

MENTAL & EMOTIONAL HEALTH & WELL-BEING

INDICATOR #28 Most Common Prescription Mental Health Drugs

DEFINITION

INDICATOR #28 — Annual incidence of the most common classes of prescription mental health drugs among children and youth.

KEY MESSAGES

- ▶ It is important to monitor the use of prescription medications to treat mental health conditions in children and youth, as well as to determine which **psychotropic medications** are most often prescribed to children and youth in BC.
- ▶ Two of the most common mental health disorders among children and youth are anxiety and depression,^{1,2} and BC practice guidelines indicate that non-pharmacological approaches are the first-line treatment among children and youth for anxiety and depression.³
- ▶ This indicator includes the number of new prescriptions issued to children and youth for the most common classes of mental health prescription drugs. While there is work currently underway to monitor and report this using BC Ministry of Health data (e.g., PharmaNet, Medical Services Plan, the Discharge Abstract Database), the data were not ready at the time this report was developed, and so will be reported on in future reports.
- ▶ Using estimates derived from recent prevalence surveys in other countries, it is estimated that at any given time as many as 12.6 per cent of children and youth age 4–17, or nearly 84,000 children and youth in BC, are experiencing mental disorders with clinically significant symptoms and impairment as defined by the American Psychiatric Association's *Diagnostic and Statistical Manual, Fourth and Fifth Editions* and the World Health Organization's *International Classification of Diseases, Tenth Edition*.²

REFERENCES

- ¹ Canadian Institute for Health Information. Care for children and youth with mental disorders. Ottawa, ON: Canadian Institute for Health Information; 2015 May [cited 2016 Jul 12]. Available from: <https://secure.cihi.ca/estore/productFamily.htm?locale=en&pf=PFC2866&lang=en>.
- ² Waddell C, Shepherd CA, Schwartz C, Barican J. Child and youth mental disorders: prevalence and evidence-based interventions. Vancouver, BC: Children's Health Policy Centre, Simon Fraser University; 2014.
- ³ Government of British Columbia. BC guidelines: anxiety and depression in children and youth – diagnosis and treatment [Internet]. Victoria, BC: Government of British Columbia; [cited 2016 Jul 14]. Available from: <http://www2.gov.bc.ca/gov/content/health/practitioner-professional-resources/bc-guidelines/anxiety-and-depression-in-youth>.