

#FRAYMEOFMIND TWITTER CHAT SHAREBACK

Virtual Mental Health and Substance Use Service Delivery: What are the needs? Where are the gaps?

FRAYME 

A PLATFORM FOR CONNECTING AND SHARING
YOUTH MENTAL HEALTH RESEARCH, PRACTICE,
AND LIVED EXPERIENCE

#FRAYMEOFMIND BACKGROUND

With mental health and substance use services across Canada needing to move quickly to develop, accelerate and implement virtual responses to the COVID-19 pandemic, our system has evolved rapidly to meet the need for virtual care for youth and their families.

This has resulted in innovative responses as well as challenges for the youth mental health and substance use community in implementing virtual services. To support learning and understanding about the process of implementing virtual services, Frayme hosted a Twitter Chat on the topic on April 6th, 2020.

The Twitter Chat was attended by experts in the field including youth, families, clinicians, researchers, service providers and more sharing their expertise and perspectives on the topic. Frayme has collated the responses in this document to help inform the system and guide further directions for Frayme and others looking to support the delivery of virtual mental health and substance use systems across Canada.

Use the **interactive buttons** to access each question and its corresponding responses:

Question 1: As a service provider, what are the most pressing requests for you or your organization as you aim to service youth and families virtually? As a youth or family member, what are your most pressing needs during a time when in-person mental health support is not an option?

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Question 3: What makes a virtual mental health or substance use service effective, meaningful, and engaging? If you have examples of apps, virtual services or digital programs that you found effective, share them!

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Question 5: How can lived experience be used to inform the design of virtual mental health and substance use systems and supports?

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Next Steps: Learn more about what Frayme's next steps will be to build on the momentum of this Twitter Chat and support the system in the implementation, design and evaluation of virtual mental health and substance use services in Canada.

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Question 2: What are current barriers to virtual service delivery? What services should be prioritized for virtual delivery?

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Question 4: How can a pan-Canadian partnership support virtual mental health delivery with the varying and different Canadian contexts that we have?

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Question 6: Strong links between all parties involved in the development of a virtual mental health service are crucial but how can we ensure those developing the services, those receiving the services and those funding the services are all working together and communicating needs and priorities?

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Document summary: Go straight to the summary of all key messages and takeaways shared during the Twitter Chat for each question asked.

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Question 1: As a service provider, what are the most pressing requests for you or your organization as you aim to service youth and families virtually? As a youth or family member, what are your most pressing needs during a time when in-person mental health support is not an option?

MAIN TAKEAWAYS

- Importance of **minimizing service interruptions when transitioning to online delivery**
- Ensuring that **those who don't have access to wifi or stable internet can still access services**
- **Updating social media policies** if services are being delivered through social media channels
- **Providing resources and methods for families to provide support** to youth if online services are not available immediately
- **Timeliness and effectiveness of online services are key.** How long are wait times? Can they be accessed immediately?

KEY PERSPECTIVES



@ShaunnaBrady9 As a service provider...seeking consolidated virtual platform - that is local to our area, engaging to youth who help create this platform, that promotes partners and virtual services they are offering, resources, virtual drop-ins, and health and wellness.

@Jimmy_Tan_ Great suggestion of virtual DROP-INS! #youth would benefit from flexible hours to reach out, instead of standard 9-5 office work hours. #evenings #weekends #FraymeOfMind



@stellasplace Our service volume for our peer support app Bean Bag Chat is up 300%. This tells us there is a need right now.



@jessica_hutton_ Funding for the technology to increase services. More cell phones (texting) and computers or tablets are needed.



@alyframpton I work frontline with a population that currently can't access face-to-face services but also, for the majority, do not have access to internet... were still leaving a lot of people behind with current online approaches.




@alan_maceachern as a new provider of virtual care, early feedback indicates that ease of use is an issue. The proper platform and ease of use will be key


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KEY PERSPECTIVES CONT.


