



Thank you for connecting with CMHA Halton Region Branch (CMHA-HRB) for support. Here are some answers to frequently asked questions about our Walk-In Counselling program. Please read them before your session. If you have a question that isn't listed here, please ask your counsellor.

1. Who can attend?

All individuals aged **16+** are welcome, and you may bring a support person with you if you wish. We regret that we are not currently able to offer couples or family counselling. However, we can provide contact information for other local agencies that provide these services.

2. How much does it cost?

This service is free and a health card is not required for service.

3. How long will I wait? Am I guaranteed to be seen that day?

Each day that we are open, we have a set number of sessions available that fill up on a first come, first served basis. When you arrive, you will be assigned a place in line and provided the first available session with the first available counsellor on duty. Your wait to see this counsellor will depend on how many other people have arrived before you. On busier days, the wait will be longer and the available sessions may fill up earlier.

We encourage everyone to arrive as early as possible to ensure the best availability on any

given day. In the event that all of our sessions are full when you arrive, you will not be able to be seen by a counsellor on that day. However, our staff will provide you with information on how to access counselling on another day.

4. Can I step away while I'm waiting?

If you need to step outside for a moment while waiting for your session, please inform our staff. If we are unable to find you when your counsellor becomes available, you may lose your place in line.

5. Why is someone being seen before me when I arrived first?

Please note that, on occasion, it may look like someone is "jumping the line" and being seen out of order of arrival. This can happen for a variety of reasons, including but not limited to:

- Factors related to safety
- People temporarily stepping out of the waiting room
- People arriving for a different program

For reasons related to privacy, we cannot discuss other people's service with you. Your support matters to us and we do our best to make everyone's wait as short as possible while providing high-quality service.

AN IMPORTANT NOTE ABOUT CRISIS SUPPORT

As our wait times on any given day are difficult to predict, CMHA-HRB Walk-In Counselling is not a crisis support program.

**IF YOU ARE IN CRISIS, PLEASE CALL THE 24/7 C.O.A.S.T CRISIS LINE:
1-877-825-9011 (TTY: 1-844-646-1700)**

If you begin to experience a crisis while in the waiting room awaiting your Walk-In Counselling session, please notify a staff person so that we can help you connect with crisis supports. In the event that the waiting room is unattended and you are unable to locate a staff person in a timely manner, please call the Crisis Line number noted above.

6. What's the difference between CMHA-HRB Walk-In Counselling and ongoing counselling?

The CMHA-HRB Walk-In Counselling program provides brief and single-session focused supportive counselling. We provide individual sessions that are approximately 45 minutes in length and focused on whatever topic you feel is most important to you today.

You are welcome to return in the future for additional individual sessions related to this or other topics on an as-needed basis. However, we do not book follow-up appointments and you may see a different on-duty counsellor each time (based on availability).

This is different from ongoing counselling with a regular counsellor with whom you book scheduled appointments that repeat over time and focus on your work together building on itself in each subsequent session.

There are advantages and disadvantages to both of these approaches in various situations, and everyone's needs are different and can vary over time. Using Walk-In Counselling does not disqualify you from accessing ongoing counselling in the future and vice versa.

If you are not sure which approach would fit your needs best at this time, please feel free to use a session with our counsellors to explore this. Although we do not currently offer ongoing counselling at CMHA-HRB, our staff is knowledgeable about how to access these services in the community and would be happy to discuss them with you.

7. Can I request a specific counsellor?

If you choose to return to Walk-In Counselling for a second or subsequent session, you may request to see the same counsellor you have seen before. However, we cannot guarantee that they will be available. Please also note that if you request a particular counsellor, your wait time that day may be longer.

8. How often can I come to CMHA-HRB Walk-In Counselling?

We believe that you are the expert on your own needs, and so we encourage you to access Walk-In Counselling on an as-needed basis whenever you feel it would be helpful. As our service is intended to be brief and single-session focused, if, in working with you, we feel that your particular needs and/or situation may be better supported by ongoing counselling or by another service in the community, we may suggest that you connect to other programs and/or agencies that offer those services and support you in doing so.

Your input is important!

Feedback forms are available at reception for you to fill out after your session.

To provide additional feedback, you may contact:

Manager, Case Management Services

1-877-693-4270 ext. 5424

TTY: 1-844-646-1700

*General inquiries about this and other CMHA-HRB programs can be made during regular office hours by contacting the CMHA-HRB Information and Referral Team at (905) 315-8664 and/or info@cmahhrb.ca. The Information and Referral Team aims to respond to messages left for them within 2 business days. **If you are in crisis, please call the 24/7 COAST crisis line at 1-877-825-9011 (TTY: 1-844-646-1700).***