addiction and its programs and initiatives can be found at: <https://www.alberta.ca/mental-health-and-addiction>

The Ministry of Mental Health and Addiction remains committed to regulatory approaches and program delivery that reduce unnecessary government oversight and emphasizes outcomes, in order to improve access to government services, attract investment, support innovation and competitiveness, and grow Alberta businesses.

Ministry business plans should be considered in conjunction with all budget documents - including the Fiscal Plan, Government Strategic Plan, and Estimates - which work together to provide a complete overview of government’s commitment to responsible fiscal management.

¹ Recovery capital is the combination of personal, interpersonal, and community resources that an individual can draw upon to begin and sustain addiction recovery. These addiction and mental health interventions and recovery-oriented supports fall under eight recovery domains: physical and mental health; safe housing and healthy environments; employment and resolution of legal issues; vocational skills and education development; safe and meaningful family, social, and leisure activities; peer-based supports, community engagement and cultural supports; and (re)discovering meaning and purpose of life.

2024-27 Business Plan

Outcome 1

Alberta has a comprehensive, integrated, and responsive recovery-oriented addiction and mental health system

Implementing system-wide transformation in collaboration with government and community partners to improve supports for Albertans from prevention and intervention to treatment and recovery while promoting individual and community safety. Areas of focus include enhancing the mental health and addiction system, implementing legislative changes, supporting workforce development and capacity building; and increasing treatment and referral pathways from police services to mental health and addiction care.

Key Objectives

- 1.1 Develop a new mental health and addiction system, as part of a refocused health system, to better support Albertans experiencing mental health and addiction challenges.
 - Establish a new provincial mental health and addiction organization to deliver publicly funded mental health and addiction services currently delivered by AHS.
 - Establish a new centre of recovery excellence to provide leadership on Alberta’s recovery-oriented system of care and expand the evidence base to guide and advance the mental health and addiction system.
- 1.2 Expand mental health and addiction system oversight to reduce barriers and ensure every Albertan has access to high-quality recovery-oriented care to improve their overall well-being and help sustain recovery.
- 1.3 Develop strategic approaches, including a Compassionate Intervention Framework, to expand access to timely and appropriate mental health and addiction services across the province to support individuals who are a danger to themselves or others.
- 1.4 Continue to advance treatment referral pathways in the criminal justice system and support initiatives to expand police services’ access to tools that support Albertans’ wellness and recovery while keeping communities safe.
- 1.5 Enhance quality standards and legislative requirements guiding regulatory oversight and enforcement to improve service provider accountability and protect communities and Albertans accessing services.

Initiatives Supporting Key Objectives

- In 2024-25, \$1.13 billion is allocated to deliver a continuum of high-quality, recovery-oriented services consistently across the province through the new provincial mental health and addiction organization (AHS prior to spring 2024).
- In 2024-25, \$5 million is allocated to establish a centre of recovery excellence to evaluate and research recovery-oriented care and inform the future delivery of mental health and addiction services.

Performance Metrics

1.a Performance Measure: Mental health and addiction-related emergency department visits with no interaction with publicly funded mental health and addiction services in the previous two years (per cent)

Few mental health and addiction service needs are best served in the emergency department. This measure demonstrates the success of government initiatives in providing more accessible and effective community care. In 2021-22, 19.6 per cent of individuals who accessed emergency departments for mental health and addiction-related issues had not received publicly funded mental health and addiction services in the previous two years.

| | | | | | | |
|----------------|----------------|------|----------------|------|----------------|------|
| Targets | 2024-25 | 16.5 | 2025-26 | 15.6 | 2026-27 | 14.6 |
|----------------|----------------|------|----------------|------|----------------|------|

1.b Performance Indicator: Percentage of Albertans receiving care at an appropriate level (under development)

This indicator will reflect the impact of mental health and addiction programs on broad aspects of Albertans' lives (e.g., involvement in the justice and correctional system, employment, education, income support, and quality of life). The current focus of this indicator is on four client groups receiving new or expanded services. Involvement in one or more of these client groups, and an increase in program involvement over time, is indicative of a positive, wider system impact. Baseline data will be collected in 2024-25, with reporting anticipated to commence once sufficient baseline data is established.

Outcome 2

Alberta's communities and families have the capacity to support individuals pursuing recovery

Working with partners to ensure programs, services, and resources are available in communities across the province to facilitate and sustain recovery. Areas of focus include building and operationalizing new recovery communities, youth mental wellness centres; and enhancing mental health and addiction services for Indigenous people in Alberta.

Key Objectives

- 2.1 Expand oversight responsibility for and increase the number of mental health and addiction treatment facilities in Alberta to streamline service delivery and improve access to a consistent continuum of supports spanning prevention, intervention, treatment, and recovery.
- 2.2 Invest in mental health facility expansion to increase access to a suite of community-based mental health services across the province that provide consistent supports to youth experiencing mental illness.
- 2.3 Develop a comprehensive continuum of culturally appropriate mental health and addiction services to support Indigenous people in Alberta.

