

Date: January 28, 2014

New funding supports seniors living with dementia, mental illness
Providence Care's 'mobile response teams' reach out to long-term care homes across southeastern Ontario

KINGSTON, ON – Providence Care is receiving an additional \$1.8 million in funding from the South East Local Health Integration Network (SE LHIN) to enhance a community-based service supporting seniors living with dementia and mental illness, and who are transitioning to long-term care.

Providence Care's mobile response teams (MRTs) are part of the organization's Seniors Mental Health service, which includes hospital-based care in Kingston, as well as outreach services across southeastern Ontario. Launched in 2012 as part of the provincial Behavioural Supports Ontario (BSO) initiative, the MRTs respond to calls from long-term care homes and are able to provide additional hands-on clinical support to older adults with dementia. The teams are structured to be able to respond to crisis situations, 24-hours a day, seven days a week. Today, the MRTs are working in partnership with 36 long-term care homes across the region.

"Typically, we have been focused on providing additional support to clients who are making the transition to or within long-term care," said Shawn Souder, Regional Director of Seniors Mental Health and Behavioural Support Community services at Providence Care. "We are able to work collaboratively with the other caregivers and provide additional supports that enhance the quality of life for individuals, and reduce the impact of the challenging behaviours related to dementia or mental illness on staff and other long-term care home residents."

"We meet our elderly clients and their families often as they are preparing for a significant transition in their lives, in moving to a new home in long-term care," said Lisa Vaughan, a member of Providence Care's Kingston MRT and a personal support worker. "We get to know their likes and dislikes, and more about their particular mental health needs, so that when they move in we can help everything go smoothly. It minimizes the risk of an emergency situation for everyone – the client, the family and the long-term care staff."

The new funding will help the MRTs grow their services – which have been in high demand. The expanded services will include additional abilities for the MRTs to provide mentorship and side-by-side training to long-term care staff, building partnerships and capacity throughout the health system. Additionally, the MRTs will be able to provide direct support to elderly clients who require a short hospital stay, before they transition to long-term care.

Souder points out that meeting the needs of the patient and his or her family is the continued focus as the new services are designed.

This material is available in accessible formats upon request to the Communications Department.

“This additional investment will ensure that BSO Mobile Response Teams continue to enhance health care services for people with challenging and complex behaviours by delivering quality patient-centred care at the right time, and in the right place,” said Paul Huras, CEO of the South East LHIN. “This community-based service will continue to build relationships and support improved collaboration and coordination among providers, across the South East LHIN.”

“We know that as our population ages, long-term care homes are places where there is a new pressure for mental health care,” said Shelagh Nowlan, Vice-President of Long-Term Care at Providence Care, and site administrator of Providence Manor. “The MRTs are one way of addressing this need today.”

- 30 -

Providence Care is southeastern Ontario’s leading provider of Aging, Mental Health and Rehabilitative Care. Fully-affiliated with Queen’s University, Providence Care is a centre for health education and research, and a member of the Council of Academic Hospitals of Ontario. Continuing the legacy of our Founders, the Sisters of Providence of St. Vincent de Paul, Providence Care is sponsored by the Catholic Health Corporation of Ontario. Providence Care provides a range of outreach health care services from 12 community-based locations across the region, and also operates St. Mary’s of the Lake Hospital, Mental Health Services and the Providence Manor long-term care home (Kingston).

Media contact: Jenn Goodwin, Director of Communications, Providence Care
(613) 548-5567 ext 5668 / c. (613) 329-0829

Caitlin den Boer, Communications Lead, South East Local Health Integration Network (SE LHIN)
(613) 967-0196 ext 2240 / c. (613)242-7655