

QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS

Announcement of the new Foundry BC App

On Child and Youth Mental Health Day

May 7, 2021

Top Messages:

- Since the pandemic began, many children and youth in BC are experiencing increased anxiety, stress and other mental health challenges
- Making sure that holistic services are available when and where young people need them is a top priority as we work to develop the broader system of mental health and addictions care here in B.C.
- Today, we are announcing a new province-wide Foundry BC app and web portal to deliver quality virtual services at the touch-of-a-button, which was created with youth for youth.
- The Foundry BC app and web portal will significantly improve access to integrated health and wellness resources and supports for young people aged 12-24 and their caregivers living anywhere in B.C.
- The app offers a new user-friendly, accessible way for young British Columbians and their caregivers to schedule virtual counselling and peer support appointments in advance, access same-day support via messaging, audio or video sessions and join group sessions.
- This is just the beginning. The Foundry BC app will soon include features such as a wellness goal setting, medication tracking, and a Circle of Care program where youth can allow service providers and their caregivers to collaborate online. In addition, services such as primary care and employment supports will also be available on the Foundry BC app.
- Foundry services are the cornerstone of our commitment outlined in A Pathway to Hope to help young people not just survive but thrive in the months, weeks and years to come as we navigate through the COVID-19 pandemic and beyond.

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Q1. What services will the Foundry app and online portal provide?

- Young people aged 12-24 and their caregivers can use the Foundry BC app to drop-in or schedule a virtual counselling appointment, find peer support, join a youth or caregiver group or browse a web-based library of tools and resources.
- This is just the beginning. The Foundry BC app will soon include features such as wellness goal setting, medication tracking, and a Circle of Care program where youth can allow service providers and their caregivers to collaborate online. In addition, services such as primary care and social services will also be available on the Foundry BC app.
- Foundry's provincial virtual services team works together with each young person and caregiver to form a plan shaped around their unique needs.

Q2. Who can access services through the Foundry BC app? Are there costs associated?

- BC's young people aged 12-24 and their caregivers are able to access Foundry's provincial virtual services through the Foundry BC app and web portal.
- If internet access is a barrier, Foundry provides support by phone at 1-833-FØUNDRY (or 1-833-308-6379).
- As with all Foundry services, no referrals are required, and services are free and confidential.
- The goal of Foundry is to remove barriers for young people and their caregivers to access care.

Q3. Who is providing services through the Foundry BC app and web portal?

- Youth and caregivers will speak directly to a trained health professional, including a Foundry clinician, trained Foundry Peer Support Worker or a Nurse Practitioner, depending on what service they ask for.

Q4. What kind of counselling is provided through the Foundry BC app and web portal?

- Foundry's counselling appointments can be for complete course of therapy or a single session.
- Foundry focuses on a brief and specific goal using the solution-focused brief therapy approach (SFBT). With this type of therapy, you can start a new session or work on the goals and concerns you discussed in an earlier session.

Q5. How much funding was allocated for developing Foundry Virtual?

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- The Province has provided approximately \$1.6 million to support the Foundry's virtual services, including the development of the Foundry app.

Q6. Where is the Foundry app available for download?

- The Foundry app is available through the [Apple Store](#), [Google Play](#) store or on desktop through a [web portal](#).

Q7. What about youth who live in rural and remote areas with limited connectivity? How does this help them if they can't access it?

- Virtual services are available not only via the app, but through the Foundry's online portal www.foundrybc.ca/virtual
- For youth and caregivers who have limited or no access to the internet, Foundry's provincial virtual services team also provides support by phone at 1-833-FØUNDRY (1-833-308-6379).
- Our commitment is to expand Foundry centres across the province to ensure more and more youth and their families or caregivers have access to in-person services as well. We are already expanding the number of centres to 19 throughout B.C., with more to come in the years ahead.

Q8. Does the app include culturally safe supports?

- The Foundry Virtual BC team strives to offer culturally safe supports to all youth and their caregivers. Foundry has a culturally diverse team of service providers who speak several languages including Mandarin, French and Punjabi.
- Examples of culturally safe supports include a partnership with the Urban Native Youth Association (UNYA) to provide UNYA's 2- Spirit Collective X Foundry Group, which offers all identifying Indigenous LGBTQIA+ and 2Spirit youth meaningful connections with others in a safe, online environment.
- Additionally, Foundry offers an ongoing group, Queer Café, for all youth who identify as LGBTQI2S+.

