

PSYCHOSIS

Where to go when you're looking for help

The word psychosis describes a state of mind in which people have trouble knowing what is real and what is not. When this happens, it is called a psychotic episode. A first episode of psychosis is often very frightening, confusing and distressing, especially because it is an unfamiliar experience.

About three out of every 100 people will experience an episode of psychosis in their lifetime. Psychosis affects men and women equally and occurs across all cultures and socioeconomic groups. Psychosis usually first appears in a person's late teens or early twenties. Psychotic illnesses seem to affect women at a later age than men, when women may be farther along in their social and work lives.

A number of mental illnesses can include psychosis as a symptom, including schizophrenia, bipolar disorder, schizoaffective disorder and drug-induced psychosis.

You can get a referral to many mental health services in Toronto, including those for psychosis, through The Access Point. This is a centralized point to apply for mental health and addiction support services and supportive housing. The Access Point co-ordinates access to a wide network of service providers through one application and intake assessment process. Call 1 888 640-1934 or apply online at www.theaccesspoint.ca. The service will respond within 48 hours to arrange an assessment.

Early Intervention Programs

Early intervention programs offer support for people who have experienced early signs and symptoms of psychosis. These people may have trouble concentrating or thinking clearly, they may withdraw from family and friends, be suspicious of other people and be confused about what is real and what they have imagined. They may also have hallucinations (in which they see or hear things that aren't there) and experience unusual changes in their behaviour.

Psychiatrists help with medication, and a team also helps with employment and education support, family support, social skills training and psychotherapy. Early intervention programs minimize disruptions to the person's work, school and relationships, and improve the chances of a more successful recovery. These programs also decrease the need for hospitalization.

If any of this information is incorrect or outdated, or if there are additional organizations or programs that would be helpful to include, please e-mail the information to us at access.resources@camh.ca.

This resource list is for information purposes only and does not constitute an endorsement by CAMH or guarantee any particular outcome.

Many of the organizations listed below are part of a group of Toronto-based early psychosis intervention programs. They are generally for people aged 14 to 34 who are having a first episode of psychosis and have been in treatment for less than a year. The programs usually provide up to three years of service, after which the person is referred to other types of services as needed.

Canadian Mental Health Association Toronto

Lawrence Square Mall, 700 Lawrence Ave. West, suite 480, Toronto, ON

www.toronto.cmha.ca

416 789-7957 ext. 3631

Services offered: Early psychosis intervention program, transitional youth program

Eligibility: People age 16 to 34 who are experiencing a first episode of psychosis

Languages: English, French

Referral: Apply through The Access Point: Call 1 888 640-1934 or apply online at www.theaccesspoint.ca.

Central Toronto Youth Services

65 Wellesley St. East, suite 300, Toronto, ON

www.ctys.org/category/programs

416 924-2100

Services offered: Program for young adults that includes early intervention (New Outlook) and up to three years of case management

Eligibility: People age 15 to 24 with serious mental illness (primarily psychotic disorders)

Referral: Apply through The Access Point: Call 1 888 640-1934 or apply online at www.theaccesspoint.ca.

Centre for Addiction and Mental Health, Early Psychosis Unit and Slight Centre Outpatient Services

250 College St., 7th floor, Toronto, ON

www.camh.ca/en/your-care/programs-and-services/slight-centre-early-intervention-service (Slight Centre)

www.camh.ca/en/your-care/programs-and-services/early-psychosis-inpatient-unit (Early Psychosis Unit)

416 535-8501 ext. 36496 (Access CAMH outpatient co-ordinator) or ext. 34841

Services offered: Early Psychosis Unit (18-bed inpatient unit) and Slight Centre Outpatient Services offer early assessment, recovery-focused treatment, education and support for families, supported education and employment, recovery programming

Eligibility: People age 16 to 29 experiencing a first episode of psychosis

Referral: Self-referral; referral from a physician or nurse practitioner, hospital, community agency or school. The Early Psychosis Unit can be accessed through a transfer from CAMH's emergency department or from another hospital. Download the referral form from the website.

