

When you don't know
where to turn.™



Quand tu ne sais pas
vers qui te tourner.™

POWERED BY PARTNERSHIPS

Ontario 211 Services
ANNUAL REPORT 2012-2013





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What is 211?

211 is an award winning service providing **the** most complete directory of 60,000 community and social services in Ontario to help residents find the support they need.



Dial 2-1-1 to reach our helpline



www.211ontario.ca



TTY: 1-888-340-1001

Highly trained specialists answer the 211 helpline who can help in over 150+ languages.

Free | Confidential | Live answer 24/7

When you don't know
where to turn.™



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2012/2013 represented the first full year of service to 100% of Ontario communities, and awareness continues to increase. More than 534,000 calls to 211 were answered across the province, and over 648,000 people visited 211 related websites for information. More and more, agencies and community members are turning to 211 as a reliable source of information about health, government and social services in the community. There is also a growing appreciation for the ways in which 211 services data and infrastructure can enable funders, policy-makers and residents to make more informed choices about their human service needs.

Ontario 211 Services understands that local information about community-based services is critical to those delivering services, and those using them. It is the network of 211 organizations that makes the service relevant and useful to people in the communities where they live, work and play. Calls to 211 in Ontario are answered by one of seven Regional Service Partners, who are each responsible for call service across their catchment areas. Service data is collected, maintained and updated by over 42 Data Partners in the province – from non-profit Community Information Centres, to public libraries, to United Ways and municipalities. Data is then fed to the 211 provincial database by partners who are actively involved in the social and health services sectors in those communities.

The knowledge and expertise of service delivery organizations and funding partners makes the caller and web visitor experience richer. It is the experience and professionalism of these individuals and organizations that allows Ontario 211 to report back to the community about social service needs and trends, as well as unmet needs. A snapshot of the information collected through calls and web visits is included in this report for the 2012/2013 year, and detailed reports on specific social issues or topics have been compiled at the regional level. For more information on your community, you are encouraged to contact your local service provider by dialing 211 in your area.

The quality of the 211's information & referral service was once again recognized as industry-leading by our callers this past year. 211 Ontario was awarded the highest SQM Customer Satisfaction rating within the government sector for the third time. SQM is a third party customer satisfaction benchmarking firm, and ranks over 450 call centres across North America.

As we look towards the future, it is clear that making 211 data and information accessible and easy to understand will continue to be a key priority. Creating channels for agencies and users of services to be a part of 211 by

The knowledge and expertise of service delivery partners and funding partners makes the caller and web visitor experience richer.

supplying information about services, and enabling the dissemination of 211 data for the public good will be the focus of the 211 network in the weeks and months to come.

Ontario 211 Services and its network of partners will continue to work collaboratively, building on the strong foundation that exists in the province to fulfill the mission of 211 - connecting people to the right information and services, strengthening Ontario's health and human services, and helping Ontarians to become more engaged with their communities.



On behalf of the Board of Directors, I am pleased to report on the progress made in further developing the 211 service in Ontario over the past year. We have worked together to advance many priorities for the organization, including governance, systems development, policy, resourcing and sustainability, as well as creating new partnerships with information and referral agencies. I would like to thank my Board colleagues for their commitment and guidance, and staff for their dedication and contributions to progressing our collective work.

In August 2012, Bill Morris returned to United Way Centraide Canada, taking on the position of National Director of 211. I would like to thank Bill for his contributions to 211 in achieving full provincial coverage, and wish Bill continued success in his future endeavours.

The Board of Directors welcomed Andrew Benson into the role of Executive Director at Ontario 211 Services. During this past year, the focus has been on building strong relationships with 211 service providers and stakeholders, including Regional Service Partners, Data Partners, funders and Ontario 211 staff. We look forward to working with our provincial colleagues in maximizing the full value of 211 in Ontario, and supporting our provincial and national partners in expanding 211 throughout Canada.

Reflecting on the past year, we have learned a great deal about the power of collaboration with others to maximize the value of 211 in communities. We are committed to leveraging the expertise and capacity of partners in the community to bring 211 to life for all residents, and to provide rich data back to communities regarding needs and trends for human services. We are also committed to using the best technology to enable access to 211 across all channels. We have a solid foundation to build from, thanks to the contributions of so many stakeholders.

We are so grateful to our funders for their ongoing support. The Ministry of Community and Social Services has championed the development of 211 and its expansion across the province and continues to provide vital resources to sustain service delivery for all Ontarians. We are also grateful for the ongoing support of The Ontario Trillium Foundation and several United Ways and municipalities in Ontario, as well as other funding partners for their contributions to collaborative projects.

