

Youth Wellness Hubs Ontario (YWHO): Youth Wellness Teams Staffing Model

YWHO sites are encouraged to use this document as a guiding scope to design their hiring processes and materials when staffing their Youth Wellness Teams (YWT).

Youth Wellness Teams Core Services:

Youth Wellness Teams are funded to provide the following functions of care:

- Mental Health and Substance Use Counselling
- Nurse Practitioner/Primary Care Services
- Peer Support
- Care Navigation
- Intake/Needs Assessment

Staffing Structure:

As long as these five functions of care are provided at the site and appropriately meet the local demand for each service, the FTEs and the titles of the roles can vary.

YWHO Executive Leadership will be approving each site's new staffing structure as part of the funding agreements to ensure it aligns with the expectations of the Ministry of Health. The staffing structure submitted should include the in-kind services provided by network partners at the site. If FTE functions are being covered through purchase of service, this needs to be indicated in the "Service Contracts" section detail of the budget.

Alignment with YWHO Model:

A funded YWT can assist in overcoming barriers of integration. By having a YWT in place, sites will be equipped to consistently provide care to youth for at a minimum of 30 hours per week, within the parameters of the YWHO model. As such, all services offered as part of the YWT need to be available to all youth ages 12 to 25. Staff fulfilling these roles must follow the core components outlined in the YWHO model, including the completion of the Minimum Data Set (MDS) to provide Measurement-Based Care (MBC) within a “stepped-care” approach.

No other intake or screening forms outside of those outlined by the YWHO model should be required to access the core YWHO services, as that would increase barriers to care. This requirement is important to consider when forming partnerships for in-kind core service supports. Service providers, including psychiatrists from partner agencies providing service at the site, may use their own more comprehensive assessment tools or processes with youth post-MDS to determine suitability for more intensive service options, but every effort should be made to reduce youth burden and information duplication.

Reporting:

All activities/services funded through the YWHO funding need to be reported through YWHO funding and through the MDS. They should not be reported through the partner’s statistical or financial reporting mechanisms. This includes activities/services delivered by a direct employee of the Network Lead or by a contracted staff of a partner agency.

Similarly, where YWHO hubs have integrated other funded services, it is important to note that YWHO reporting only counts activities funded by YWHO Services funded by other funding agreements will not be included. For example, where a Hub has integrated Youth Outreach Worker (YOW) services, the activities attached to the YOW staff should be counted against the YOW funding and **not** the YWHO funding. This is to ensure YOW activities in the YWHO hub would not be double-counted.

In-Kind Contributions:

All YWHO sites are encouraged to form partnerships and incorporate in-kind contributions to develop an integrated service that meets the holistic needs of local youth. These additional supports include education, vocational/employment, housing, culturally specific supports, and engagement and inclusion-focused services, among others. In-kind partnerships provide functions within the YWT, as long as these are able to operate within the aforementioned parameters.

Subscribing to YWHO Values:

Anti-Racism & Equity:

Sites are highly encouraged to prioritize equity and anti-racist approaches when hiring and forming their YWT, and when developing site policies that affect these teams and their services. Intentionally hiring a workforce that reflects the local diversity of youth and that holds a strong background in anti-oppressive and anti-racist practice is highly encouraged. This includes prioritizing representation of intersectional lived experiences (i.e., staff who are Indigenous, Black and people of colour, Francophone, those with lived experience of mental health and/or substance use challenges, LGBTQ2S+ identity, those with lived experience of poverty and/or homelessness, disability, neurodiversity, and more).

Offering staff continuing capacity-building opportunities on anti-racist and anti-oppressive practice is key in fostering a workforce that is well equipped to offer equitable and culturally responsive service delivery. Implementation Specialists can connect you to the necessary materials and supports.

