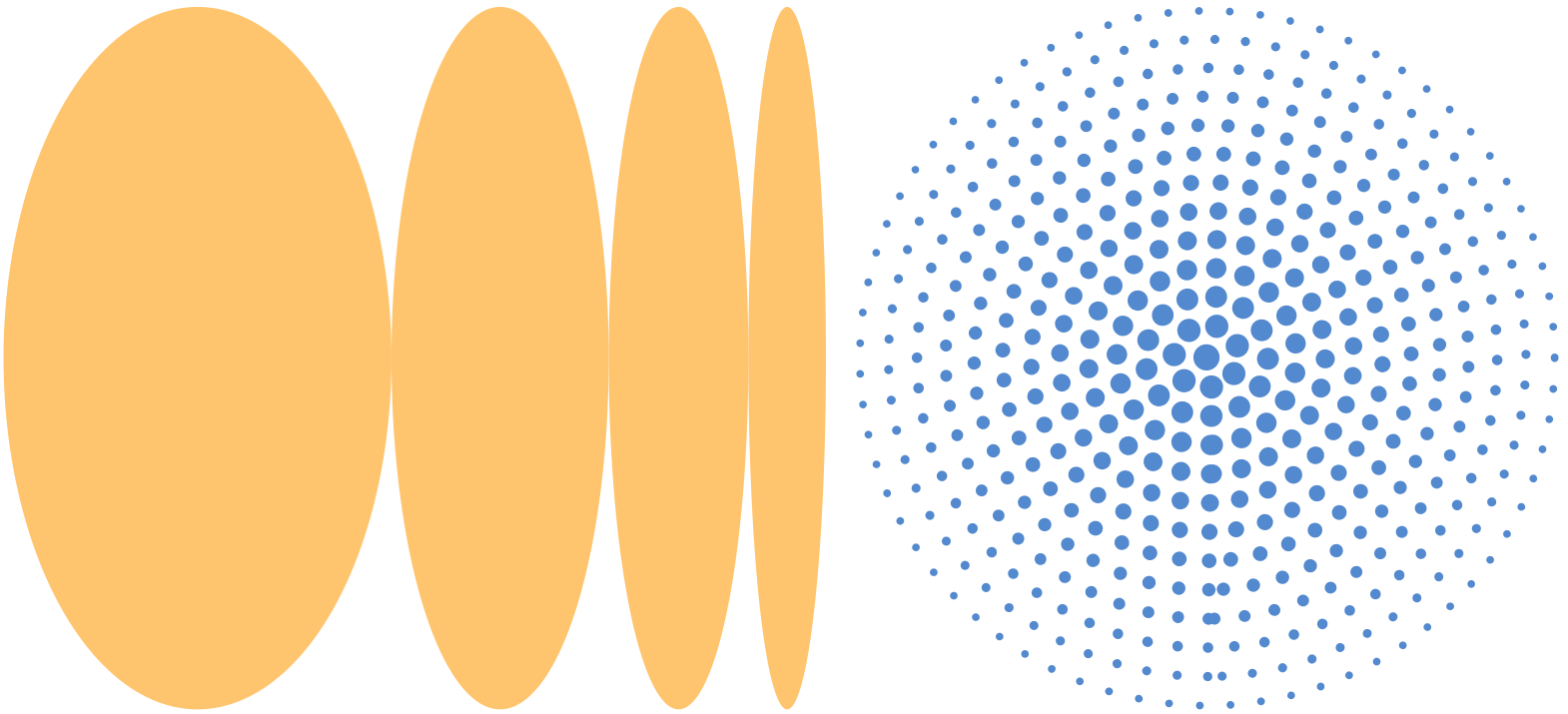




Member Benefits Package



We are here for you.



Who We Are

Building a caring partnership for close to 50 years, the Ontario Association of Distress Centres, operating as Distress and Crisis Ontario (DCO), has worked with its membership to increase the capacity of community based organizations offering distress/crisis line services and providing suicide prevention, intervention, and postvention support, as well as other specialized supports. In everything we do, we aim to provide advocacy for our Members and the distress/crisis sector, training opportunities for volunteers and leadership, and to foster networking among Member centres to allow for partnerships and growth among the sector.

Our goal is to help

A membership is ideal for a variety of organizations that provide telephone, chat, and/or text-based distress and/or crisis and/or suicide prevention, intervention, and postvention services to their communities. Also for multi-service organizations with specialized telephone, chat, text and/or web-based support for their communities and its at-risk populations.



MISSION

To be an association that is the recognized leader in promotion, collaboration, and building capacity within organizations that provide distress and crisis response.



VISION

To foster an environment of collaboration and networking while providing universal, 24/7, access to support for individuals in distress and crisis.



