



ONTARIO STRUCTURED
PSYCHOTHERAPY PROGRAM

Treatment for people with depression and anxiety-related concerns

Adults experiencing depression or anxiety-related concerns can access ***publicly funded*** cognitive-behavioural therapy and related services through the Ontario Structured Psychotherapy Program (OSP).



Ontario Health
Mental Health and Addictions
Centre of Excellence

What treatment is available for people with depression or anxiety-related concerns?

Depending on needs and preferences, clients will be matched with an OSP service. Services include self-led resources guided by a coach or therapist, and one-on-one or group therapy sessions. These sessions can be in-person or virtual.

OSP can help people who experience:

- Depression and low mood
- Generalized anxiety and worry
- Health anxiety
- Obsessive-compulsive concerns
- Posttraumatic stress
- Social anxiety and performance fears
- Specific fears
- Unexpected panic attacks and agoraphobic fears
- Other anxiety and stress-related problems

OSP does not offer:

- Dialectic behavioural therapy (DBT)
- Crisis management
- Housing support
- Case management
- Chronic pain management
- Medication management
- Financial support
- Substance use counselling
- Relationship counselling
- Legal services

What types of support are available through OSP?

OSP offers different services to best meet the client's needs and preferences, including:

- **Self-led resources guided by a coach or therapist:**
 - BounceBack is delivered over the phone and includes workbooks and bi-weekly personalized mental health coaching, to give people the tools to better understand and manage thoughts, emotions, and behaviours.
 - Clinician Assisted Bibliotherapy is delivered over the phone, where clients receive a free cognitive behavioural therapy self-help guide specific to their concern, a plan for reading and exercises, and weekly 30-min sessions with a therapist.
 - Internet-based cognitive behavioural therapy is delivered online, and is guided by a therapist to work through modules, complete readings, and exercises that help participants learn coping and resiliency skills. It requires access to a computer or mobile device and internet.
- **Individual or group cognitive-behavioural therapy:** this includes in-person or virtual sessions with a therapist in a one-on-one or group format.

All services in the program are informed by cognitive-behavioural therapy approaches. Cognitive-behavioural therapy is a structured, short-term therapy that teaches individuals practical skills and techniques to help them feel better and improve their mental health. This treatment focuses on problems that affect people's lives the most by helping them to change the way they feel, think and act.

It is a stepped care program, meaning that most people will begin with the self-led resources guided by a coach or clinician, and will move to individual or group therapy if they need more support. Services may be available in a variety of languages depending on the network. Please contact your local network to learn what is available.

Which service is most appropriate for my client?

To help connect clients to the service that can best meet their needs, trained service staff completes screening and assessment.

If clients are eligible for the program, most will begin with self-led resources guided by a coach or therapist and will move to individual or group therapy if they require additional support.

While many people will respond well to the initial brief intervention, others will require more support from a clinician over several months.

Measurement-based care, which is an evidence-based, central feature of OSP, also helps support clinical decision-making throughout the client journey. It involves consistent monitoring of a client's progress over time using standardized questionnaires. This facilitates discussions between the client and program staff to determine whether the service is effectively meeting the client's needs or not.

If the client's symptoms do not improve through treatment, they can be transitioned to a different level of care either within or outside of the program.

Who delivers OSP services?

Individual and group therapy are provided virtually and in-person by different community-based service delivery sites across the province. Services are coordinated by 10 network lead organizations:

Central Region (Mississauga to Huntsville and Orangeville to Markham)

- [Waypoint Centre for Mental Health Care](#)
- [CarePoint Health](#)
- [Canadian Mental Health Association – York and South Simcoe](#)

Toronto Region (city of Toronto)

- [Centre for Addiction and Mental Health](#)

West Region (Waterloo to Windsor and Tobermory to Niagara Falls)

- [St. Joseph's Healthcare Hamilton](#)
- [St. Joseph's Health Care London](#)

East Region (Scarborough to Deep River to Hawkesbury)

- [The Royal Ottawa Mental Health Centre](#)
- [Ontario Shores Centre for Mental Health Services](#)

North East Region (Parry Sound to Sault Ste. Marie to the Hudson Bay and James Bay Coasts)

- [Health Sciences North](#)

North West Region (Thunder Bay to Kenora to the Hudson Bay Coast)

- [St. Joseph's Care Group](#)

Who is eligible for OSP services?

