

Annual Report 2017-18

Durham Mental Health Services



Celebrating 30 Years of Service in Durham Region

Thank you to the members of our Family Support Program for the words of advice offered throughout this report to others who are supporting loved ones with mental illness

The DMHS Family Support Program is available for anyone who is supporting someone with a mental health challenge.



Message from the Board President and Chief Executive Officer

Bill Sims and Rob Adams

As we look back on our 30th year, a leading theme is innovative partnerships. Throughout the past year, DMHS strengthened existing partnerships and developed new ones to creatively address the unmet needs of people in Durham's many communities, particularly for those people who are most vulnerable.

When the Region of Durham identified that seniors living in social housing required better support and assistance with eviction prevention, DMHS took the lead in providing multi-disciplinary team-based pro-active support to residents of 17 Region-owned buildings in Durham Region. Providing holistic physical and mental health support, the team helps vulnerable seniors manage day-to-day by addressing issues before they are overwhelming.

In West Durham, two innovative partnerships increased access to community mental health support. Collaborations with Ajax Harwood Clinic and the Pickering Holistic Health Centre make support available to patients at primary care practices. In addition to improving access to service, these partnerships enable a high degree of cooperation and support between doctors and DMHS staff as they work together. A second West Durham partnership, with the Welcome Centre, brings our services directly to newcomers to Canada who are often facing many life challenges, including past trauma. Direct individual service, plus groups for individuals and families, help break down barriers to accessing service for people who are finding their way in a new country.

Another notable aspect of DMHS programming is that it addresses a very full continuum of needs. Our new Oshawa Crisis location is able to provide intensive support to individuals facing immediate, urgent issues in their lives; workshops hosted by our Peer Support Program offer strategies for coping with symptoms to people already well on their recovery journey; and our new Homelessness Outreach program reaches out to people who need a place to live as well as mental health support.

Throughout the years we have been privileged to work with many organizations, funders and individuals who have worked with us and beside us. We were heartened by and grateful for the support that was shown in many ways this year – through donations, volunteering for the Point-in-Time Count, and for the first time, through two benefit concerts that were organized by people who had benefitted from DMHS support and who wanted to give back. In order to recognize members of our community for their support of individuals with mental health challenges, and to encourage people to talk about their challenges and ask for help, DMHS inaugurated the Blake Garvey Memorial Award of Appreciation, named in honour of a young man who lost his life to addiction.

Through our 30 years in Durham Region, DMHS has grown from one house in Whitby for people with nowhere to live to a multi-service community mental health agency that services all of Durham Region. We are proud of what we have built to support people with mental health challenges, and we are continually inspired by the people we serve.

As we move forward, the most important message that we share here and in our daily work is that *Hope is Essential*. Thank you to the people who have shared this message and their stories in our 2017-18 Annual Report.

Family Crossroads, Changes and Challenges

Elizabeth's Story

I lived in my hometown until age 70, when I moved to Whitby after my husband passed away. I had been his main caregiver during a prolonged battle with cancer. I came to live with my son. He had to move to a larger house to accommodate both of us. I ended up living with him for five years.

My son had gone through a difficult separation. Eventually, his need for emotional support strained what I was able to provide but I helped wherever I could – emotionally, financially and otherwise. Things finally came to a head and I couldn't take it anymore. I was spending more and more time out of the house to avoid him, going to the library or the Senior Centre or wherever I could go.

In my walks to the Senior Centre, I passed by the Durham Mental Health Services main office and eventually I felt I had no other option but to go in and explore how they might help. The woman at the front desk was very helpful and calming and arranged for the Crisis Team to come as soon as they could.

The Crisis Team listened to my story. With their help, I was able to find an independent living retirement home and I finally made the break that I needed to for my own health and my own sanity. They also connected me to DMHS Family Support and I started attending the family groups which I found tremendously helpful. The connections I made and the information I learned through the Family Support program were so valuable.

Right from the first person I encountered at DMHS, I was listened to. They helped me feel less alone and helped me find my way. I feel that I have a better understanding of what was going on and I can think more clearly about what I can do and what I can't do for my son. And I am clear now on my healthy options for my own life.

In 2017-18 the Seniors' Support Program supported people to live independently by conducting over 26,000 visits and 811 Group Sessions. The program runs in 5 buildings in Ajax and Whitby in collaboration with Ajax Municipal Housing Corporation and Durham Region Non-Profit Housing.

266 people participated in the Family Support Program in over 100 group sessions. 100% of participants said they would refer someone in a similar situation to the DMHS Family Support Program for help.

First, take good care of yourself.

Have insight and knowledge about what your loved one is actually going through.

Be calm, consistent and patient.

Be hopeful. Take one day at a time.

Know that you are not alone.

There is support out there. You just need to reach out and get it.