ACCOUNTABILITY



COLLABORATION AND
EMPOWERMENT



INCLUSION



INTEGRITY



LEADERSHIP



What are the Benefits of Membership?

Benefits of a Membership with DCO include:

- **Learning Forum Access**

- 24-hour access to our password-protected Learning Forum that provides asynchronous training on a wide range of topics through educational video presentations and sample practice scenarios. We update content and create new modules on an ongoing basis. The hosting platform provides the opportunity for certificates upon completion of each module.



- **Quarterly Volunteerism Webinars (and more)**

- Access to our Spirit of Volunteerism (SOV) program that hosts one live webinar each quarter for responders to come together to network and learn. Two more webinars each quarter are pre-recorded and provided via e-mail for asynchronous learning.

- **Support for Leadership**

- Participation in webinars for Member leadership to gather and discuss relevant issues pertaining to the sector and communities of practice. This year we will be continuing work on Accreditation and understanding the impact of the national 9-8-8 number.
- Free consultation with OADC leadership and Members, as needed, to receive support for organizational and sector-specific concerns, growth opportunities, good governance, and more.
- DCO holds memberships and partnerships with other organizations that influence provincial, national, and international mental health and addiction services.

- **Driving Visibility Through Our Website**

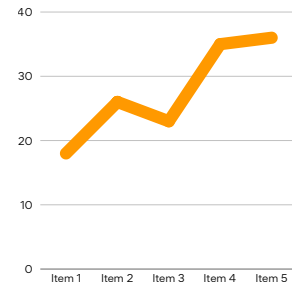
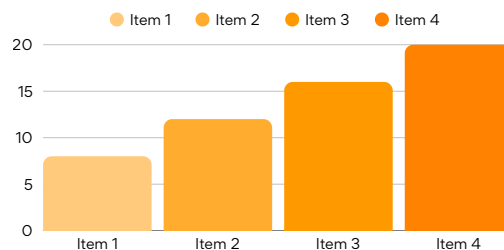
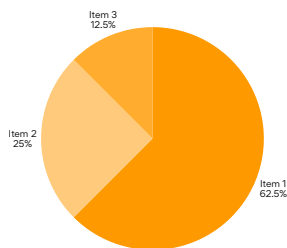
- The website is a key tool for promoting membership, serving as a central directory where clients can find and connect with member centres. Analytics show that membership-related pages generate some of the highest traffic, with strong engagement indicating users are actively seeking services. By joining, centres gain visibility through a trusted platform, increasing exposure and reach. Membership therefore acts not just as affiliation, but as ongoing digital promotion. Below are key website analytics that highlight this impact.
- [2025 Website Overview:](#)
 - Visitors: 19,388, Page Views: 39,849, Sessions: 24,399, Bounce Rate: 66%



What are the Benefits of Membership? (cont.)

- **Data and Statistics Support**

- DCO manages the Statistics, Information, and Outcome Measures (SIOM) project that collates data from centres across the province to highlight the impact of distress, crisis, and suicide prevention, intervention, and postvention services across the province.
- We also offer assistance in data analysis to create organizational reports depending on members needs.



- **Social Media/Marketing Support**

- We offer tailored social media and marketing help for our members including the creation of **2-3 high quality posts to pin** to social media accounts and **max (2) posts/month** tailored to your social media needs.



- **Further programming from DCO, also available to the public, includes:**

- Bi-weekly podcasts providing information, resources, and/or interviews with subject matter experts or those with lived experience on topics related to mental health, suicidality, and addiction.
- Monthly newsletters that include trending articles and government of Ontario updates related to mental health, suicidality, addiction, wellbeing, and more.
- Access to our ongoingly improved website for updates, information, and a resource database.
- The opportunity to attend our Annual General Meeting each year, Annual Conference(s) for training and networking, and ad hoc training events. at reduced rates.



Membership Fees

Fees are based on organization expenditures for your distress and/or crisis services specifically, not global agency budget for multi-service organizations.



- If you are interested in Membership, please complete our [Membership Application Form](#) (available on the “Become a Member” section of our website)
- Payments can be made by cheque or direct deposit, all payment information can be found on our Membership Application Form

Interested in Membership?

Scan the QR code below to view our website or reach out to us by email at info@dcontario.org.



DCO Member Centres (as of March 2026)

- Distress Centre Lanark, Leeds, and Grenville
- Distress Centre Ottawa & Region
- Nunavut Kamatsiaqtut Helpline
- Talk 4 Healing (Beendigen INC)
- Telecare Distress Centre of Peterborough
- Telephone Aid Line Kingston (TALK)
- Crisis Centre North Bay
- Connex Ontario
- Telecare Distress Line of Greater Simcoe
- LGBT Youthline



Highlights from 2024 & 2025

SIOM snapshot from April 1st, 2024 to March 31st, 2025



Participants:

Distress Centre Lanark, Leeds and Grenville
Distress Centre Ottawa & Region
Distress Centre Halton

In 2024-25, we saw a decrease of 7.39% in call volume compared to last year, however this year's data includes two fewer centres.