OSP is available for adults (18 years and older) who have concerns that are primarily related to depression or an anxiety-related problem. Some of the self-led resources are available to individuals under the age of 18 outside of the program and must be referred to directly (*Please see next page*).

The OSP Exclusionary Criteria provides a clinical guide to help determine if the program is suitable for the client; clinical judgement should also be used. If any of the following criteria are met, clients should be directed to a more appropriate service outside of OSP that may better support their needs.

EXCLUSIONARY CRITERIA

- Client/patient is actively suicidal and with impaired coping skills and/or has attempted suicide in the past 6 months.
- Client/patient poses a high risk to themselves, risk to others or is at significant risk of self-neglect.
- Client/patient is self-harming, which is the primary concern.
- Client/patient is experiencing significant symptoms of mania or hypomania currently or has experienced these symptoms within the past year. *
- Client/patient is experiencing significant symptoms of a psychotic disorder currently or has experienced these symptoms within the past year. *
- Client/patient has a severe/complex personality disorder that would impact their ability to actively participate in CBT for anxiety or depression. *NOTE: This program is not appropriate for clients/patients for which personality disorder is the problem that is currently causing the most distress and impairment.*
- Client/patient has requested medication management. Client/patient has moderate to severe impairment of cognitive function (e.g., dementia); or moderate/ severe impairment due to a developmental disability or learning disability.
- Client/patient currently has problematic substance use or has had problematic substance use in the past three months that would impact their ability to actively participate in CBT.
- Client/patient requires specialized concurrent disorders treatment.
- Client/patient has a **severe** eating disorder that would impact their ability to actively participate in CBT for anxiety or depression.

**This does not include symptoms induced by medication or substance use*

What happens if my client is not eligible?

OSP is not an appropriate service for all referred clients. If the program cannot serve a referred client, an OSP team member will let you know that the program is not suitable and may suggest other services to meet their needs.

It is important to carefully consider if OSP is the right fit for your client **before** submitting a referral. If your client meets any of the exclusionary criteria, other service options may be more appropriate. This will help ensure clients experience the most streamlined process and are not redirected to multiple services before receiving treatment.

How do I refer my client to OSP?

Before referring your client, please review the eligibility criteria for suitability based on your client's needs, and discuss the service with your client to determine their interest in the program. If you determine the program is suitable you can submit a referral to the network that's closest to where your client lives. See previous page for links to the network(s) in your area. OSP is a publicly funded program that does not require OHIP billing.

After receiving the referral, the network lead organization will conduct an initial screening to ensure the reason for the referral is aligned with services offered within OSP. This may include a call to collect additional information if required. Following initial screening, the network lead organization will connect with the client for an assessment that confirms OSP suitability, service level that best meets their needs and their specific problem area.

How is my client's progress monitored?

Your client's progress in OSP will be continually monitored to ensure that the program meets their ongoing needs and to help inform treatment. They may be transitioned to other services, including those outside the program as needed.

What happens after my client has completed OSP?

Clients will exit from the program at treatment completion or if the program can no longer meet their needs. Depending on specific client circumstances, a referral or recommendation for other services may be made.

What services are available for my clients under 18 years old outside of OSP?

While OSP services are only for those 18 years and older, the BounceBack program is available for direct referral for youth aged 15-17.

A referral or self-referral can be made to the BounceBack program by completing an online form which can be found on the [BounceBack website](#). This referral will be automatically sent to the BounceBack program for consideration.

For more information, please visit:
[**ontariohealth.ca/osp**](https://ontariohealth.ca/osp)