



**Marit Stiles**  
MPP / Députée, Davenport

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Hon. Christine Elliott  
Minister of Health & Deputy Premier  
Ministry of Health  
5<sup>th</sup> Floor, 777 Bay St.  
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August 4, 2021

Dear Minister Elliott,

Further to my March 15, 2021 letter and our subsequent phone call, I am once again writing to share the ongoing concern from members of the Portuguese-speaking community in my riding of Davenport and across Toronto, about the loss of mental health and addictions services close to our community.

As discussed, the Portuguese Mental Health and Addictions Clinic at Toronto Western Hospital (part of the University Health Network), has effectively stopped taking referrals. Patients are being referred to a general community mental health clinic where they may or may not receive help in their first language. While I appreciate the time you made available to me, there has been no change in access to the clinic since we spoke.

Community agencies, like the Abrigo Centre in my riding, as well as the founders of this innovative program, have spoken about the impact the loss of this service is already having on the people they serve. Furthermore, we have heard that the **Spanish-language clinic** at the hospital is also no longer taking referrals.

There is no doubt that the ongoing impacts of the pandemic are taking their toll on people's mental health and can be triggering for those with substance dependencies or addictions. By allowing these innovative and vital services to be absorbed into a broader, general clinic, hundreds of Portuguese and Spanish-speaking Ontarians are being left without appropriate and urgent health care at a time when they need it most.

**I am appealing to you once again to step in as Minister of Health and ensure that the University Health Network is providing this culturally specific care to the Portuguese and Spanish-speaking communities, as it was intended.**

Provincial dollars for culturally-specific mental health care must be used as intended and not other purposes. If UHN is not interested in providing this program as intended, I ask that you seek a new community partner to ensure that residents in my community can get the care that they deserve.

Sincerely,



**Marit Stiles**  
**MPP Davenport**

C.c.:

Hon. Michael Tibollo, Associate Minister of Mental Health and Addictions

Monique Taylor, MPP – Official Opposition Critic for Mental Health and Addictions