



## Finding Help: Accessing Mental Health Resources



# Mental Health Professionals

Mental health professionals are licensed professionals who diagnose mental health conditions and prescribe treatment. Most have either a master's degree or more advanced education and training. The following factors should be taken into consideration when choosing a mental health provider:

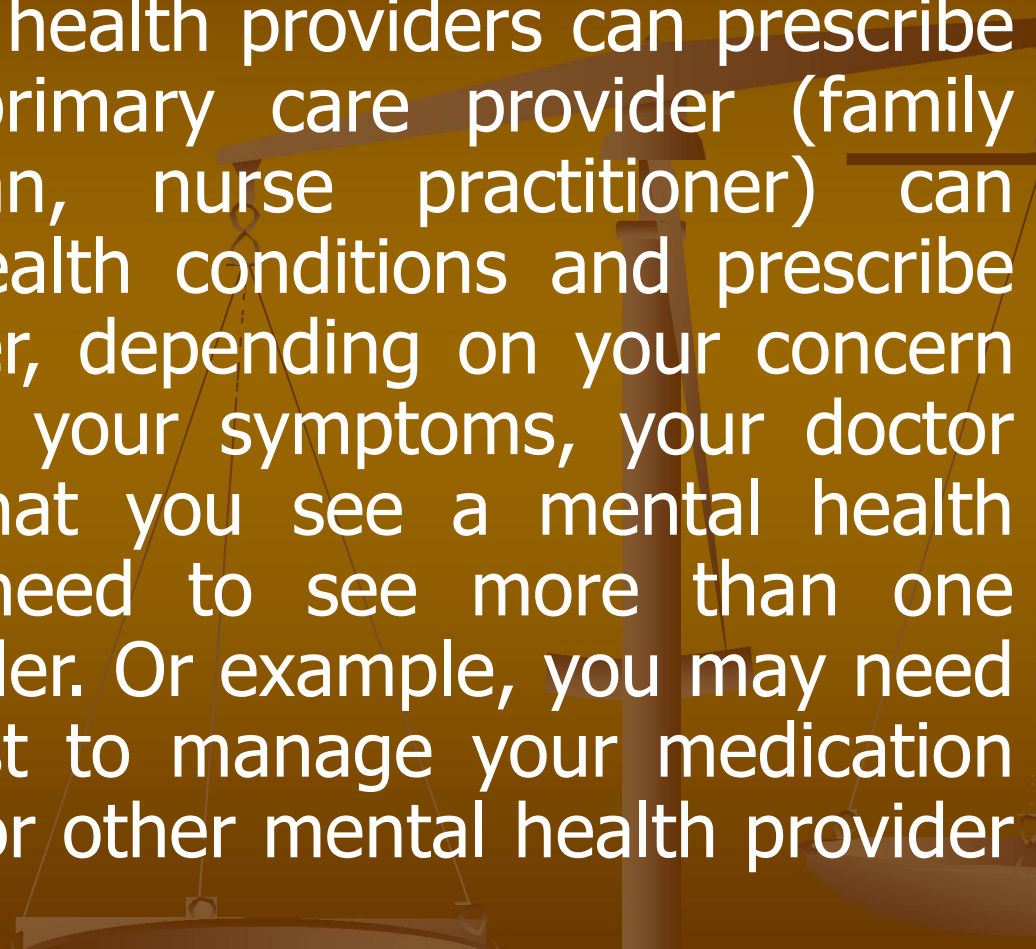
- Your concern or condition
- Whether you need medication, counselling or both
- Your health insurance coverage

# Your concern or condition

- Most mental health providers can provide treatment or a range of conditions, but a mental health provider with a more specialised focus may be more suited to your needs. For example, if you have an eating disorder, you may need to see a psychologist or counsellor who specializes in that area. If you are interested in resolving concerns within your family environment, you may want to consult a marriage or family therapist. In general, the more severe your symptoms or complex your diagnosis, the more expertise or training you need to look for in a mental health provider.
- You may need to see more than one to meet your needs.

