

From: PHAC Correspondence / Correspondance ASPC (PHAC/ASPC) <phac.correspondence-correspondance.aspc@canada.ca>

Sent: Friday, April 23, 2021 3:26:05 PM

To: Allan Thompson <allan.thompson@caledon.ca>

Subject: Response from the Public Health Agency of Canada

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Dear Mr. Mayor:

I am writing in response to your correspondence of March 31, 2021, addressed to the Honourable Patty Hajdu, Minister of Health, in support of a national three-digit suicide prevention hotline. Minister Hajdu has asked me to reply on her behalf.

I commend you and your colleagues from the Corporation of the Town of Caledon for your efforts to prioritize the implementation of a national three-digit suicide prevention hotline in Canada. The Government of Canada recognizes the impact suicide has on families and communities, and acknowledges the critical importance of people in crisis needing immediate access to suicide prevention support and resources.

The Public Health Agency of Canada is investing \$21 million over 5 years in the Centre for Addiction and Mental Health, which is working in partnership with the Canadian Mental Health Association and Crisis Services Canada to implement and sustain a pan-Canadian suicide prevention service. The Canada Suicide Prevention Service currently provides people across Canada with suicide prevention crisis support from trained responders via phone (24/7) and text (evenings only). When fully implemented in March 2023, people will have access to 24/7/365 crisis support, in English and French, using the technology of their choice: voice, text or online chat. This includes immediate access to information and resources such as emergency services, referrals, safety plans, and bereavement support.

As demonstrated by the House of Commons' passage of a motion by unanimous consent to establish a national suicide prevention hotline that is accessible to all Canadians, there is great interest in exploring the implementation of a three-digit number in Canada.

As a first step, there is a need to gain a better understanding of the regulatory, technological and resource implications in the Canadian context. The Canadian Radio-television and Telecommunications Commission (CRTC) is responsible for numbering administration in Canada which includes establishing any three-digit abbreviated codes.

The CRTC is launching a regulatory proceeding to consult on a proposed three-digit number, which will build a fulsome public record in an open and transparent manner. This record could identify potential obstacles and how they could be overcome. It may also determine whether to assign a three-digit number to access mental health crisis/suicide prevention services in Canada.

As highlighted in Budget 2021, the federal government is supportive of these efforts including ensuring funds are available to support the creation of this line.

Thank you for writing and for your attention to this important matter.

Sincerely,

Candice St-Aubin
Vice-President
Health Promotion and Chronic Disease Prevention Branch
Public Health Agency of Canada



Allan Thompson
Mayor

Sent via E-Mail to: Patty.Hajdu@parl.gc.ca

March 31, 2021

The Honourable Patty Hajdu
Federal Minister of Health
House of Commons
Ottawa, ON K1A 0A6

Dear Ms. Hajdu,

RE: SUPPORT FOR 988, A 3-DIGIT SUICIDE AND CRISIS PREVENTION HOTLINE

I am writing to advise that at the Town Council meeting held on March 30, 2021, Council adopted a resolution endorsing the 988 crisis line initiative to ensure critical barriers are removed to those in a crisis and seeking help.

The resolution reads as follows:

Whereas the Federal government has passed a motion to adopt 988, a National three-digit suicide and crisis hotline;

Whereas the ongoing COVID-19 pandemic has increased the demand for suicide prevention services by 200%;

Whereas existing suicide prevention hotlines require the user to remember a 10-digit number and go through directories or be placed on hold;

Whereas in 2022 the United States will have in place a national 988 crisis hotline;

Whereas the Town of Caledon recognized that it is a significant and important initiative to ensure critical barriers are removed to those in a crisis and seeking help;

Now therefore be it resolved that the Town of Caledon endorses this 988 crisis line initiative; and

That a letter demonstrating Caledon's support be sent to Kyle Seebach, MP, Dufferin-Caledon, the Honourable Sylvia Jones, MPP, Dufferin-Caledon, the Honourable Patty Hajdu, Federal Minister of Health, the Canadian Radio-television and Telecommunications (CRTC) and all municipalities in Ontario.

THE CORPORATION OF THE TOWN OF CALEDON

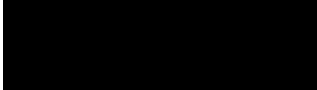
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Allan Thompson
Mayor

Thank you for your attention to this very important matter. We look forward to hearing from you.

Sincerely,



Allan Thompson
Mayor

Cc. Kyle Seeback, MP Dufferin-Caledon, Kyle.Seeback@parl.gc.ca
Honourable Sylvia Jones, MPP Dufferin-Caledon, sylvia.jones@pc.ola.org
Ian Scott, Chairperson and Chief Executive Officer, Canadian Radio-Television and Telecommunications Commission (CRTC), iscott@telesat.com
All Ontario Municipalities

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