FINDHELP | 211 SECTOR SNAPSHOT:

Durham Region | January – December 2025

The purpose of this report is to provide an overview of top and emerging client needs.

TOP 3 CLIENT WEB SEARCHES [1]

211Central.ca

- Food Security
- Housing / Shelter
- Mental Health

Findhelp | 211 connects people to services through 24/7 multilingual navigation, crisis response, specialty helplines, online searches, and a comprehensive database of human and social services. Working with our partners, we strive to deliver equitable access for vulnerable people in our communities.

COMMITMENT TO SERVICE EXCELLENCE

Our commitment to service excellence is unparalleled. As the partner of choice for government and community service organizations, our team strives to exceed service standards.[2]

100%
Of Clients Would Absolutely Call 211 Back

98%
Of Clients Felt 211 Service Navigators Were Attentive & Friendly

TOP 5 CLIENT SERVICE NEEDS [3,4,5]

- **19%** Mental Health
- **18%** Housing / Shelter
- **9%** Legal / Public Safety
- **8%** Individual / Family
- **7%** Health

TRENDS & UNMET CLIENT SERVICE NEEDS[6]

Over the past year, these have consistently been top issues as identified by our Service Navigators:

1. MENTAL HEALTH

- **Escalating demand for crisis response:** Repeated wellness-check requests, and growing referrals from shelters, housing staff, security, and service agencies show sustained pressure on crisis systems.
- **Rising mental-health concerns across all ages:** Significant increases in anxiety, depression, behavioural issues in youth, caregiver burnout, and seniors' loneliness drove many calls for support and follow-up resources.
- **System strain and service gaps:** Callers reported long wait times, limited follow-up after hospital discharge, and insufficient text/chat crisis options, prompting frustration and repeated crisis use.

2. HOUSING / SHELTER

- **Persistent housing instability and shelter shortages:** Steady calls from unhoused individuals, seniors, families, and newcomers reflected ongoing struggles to secure affordable housing, emergency shelter, or relocation options amid capacity limits and extreme weather.
- **Financial strain driving crisis:** Requests for rent arrears support, deposits, mortgage help, heating assistance, and low-income benefits highlighted deepening economic pressure.
- **Mental-health impacts of inadequate housing:** Callers reported worsening anxiety and distress tied to homelessness, eviction risk, and lack of shelter access.

3. TOP UNMET NEEDS: Mental Health, Housing / Shelter, Individual / Family

GET INVOLVED

- Update Your Agency's 211 Profile
- Request a 211 Overview / Training: training@findhelp.ca
- Order 211 Promotional Materials: 211outreach@findhelp.ca
- View our Data Insights: 211 National Expansion Portal, 211 Ontario Needs Dashboard, 211 Data Snapshots (GTA)

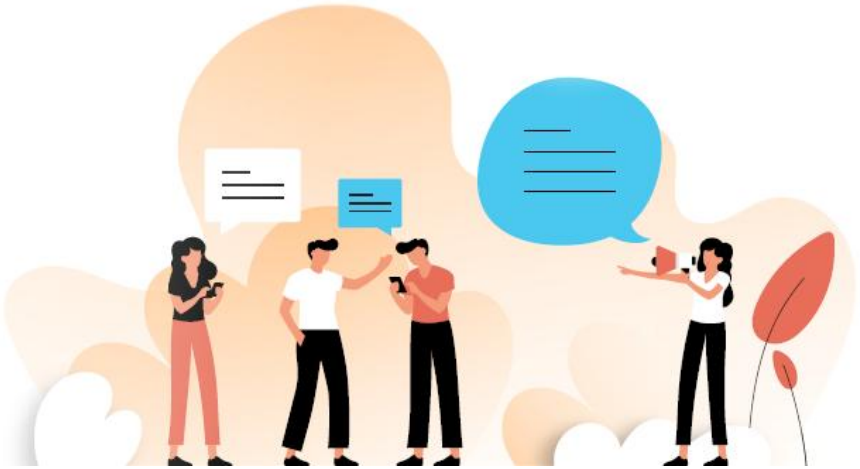
CONTACT US: communications@findhelp.ca

211 CLIENT STORY

A woman called 211 while in mental health distress. The caller stated that she suffered from anxiety and depression. She was unsure of what services were available to her and at the time of the call, was in need of mental health support and someone to talk to. The caller said that she currently lived by herself and her anxiety was triggered a lot at night due to being alone.

The Service Navigator performed a risk assessment. The caller was not in imminent danger of harming herself, but she did need assistance as soon as possible. The caller and the Service Navigator discussed different options. The caller liked the idea of receiving assistance over the phone. Therefore, the Service Navigator referred her to the *Durham Distress Centre*. The advantage of this service was that she could call at night when her anxiety was most likely to be triggered. She was also referred to the *Crisis Access Linkage Line through Lakeridge Health*. To ensure that she was connected to ongoing support, the Service Navigator gave her information on the different mental health supports offered by *Lakeridge Health* and *Durham Mental Health Services*. Finally, she was given a referral to the *Canadian Mental Health Association (CMHA)* in her area.

The Service Navigator wanted to make sure the caller received the services that she needed. She offered a follow up call, and the caller accepted. This way she could ensure that the referrals worked out for the caller and see if she had any new needs.



1 Top 3 Client Web Searches across the Greater Toronto Area via 211Central.ca
2 Service Outcome percentages help us understand how the service we provide is received, how clients are feeling after they contact 211 and whether more support is needed to address any unmet client service needs.
3 Client Service Needs are tracked using taxonomy (a categorization system that is standard for 211 Service Providers across North America) and are rolled up to categories.
4 Learn about the Canadian AIRS Needs Categories – Data Dictionary.
5 'Individual / Family' represents Case Management, Care Planning & Advocacy needs.
6 Trends & Unmet Client Service Needs is comprised using multiple data sets including client service needs, unmet client service needs and trends reported by 211 Service Navigators – who answer 211 calls, text, chat, and emails. This data does not identify individuals.

211 Ontario® United Way Durham Region Ontario

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