

Strategies for System Level Change

The Canadian Experience



Centre for Addiction and Mental Health
Centre de toxicomanie et de santé mentale

The Past: A Hospital-Based Mental Health System

- Context (culture/climate)
- Structure (organization)
- What it meant for clients (stigma/alienation)

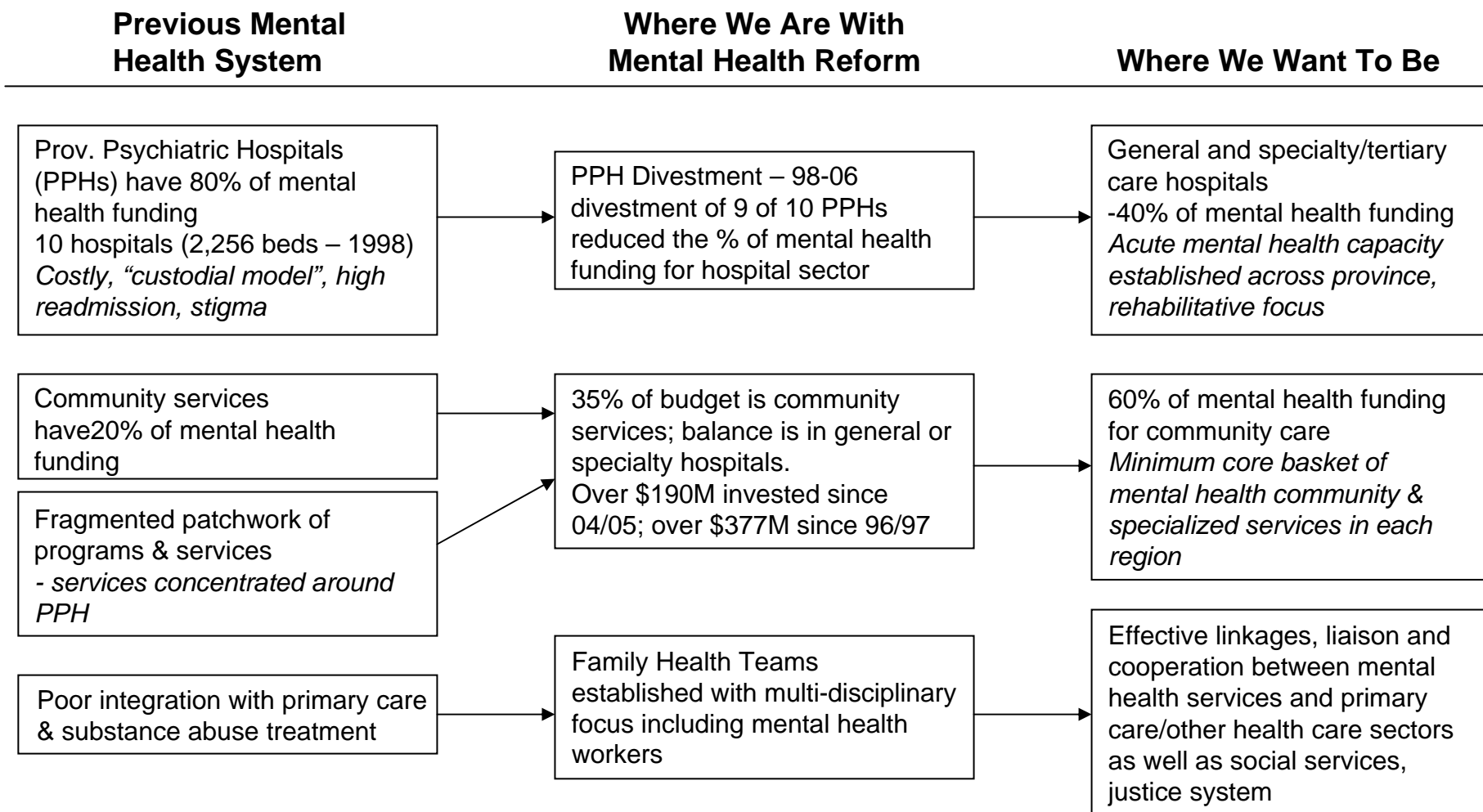
De-Institutionalization

- Why/How
- Problems
- Result

The Present: A Community-Based System in a Regional Context

- Rationale for this transition
- Characteristics of a community-based model
- Main challenges
 - Resources
 - Leadership
 - Partnership
 - System Planning

Towards a Reformed Mental Health System



The Present: Programs in Ontario

\$601M in 06/07 for 334 community-based mental health programs across the province that offer a range of services and supports including:

- Crisis Services - for clients and families to assist in crisis prevention and on-going support (e.g., medical intervention, counseling, referral and advocacy)
- Intensive Case Management - to meet a persons perceived needs and changing needs (e.g., assessment, advocacy, outreach functions, monitoring and evaluation)
- Assertive Community Treatment Teams - to provide comprehensive treatment, rehabilitation and support from self-contained 10-12 member multi-disciplinary teams (including psychiatrist, registered nurse, occupational therapist, social worker, peer specialist)
- Supportive Housing - combination of buildings, leased units and individualized supports
- Employment Supports - to secure and maintain employment
- Consumer Initiatives - for mutual support, knowledge development, skills training, consumer businesses; and
- Family Initiatives - such as family self-help groups and their involvement in planning, evaluation and governance of care delivery.

Critical Success Factors for a Transformed Mental Health System

- Addiction and mental health care will be fully integrated within a transformed system.
- Consumers and families will be involved in all aspects of planning, decision-making, implementation and service delivery.
- People across Ontario will have access to the best mental health and addiction services in their communities, supported by widely shared research findings, best practices and professional development.

Critical Success Factors, continued

- There will be a continuum of mental health and addiction services and supports from community-based to hospital care, and including consumer and family initiatives.
- Access to housing, income, employment, social supports and other determinants of health will be acknowledged and supported as critical aspects of treatment and recovery.
- Mechanisms for addressing the historical marginalization, stigma and under-funding of addiction and mental health services will be in place.
- The needs of diverse, rural and remote communities will be met.

Recommendations to Improve Mental Health Care

1. Governments must take leadership to develop a National Action Plan on Mental Health
2. Include Mental Health and Addictions in health care reform initiatives
3. Increase funding to the community-based sector and ensure a continuum of services and supports from community-based to hospital care
4. Prevent and reduce homelessness
5. Enhance the focus on health promotion and prevention
6. Act outside the traditional health care sector: Ensure access to housing, supportive housing, income, and employment
7. Improve accountability

Recommendations, continued

8. Protect mental health and addictions funding in the new regionalized system
9. Involve consumers and their families
10. Expand mental health and justice funding
11. Continue investments in early intervention programs
12. Continue to build concurrent disorders services
13. Invest into mental health and addictions human resources
14. Include capacity building for mental health and addictions in e-health strategies
15. Develop a Provincial Network to provide expert advice and support to LHINs regarding mental health and addictions issues

Conclusion: Current Issues and Challenges

- Change takes time
- Need a broad definition of the system and its needs
- De-centralization of decision making
- Sectoral cooperation and unified messages
- Recognized importance of the social determinants of health (housing, employment, etc.)
- Providing services to a diverse population
- Criminalization of mental illness