

Stepped Care Model Promotes Seamless Service Transitions *More individuals living with Mental Illness receiving better care*

NEWS

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More people with severe and persistent mental illness, who are in need in the community, are receiving better care under an innovative Stepped Care Model now in place within the Assertive Community Treatment Teams (ACTT) throughout the Central East Local Health Integration Network (Central East LHIN).

Assertive Community Treatment is a team approach that provides comprehensive psychiatric treatment, rehabilitation, and support for individuals with mental illness at the community level, and is available through funding provided by Central East LHIN.

Under the ACCTs' new Stepped Care Model, individuals who are ready for transition to more independent care, but are not yet ready to transition out of ACTT completely, may be safely and effectively cared for by the Stepped Care team, thus allowing ACTT to serve more people.

With the addition of Stepped Care nurses to support the transition process, all eight Central East LHIN ACT teams, currently located in Scarborough, Durham Region, Peterborough and Northumberland County, have successfully introduced the model which has enhanced their capacity to accept more clients with severe mental illness.

Over the first year of implementation of the project, the care teams have transitioned 90 clients into the Stepped Care Model and, at the same time, 104 new individuals were admitted into the ACTTs.

This new approach is a big help for Vera, a client who started working with the Canadian Mental Health Association (CMHA) Durham ACTT in 2007, and transitioned to the Stepped Care program in January 2015.

"I was scared at first, thinking there'd be a lot of changes, but there weren't. I still see the team every week and I have one nurse who works with me and we have built a strong bond," shares Vera.

After going through difficult times with the death of her parents and life transitions, Vera got help from the team who she says began to fill the void of not having family.

"I am so thankful to have this team. I can talk to them about anything. I look after my medications on a weekly basis now, and I try not to forget to take them. I'm so glad I'm not alone anymore."

Vera who has been living independently for a number of years is now able to do things many may take for granted like grocery shop, pay bills, and clean her house. "I'm very proud of what I've been able to accomplish."

QUOTES

“Mental health providers from across the Central East region are always working on implementing innovative service delivery models that will lead to service expansions and this Stepped Care Model is one such innovation of which we are very proud.”

- Dr. Ian Dawe, Mental Health and Addictions Physician Lead, Central East LHIN

“The success of the Stepped Care Model and the ongoing dedication of the Assertive Community Treatment Team members is having a significant impact on our shared goal of strengthening the system of supports for people with Mental Health and Addictions issues so they spend more days at home in their communities. The LHIN is pleased to provide ongoing funding as the new model continues to be implemented and evaluated.”

- Deborah Hammons, CEO, Central East LHIN

QUICK FACTS

- Clients had already spent a combined total of over 17,000 days in hospital before being admitted to the ACTT program.
- Clients have stated that they prefer receiving supportive care in their homes rather than in a hospital setting.
- The addition of a registered nurse to each ACTT ensures that an additional 200 new individuals will be helped by 2017.
- Central East LHIN-funded ACT teams deliver care in Scarborough through CMHA Toronto and The Scarborough Hospital, in Peterborough through Ontario Shores Centre for Mental Health Sciences, in Northumberland County through Northumberland Hills Hospital and in Durham Region through Ontario Shores Centre for Mental Health Sciences, CMHA Durham, Rouge Valley Health System and Durham Mental Health Services.

LEARN MORE

For more information and to download a copy of the “Assertive Community Treatment Team (ACTT) Together – Implementation Phase – Year 1 Progress Report”, please visit the Central East LHIN website at www.centraleastlhin.on.ca and click on “[Resources – Publications.](#)”

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