**RESEARCH OVERVIEW**

**Topic**
A preventative online mental health program for youth

**Key question**
How can a co-designed preventative online mental health program support youth mental wellbeing following the onset of the COVID-19 pandemic?

**Project aims**
COVID-19 introduced and intensified many mental health challenges faced by youth. In response, this project aims to engage Ontario youth and stakeholders to co-develop, implement, and evaluate a preventative online mental health program that aligns with youths’ mental health needs and programming preferences, during and beyond the pandemic.

The program, A Preventative Online Mental Health Program for Youth (POMHPY), is a free, 6-week online mental wellness program for youth between the ages 12 to 25 living in Ontario. Each week, participants engage in evidence-based and interactive activities to improve their mental wellbeing and resilience, physical wellness, and social connectedness. POMHPY is designed with youth, for youth, and program sessions are facilitated by youth.

**Activities**

- Co-designing POMHPY with youth and stakeholders.
- Piloting POMHPY in Simcoe County (Summer 2023).
- Conducting focus groups and surveying youth. Refining the program based on youth feedback and providing an updated version POMHPY to the broader population in Ontario (Fall 2023).
- Developing partnerships across Ontario to support the sustainability and scaling of POMHPY.

**Helpful terms**

- **Co-design**: A collaborative approach to design that involves working with participants to create participant-centered solutions.
- **Preventative**: An approach that aims to prevent or reduce the worsening of.

**Principal investigators**: Soyeon Kim, PhD and Elnaz Moghimi, PhD

**Project funder**: TD Ready Commitment

**Waypoint Research Institute**

WaypointResearchInstitute@waypointcentre.ca