We are proud of how far we have come in bringing 211 service to Ontarians and are excited to continue our progress towards a fully integrated, resident-focused 211 network in the months and years to come!

Jocelyne St-Jean
Board Chair, Ontario 211 Services



The past year represents an active and pivotal point in the development of 211 in Ontario. Thank you to the Board of Directors at Ontario 211 Services for their guidance and support, to staff for their dedication and contributions, and the many individuals who have shared with me their thoughts and wisdom on how 211 can be leveraged throughout the Province.

In late 2011, 211 in Ontario achieved a significant milestone – 100% phone coverage that provides all Ontarians with access to information and referrals to nearly 60,000 services in more than 2,000 communities. Our attention is now turning towards expanding access and cross-sector connections to these services through better technologies that will help to ensure that people receive the right supports, at the right time, in the right place. As we continue to move forward, our efforts will be directed at establishing a strong, integrated system on which 211 will create new local, regional and provincial benefits for our funders, service partners, and – most importantly – the people of Ontario.

Since taking on the role of Executive Director in August 2012, I have developed a strong appreciation for the people and organization who collectively make 211 service happen across the province. This includes the 7 Regional Service Partners that manage regional call centres, the 42 Data Providers who collect local service data, the 41 local United Way organizations who provide financial or in-kind support for 211 in their areas, and the 84 partner organizations who leverage 211's data and call centre infrastructure to facilitate access to their specialized services. The level of knowledge, professionalism and passion that exists in our 211 network is impressive.

Building on the strength and capacity of the network, the past year focused on forging new partnerships at the provincial level, and through the Regional Service Partners at the local and regional level. As a partner at many community tables, 211 organizations played a role in creating more efficient and effective service delivery models for specialized services, and reduced the duplication of service data collection for a sector challenged with ongoing resource pressures. We continued to progress in our work to integrate data from across the province into one shared system, and developed processes and guidelines to improve interoperability.

Henry Ford once said, “Coming together is a beginning. Keeping together is progress. Working together is success.” With the contribution and cooperation of partners and supporters across the province, I believe we have all of the building blocks in place to take 211 service to the next level - one created from the community-up that meets and exceeds the needs of all Ontario residents.

Andrew Benson
Executive Director, Ontario 211 Services



211 plays a role in more than 84 local, regional and provincial partnerships and initiatives focused on some of our top community priorities...

