

COMMUNITY MEMO

Date: March 8, 2017
To: Community Partners
CC: MCYS
From: Moving on Mental Health Residential Treatment Services Work Group
Subject: Residential Treatment Services

Dear Valued Community Partner,

For about a year, a working group has been working to assess the current state of residential treatment services for children and youth in Hamilton with intensive mental health needs. Our work group is now seeking feedback from stakeholders on our preliminary proposals for change.

The working group has developed some preliminary proposals for change:

- We must ensure that existing services are financially sound. This will not be done by diverting resources from other mental health services, which are challenged to respond to growing service demand and funding restraint.
- The residential program for younger children (ages 6 to 12) will include an additional, pro-active respite component.
- Children involved with Hamilton's children's aid societies need access to a range of beds, rather than dedicated beds at only one facility (Flamborough program)
- Our services will work better with other parts of the service system if we dedicate certain residential treatment beds for adolescents who are in transition to- or from- other services.
- Our adolescent residential services will transition from gender specific environments to programs that serve all eligible young people, regardless of gender identification.

Last month, Good Shepherd made the difficult decision to close Jeb's place, its residential treatment service for male-identified youth 12 to 17 years old. The closure of Jeb's place has reinforced the importance of using existing resources to support sustainable, stable programs, within an environment where resources are extremely limited.

In the months ahead, our work group will work to communicate proposed change, and to seek feedback from key stakeholders. We will be working to engage families and caregivers, youth, local and regional community partners. More information to come. Please do not hesitate to contact us should you have any questions. We look forward to having further dialogue about residential treatment services in our community.

Sincerely,



Maggie Inrig, Director of System Planning, Lynwood Charlton Centre, Lead Agency for MOMH

On behalf of members of the Residential Treatment Services Work Group (comprised of representation from McMaster Children's Hospital, Good Shepherd, Lynwood Charlton Centre, Contact Hamilton, MCYS, the Children's Aid Society of Hamilton and the Catholic Children's Aid Society of Hamilton).