# Medication or counselling?

Only certain mental health providers can prescribe medication. Your primary care provider (family doctor, paediatrician, nurse practitioner) can diagnose mental health conditions and prescribe medication. However, depending on your concern and the severity of your symptoms, your doctor may recommend that you see a mental health expert. You may need to see more than one mental health provider. For example, you may need to see a psychiatrist to manage your medication and a psychologist or other mental health provider for counselling.



# Your health insurance

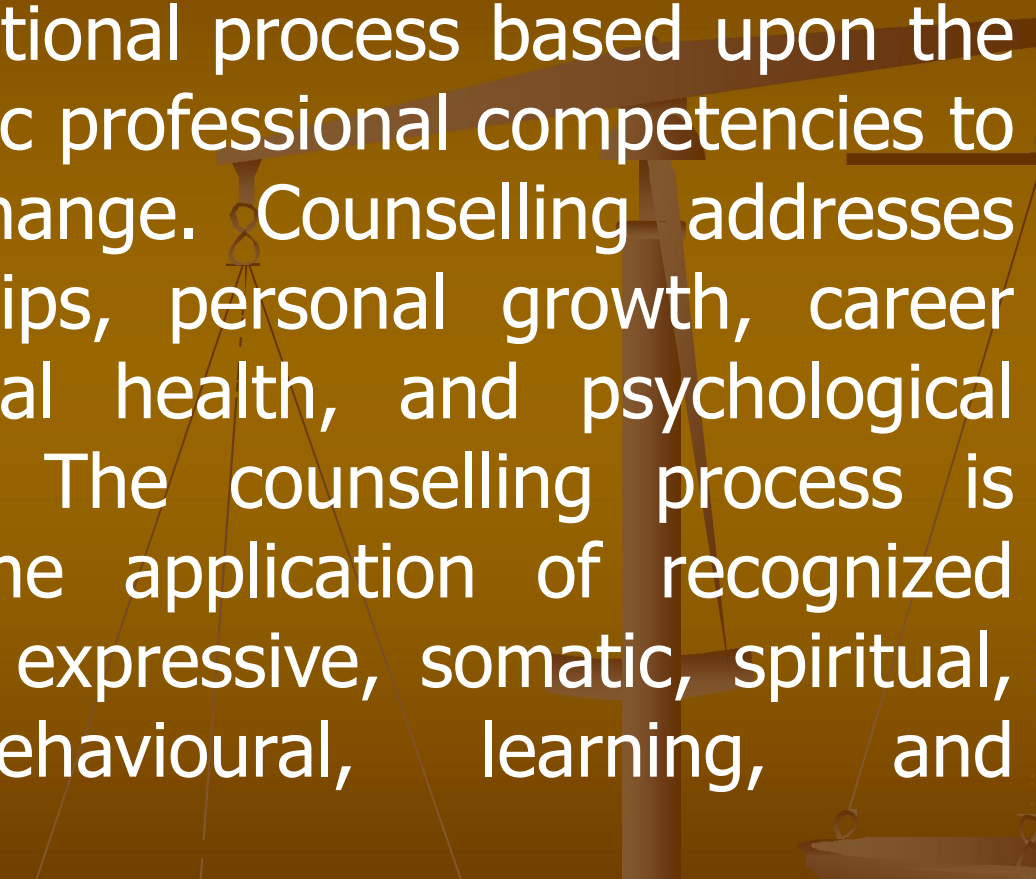
- Some mental health providers are covered by OHIP others are covered by extended health care plans. Your health insurance policy may have a list of specific mental health providers covered, or your insurance may only cover certain types of mental health providers.
- Check to see whether your employee assistance program (EAP) or student health centre offers mental health services and ask for a referral.

# Counselling

Counselling is the skilled and principled use of relationship to facilitate self-knowledge, emotional acceptance and growth and the optimal development of personal resources. The overall aim of counsellors is to provide an opportunity for people to work towards living more satisfyingly and resourcefully. Counselling relationships will vary according to need but may be concerned with developmental issues, addressing and resolving specific problems, making decisions, coping with crisis, developing personal insights and knowledge, working through feelings of inner conflict or improving relationships with others.