 **@KamiSantafe** Reviewing and updating Orgs communication/ social media policies and procedures and aiming for service providers to be able to meet youth and families where they are at by joining efforts with community partners to remove barriers. #InThisTogether


 **@LLutsyshyna** The Oregon YouthLine volunteers have found ways to still come into the office safely. With masks and social distancing, our volunteers continue to provide peer support to teens at risk. Pressing needs include checking in with our volunteers' mental health.


 **@HRisInnovative** A1. The most pressing need as a family is to have access to a provider when we need one. Timeliness and effectiveness are key. #FraymeOfMind

@quaycethomas Yes, and knowing what we, as family members, can do to support when the services are difficult to access, outside of the service

 **@jessica_hutton_** Ensuring that the #technology platforms being used are safe & meet the most stringent #privacy #regulations & #standards. Given many #mental-health #serviceproviders are scrambling to try & deliver services virtually during #COVID19 I worry about privacy being compromised.

 **@Edwards23** A1. The most pressing need as a service provider that we are hearing, is youth having basic needs such as food/shelter met and then being accessible for mental health care. #FraymeOfMind #FraymeOfMind

 **@NorWestYouthHub** at 1st, the most pressing thing was ensuring our services for youth could continue without skipping a beat. Thanks to technology & youth/staff flexibility, we've been able to transition to phone-based appointments & running programming virtually!

 **@JennyCarver2** Finding ways to increase accessibility for the most vulnerable when wifi and hardware are not readily available. Building choice of access pathways #FraymeofMind #InThisTogether

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Question 2: What are current barriers to virtual service delivery? What services should be prioritized for virtual delivery?


MAIN TAKEAWAYS


- Having **IT and software development expertise** at the table is crucial to designing effective virtual platforms
- Many **barriers to access both in terms of availability of devices** (phones, tablets, computers) and connectivity especially for youth in rural and remote locations
- **Need for a single app that is evidence-based and safe for province-wide use** that can triage, screen and refer based on location
- **Online services need to provide supports for substance use** not just mental health supports
- Need for **interoperability within virtual services** among service providers, youth and health facilities/health records


KEY PERSPECTIVES

 **@ShaunnaBrady9** Having someone with IT expertise working with us. Someone who loves youth, understands systems work, with knowledge to develop a youth friendly virtual platform showcasing all things our community is offering virtually in a relatively short period of time!

 **@Amanda_McGraww** A huge (if not the biggest) barrier here is that not all folks have access to these sorts of things, if we're going to start implementing virtual mental health services, we need to ensure that people actually have access the the virtual part!

 **@LLutsyshyna** At our organization, a barrier to virtual service delivery is the nature of our team. Our teenage volunteers work in a physical environment with adult supervisors. They cannot perform this work from home even though the texts and calls with teens are virtual.

 **@HRisINNOVATIVE A2.** Current barriers - access to technology - computers, tablets, or phones, stable or any internet, privacy issues, capacity to manage, cost, being able to find a service provider online with whom you connect; ensuring evidence informed practices. #Fray-meOfMind


 **@MartyBevan1** The lack of one simple app from Ontario Health that screens, triages and refers people to online and on-phone mental healthcare services like these: Bounce Back - CMHA
Free addictions counselling through CACCF
And screener like the app called 'Broccoli'

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KEY PERSPECTIVES CONT.


 **@Vanessaodacost1** I would say barriers are that you can't necessarily connect with youth the same way over text or technology as you would in person. You also can't reliably always know how the youth are doing if they are not reach out or giving short answers over text

@HRisINNOVATIVE Do you find that some youth prefer in person vs. virtual? What steps do you take to ensure you know how the youth is doing? #FraymeOfMind


@Vanessaodacost1 I find the youth I work with all have different preferences. Some are happy with phone sessions, some prefer to text and some do not feel comfortable with text or phone and have not been engaging as frequently as they did when we had in person session


 **@TheErdbird** A2 - Evidence! Everybody and their dog can make apps, but there is no oversight or quality control to ensure they work (or at least don't cause harm). #fray-meofmind


 **@JennyCarver2** Q2-yes, tech costs (hard and soft) are barriers for user and provide. We need to prioritize low barrier, accessible virtual front doors - peer supporters to help navigate #FraymeofMind

 **@alyframpton** A2: I think currently there is a barrier to providing services particularly in the area of substance use and addiction in relation to #eMentalHealth, the conversation is always siloed (we often talk mental health vs addiction) but it's just really been missing.