462 Coordinated Care Plans were completed with clients in 2017-18. This means that clients were connected with comprehensive supports to meet their individual needs.

Be happy for any small improvement or positive change. Accept your loved one and don't take anything they say or do personally. Relax and still continue your own life, while supporting your loved one.

Take care of yourself.



It's Going to Get Better

Lindsay's Story

In my teens, I had my first encounter with the mental health system due to a severe episode of depression. I was prescribed anti-depressants and things got much better for over a decade.

In my late twenties, I lost a dear friend and work colleague to suicide. In the wake of this, I pretty much shut down. I consulted my family doctor who suggested I reconnect with Centenary Hospital. Soon I was able to reach out to Durham Mental Health Services and my Community Mental Health Worker introduced me to the full range of supports that DMHS offered.

One service that appealed to me in particular was the WRAP (Wellness Recovery Action Plan) group. Over eight weeks, I gained insight into my symptoms and my warning signs of relapse and I was able to develop a concrete, individualized plan on how to respond when symptoms surfaced. I use the insights I gained and the plan I developed daily to reach out to supports. Before WRAP, I would have waited until I was in crisis and unable to cope and I would have ended up in the hospital.

Another DMHS program I value is the New Leaf Day Program. I don't attend daily but it is great to know I always have a place where I will be welcomed and supported.

Right now I am in my second semester of an Addictions and Mental Health diploma program at Centennial College. My goal is a career in the field to give back to my community and help those who find themselves struggling as I did.

DMHS really helped me see, "It's going to get better." At DMHS, I was constantly reminded that the light is there and I learned skills and strategies to move towards it. I am still on that journey today, but I carry a strong sense of hope that helps to guide me even when challenges come up.

109 people created their own Wellness Plans at 11 WRAP groups. 27 people were trained by Peer Support Specialists to be WRAP facilitators. Peer Support Specialists also trained 336 people in Mental Health First Aid. This programming builds capacity in the community as people gain skills to manage their own symptoms, and to understand and assist others.

Finally Enjoying Life in a New Country

Alamzeb's Story

Alamzeb grew up in Pakistan where he was an air force pilot. After coming to Canada, he raised a family while working a variety of jobs. Work-related health issues and marital conflict led to financial insecurity and depression. With the help of DMHS and other supports, Alamzeb has been able to restore his health and confidence. Here is his story.

My family's financial situation gradually worsened after I had to go onto WSIB – we couldn't pay our bills. We were literally in the dark after our hydro was disconnected. As my family's main provider, I felt disgraced and fell into a deep depression with severe anxiety. Through my psychiatrist, I was connected with DMHS' Crisis Services program. Their support and advocacy helped me get to the point where I was actively engaged in life again. I began career retraining.

I was managing my life well – then my marriage broke down and I relapsed into depression. My friends told me they were worried I was going to commit suicide – they were calling me every few hours to check in. I was crying continuously. I had no hope and felt my life was shattered. I didn't want to live. I reached out to DMHS Crisis Services again for support.

I believe now that two things saved my life: one is the medication I was prescribed and the other is my connection to DMHS. The help from DMHS went "beyond the line of duty." I had lost everything and now I had a sense of belonging and of support. When my case manager wasn't there, I knew that Crisis Services were available and had my back. I gradually regained my confidence in managing my own life. My case manager's genuine, caring support at times brought tears to my eyes – I compare his support for me to a person in critical condition getting oxygen. It gave me back my life.

I'm now in subsidized housing – I've literally come out of the basement. I'm going to the gym and enjoying life. Now I can say that I made the right decision in coming to this great country that provides such high quality health support.

In 2017-18 DMHS Crisis Services made 25,342 visits, including mobile visits and 24/7 phone support. 722 people used DMHS Crisis beds in Ajax, Whitby and Oshawa. Half of these people were first time users. One third of the people who used Crisis beds said they would have gone to the hospital or called 911 if the Crisis beds had not been there. Five new Crisis beds opened in Oshawa this year, bringing our total for Durham Region to 17.

Community Mental Health Workers supported 843 clients and made 19,888 visits in the community.



Do not give up on your loved one. Listen and try to imagine how they feel. It is going to take a long time and there is no magic cure. Support in the best way you can.



2017-18 Highlights

Sue Cathcart Peer Recognition Award

The Sue Cathcart Peer Recognition Award was established to honour the memory of a much beloved DMHS Peer Support Specialist. It recognizes an individual with lived experience who embodies the five key concepts of recovery: Hope, Personal Responsibility, Education, Self-Advocacy and Support. The winner of this year's 3rd Annual Award, chosen by a vote of his peers was *Stephen James*. It was presented by last year's winner, Renee Parratt.