Centre for Addiction and Mental Health, Focus on Youth Psychosis Prevention

252 College St., Toronto, ON

www.camh.ca/en/your-care/programs-and-services/focus-on-youth-psychosis-prevention-clinic-fypp

416 535-8501 ext. 32517

fypclinic@camh.ca

Services offered: Assessment for people with early warning signs of psychosis; early intervention to prevent youth psychosis (e.g., psychosocial and/or pharmaceutical treatment); psychiatric monitoring; six months of follow-up care, including a 10-week group therapy program

Eligibility: People age 16 to 35 who are at risk of developing psychosis

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Referral: Self-referral; physician, hospital, community agency or school

Note: One- to three-week waiting period

Early Psychosis Intervention Ontario Network (EPION)

help4psychosis.ca/looking-for-help/where-to-get-help

Services offered: Links to support services for yourself or for a loved one, with an interactive map

Fred Victor

2660 Eglinton Ave. East, Scarborough, ON

www.fredvictor.org/community-mental-health-services

416 482-4103

Services offered: Early intervention program that provides culturally appropriate case management for clients and their loved ones

Eligibility: People age 14 to 35 who are experiencing a first episode of psychosis, and their families

Referral: Self-referral, family referral or referral from a health care provider through The Access Point: Call 1 888 640-1934 or apply online at www.theaccesspoint.ca.

Humber River Hospital

1235 Wilson Ave., 5th floor, Toronto, ON

www.hrh.ca/mhearlyintervention

416 242-1000 ext. 43000

Services offered: Early intervention psychosis program that includes consultations, assessments, individual- and group-based therapy for clients and their families

Eligibility: People age 14 to 35 who are experiencing a psychotic episode

Referral: Anyone can apply by contacting The Access Point: Call 1 888 640-1934 or apply online at www.theaccesspoint.ca. Referral by a physician is required: the referral can be faxed to central intake at 416 242-1024, after which an appointment will be scheduled.

Mood Disorders Association of Ontario

36 Eglinton Ave. West, suite 602, Toronto, ON

www.mooddisorders.ca

416 486-8046 ext. 237 or 1 888 486-8236

Services offered: Early intervention in psychosis program, online support forums

Eligibility: People age 14 to 35 with mood disorders, and their families and friends

Referral: Self-referrals accepted by calling the main number at 416 486-8046.

Rouge Valley Health System

2877 Ellesmere Rd., Scarborough, ON

www.rougevalley.ca/first-intervention-treatment-team-fitt

416 281-7301

Services offered: First intervention treatment team that provides consultations, assessments, individual and family counselling, housing, financial, employment and schooling assistance and mutual help groups

Eligibility: Young adults under 35 years old experiencing their first episode of psychosis

Referral: Self-referral through The Access Point: Call 1 888 640-1934 or apply online at www.theaccesspoint.ca.

Fees: Covered by OHIP

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Schizophrenia Society of Ontario

www.schizophrenia.on.ca

1 800 449-6367

asktheexpert@schizophrenia.on.ca (for families)

Services offered: Early intervention for people with psychosis; early intervention family support (counselling, system navigation and information)—both for up to two years

Referral: Apply directly.

St. Michael's Hospital, STEPS for Youth

21 McGill St., Toronto, ON

www.stmichaelshospital.com/programs/mentalhealth/steps.php

416 864-6060 ext. 7183

steps@smh.ca

Services offered: Assessment; treatment; support with school, work and social activities; family education and support; referral to community services; weekly group programs

Eligibility: People age 16 to 35 who are experiencing a first episode of psychosis and live within the catchment area: between Bloor Street East/Danforth Avenue and Lake Ontario and between Yonge Street and Victoria Park Avenue

Referral: Self-referral through The Access Point: Call 1 888 640-1934 or apply online at www.theaccesspoint.ca.

The Toronto Early Intervention in Psychosis Network

www.torontoearlypsychosis.com

416 789-7957 ext. 281

kloconnor@cmha-toronto.net

Services offered: A network of 14 hospitals and community agencies in Toronto offering resources and links to member organizations; information on early psychosis and recovery and how to get help for oneself or a loved one

Eligibility: People wondering whether they are experiencing psychosis; people worried about a friend or loved one; service providers looking for help for clients

Toronto Western Hospital, Asian Initiative in Mental Health Clinic

399 Bathurst St., East wing, 9th floor, Toronto, ON

www.uhn.ca/MCC/PatientsFamilies/Clinics_Tests/Asian_Mental_Health

416 603-5071 (Early Intervention in Psychosis)

Services offered: Assessment; outpatient treatment and case management; pharmacotherapy, psychotherapy and counselling; referral to health and social service agencies; public education (Early Intervention in Psychosis)

Eligibility: People age 16 to 45 who are experiencing a first episode of psychosis, are members of the Chinese community in Toronto and have received medical treatment for less than one year

Languages: English, Mandarin, Cantonese

Referral: Self-referral through The Access Point: Call 1 888 640-1934 or apply online at www.theaccesspoint.ca. Referral forms are available on the website.

