



# CARING FOR SENIORS WITH MENTAL ILLNESS AND MENTAL HEALTH PROBLEMS

In 2016, more than 1.8 million Canadians age 60+ were living with mental health problems including depression, anxiety, bipolar disorder, and even suicidal thoughts.

*Left untreated, these problems can get worse.*

**But it doesn't have to be this way.** By addressing seniors' mental health early, you can help your loved one feel less lonely, greater life satisfaction, and better overall!

## 6 signs your loved one may have mental health problems

*The following signs may indicate some form of mental illness or mental problems:*

### 1 Memory issues:

Short-term memory loss, confusion, disorientation, or trouble concentrating or making decisions

### 4 Changes in mood:

Depression lasting longer than 2 weeks, irritability, anxiety, feelings of worthlessness or helplessness, or suicidal thoughts

### 2 Unexplained physical issues:

Aches, pains, constipation, fatigue, energy loss or insomnia

### 5 Social isolation/withdrawal:

Loss of interest in spending time with people and doing things they used to find enjoyable

### 3 Changes in self- or home-care:

Paying less attention to physical appearance, hygiene, nutrition, or home or yard

### 6 Substance abuse or misuse:

Including alcohol, cannabis or medications

## WHERE TO SEEK ADVICE, SUPPORT AND RESOURCES

*In addition to speaking to a physician, here are a few places to get more information:*

The [Geriatric Psychiatry Program](#) at [The Royal](#) provides a range of mental health services for adults 65 years and over, including in-patient, out-patient, assessment, treatment and crisis intervention.

The [Geriatric Psychiatry Community Services of Ottawa](#) provides consultations and treatment for seniors with mental health problems

Check out the [Canadian Coalition for Seniors' Mental Health](#) for a list of care publications.

[eMentalHealth.ca](#) provides a list of Ottawa-local mental health resources for seniors 55+

## Consider a new home or retirement community

Social isolation is a major factor affecting seniors' mental health. On the flip side, that means that more socializing equals better overall health.

Retirement communities provide a wonderful way to keep older people socially connected, active, and feeling happier.

**Contact Tea & Toast** to learn more about our search service and how we can help you find an Ottawa-based home that provides the right social "fit" for your aging parent.

**Retirement Living Search | seniors and their families in Ottawa.**

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**We'd Love to Help You Find Your Next Home**