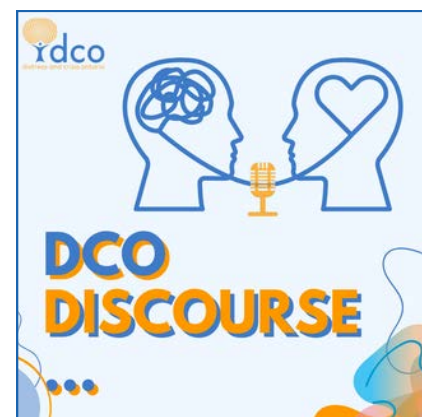
61% of all callers identified as female and 34% identified as male. Less than 0% identified themselves as transgender, and the rest were classified as unsure. These numbers are consistent with last year's annual results. Callers seeking ongoing support made up 47% of this year's calls.

The majority of calls this year were about support, followed by distress-related concerns. There was a significant increase in inappropriate calls, while crisis-related calls had a significant decrease compared to last year's annual results.

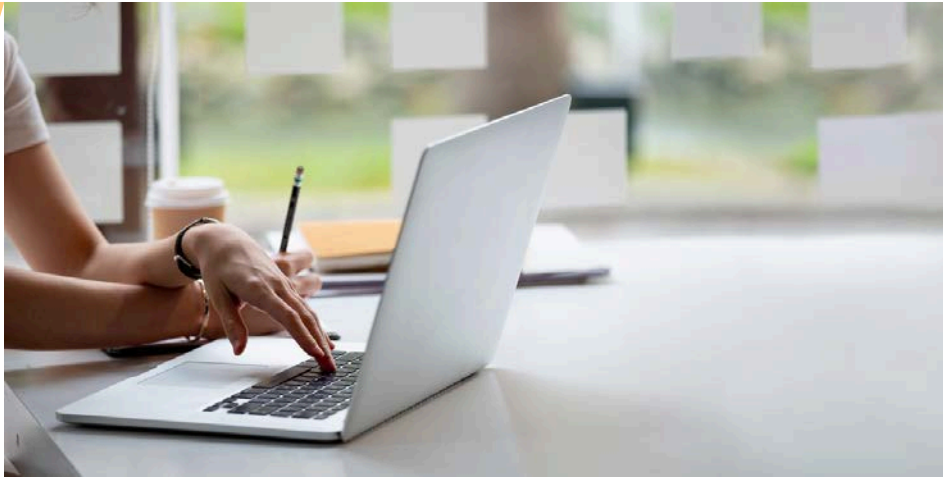
Interpersonal challenges are the most common caller issue for this year, followed by Mental health status.

The top caller outcome was a decrease in isolation and loneliness represented by 27% of all callers, followed by an action plan explored by 18%.

The DCO Discourse... Podcast includes discussions on topics related to mental health, addictions, suicidality, and life in Ontario, Canada. We aim to provide our listeners with tools and resources that will help them to improve their own mental health and wellness, as well as tools to help them support their family members, loved ones, and their communities at large. Episodes are shared every other Monday, with occasional bonus upload. In 2025 we surpassed **34,000 total downloads.**



Highlights from 2025



LEARNING FORUM

Online learning modules continue to be updated regularly with many new updates and additions on the way.

New Users: 72
Top performing module:
Volunteer Skills Refresh

BLOG POSTS

Monthly blog posts on the DCO website cover timely topics related to current events or monthly mental health themes.

Views: 3,240
Most popular blog post:
Breaking Down Barriers in
Women's Healthcare

SOV WEBINARS

Our monthly webinars have pivoted to best serve our communities. One webinar per quarter remains live and the rest are pre-recorded.

Total webinars: 10
Most popular webinar:
Seasonal Affective Disorder

ENEWS + VIEWS

The monthly eNews+Views newsletter continues to provide valuable insights from DCO, the mental health sector, and partners with an 80% open rate.

WSPD LIVESTREAM

Our annual World Suicide Prevention Day livestream hosted on Facebook Live was our most successful event yet this year.



