

Ottawa East EMC

Program creates bridge for teens in crisis, Integrated mental-health services will see youth get help they need

Posted Dec 20, 2012 By [Laura Mueller](#)

EMC news - A new program will offer a path for families of youth suffering from a mental health crisis.

Called the Bridges Project, the new program will bring services from the Children's Hospital of Eastern Ontario, Ottawa Public Health, the Royal Ottawa Health Care Group and the Youth Services Bureau to form a treatment team that can provide intensive treatment program for teens - outside a hospital setting.

The program will ensure the appropriate services are offered directly to teens in crisis, instead of the current process, which leaves families in crisis searching for the right way to access services, said Kanata South Coun. Allan Hubley.

Hubley's son Jamie took his own life in the fall of 2011. For the councillor, this shift in the relationship between families and service providers is huge.

"It changes the dynamic around," Hubley said. "We were out there running around trying to find help. Now what's going to happen is all the agencies are going to come to the families and say, "This is the kind of help you need to get and we can refer you."

The program is geared towards the most vulnerable youth from ages 12 to 18. The target group represents the most repeat visits to the hospital emergency room and community-based mental health crisis services. They have the most complex needs and the most complicated admissions to mental-health units.

"At the time, when you're in a crisis like that, all your worried about is your child's health," Hubley said. "The reality is, before this program people would have to be trying to think of where they are going to go to try and get help and what kind of help you need."

Alex Munter, president and chief executive officer of CHEO, stated in a press release that Ottawa is seeing unprecedented demand for mental health services.

"It is not just the number of cases that is increasing, but also the severity of these cases," he stated. "Our goal with this program is to completely change the trajectory of young peoples' lives, forever altering both their physical and mental health as well as their life expectations.

The Champlain Local Health Integration Network will provide half a million dollars in annual funding to run the integrated treatment program, which is expected to make youth mental-health intervention more streamlined and cost-effective.

Ottawa Centre MPP Yasir Naqvi praised the partnership between service providers.

"This program has the capacity to identify and respond to the needs of high risk youth in Ottawa and ultimately, has the potential to save lives, reduce the use of hospital beds, and build community capacity," he stated.

By providing services outside the hospital, not only are hospital beds freed up, but youth in crisis can maintain some normalcy in their lives by staying at home and accessing services in the community, according to the press release.



[Click to Enlarge](#)
Submitted by Coun. Allan Hubley
Kanata South Coun. Allan Hubley and Alex Munter, chief executive of the Children's Hospital of Eastern Ontario, were on hand for the announcement of the Bridges Project. The new program will bring together mental-health service providers to provide integrated care for youth to help them recover at home instead of at a hospital.

Like

Add New Comment

[Login](#)



Type your comment here.

Showing 0 comments

Sort by popular now

* [Subscribe by email](#) . [RSS](#)

Trackback URL

blog comments powered by [DISQUS](#)