# Counselling

Counselling is a relational process based upon the ethical use of specific professional competencies to facilitate human change. Counselling addresses wellness, relationships, personal growth, career development, mental health, and psychological illness or distress. The counselling process is characterized by the application of recognized cognitive, affective, expressive, somatic, spiritual, developmental, behavioural, learning, and systemic principles.





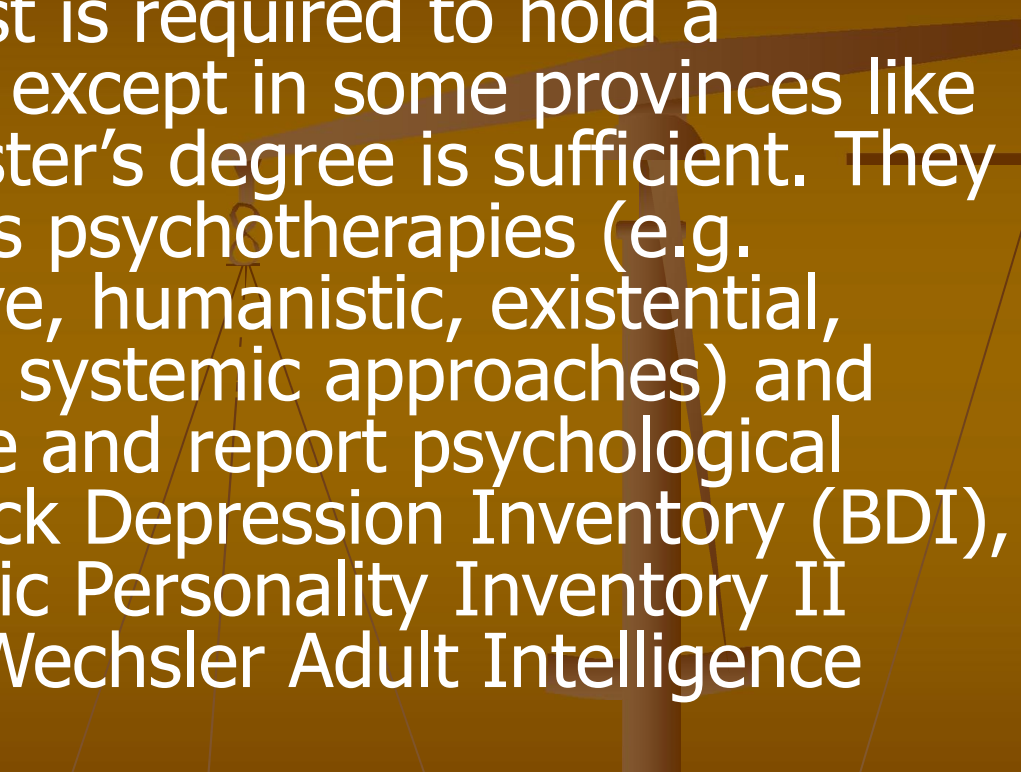
# Psychiatrist

A psychiatrist is a physician who specializes in the diagnosis, treatment, and prevention of mental illnesses and substance use disorders. Psychiatrists receive additional training after completing a medical degree and serve a supervised residency in their specialty. Many psychiatrists undergo additional training so that they can further specialize in such areas as child and adolescent psychiatry, geriatric psychiatry, psychopharmacology etc. Among mental health professionals, only psychiatrists are authorized to prescribe psychiatric medication, conduct physical examinations, order and interpret laboratory tests and electroencephalograms (EEG), and may order brain imaging studies such as computed tomography (CT) or computed axial tomography (CAT) scans, magnetic resonance imaging (MRI) and positive emission tomography (PET) scanning.



# Clinical Psychologist

A clinical psychologist is required to hold a doctorate in Canada except in some provinces like Alberta where a master's degree is sufficient. They are trained in various psychotherapies (e.g. behavioural, cognitive, humanistic, existential, psychodynamic, and systemic approaches) and can administer, score and report psychological tests such as the Beck Depression Inventory (BDI), Minnesota Multiphasic Personality Inventory II (MMPI-II), and the Wechsler Adult Intelligence Test IV (WAIS-IV).



