



## Enhancement of COVID-19 Psychological Support (CPS) Program for Frontline Workers

**TORONTO, May 7, 2021** -- The City of Toronto, 211 Central (211), and the Ontario Psychological Association (OPA) are pleased to announce the continuation of our partnership to ensure Toronto's frontline workers get the mental health support they need. Over the course of this global pandemic, we have seen a significant increase in mental health challenges, burnout and fatigue being experienced by our frontline workers, as they continue to work hard to support Torontonians. This partnership will enable frontline workers without extended health benefits to access the psychological services and supports they need at no cost throughout the remainder of the COVID-19 pandemic response.

This announcement extends OPA's Disaster Response efforts specifically for the Toronto region. The OPA's COVID-19 Psychological Support (CPS) program will provide up to 6 mental health sessions with a registered psychologist at no cost for frontline workers who may need additional support coping with the stresses of the pandemic and have no, or minimal, mental health coverage. Frontline workers interested in accessing this support through the CPS program can do so by calling 211. Community Navigators will confirm eligibility for the program and help register frontline workers through the OPA referral portal [askforhelptoday.ca](http://askforhelptoday.ca), where they will be matched with an appropriate psychologist.

### Quotes:

"The Ontario Psychological Association (OPA) is pleased to see the City of Toronto make significant investments in mental health services and ensuring frontline workers with limited health coverage get timely access to psychological services when needed," says Dr. Sylvain Roy, Former OPA president and one of the co-leads for the City of Toronto's Mental Health Support Strategy. "During COVID, essential workers in our shelters, long-term care facilities, hospitals, community agencies, and primary care clinics have been exposed to unprecedented levels of stress and loss, which is leading to burnout and decreased capacity to provide vital services. We must continue to do everything in our power to keep our essential workforce safe and healthy. We look forward to continue collaborating with 211 Central, the City of Toronto and other mental health partners as the City addresses the devastating impacts of the pandemic on our mental health."

"211 Central is thrilled to continue our partnership with the Ontario Psychological Association and the City of Toronto. At the beginning of the COVID-19 pandemic this collaborative project became a starting point for frontline workers across the City looking for mental health resources and support," says Angela Finateri, Director of Inquiry Services at 211 Central. "People working in shelters, long-term care homes and other City employees may not have the health benefits required to pay for the services being offered through the program. It's reassuring to know that 211 Navigators, can continue to make

these connections so that front line workers get the mental health supports they need quickly and without cost.

"The partnership between the City, 211 and the Ontario Psychological Association has proven to be valuable in the lives of many of our frontline workers. I am pleased that this partnership will continue so that we can help even more of our frontline workers and their families. Since the implementation of the Mental Health Support Strategy early last year, over 80+ frontline workers and their families have received support and benefited from the services provided by OPA's psychologists. As the pandemic continues, we know the need for mental health support and services for our frontline workers also continues. We will continue to do everything we can as a municipal government to support all residents, including our frontline workers, during these tough times. "

- Toronto Mayor John Tory

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### **About 211 Central**

[Findhelp|211 Central](#) is a lead provider of information and referral services in Ontario and across Canada. [211 Central](#) connects people to the right information and services, making their pathway to care, help and resources an efficient and trusted one. 211 strengthens our province's health and human services and helps Ontarians get the help they need, when they need it, at their fingertips. The 211 service is a free phone, web, email, text and chat service. Our team of Certified Service Navigators provide targeted, live and confidential help to navigate the complex network of human services quickly and easily, 24 hours a day, 7 days a week, in 150+ languages.

### **About Ontario Psychological Association**

The Ontario Psychological Association (OPA) is a professional organization representing psychology in Ontario. The OPA provides leadership to promote the mental health and wellbeing of Ontarians, and to inspire excellence in the profession of psychology through research, education, clinical excellence and advocacy. The OPA strives for a healthcare system in which psychological services are accessible to all Ontarians, where psychologists can practice to their full potential, and the value of the professional healthcare services psychologists provide is widely and properly recognized. <http://www.psych.on.ca>