Q9. We noticed that only youth can use the drop-in feature right now. When will the families/caregivers of youth be able to access it/be supported by it?

- While the drop-in function is not available for family members at this time, families and caregivers of youth are still able to access both counselling and peer support services by booking an appointment, which are often available the same day as booking.

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- Families and caregivers can access these services either through the Foundry BC app or the web portal.
- As the uptake of family/caregiver services increases, the Foundry Virtual BC team will grow to offer these same services on a drop-in basis. We anticipate this increased function and accessibility will be made available in the year ahead.

Q10. Do you have enough staff to support the demand we know is out there right now?

- Through the soft launch of the app Foundry BC is confident the app will be able to meet demand.
- We know the demand for supports and services is great right now, which is why the Foundry BC app offers a combination of bookable and drop-in appointments for youth.
- Young people and their caregivers can book a peer support or counselling appointment up to 14 days in advance, and new bookable appointments are made available each day.
- For youth seeking same day support, the app drop-in function is available Monday-Thursday from 2pm-6 pm.
- Foundry does not provide emergency or crisis services. If a youth or someone you know is in need of immediate help, call Emergency Services – 911. You can also:
 - Call crisis line at 1-800-784-2433
 - Call KUU-US Crisis Line at 1-800-588-8717.
 - Chat online with Kids Help Phone
 - SMS/Text Kids Help Phone by texting CONNECT to 686868
 - Get confidential, free counselling and referral services by app, phone or online chat for all registered post-secondary students by calling Here2Talk at 1-877-857-3397

Q11. How can you ensure the youth's privacy – it's an app?

- Foundry does not record audio, chat or videos calls. All of the information a young person or caregiver shares will be stored securely within Canada.
- Foundry will not release information unless a young person or family member/caregiver allows them to, or they are required to do so by law.
- The team may share information internally with one other – provided consent to share has been provided by the young person or family member/caregiver - so that youth and caregivers aren't required to share their story multiple times.
- The only time Foundry is required by law to share information is if they learn something that makes them believe that a young person, caregiver or someone else is in serious danger, or if they are ordered to do so by law.

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- These are very unusual situations, and should they occur, Foundry will be straightforward and clear about this need if it arises with the youth or caregiver being served.

Q12. What other mental health and substance use supports are available for youth across the province?

- Just last week we announced a historic \$56.5M investment through Budget 2021 in the expansion of mental health and substance use supports for children, youth, and families.
- This investment will quadruple the number of communities where we are establishing integrated child and youth teams and adding more service capacity in 15 additional school districts across B.C. To complement the Integrated Child and Youth Teams expansion, we are also expanding early years mental health services in the same communities.
- Just a few examples of other supports:
 - Y Mind: YMCA mental wellness programs
 - Confident Parents Thriving Kids: free phone-based coaching for parents/caregivers of children 3 to 12 years old, to manage either anxiety or behaviour challenges.
 - MCFD's Child and Youth Mental Health (CYMH) community-based teams.
 - FamilySmart: parent peer support and mental health navigation.
- There is also a dedicated 24/7 mental health service for post-secondary students across BC called Here2Talk.

Q13. Can the Minister comment about the 12-year-old girl who recently died from a suspected illicit drug overdose? What supports/treatment options are available for youth struggling with substance use in this province?

- There is no greater heartbreak than losing a child. While we can't comment on a suspected overdose or specific situations for privacy reasons, my thoughts are with the family and friends who are grieving this unimaginable loss.
- Our priority is prevention and early intervention to help young people get the help they need before mental health and substance use challenges become more severe.
- Budget 2021's historic investment in mental health and addictions will dramatically expand services for young people, including \$97 million over three years to improve wellness for children, youth and young adults. This includes:
 - expanded access to integrated, wraparound services, including substance use counselling and treatment services such as the quadrupling of communities that will have integrated child and youth teams – announced last week,

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- expanded early years services in 15 communities to prevent or minimize future mental health and substance use challenges in a young person's life,
- expanded crisis intervention and support services to help prevent more deaths by overdose and improve wraparound care following an overdose.
- All these services will support young people accessing the new 123 youth substance use beds being created around the province.