# Counselling Psychologist

- Counselling psychologists follow a wellness model and use psychological knowledge to foster and improve normal human functioning by helping people solve problems, make decisions and cope with stresses of everyday life. The focus is on reasonably well adjusted people living in a community rather than pathological clients in an institutional setting. Counselling psychologists are also trained in various psychotherapeutic approaches.
- In Ontario only members of the College of Psychologists of Ontario may use the title psychological associate or psychologist or hold himself or herself out to practice psychology.

# Psychotherapist



Psychotherapy is a general term for addressing mental health concerns by talking with a psychologist or other mental health provider. Psychotherapy helps the individual learn about moods, feelings, thoughts and behaviours in order to take control of one's life and respond to challenging situations with healthy coping skills. There are many specific types of psychotherapy which are tailored to individual needs. In addition, psychotherapy can be provided by many individuals within the mental health or medical fields such as doctors, nurses, social workers etc.

# Regulation of Profession

College of Psychotherapists and Registered Mental Health Therapists of Ontario (2007) is seeking to regulate the use of the terms **psychotherapy**, **psychotherapist**, and **registered psychotherapist** to only members of the college. This will regulate the practice of psychotherapy by establishing standards and procedures in the public interest to ensure competent and ethical practice within a professional accountability framework. The guidelines suggest that a written examination will be required, educational and clinical experience including supervision in order to be accepted by the College.

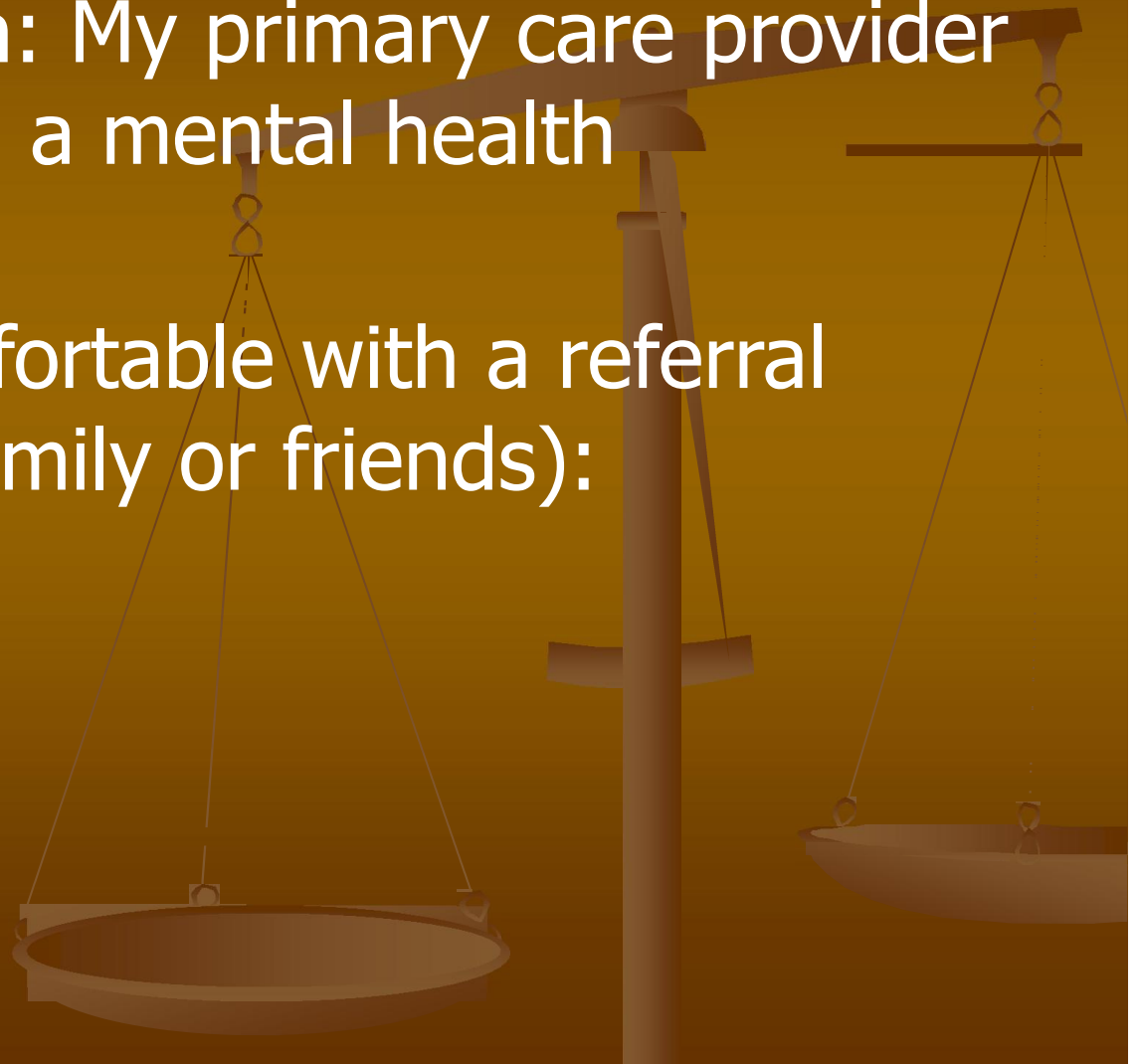
# What do I need help with?

