

Motion on Solve the Crisis - Reaction to Recovery Campaign

Moved by Mayor Alex Nuttall and Seconded by Mayor Jan Liggett

August 6, 2026

Whereas OBCM launched the Solve the Crisis campaign in 2024, urging the provincial and federal governments to make significant investments and updates to programs and services to address the homelessness, mental health and addictions crisis; and

Whereas the homelessness, mental health and addictions crisis continues to escalate, impacting communities of all sizes across the province; and

Whereas municipalities have continued to step up, working with community partners to put in place community-specific solutions to address this crisis, but we lack the expertise, capacity, or resources to address these increasingly complex health care and housing issues alone; and

Whereas this crisis falls under provincial jurisdiction and municipalities should not have to continue to fund these programs and services on the property tax base; and

Whereas municipalities' property taxes are paying for the largest and fastest-growing share of housing and homelessness funding in Ontario - \$4B in 2025, up from \$2.1B in 2018 - (AMO) despite housing and homelessness being a provincial responsibility; and

Whereas the province has made some progress in addressing this crisis over the last two years including the introduction of Hart Hubs and increased funding for the Homelessness Prevention Program and Community Mental Health and Addictions programs, they are far from meeting the growing needs of the most vulnerable members of our communities; and

Whereas barriers to access programs and services must be removed to ensure that anyone who voluntarily requests treatment will have access within 24 hours of that request, including by:

- Ensuring appropriate mental health and addictions treatment supports, including 24/7 medical staff and beds are in place in facilities across the province
- Easier access to evidence-based, life-saving medications for those in emergency situations and for emergency service providers to provide this medication along with anyone requesting treatment immediately; and

Whereas the priority is to increase funding for programs, services and spaces for those who want to receive help, we need to also look at ways to address the needs of those who do not have the capacity to ask for help themselves but may be a danger to themselves or the broader community; and

Whereas provinces across the country are seeing a lot of success in addressing this crisis by funding recovery based models of care that combine medical, rehabilitation and psychological treatment of mental illness and addictions, including empowerment of patients, and treatment options that are tailored to the individual needs of patients to support their well-being and recovery journey; and

Whereas the Province of Ontario needs to move towards a coordinated, adequately funded, and outcomes-focused system that addresses the root causes of the crisis.

Therefore it be resolved that Ontario's Big City Mayors through our Solve the Crisis - Reaction to Recovery campaign are requesting that the Province of Ontario:

1. Declare a state of emergency on the homelessness, mental health and addictions crisis impacting the province to highlight this growing crisis and to unlock appropriate supports at both provincial and federal levels.
2. Significantly increase investment in voluntary recovery based treatment for homelessness, mental health and addictions that includes supportive housing capacity to reflect the scale needed, expanding the HART Hub program and removing barriers to access all treatments, programs and services.
3. Undertake a comprehensive review of, and consultation on, changes to the *Mental Health Act*, and the *Health Care Consent Act*, focused on implementing a compassionate care and intervention model for Ontario, as well as the safeguards required to protect the rights, dignity, and well-being of individuals living with severe mental illness and/or substance use disorders with consideration given to circumstances involving individuals who have the capacity to provide informed consent and those who do not.
 - And that this review is in collaboration with key stakeholders, municipal partners, first responders, individuals with lived and living experience, families, caregivers and others deeply impacted by mental health and addictions issues.
4. Expand addiction treatment and rehabilitation programming within provincial and federal correctional institutions, including discharge planning to ensure appropriate treatment and housing options.
5. Establish a Minister of Mental Health and Addictions with its own ministry, decision-making authority, and the appropriate funding required to address the supportive housing, mental health and addictions crisis in this province, with the sole focus of overseeing the extensive work that needs to be done to solve this crisis, including the recommendations above.