



December 23, 2022

Lumenus at Northern Secondary School: an update on changes to mental health support services for students, as of September 2023

We want to provide you with important information about some changes to the way mental health support services from Lumenus Community Services will be offered to students at Northern Secondary School as of September 2023.

The mental health needs of young people across our city are at an all-time high, especially after the past few years of Covid-induced social isolation and anxiety. For years, Northern Secondary School has been in the unique position of having an on-site, full-time School Focused Worker who, over time, has become a valued member of the school community.

As of the end of this academic school year (June 2023), this individual will no longer be working on-site at the school but will continue to be available, along with three other School Focused Workers employed by Lumenus, to help address the mental health needs of students at Northern and other schools in Toronto. The changes taking place are to ensure students at all schools have equitable access to mental health support services provided by our four School Focused Workers. In addition to support offered by this team, Lumenus offers a variety of mental health programs and support services that can be accessed by students and families, including over the winter break period. These services include:

- Central Toronto Youth Wellness Hub at 40 Orchard View Blvd., (a short walk from Northern) <https://www.lumenus.ca/programs-and-services/central-toronto-youth-wellness-hub-ontario/>
- What's up walk-in clinics <https://www.whatsupwalkin.ca/>
- Help Ahead – centralized intake for all child and youth mental health services in Toronto <https://helpahead.ca/>

We are confident the new model of service will continue to support students at Northern as well as from other schools. We acknowledge that the new service model represents change, so during the transition period, the current School Focused Worker will remain onsite at Northern until the end of this academic year (June 2023), and will begin transitioning from serving Northern students exclusively, to also providing virtual support to students at other schools, beginning in April, with the new model taking full effect in September.

More information about how the changes will impact other school-specific activities undertaken by the current School Focused Worker will be communicated by the school. Information about how students can connect to one of our four School Focused Workers at the start of the next academic year, will be shared at the beginning of the next school year.

Lumenus' leadership team looks forward to hosting a forum for Northern stakeholders in early 2023. This event will provide an opportunity for those interested to learn more about changes to the way mental health services will be offered at Northern in the future, and to ask any questions they may have. More information about this event will be available soon.

Please direct questions or inquiries to communityrelations@lumenus.ca

