

## #MakeKidsCount campaign – Hamilton region/McMaster Children’s Hospital data for pediatric mental health, eating disorders, developmental pediatrics and rehab

### Kids have taken the brunt of the pandemic; too much has been asked of them.

- Children and youth have had vital health care delayed. They have faced learning losses and experienced devastating impacts on their developmental, and physical and mental health and well-being.
- Critical early intervention windows are being missed. A generation of children and youth is at risk of significant long-term health problems without immediate action. Every day matters in the life of a child.
- Long wait times, staffing shortages, and limited resources are not new barriers to timely care; these barriers to care have been exacerbated by the pandemic.

### Hamilton-specific data:

- Currently, **1,300** young people are waiting for surgeries and procedures.
- The number of children/youth waiting beyond accepted targets has **grown by 230%**.
- Many surgeries and procedures on the waitlist hold potential for short and long-term physical, emotional and physiological hardship for patients and families.

### Mental Health

- Many kids seeking care are younger and sicker than those who sought care prior to the pandemic.
  - For example, the number of young people admitted for medical intervention following a suicide attempt or significant self-harm has been on the rise:
    - April 2019-March 2020, **65 patients** admitted.
    - April 2020-march 2021, **104 patients** admitted.
  - The number of “encounters,” meaning how many times each patient was seen by various specialists while admitted, also climbed during this period.

### Eating Disorders

- Admissions to the inpatient unit remain at unprecedented levels. Simply put, every bed, including additional overflow beds, are full at all times.
  - January – April 2020 was **31**
  - January – April 2022 was **54**
- Wait times to begin outpatient services is somewhere between **15 and 18 months**.

### Developmental Pediatrics and Rehabilitation

- Overall demand for services has increased since pre-pandemic levels:
  - 2019/20 – **47,700** scheduled appointments
  - 2021/22 – **58,000** scheduled appointments
- Many of the youngest patients risk being “aged out” of a service due to excessively long wait times, meaning they could permanently miss critical development interventions, treatments and milestones.

\*Additional data is available upon request.