SOCIAL MEDIA



Followers

2,089

Posts

1,615

Impressions

98,921

Engagements

2,360



Meet the Team



Neta Gear

EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

I have served as the Executive Director of Distress and Crisis Ontario (DCO) for the past seven years, bringing a deep commitment to community well-being and sector collaboration. Under my leadership, DCO has built an exceptional team that reflects the diversity of the communities we support, guided by a Board of Directors that embodies the organization's core values. With a focus on best practices in training and education, meaningful networking opportunities, and sector advocacy, DCO works to strengthen its member organizations and, through them, improve outcomes in mental health, addictions, and suicide prevention, intervention, and postvention. We are grateful to the funders and partners who help make this vital work possible.

EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR



Lexie Stewart

PROGRAM COORDINATOR

My name is Lexie Stewart (she/her) and I hold an Honours Bachelor of Arts in History from Trent University and an LL.B from Swansea University. I oversee programs and key deliverables at DCO, supporting both day-to-day operations and broader organizational initiatives. I also co-host the DCO Discourse Podcast, where I engage in conversations on mental health, leadership, and community impact. I'm particularly interested in the evolving mental health space and contributing to more accessible, community-based support.

PROGRAM COORDINATOR



Caitlin Ennis

ADMINISTRATION AND COMMUNICATIONS LEAD

My name is Caitlin Ennis (she/her) and I recently completed my MSc in Medical Sciences at McMaster University after having completed a B.HSc. at the University of Ottawa. I've had previous experience as Creative Director for a student-run non-profit charity and am happy to be working at DCO as Administration and Communications Lead. In my role, I manage DCO's administrative tasks and oversee all communications to ensure they align with DCO's values and brand messaging. Further, I co-host the DCO Discourse Podcast with Lexie. I enjoy working in mental health advocacy and promoting accessible, community-based support.

ADMINISTRATION AND COMMUNICATIONS LEAD



Diya Kharbanda

MEMBERSHIP RECRUITMENT AND SUPPORT LEAD

I'm Diya Kharbanda (she/her)! I'm a Trent University graduate with an Honours B.A. in Criminology and a minor in Sociology. Through my experience volunteering and completing a placement at a distress centre, I've developed a deep appreciation for the impact of crisis support. As the Membership Recruitment and Support Lead at DCO, I'm passionate about strengthening connections across member centres, supporting communities, and advancing thoughtful policy frameworks—all while keeping a people-first approach at the heart of my work.

MEMBERSHIP RECRUITMENT AND SUPPORT LEAD



Meet the Team (cont'd...)



Sabrina Popernitsch

EDUCATIONAL CONTENT CREATOR

I am a Registered Psychotherapist with a focus on psychoeducation and improving access to supportive mental health resources. My professional background includes work in mental health support, systems navigation, and education. I am committed to promoting accessible, informed, and empathetic responses in times of distress. I value clear communication, collaboration, and evidence-based practices in support settings. I am motivated by the organization's mission to provide responsive and inclusive support. Contributing to a service that prioritizes accessibility and community well-being aligns closely with my professional goals.

CONTENT CREATOR



Madeline Bauzon

SOCIAL MEDIA CONTENT CREATOR

My name is Madeline (she/her), but I go by Maddy for short. In my free time, I enjoy being with family and friends, playing soccer, rock climbing, shopping, and especially traveling! I recently graduated from the University of Waterloo with a double major in Psychology and Sexuality, Marriage, and Family Studies (SMF). I chose to work with DCO because I'm drawn to spaces that center care, advocacy, and mental health. Even though this role isn't face-to-face, I've come to value the impact that thoughtful, often invisible, work can have on someone's well-being. My journey with DCO began as a student intern and that experience solidified for me how important the work is at DCO and is why I chose to continue.

CONTENT CREATOR



Regan Roberts

EDUCATIONAL CONTENT CREATOR

My name is Regan Roberts (she/her), and I am a social service worker with over ten years of experience supporting individuals experiencing mental health challenges, substance use disorders, and barriers to safe, permanent housing. I am currently in my fourth year of the Bachelor of Social and Community Development program at Sheridan College.

I chose to pursue work with DCO because my passion lies in supporting mental health and overall well-being. I previously completed an internship with DCO, and the experience was incredibly meaningful and affirming. The organization's values, approach, and commitment to client-centred care strongly align with my own professional goals and dedication to this field.

CONTENT CREATOR



Rifad Amjath

SIOM COORDINATOR

With a solid foundation in data organization and a keen interest in data analytics, I thrive on bringing structure and clarity to complex initiatives. I have chosen to work for DCO because I was drawn to its innovative work (SIOM project), which provides data insights on the impact of distress, crisis, and suicide intervention and prevention services.

Not pictured above:

Podcast Engineer: Damien Ragubance

Board of Directors: Benjamin Zaiser, Diwa Satkunanathan, Shri Kalyanasundaram, Elie Labaky, Sneha Sathaye, Tricia Korbud

SIOM COORDINATOR