@alyframpton A2: were not truly addressing how were aiming to support youth with addictions. How are we supporting detox and management programs? Youth need wrap around support for their needs, we can't ignore these gaps and think it won't have major impacts.

 **@KamiSantafe** A2- Having only one or two options to receive virtual care. Let's use existing apps like facetime, google hangouts, skype, and other apps that facilitate the service for families and youth. #fraymeofmind

 **@Dr_Dissonance** A2 - Lack of interoperability/connectivity between and among patients, service providers, and health facilities, and health records. #FraymeOfMind

 **@SP_Pind** I think this is tough as virtual is not necessarily an option for every youth - how can youth be equipped with the needed technology? Basic needs must be met first food shelter and then online delivery which works for the youth in question -phone call, app, etc

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Question 3 What makes a virtual mental health or substance use service effective, meaningful, and engaging? If you have examples of apps, virtual services or digital programs that you found effective, share them!

MAIN TAKEAWAYS

- Use **accessible language and relateable videos** to equip youth and families with knowledge and confidence to recognize when a peer is struggling
- **One size does not fit all.** Choice is key when it comes to virtual services as each youth has their own preferences and needs
- Virtual supports should be **accessible 24/7** for youth and families especially during evenings and weekends
- **Flexibility and adaptability** is key for effective virtual supports. The more they can be personalized to each user's experience, the more engaging they will be.

KEY PERSPECTIVES



@jackdotorg BeThere.org engages youth through accessible language and relateable videos, to equip them with knowledge and confidence they need to recognize when a peer is struggling and lean into tough conversations while maintaining their own mental health. #FraymeOfMind

@jackdotorg An effective and meaningful resource answers the questions youth have in a clear and relateable way. <http://BeThere.org> is a response to the questions raised by 1,200 students about how to support their peers.



@LinleiYe SickKids Hospital created an excellent evidence-based mindfulness resource that is youth-friendly. The video and audio clips are particularly engaging and are just the right length! [@AboutKidsHealth @SickKidsNews](https://aboutkidshealth.ca/-COVID-19)
#Fraymeofmind



@hannahheliema 1 thing I've heard repeatedly from practitioners is having choice for their patients! So meaningful and effective may look to different to different users. For ex. @BigWhiteWallCA is great for community support online while #BounceBackOn offers 1-on-1 telephone convos.




@MartyBevan1 A3
#FraymeOfMind
Simple, Immediate and Free Access to Effective and Followed Mental Healthcare Services:
<https://connexontario.ca/mobile>
<https://bouncebackontario.ca>,
<https://play.google.com/store/apps/details?id=com.audacia.broccoli>
<https://fswe.ca/covid-19-notice/>, <https://caccf.live.clinic>,
<https://intherooms.com/home/>


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Question 3 What makes a virtual mental health or substance use service effective, meaningful, and engaging? If you have examples of apps, virtual services or digital programs that you found effective, share them!


KEY PERSPECTIVES CONT.


 **@jessica_hutton_** A3: we started using Facebook Live! Amazing!! Are reaching so many youth and youth are reporting that they would tune in and then want more so would reach out! Lots of new and profound connections along with sustained ones! #fraymeofmind


 **@KamiSantafe** A3 - That is inclusive, accessible to those in need, that is easy to understand and use, that communicates or reminds regularly and consistently. That uses a holistic approach to care so that I can explain it easily to others and my parents.