- Adolescent & Youth Counselling
- Anxiety & Depression
- Assertiveness and Emotion Regulation
- Bereavement Counselling, Grief & Loss
- Chronic Pain
- Eating Disorders
- Health Problems/Wellness
- Individual Counselling/Group Counselling/Psychoeducation
- Mindfulness and Meditation
- Older Adult/Aging Issues
- PTSD, Stress Management & Trauma
- Self Care/Self Esteem
- Spiritual/Religious Issues



# Where do I begin?

- Family physician: My primary care provider can recommend a mental health professional
- I would be comfortable with a referral from (trusted family or friends):
  - 1.
  - 2.
  - 3.



# Check phone book/Yellow pages

- Check listings under: Counselling service see Career Counselling; Credit & Debt Counselling; Marriage, Family & Individual Counsellors; Mental Health Services; Pregnancy Counselling; Psychologists and Psychological Associates; Psychotherapy; Social & Human Service Organizations; Stress Management & Counselling.



# Websites

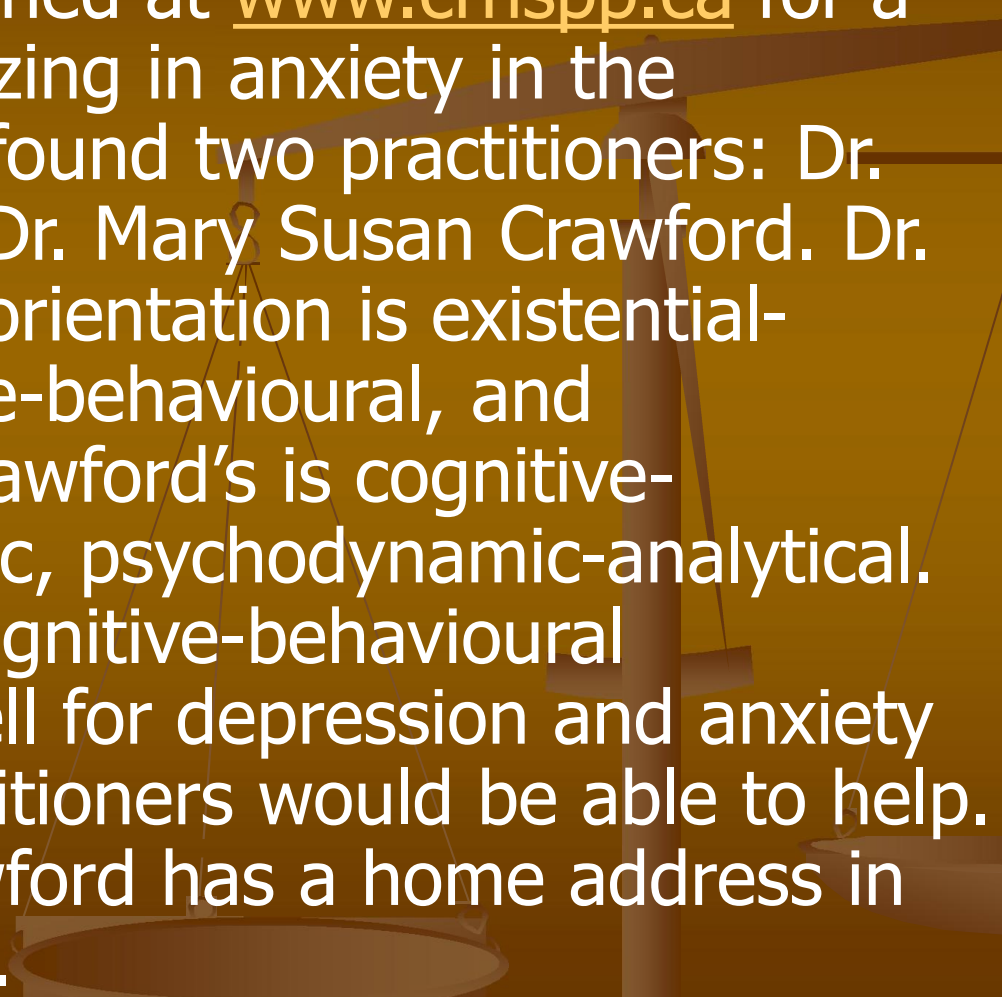
- Check nonprofit, government or mental health organization websites such as the Canadian Counselling and Psychotherapy Association (CCPA) at [www.ccpa-accp.ca](http://www.ccpa-accp.ca) and the Canadian Psychological Association (CPA) [www.cpa.ca](http://www.cpa.ca) which provide listings of providers. The Canadian Register of Health Service Providers in Psychology also has a referral list at [www.crhsp.ca](http://www.crhsp.ca)

# Other websites

- Contact a local or national mental health organization by phone or on the Internet. Such as: Canadian Mental Health Association [www.cmha.ca](http://www.cmha.ca) or [www.ontario.cmha.ca](http://www.ontario.cmha.ca); Centre for Addiction and Mental Health [www.camh.net](http://www.camh.net); eMentalHealth.ca lists mental health resources across Canada [www.ementalhealth.ca](http://www.ementalhealth.ca).