25

Facilitating Access to Health Services and Health Promotion

15

Connecting Low-Income People with Financial and Housing Supports

10

Contributing 211 data to Research and Community Development Initiatives

5

Helping Aboriginal People Access Services



20

Connecting Seniors and People with Disabilities to Care in the Community

11

Facilitating Access to Justice and Services for Priority Populations

6

Helping New Immigrants Access Settlement Services

5

Facilitating access to Employment and Education Supports



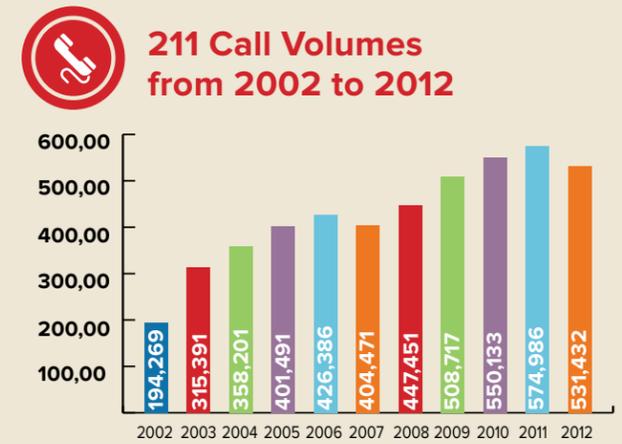
Why people called 211 in 2012

- Results collected from Ontario 211 Regional Service Partners

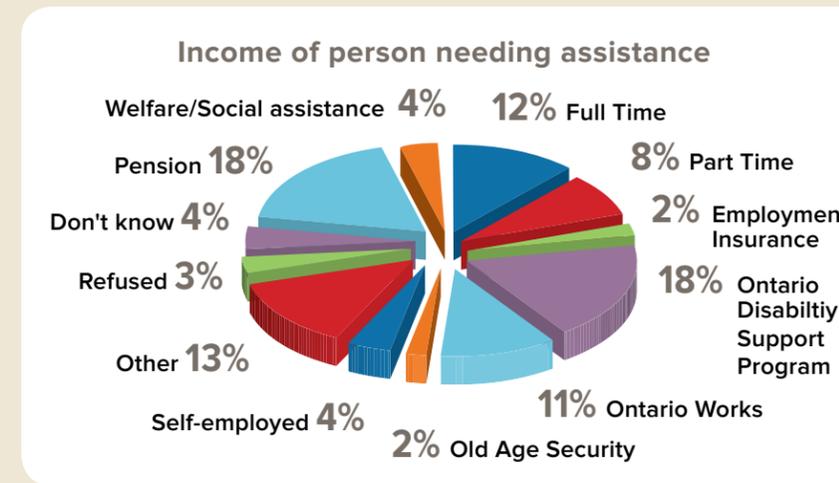
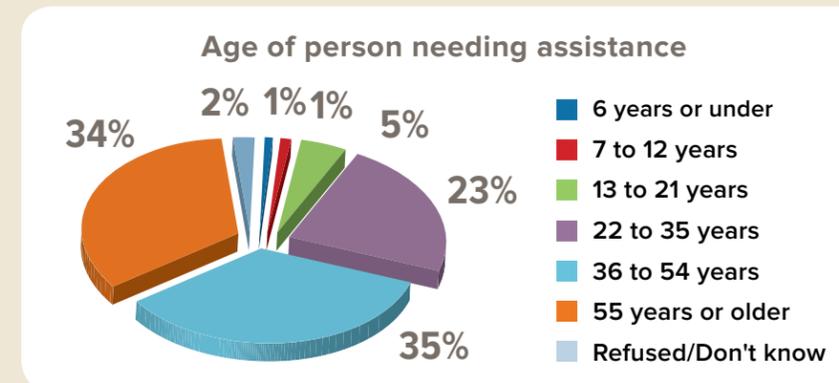
534,626 calls
(includes emails and live chat)

Referred callers to services **619,801 times**

87,578 calls for Health Services	37,387 calls for Food & Meals
68,331 calls for Income and Financial Assistance	33,264 calls for Individual & Family Services
58,812 calls for Housing Help	32,968 calls for Other Federal Government
44,466 calls for Legal and Public Safety Information	32,632 calls for Other Provincial Government
40,880 calls for Community Services	30,066 calls for Mental Health & Addiction



Who calls 211?





211 organizations in the U.S. and Canada have played a significant role in local disasters and community crises by providing authoritative information to the public regarding the emergency. 211 supports emergency responders by diverting non-emergency calls from the 911 system and allowing them to focus on critical response efforts.

At the end of the first year of the project, much has already been accomplished. Leaders of 211 organizations have made over 60 presentations to municipal and provincial Emergency Management groups and awareness is high across the province. Two formal service agreements have been signed with municipalities, and several others are in development. Tools and templates have been established so that 211 organizations across the province are able to build relationships in their respective regions. 211 Regional Service Partners participated in the Huron Challenge in November – a multi-county disaster exercise – testing its ability to manage call volumes and data requirements across the system, increasing the capacity of each organization in serving affected communities. Finally, the project team members have developed and documented standard procedures for 211 Emergency Response and Recovery, and have conducted a second Emergency Exercise to fine-tune processes and to continue to build capacity.

The final year of the project will focus on continuing our efforts to formalize agreements with municipalities, share learnings with other 211 organizations across the province through formal training, and to further develop systems to support our collective work in this area.

The project team wishes to acknowledge Ontario Trillium Foundation for helping to increase 211's ability to play an important role in our communities.

211 Regional Service Partners in Ontario have direct experience with emergency management through events such as the Goderich Tornado and the SARS/H1N1 epidemics in Toronto. We have played a formal role in disseminating public information, registering volunteers and donations from the public, and linking affected citizens to the right resources during the crisis and in the recovery phase. Through a two-year project funded by the Ontario Trillium Foundation, representatives from four Regional Service Partners and Ontario 211 are formalizing this role with municipalities who are responsible for Emergency Management.

The goals of the project are to increase awareness at the municipal, regional and provincial levels regarding the 211 service and how it can be leveraged in emergencies; to build relationships and formal service agreements with municipalities as part of their emergency plans; and to create the systems and internal processes required to respond in an integrated way to the needs of individual communities through the 211 Ontario network.

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211 Public Inquiry Role Within the Communications Structure

