



Distress Centres
of Greater Toronto

STRATEGIC PLAN-2025-2028

Resilience and Hope, Delivered Every Day

We provide support for those in crisis, at risk for suicide, and experiencing emotional distress — through 24/7 multi-lingual inbound, outbound, and in-person programs.

Why we Exist

The Reality

Crisis does not keep business hours. Someone thinking about suicide, sitting with a survivor's grief, or facing a night alone with no one to call needs a trained, compassionate responder in that moment — not the next morning, not next week. That moment is why Distress Centres of Greater Toronto exists.

Across the Greater Toronto Area, demand for crisis and emotional support keeps growing, while too many people — especially in equity-denied and underserved communities — still face real barriers to reaching help: language, culture, isolation, or simply not knowing where to turn. Left unmet, that need does not go away; it shows up as preventable suffering, strained emergency systems, and lives lost that a timely conversation could have changed. DCGT fills that gap.

Every day, our volunteers and staff answer calls and texts from people in their hardest moments, offering the kind of immediate, non-judgmental, multi-lingual support that turns a crisis into a moment of connection instead of a tragedy.

What This Means for Our Strategy

Our five strategic priorities — expanding access, advancing equity, strengthening financial sustainability, investing in volunteers, and building organizational excellence — are not separate initiatives. They are the conditions required to keep answering the call, at scale, for everyone who needs it.

Every decision in this plan is ultimately in service of the same, singular purpose: making sure that when someone reaches out in crisis, someone is there.

Mission & Vision

MISSION

We provide support for those in crisis, at risk for suicide and those experiencing emotional distress through 24/7 multi-lingual inbound, outbound and in-person programs.

VISION

We are the leader in providing resilience and hope through innovative crisis and mental health support.

Five Strategic Priorities

A roadmap for growth, equity, and sustainability

01

CAPACITY

**Expand Access to
Crisis and Distress
Support**

02

EQUITY

**Advance Equity
Through
Community
Partnerships**

03

SUSTAINABILITY

**Strengthen
Financial
Sustainability**

04

PEOPLE

**Invest in
Volunteers**

05

EXCELLENCE

**Build
Organizational
Excellence**

01

CAPACITY

Expand Access to Crisis and Distress Support

LONG-TERM GOAL

Ensure timely, high-quality crisis and emotional support is available to everyone who reaches out.

WHY IT MATTERS

Demand for crisis and mental health support keeps climbing, and every unanswered call or text is a missed moment of connection. DCGT's first priority is making sure the door is never closed — growing inbound capacity so that when someone reaches out, at 3pm or 3am, a trained responder is there.

WE WILL

- Increase inbound call and text capacity
- Maintain high standards of service quality and safety
- Invest in volunteer recruitment, training, and supervision
- Scale services to meet growing community demand

02

EQUITY

Advance Equity Through Community Partnerships

LONG-TERM GOAL

Create a community where support is accessible, welcoming, and responsive to all.

WHY IT MATTERS

Crisis doesn't affect every community the same way, and neither does access to help. Language, culture, geography, and trust in institutions all shape who picks up the phone — and who doesn't. DCGT will lean on community partnerships to close that gap, co-designing support with the populations it's meant to serve rather than assuming one model fits all.

WE WILL

- Collaborate with community organizations serving diverse populations
- Reduce barriers to accessing support
- Co-design programs that reflect community needs
- Improve cultural responsiveness and inclusivity

03

SUSTAINABILITY

Strengthen Financial Sustainability

LONG-TERM GOAL

Develop a balanced and sustainable funding model that supports growth and innovation.

WHY IT MATTERS

A crisis line can't be there at 3am on an unstable foundation. Reliance on any single funding stream leaves service continuity vulnerable to forces outside DCGT's control. Diversifying revenue and deepening donor relationships isn't just good governance — it's what lets the organization plan years ahead instead of quarter to quarter and invest in the innovation its mission demands.

WE WILL

- Diversify revenue sources
- Grow individual, corporate, foundation, and government support
- Strengthen donor stewardship and engagement
- Build financial resilience and long-term stability

04

PEOPLE

Invest in Volunteers

LONG-TERM GOAL

Build a thriving volunteer community that is engaged, supported, and empowered to make a difference.

WHY IT MATTERS

Every call answered, every text de-escalated, traces back to a volunteer who showed up. They are DCGT's service delivery model, not a supplement to it — which means their wellness, growth, and sense of being valued are inseparable from the organization's ability to deliver on its mission. Investing here is investing directly in the people in crisis on the other end of the line.

WE WILL

- Enhance volunteer wellness and support
- Recognize and celebrate volunteer contributions
- Increase engagement and opportunities for growth
- Strengthen volunteer retention and satisfaction

05

EXCELLENCE

Build Organizational Excellence

LONG-TERM GOAL

Be recognized as a leading, innovative, and sustainable community mental health organization.

WHY IT MATTERS

Strong front-line service depends on strong infrastructure behind it — well-supported staff, clear accountability, and systems that turn day-to-day work into evidence of impact. This priority is about strengthening that backbone: investing in the team's growth and building the measurement and learning culture that lets DCGT keep improving rather than standing still.

WE WILL

- Support staff wellness and professional development
- Enhance performance management and accountability
- Measure and communicate community impact
- Foster a culture of continuous learning and improvement

Together, These Priorities...

...build one connected system: wider access, delivered equitably, funded sustainably, powered by well-supported volunteers, and held to a high standard of organizational excellence. Each priority reinforces the others — progress on one strengthens DCGT's ability to deliver on all five.

01

Access

02

Equity

03

Sustainability

04

Volunteers

05

Excellence