Initiatives Supporting Key Objectives

- In 2024-25, \$229.2 million is allocated to expand access to high-quality mental health and addiction care, including to youth and Indigenous communities in Alberta, through investments in mental health and addiction treatment facilities across the province.

Performance Metrics

2.a Performance Indicator: Recovery-supportive community scores for selected Alberta communities (under development)

This indicator will report on the degree to which Alberta communities support recovery, using data collected through a newly established survey. Initial results are expected on the priority areas for measurement by April 2024 and full reporting is expected to commence in the 2025-26 fiscal year.

Outcome 3

Albertans have access to high-quality, person-centred mental health and addiction programs and services

Prioritizing Albertans' well-being and access to recovery-oriented addiction and mental health supports based on their unique circumstances. Areas of focus include mental health classrooms and Integrated School Support Programs; affordable and accessible mental health supports such as Counselling Alberta, 211 Alberta, and Kids Help Phone; harm reduction services, including supervised consumption sites and the Digital Overdose Response System app; and bed-based addiction treatment and medical detox services.

Key Objectives

- 3.1 Extend the My Recovery Plan platform roll out to support evidence-based decision making and help more Albertans living with addiction build their recovery capital and improve their ability to pursue and maintain recovery.
- 3.2 Expand access to a range of virtual and in-person recovery-oriented supports to improve mental health and addiction care and support better outcomes for communities in need, including underserved, rural, and remote populations.
- 3.3 Evaluate and expand access to mental health supports for youth in schools and in community to promote positive mental health, prevent severe mental health issues from developing, and provide treatment for students with mental illness.
- 3.4 Support initiatives to decrease the number of opioid-related overdoses in the province.
- 3.5 Support the delivery of addiction treatment services throughout Alberta to provide safe, variable supports for individuals to pursue recovery from addiction.

Initiatives Supporting Key Objectives

- In 2024-25, \$183.3 million is allocated directly from the Department of Mental Health and Addiction to deliver community-based mental health and addiction programs and services focused on children and youth, prevention, intervention, and treatment and recovery.

Performance Metrics

3.a Performance Indicator: Change in recovery capital scores of Albertans accessing publicly funded treatment (per cent)

This indicator reports on the percent change in individual recovery capital scores of Albertans receiving addiction treatment services in publicly funded facilities where the My Recovery Plan platform has been implemented. Recovery capital scores are established through a facilitated questionnaire and reflect an individual’s unique circumstances. The change in individual recovery capital from admission to discharge or most recent assessment corresponds to a strong positive effect of Ministry-supported treatment services.

The Recovery Capital Index (RCI) includes important domains of well-being, commitment, barriers to care, and service needs along with the domains included in the Assessment of Recovery Capital (ARC). The ARC is a subset of the RCI Score often used in recovery research. The similarities in the results for these indicators supports the utility of the more holistic RCI score.

| | 2022-23² |
|--|----------------------------|
| Percentage change in recovery capital score (Assessment of Recovery Capital) | 33% |
| Percentage change in recovery capital score (Recovery Capital Index) | 35% |

Source: My Recovery Plan database

² The 2022-23 recovery capital scores include data from July 2022 to December 2023 to ensure a sufficient sample size. The My Recovery Plan platform was introduced in 2022, as such, no further historical results are available. Going forward, annual recovery capital scores will be limited to data collected within the relevant fiscal year.

STATEMENT OF OPERATIONS

(thousands of dollars)

| | Comparable | | 2024-25 Estimate | 2025-26 Target | 2026-27 Target |
|---|-------------------|---------------------|---------------------|-------------------|-------------------|
| | 2023-24 Budget | 2023-24 Forecast | | | |
| REVENUE | | | | | |
| Transfers from Government of Canada | 1,050 | 50,150 | 164,800 | 142,600 | 142,000 |
| Consolidated Total | 1,050 | 50,150 | 164,800 | 142,600 | 142,000 |
| EXPENSE | | | | | |
| Ministry Support Services | 4,382 | 9,386 | 13,453 | 13,946 | 13,555 |
| Mental Health and Addiction | 1,403,561 | 1,461,972 | 1,541,259 | 1,553,489 | 1,496,025 |
| Ministry Total | 1,407,943 | 1,471,358 | 1,554,712 | 1,567,435 | 1,509,580 |
| Inter-Ministry Consolidation Adjustment | (1,241,489) | (1,241,489) | (1,248,602) | (1,248,698) | (1,247,498) |
| Consolidated Total | 166,454 | 229,869 | 306,110 | 318,737 | 262,082 |
| Net Operating Result | (165,404) | (179,719) | (141,310) | (176,137) | (120,082) |
| CAPITAL INVESTMENT | | | | | |
| Ministry Support Services | 25 | 25 | 25 | 25 | 25 |
| Mental Health and Addiction | - | 3,000 | 5,000 | 6,000 | 4,000 |
| Consolidated Total | 25 | 3,025 | 5,025 | 6,025 | 4,025 |