All YWT roles subscribe to the importance and values of:

- Meaningful engagement;
- Access, equity and inclusion for diverse youth;
- High visibility and stigma-free;
- Integration across sectors;
- Continuous learning and quality improvement; and,
- Service approaches that are youth-centered, developmentally appropriate and holistic

YWHO Model – Function and Scope for YWT Team

The table below describes each function within the YWT within the scope of the YWHO model:

Youth Wellness Team Role/Core Service	Alternate Names (to be tailored by hub network)	Functions within scope of YWHO Model
<p>Mental Health and Substance Use Clinician</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Mental Health and Addictions Counsellor/Specialist • Psychologist • Social Worker • Psychotherapist • Therapist • Counsellor – Black health and wellness • Counsellor – Indigenous wellness and health • Newcomer mental health counsellor 	<p>In collaboration with youth, support the use of YWHO standardized measures/MDS to provide mental health and substance use services, monitor progress, and improve youth outcomes (focus on measurement-based care).</p> <p>Provide high quality mental health/substance use interventions that are:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Evidence-based (e.g., solution focused brief therapy, motivational interviewing, cognitive behavioral therapy, dialectical behavior therapy) or evidence-generating • Wholistic healing and culturally specific practices (e.g. two-eyed seeing approach, wise practices, etc.) • Youth-centered and developmentally appropriate • Based on an integrated stepped-care model. • Work from a harm reduction and culturally responsive approach • Provide technology-based (online, phone) and in-person service.

Youth Wellness Team Role/Core Service	Alternate Names (to be tailored by hub network)	Functions within scope of YWHO Model
<p>Nurse Practitioner</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Registered Nurse • Primary care service provider • General Practitioner 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Screen/assess youth using standardized measures to help improve youth outcomes (focus on measurement-based care) • Provide full range of health care and support, including sexual health and body positivity • Provide services on-site (to the extent possible), virtually (to the extent possible), or locally • Provide pharmacotherapy when appropriate. • Participate in relevant training, mentorship, and partnership opportunities (e.g., medical treatment of youth opioid use) • Work from a harm reduction and culturally responsive approach • Work with youth with mental health and substance use disorders

Youth Wellness Team Role/Core Service	Alternate Names (to be tailored by hub network)	Functions within scope of YWHO Model
<p>Peer Support Worker</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Mental Health & Substance Use Peer Specialist • Peer Mentor • 2SLGBTQ+ Peer Support Worker • Community Ambassador • Youth Outreach Worker • Indigenous Elder • Aunties, Uncle, Grandmother or Grandfather 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Provide group and individual support services that draw on lived experience and recovery journey • Support use of standardized measures to help improve youth outcomes (focus on measurement-based care) • Help youth navigate mental health and substance use system • Participate in community youth network meetings and support outreach • Provide technology-based (online, phone) and in-person service • Work from a harm reduction and culturally responsive approach

Youth Wellness Team Role/Core Service	Alternate Names (to be tailored by hub network)	Functions within scope of YWHO Model
<p>Care Coordinator</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Care Manager • Transition Support Worker • Community Support Worker • Traditional Teachers • Knowledge Keepers 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Work to proactively link/warmly transfer youth to YWHO partners or external service providers • Facilitate continued engagement of youth at YWHO and continuity of care between all service providers • Work from a harm reduction, collaborative/team-based and culturally responsive approach • Build and maintain relationship with network partners and other relevant services • Liaise between YWHO and external agency staff • Provide technology-based (online, phone) and in-person service

Youth Wellness Team Role/Core Service	Alternate Names (to be tailored by hub network)	Functions within scope of YWHO Model
<p>Intake Coordinator</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Client Facilitator • Youth Navigator • Community Intake Worker • YWHO Administrator • Front Desk Staff • Reception & Orientation Staff • Needs Assessment Facilitator 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Gather information for service determination using YWHO intake processes and standardized measures • Create and maintain developmentally appropriate, non-judgmental, non-stigmatizing, safe, and welcoming hub atmosphere • Welcome youth to YWHO, engage with youth, and explain (and support) measurement-based care • Represent YWHO to youth, families, and agencies, and liaise among all groups • Work from a harm reduction and culturally responsive approach • Provide technology-based (online, phone) and in-person service.