

Ontario Opens Homelessness and Addiction Recovery Treatment Hub in Peterborough

PETERBOROUGH — The Ontario government is expanding access to high-quality mental health and addictions care with the launch of a new Homelessness and Addiction Recovery Treatment (HART) Hub in Peterborough. This is part of the province's more than \$560 million investment to open 29 HART Hubs across Ontario to protect the safety of families and communities while improving access to recovery and treatment services for people facing housing instability, mental health and substance use challenges.

"We are building a stronger, more connected system of mental health and addictions care that better reflects the needs of communities and focuses on lasting recovery," said Vijay Thanigasalam, Associate Minister of Mental Health and Addictions. "The opening of this new HART Hub will ensure that people struggling with mental health and addictions challenges in the Peterborough region can access support services that prioritizes their path to recovery and strengthen community safety."

HART Hubs connect people to a range of comprehensive treatment and recovery services such as primary care, mental health services, addictions care, social services and employment support.

The Peterborough HART Hub delivers services with the Four Counties Addictions Services Team (Fourcast) as lead agency, in partnership with local organizations, including the City of Peterborough Social Services, Canadian Mental Health Association – Haliburton, Kawartha and Pine Ridge, Elizabeth Fry Society of Peterborough, Peterborough Community Health Centre (PCHC), Peterborough County-City Paramedics and Peterborough Regional Health Centre (PRHC).

The Hub brings together a collaborative network of clinical, social service and care providers working to deliver services tailored to local needs, including:

- Mental health and addictions services
- Primary Care
- Case management for income supports, social services, employment services
- Supportive housing and supportive housing services
- Indigenous Services

Through Your Health: A Plan for Connected and Convenient Care and building on the Roadmap to Wellness, the province is taking action to connect individuals to integrated mental health and addictions services, where and when they need it.

The Peterborough HART Hub is located at 210 Wolfe Street.

In March 2025, the government announced plans to open 28 HART Hubs across the province. In April 2026, the government expanded the number of hubs by announcing a new Kingston location, bringing the total to 29 hubs, supported by an investment of more than \$560 million.

HART Hubs will also add close to 900 supportive housing units across the province. This is over 300 more than originally planned, helping people transition to stable, long-term housing.

With a focus on treatment and recovery, HART Hubs will not offer safer supply, supervised drug consumption or needle exchange programs.

From 2019-20 to 2025-26, Ontario has invested over \$1 billion through the Roadmap to Wellness to expand mental health and addictions services, helping to meet growing demand, to close gaps in mental health and addictions care and build a world-class system. This investment is helping create new services and expand programs across the province.

"For the first time in Ontario's history, we are taking a look at the entire continuum for homelessness, addictions, and recovery. The Hart Hub is a fantastic approach; it means that we are crossing different sectors to ensure that we are providing the services where they need it, when they need it, and at the appropriate level. People can enter at any stage into the Hub, wherever they are, and then progress through. It is the first time that any province has looked at the entire continuum for homelessness, addiction, and rehab."

- Dave Smith
MPP for Peterborough-Kawartha

"The opening of the Peterborough HART Hub marks an important step forward in ensuring that our most vulnerable residents have access to the supports they need. The HART Hub brings together health care, mental health and addiction services, housing supports, and other community resources in one place, helping people access compassionate care closer to home."

- Laurie Scott
MPP for Haliburton – Kawartha Lakes – Brock

"The provincial government's investment in HART Hub Peterborough provides local partners with the opportunity to expand resources and services for those experiencing homelessness in our community. Building on the core foundations of homelessness services in Peterborough, we will diversify our housing solutions to target specialized services for specialized needs. Our unique model puts a laser focus on long term housing stability for those with few housing options. We believe that housing is the solution for those in our community facing the intersecting crisis of addiction, mental health and homelessness."

- Donna Rogers
Executive Director, Four Counties Addiction Services Team



Karmageddon

Mr. X: The Law Doesn't Make Exceptions at the Slaughterhouse

By Mr. 'X' ~ John Mutton, Former Mayor of Clarington
CENTRAL EXCLUSIVE

Last week, I wrote about allegations of illegal slaughterhouses operating within our communities. The response was overwhelming. Some people asked why we have so many rules governing the slaughter of livestock in the first place.

The answer is remarkably simple. Those laws exist because history has taught us what happens when they do not. Ontario's meat inspection system was not created to make life difficult for farmers, butchers, or abattoir operators. It was created because animals deserve humane treatment, consumers deserve safe food, and legitimate businesses deserve a level playing field.

Every licensed abattoir in Ontario understands what it takes to operate legally. Facilities must meet stringent construction and sanitation standards. Animals must be handled humanely. Meat intended for sale is subject to inspection before and after slaughter. Refrigeration, waste disposal, water supply, employee hygiene, pest control, record-keeping, traceability, and ongoing oversight are all part of the system. None of this is accidental.

Every requirement was put in place because, somewhere, someone became sick, an animal was mistreated, or a public health failure demonstrated why stronger safeguards were needed.

When Ontarians purchase meat, they rarely think about the inspection system behind it. They simply assume the meat they are feeding their children has been processed under rules designed to protect them.

That confidence should never be taken for granted. When animals are slaughtered outside the regulated system and meat enters the marketplace without the required inspections, the very safeguards designed to protect the public may be bypassed. That is why provincial licensing and inspection requirements matter so much. There is another side to this issue that deserves equal attention.

Every legitimate abattoir owner has invested hundreds of thousands—sometimes millions—of dollars to comply with Ontario's standards. They have built proper facilities, obtained licences, welcomed inspectors, maintained records, paid taxes, and accepted the costs of doing business legally.

Why should they have to compete against anyone who ignores those same obligations? The rule of law only works when it applies equally.

This issue is also larger than agriculture. It involves municipal zoning, provincial food safety, public health, environmental protection, animal welfare, building standards, wastewater management, and consumer confidence. Each level of government has a role because each is protecting a different aspect of the public interest.

When one part of that system is ignored, the consequences can extend well beyond a single property.

As a former mayor, I learned that laws only command public respect when they are enforced consistently. Citizens quickly lose confidence when they believe some people are expected to follow the rules while others are not.

This is not about culture, religion, politics, or personal beliefs. It is about one standard that applies to everyone.

If you intend to slaughter livestock for meat that will be sold or distributed, Ontario has established a legal process. Follow it.

Obtain the required approvals.
Meet the inspection standards.
Protect the animals.

Protect consumers. Respect your neighbours.
Compete fairly with the businesses that have invested in doing things the right way.

The overwhelming majority of Ontario farmers and meat processors do exactly that every single day.

They deserve our respect.

They also deserve to know that governments will enforce the same rules for everyone else.

Because public confidence in our food system depends on one simple principle: The law must mean the same thing for everyone.

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