 **@SP_Pind** I truly feel youth determine what works so to design services for them their perspective is necessary. As a parent I've used Breathe, be safe, find that engaging youth need to meet them where they are at #Fraymeofmind

 **@Dr_Dissonance** There are so many apps available now that it's hard to keep up! But "What's Up" out of the UK is often rated near the top when ranked against others. #Fraymeofmind

 **@NorWestYouthHub** #FraymeOfMind A3. As with youth hubs pre-Covid 19, flexibility & adaptability are key. In response to heightened stress & anxiety, we launched the Youth Quaranteen Support Line today - a partnership between the NorWest Youth Hub and two other youth-serving NorWest teams. Red heart

 **@SMHO_SMSO** We've partnered with @jackdotorg and @KidsHelpPhone to create an online hub of COVID-19 mental health resources to help students take care of their mental health and look out for one another. Please share. It's more essential now than ever. <http://jack.org/covid>

 **@Vanessaodacost1** A3. As a clinician who is providing texting and phone sessions with young people I would love to hear from other clinicians and young people about how to be more engaging and how to best support individuals virtually

@Jimmy_Tan_ Thank you for supporting #youth! Having service capacity for hours in the #evenings and #weekends may further reach #youth where they're at! #FraymeofMind

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Question 4 How can a pan-Canadian partnership support virtual mental health delivery with the varying and different Canadian contexts we have?

MAIN TAKEAWAYS

- Importance of accessibility via **multi-lingual service delivery** to accommodate Canada's ethno-cultural diversity
- **National and provincial regulation and coordination** of quality assessment for virtual mental health and substance use supports
- Clarity and guidance around **privacy and security standards** when it comes to virtual mental health and substance use supports
- Need for a **centralized resource to share data sets** and uptake metrics in order to inform best practices

KEY PERSPECTIVES



@Jimmy_Tan_ A4 - Sharing of best practices across our #AMAZING network and then communities can adapt those practices into their local contexts as they see best. #FraymeOfMind



@stellasplaceca Internet access is essential! It would be incredible if affordable internet and phone access was available to all Canadians.



@LLutsyshyna Q4 #FraymeofMind
While I am not in Canada, I believe diversity trainings are a huge part of reaching varied contexts.



@KamiSantafe A4 -Ensure mental health care and access as essential not optional. #Fraymeofmind



@hannahhelisema I think virtual support provides an opportunity to expand multi-lingual service delivery across Canada. An important step in providing mental health support to newcomer and refugee populations across the country.

@LinleiYe Absolutely agree - language barriers also prevent many from downloading apps or accessing online resources that have English instructions

@Shauna_E_M Excellent flag - we can't increase access for all without #equity in design #FraymeOfMind

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Question 4 How can a pan-Canadian partnership support virtual mental health delivery with the varying and different Canadian contexts we have?

KEY PERSPECTIVES CONT.



@JennyCarver2 A4 How about an annotated listing of virtual platforms and apps in Canada and perhaps even sharing of uptake metrics #FraymeofMind #sharevirtual-practices

@AlanaSalsberg Agreed on the need for alignment on performance metrics and transparency in user behaviours and outcomes. #FraymeOfMind



@SP_Pind A4 As a parent navigation of MH services is tricky-a coordinated approach involving perspectives of all-youth, families, clinicians, policy makers around the same table learning and caring together to appropriately service youth in need-kids suffer on waitlists #Fraymeof-mind



@TheErdbird #fraymeofmind A4. I think we need a coordinated quality assessment service like the UK has (eg. @OrchaHealth) so that provincial efforts aren't duplicated. Could either live in @MHCC_ or CADTH_AC-MTS.



@punit_virk Our team's currently doing research to develop and eval digital self-assessment and guidance tools, to improve youth/young adult capacity to self-identify MH needs and appropriate supports. Check out @HEARTSMAP_

@punit_virk 1) Intentional engagement with diverse communities. "For youth by youth" is great, but which youth? And who decides? 2) building research capacity into these efforts, does e-MH work effectively for all? How/what do we need to refine?



@meriembee Perhaps support in navigating privacy and confidentiality legislation and limitations across jurisdictions, and learning from what other folks' successes and challenges in this area? #FraymeofMind



@Dr_Dissonance A4 - National collaboration is essential, particularly for regulated health practitioners who may not be permitted to practice outside of their home province or territory. The Society of Rural Physicians of Canada convened an expert panel about this issue in 2001

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Question 5 How can lived experience be used to inform the design of virtual mental health and substance use systems and supports?

