

While Mr. Hudak's pledge is welcome, it would be helpful for all three parties to commit to investing in mental health care. As the Select Committee noted, which was co-chaired by Christine Elliott, Mr. Hudak's deputy leader, the mental health system is in crisis. Only 3 in 10 people living with mental illness get access to any services at all, and wait lists for supportive housing in Toronto has grown to over 3,000 from 700 just over a year ago. Ontario's spending on mental health is well below the OECD average and its per capita spending lags most other provinces. Since 20% of the population lives with mental illness, it would seem reasonable to allocate at least \$1 billion to improve access to services and supports. Investments in community mental health could reduce hospitalizations by 50% and hospital days by up to 80%, while improving quality of life. Increasing the mental health share of health spending is something all parties should commit to.