

Service Delivery Framework

There are 14 ACCESS Open Minds service sites in 6 provinces and 1 territory across Canada. Facilitated by the ACCESS OM network, these sites have transformed their existing youth mental health services in diverse ways based on local context and needs.

Service benchmarks and the Culture of Care

All ACCESS OM service sites provide a direct entry-point to an initial mental health assessment for youth aged 11-25, within 72 hours of seeking help. This assessment is followed by access to the appropriate needs-based services within 30 days, where possible and when deemed necessary. While receiving services with an ACCESS OM site, youth are considered partners in their own care, and their family members and carers are also engaged and supported in participating in the process.

Staffing and service components

Building on existing youth mental health services, the following staffing roles and service components are being implemented across all ACCESS OM sites:

ACCESS Clinicians

Accessible by phone, text message, or at a drop-in centre, these registered professionals from mental health backgrounds (including social workers, nurses, and occupational therapists) are dedicated to providing youth with a mental health assessment within 72 hours of seeking help, and providing support to youth and their families and carers while they await access to another service, if it is required. These clinicians are flexible and youth-friendly, and they can meet youth outside of the service space.

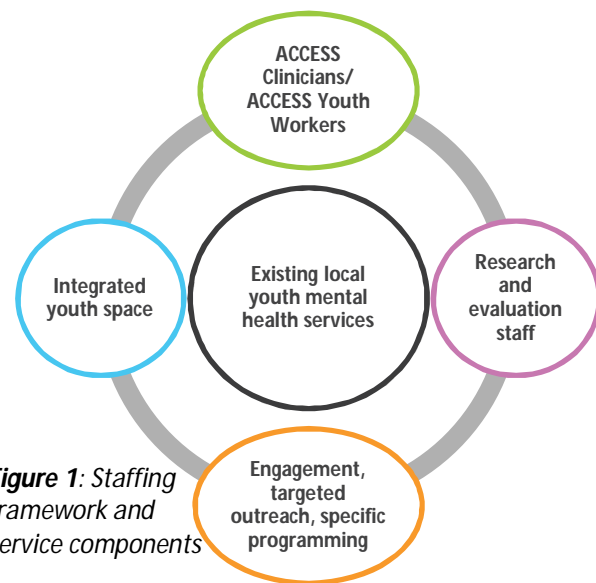


Figure 1: Staffing framework and service components

ACCESS Youth Workers

Lay health workers are trained community members employed at ACCESS Open Minds sites in remote Indigenous communities. They provide information about mental health to youth and their family member/carers, and to the community at large. They also provide support to youth in accessing mental health services (e.g. at local health centre or clinic), as well as support to youth who are returning to the community after receiving services elsewhere (for instance, hospital care in an urban centre).

Research and evaluation staff

In collaboration with the ACCESS Clinician and/or ACCESS Youth Worker, these staff members work closely with youth and family members/carers to collect data related to the ACCESS OM Evaluation Protocol, and then integrate this information into the care that the youth receives. The site team works together to ease transitions of care, if necessary, and produce reports for service staff and management to inform responsive service design and delivery.

Integrated youth space

Part of the ACCESS OM transformation is the development of a youth-friendly space and “home base” for the ACCESS Clinician(s) and Research Staff that facilitates a young person’s direct access to services without a formal referral. These youth spaces are located in accessible, non-stigmatizing community settings, are open during flexible hours. They also are host to various activities for the diversity of a community’s youth.

Early identification

Sites are implementing new and innovative targeted outreach activities so that youth and their communities know what services are available, and are able to access these services as soon as possible when something might be wrong. These activities – such as school presentations, poster and radio campaigns, etc. – are continuously monitored and evaluated for effectiveness to ensure that all youth (especially those not in school, employed, or in vulnerable situations) as well as their families/carers and community members, know where to turn for help when it’s needed.

Youth and family engagement

Sites are creatively engaging youth and their families /carers in the design and delivery of services, including the creation of local youth and family/carer councils, establishing peer support programs, and ensuring that youth and their families and carers are always considered partners in their own care.

Other programming

Indigenous communities within the ACCESS Open Minds network are also implementing traditional programs, for example through land-based activities and programs, as well as an integration of traditional, holistic approaches to mental health and wellness that complement clinical service components.

ACCESS Open Minds’ Central Office team provides specialized training and ongoing support to ACCESS Clinicians, Youth Workers and Evaluation Staff focused on the utilization of current, evidence-based clinical approaches and tools, engaging youth and families/carers as partners in care, and in the integration of data collection and research into clinical care. In addition, the Central Office team also facilitates online communities of practice for network members from across the country to connect, share their experiences, and support each other in their work.

For more information about ACCESS Open Minds, visit www.accessopenminds.ca