# Example 1

For example, I searched at [www.crhspp.ca](http://www.crhspp.ca) for a psychologist specializing in anxiety in the Brampton area and found two practitioners: Dr. Michael Blacha and Dr. Mary Susan Crawford. Dr. Blacha's theoretical orientation is existential-humanistic, cognitive-behavioural, and interpersonal. Dr. Crawford's is cognitive-behavioural, systemic, psychodynamic-analytical. Since I know that cognitive-behavioural approaches work well for depression and anxiety either of these practitioners would be able to help. In addition, Dr. Crawford has a home address in the Orangeville area.



## Example 2

- Canadian Counseling and Psychotherapy Association [www.ccpa-accp.ca](http://www.ccpa-accp.ca). Find a Canadian Certified Counsellor North Bay
- Arthur Henry, M.A. CCC
- Specialization: Adolescent/Youth Counselling, Adults, Anger Management, Anxiety Disorders,, Bereavement Counselling, Depression, Divorce Counselling, Grief and Loss, Group Counselling, Individual Counselling, Men's Issues, Relationships, Self Esteem, Separation Anxiety Disorder, Specific Phobias, Spiritual/Religious Issues, Spirituality, Stress.
- Accepting new clients, speaks English

# Questions to ask



- What particular services does this mental health provider offer?
- What education, training, licensure and years in practice do they have?
- What are their office hours, fees and length of sessions?
- Are they covered by OHIP or other medical insurance?
- What are their areas of specialization?
- What is their treatment approach and philosophy?

# A Biblical Perspective

- What is the origin of my problems?
- Who is responsible for fixing them?
- How does prayer figure in to this?
- How does God answer prayer?
- In what other ways does God help me?
- How can I state my beliefs to a mental health professional?
- Concerns that I might have when looking for help