MAIN TAKEAWAYS

- Having **voices of youth and family** at the table for co-design cannot be overstated. The process must reflect meaningful engagement through transparency in decision making processes
- Establish **pre- and post-evaluation processes** for users to provide a constant feedback loop and reflect their comments in the design of the service
- Importance of **community driven solutions** to deal with barriers that youth trying to access services may face. Engage with youth during program design, implementation and ensure mechanisms for regular feedback

KEY PERSPECTIVES



@LLutsyshyna Q5 #FraymeofMind
If the ritual of seeing a mental health provider was important to you, it helps to have them encourage you to continue that ritual from your home. Making yourself tea and sitting in a designated spot can help create an intentional setting despite the distance.



@stellasplaceca A5: It is important to understand the needs of folks accessing services and respond to the barriers they face with community driven solutions. Engage folks with lived experience in program design, implementation and routinely solicity feedback.



@HRisInnovative A5. The voice of persons with living expertise and families should be part of the process from start to finish, including ongoing evaluation and assessment. Their voices should inform all aspects of change.



@Amanda_McGraww Ensure that those voices are ALWAYS on the table! And ensure that those voices are utilized and sought out as equals within the process



@Amanda_McGraww In my experience as a professional it is INTEGRAL for lived experience to be a voice within this sector, they're the people who know what's needed! Those who's voices have experienced the hardship are the ones we NEED. How else are we going to get the info?

@AlanaSalsberg So happy to see the increasing value of lived experience in #mentalhealth support offerings here in CAN. From peer support accreditation to family advisory committees weighing in, people with lived experience MUST be part of design to ensure resources are relevant and effective.

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Question 5 How can lived experience be used to inform the design of virtual mental health and substance use systems and supports?

KEY PERSPECTIVES CONT.



@Jimmy_Tan_ A5. It would be inspiring to have these stakeholder voices take part in critical decision-making steps, such as participating in votes, sitting on boards or having a quorum at key meetings. #FraymeOfMind.

@SP_Pind Just having completed the Family Engagement in Research at McMaster and a member of MH quality council at local hospital as a parent who cares and would like to reduce suffering of others I would agree all stakeholder voices matter



@Amanda_McGraww You can utilize lived experience by using it as a framework for those who are seeking services! Youth voices matter, and engaging youth properly, the ones who are out there experiencing this every day, will be the ones with the answers



@JennyCarver2 A5 - Codesign with and ongoing feedback/pre-post eval from users-a must! #FraymeofMind #alwayscodesign

@HRisInnovative Yes. This. #FraymeOfMind



@parentalmental A5. This is why I've started <http://ParentalMental.com> - an anonymous forum to support #parents dealing with their own #mentalhealth concerns. Inspired by my #LivedExperience from when I got sick, and now that I'm better, I want to help others with what I've learned. #FraymeOfMind



@KamiSantafe A5 - By treat/value it as skill equal to other partners in the table. It is crucial to defined roles/-expectations for those w/ lived experiences so their engagement is meaningful and not tokenized. Be transparent so that they can understand the decision-making process.



@MartyBevan1 A5 - #FraymeOfMind Surveys performed with clients / patients.



@ferrari_nu A5 Over the last few weeks I had the pleasure and honour to work with the Gaming Against Stigma Youth Advisory supported by @Frayme, They are changing the world and fighting #Covid19 one game at the time #FlattenTheCurve #FraymeOfMind #InThisTogether

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Question 6 Strong links between all parties involved in the development of a virtual mental health service are crucial but how can we ensure that those developing the services, those receiving the services and those funding the services are all working together and communicating needs and priorities?

MAIN TAKEAWAYS

- Covering of **multi-stakeholder groups** to strengthen partnerships and create space for varying and diverse expertise
- Always ensure measures to provide **ongoing feedback and support improvement** while staying on track of the ultimate goal
- **Participatory research** is a good mechanism to include the dynamic and changing needs of youth and families
- Allow for space and time to **establish mutual priorities and goals** that will ultimately lead to stronger partnerships
- **Pan-Canadian forums** may be one avenue to allow various stakeholders to come together and share their voices

KEY PERSPECTIVES



@Jimmy_Tan_ A6 - Perhaps we can have pan-network #forums to bring together multi-stakeholder groups. One way to forge strategic partnerships and set priorities! #FraymeOfMind



@stellasplaceca A6: Intentional participatory research that considers the dynamic and changing needs of folks who use services



@NorWestYouthHub #FraymeOfMind A6 - "strong links between all parties involved... are crucial" - agreed, integration & collaboration are essential. Re: what @Jimmy_Tan_ said about pan-network forums... a virtual "party" for these "parties"? With voices of youth/families at the table & centred!