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Family Support

Canadian Mental Health Association, Family Outreach and Response Program

2333 Dundas St. West, suite 501, Toronto, ON

1200 Markham Rd., suite 500, Scarborough, ON

www.toronto.cmha.ca/family-support

416 539-9449 (Toronto), 416 789-7957 ext. 3329 or 3299 (Scarborough)

Services offered: Individual, family and group support

Eligibility: Family and friends of people age 14 to 34 who are experiencing a first episode of psychosis, regardless of a diagnosis

Referral: Call to reserve a space

Languages: English and Tamil

Family Association for Mental Health Everywhere (FAME)

50 Burnhamthorpe Rd. West, suite 300, Mississauga, ON

www.fameforfamilies.com

905 276-8316

Services offered: Eight-week educational groups for people who have a family member experiencing a first episode of psychosis

Eligibility: Families in Peel Region

Referral: Call or e-mail

Psychosis Support

psychosissupport.ca

Services offered: Information and coping strategies for family members who have a loved one with serious mental illness (includes text and videos)

Eligibility: Family members who have a loved one with a serious mental illness

Community Support

Across Boundaries: An Ethnoracial Mental Health Centre

51 Clarkson Ave., Toronto, ON

www.acrossboundaries.ca

416 787-3007

Services offered: Psychiatric consultation, drop-in, community outreach, family support, individual and group support, case management, support groups, art and music therapy, community kitchen

Eligibility: People age 16+ in the GTA from racialized communities who have severe mental health or substance use problems

Referral: Apply through The Access Point: Call 1 888 640-1934 or apply online at www.theaccesspoint.ca.

Languages: English; many African, Caribbean and Central and South Asian languages

Cota

59 Adelaide St. East, 2nd floor, Toronto, ON

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www.cotainspires.ca

416 785-9230

Services offered: Mental health and community support services, including case management, supportive housing, short-term residential beds, day programs, court- and justice-related services, assertive community treatment team, services for people who are homeless

Eligibility: People age 16 to 65 with serious mental illness, geriatric mental health conditions, acquired brain injury, developmental disabilities or dual diagnosis; people experiencing homelessness

Referral: Apply through The Access Point: Call 1 888 640-1934 or apply online at www.theaccesspoint.ca.

Reconnect Community Health Services

1281 St Clair Ave. West, Toronto, ON

www.reconnect.on.ca

416 248-2050

Services offered: Case management, supportive housing, short-term crisis housing, crisis services, assertive community treatment team, justice prevention and diversion services, forensic case management, rehabilitation and support services

Eligibility: People age 16+ with serious mental health problems and other concurrent challenges who need rehabilitation or support to live in the community

Referral: Apply through The Access Point: Call 1 888 640-1934 or apply online at www.theaccesspoint.ca.

Resources

Baker, S. & Martens, L. (2010). *Promoting Recovery from First Episode Psychosis: A Guide for Families*. Toronto: CAMH.

Blake, P., Collins, A.A. & Seeman, M.V. (2015). *Women and Psychosis: An Information Guide*. Toronto: CAMH.

Bromley, S., Choi, M. & Faruqui, S. (2015). *First Episode Psychosis: An Information Guide*. Toronto: CAMH.

Centre for Addiction and Mental Health. (2005). When a Parent Has Experienced Psychosis... What Kids Want to Know. Retrieved from www.camh.ca/en/health-info/guides-and-publications/when-a-parent-has-experienced-psychosis

Ernest, D., Vuksic, O., Shepard-Smith, A. & Webb, E. (2017). *Schizophrenia: An Information Guide*. Toronto: CAMH.

Kidd, S., Velligan, D.I. & Maples, N.J. (2017). *Supporting a Family Member with Schizophrenia: Practical Strategies for Daily Living*. Toronto: CAMH.

Martins, L. & Baker, S. (2009). *Promoting Recovery from First Episode Psychosis: A Guide for Families*. Toronto: CAMH.

Mueser, K.T. & Gingerich, S. (2006). *The Complete Family Guide to Schizophrenia: Helping Your Loved One Get the Most Out of Life*. New York: Guilford Press.

Torrey, E.F. (2013). *Surviving Schizophrenia: A Family Manual* (6th ed.). New York: HarperCollins.

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