@LLutsyshyna This is a broad question. I want to emphasize that this is an issue even not in the face of a pandemic. In general, cooperation between providers, clients, and funders is not streamlined. A huge rift also exists between clinical research and clinical practice.



@SP_Pind A6 It comes down to "nothing about us without us" Have lived experience voices from research to the board room-we are in this together and we care better together #Fraymeofmind



@Dr_Dissonance A6 - Don't start anything without a project charter, and have an explicit mechanism for ongoing feedback and to support improvement. #Fraymeofmind

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KEY PERSPECTIVES CONT.



@TheErdbird #fraymeofmind A6- if anybody in the chat is interested in what we've been doing in AHS around this, DM me! We've done a lot of work in this space and I'm happy to share materials or connect you to our project leaders!



@JennyCarver2 A6 - Listen to and act on what service users identify as priorities for design and delivery. Get real feedback and incorporate it #FraymeofMind



@LinleiYe A6. Taking the time to understand motivations/incentives from each party and using those perspectives to form (and document!) common values and mutual goals #Fraymeofmind.

@meriembee Arguably the best tactic to truly bring people together under one common goal, while leaving space for folks to bring their own expertise and perspectives. #FraymeofMind

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#FRAYMEOFMIND NEXT STEPS

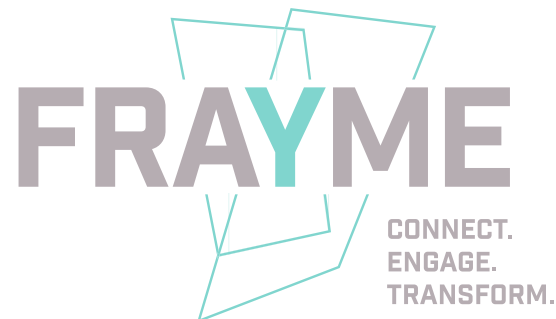
There is a clear need for further resources in design, implementation and evaluation of virtual mental health and substance use. In order to better understand the impacts of rapidly moving to virtual service for service providers, youth and their families, Frayme will be launching the **Virtual Integrated Care Evaluation (VICE) Grant Program**.

This program will provide support for learning and understanding about the process of implementing virtual services and help identify approaches, practices and programming that have arisen in response to the move to virtual services. Through a call for applications, Frayme will be providing formative evaluation grants to youth mental health and substance use service sites across Canada. More information about this program will be posted to Frayme.ca in the next coming weeks. Please be sure to subscribe to Frayme and follow us on Twitter to stay up-to-date.

Thank you to all of our Twitter Chat participants for taking the time to share their expertise and perspective. We hope you can join us for the next one!

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#FRAYMEOFMIND SUMMARY

Question 1: As a service provider, what are the most pressing requests for you or your organization as you aim to service youth and families virtually? As a youth or family member, what are your most pressing needs during a time when in-person mental health support is not an option?

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- Importance of accessibility via **multi-lingual service delivery** to accommodate Canada's ethno-cultural diversity
- **National and provincial regulation and coordination** of quality assessment for virtual mental health and substance use supports
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- Having **voices of youth and family** at the table for co-design cannot be overstated. The process must reflect meaningful engagement through transparency in decision making processes
- Establish **pre- and post-evaluation processes** for users to provide a constant feedback loop and reflect their comments in the design of the service
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Question 6: How can we ensure those developing the services, those receiving the services and those funding the services are all working together and communicating needs and priorities?

- Convening of **multi-stakeholder groups** to strengthen partnerships and create space for varying and diverse expertise
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- **Pan-Canadian forums** may be one avenue to allow various stakeholders to come together and share their voices