Staff Appreciation Day

This year's Staff Appreciation Day was a Food Truck Frenzy at our head office in Whitby. It was great to see so many staff at this event. Our staff of over 200 people work in 26 different locations throughout Durham Region. They bring a diverse set of skills and strengths to our agency. Dozens of DMHS staff enjoyed BBQ from Stuttering John's and ice cream from the Enniskillen General Store.



30th Anniversary Celebration

In 1987, DMHS opened its doors as a single supportive housing location serving eight residents. Now, 30 years later, the agency celebrated its growth into a large and diversified leader in local community mental health support. A daytime seminar for staff on resilience and personal growth was followed by an evening gala featuring keynote speaker Michael "Pinball" Clemons, who spoke powerfully on the topic of hope and perseverance through adversity.



New Winds Fall Fashion Show

Clients from the New Winds Day Program organized and staged the 3rd Annual Fall Fashion Show where they strutted their stuff on the runway—donated by the Whitby Knights of Columbus. Fashions were donated, and the models put together their outfits. An assortment of light snacks was served to guests and music was also provided by the New Winds Day Program. All in all, a really fun afternoon!





Hot Dog Cart

DMHS' New Winds Day Program operated a BBQ cart, serving customers at the Salvation Army Thrift Store on Brock Street North from June to October. Two Day Program members who worked on the cart are Mike and Akil (pictured with Brenda from Salvation Army Thrift Store). They worked 18 hours a week, taking inventory, getting the cart ready for the day, setting up on site and serving customers.

Blake Garvey Memorial Award

DMHS partnered with Chris and Suzanne Garvey to memorialize their son Blake, who lost his life to mental health and addiction. The Blake Garvey Memorial Award of Appreciation recognizes outstanding contributions to mental health and recovery in Durham Region. The inaugural winner was Doug McLean of the Knights of Columbus.



Welcome Centre Associate Partner

DMHS is now providing onsite community mental health support to Welcome Centre Immigrant Services clients. This enables us to bring timely mental health services to newcomers and provides direct access to services that individuals might not otherwise seek out due to stigma or just lack of information about community mental health services and what they can offer.



Point in Time Count

In early 2017 DMHS partnered with the Community Development Council of Durham to organize and conduct the first Point in Time Homelessness Count. Over 120 volunteers took to the streets, shelters and "hot spots" across Durham Region. 271 people were counted. The findings were published in later 2017 and will help governments and services tackle the ultimate goal of ending homelessness in Durham Region.



Learn about the disease and how it could be affecting your loved one. If possible obtain professional help as soon as possible. Find a support group for yourself. This will help guide you to handling the interaction with your loved one in a more compassionate, supportive and positive manner. Share with others.

Don't be afraid to talk about the illness - at different levels of detail depending on who you are speaking to—but don't avoid it.



Finding Acceptance, Understanding and Support

Lynn's Story

My son became psychotic – it was horrifying. He feared for his personal safety, and some of the stuff he was saying was very concerning. As his symptoms progressed, he would say things that couldn't possibly be true and we recognized he was struggling with mental illness. I called every organization I thought might help my son. It felt like I was sent in 20 or 30 directions. It was a nightmare trying to find out what was going on with my son and get him appropriate help.

Sometime prior to his breakdown, my son had reached out for support to DMHS Crisis Services, and I now made this call myself. The C.A.L.L. Centre staff listened to my story and gave me a few avenues to try out, including a linkage to DMHS' own Family Support program. I was soon attending the Family Support group sessions and they became my lifeline – it was the only thing in my week I looked forward to. You're terrified going in because you don't know anybody – how will I be perceived? What will they think about my situation? In the first session, the worker made everyone feel welcome and offered us the hope that this group could be a vital support.

What I love about the Family Support groups is that you support others by listening to their stories, and you get that same listening support in return. I went from feeling alone to feeling like I was part of a group with no judgment who had all been through very similar traumatic experiences themselves. We had so much to share with each other. I learned that some of the ways I was relating to my son were not helping, and I learned better ways to manage, healthier ways to cope.

My son's experience of severe mental illness took me down a tunnel I had never been in before. Now I needed support for myself if I was going to be able to support my son, to get back to work and resume my life. DMHS Family Support – along with the 18-week Coping Skills Group offered by Rouge Valley Ajax-Pickering – allowed me to climb out of the hole I was in. I'm not back to "normal," by any means, but have become somewhat of my old self – I feel like me again.

Sometimes, people who are experiencing mental health challenges find themselves in the criminal justice system. DMHS programming helps to divert people from the criminal justice system and helps those who are being released from custody to get back on their feet. DMHS staff assisted 337 adults and 85 youth through Court Support Services, and assisted 59 people who were being released from custody.

Letting Her True Self Show

Natasha's story

I learned it's not about me. I learned to cope and actually get stronger as a person. I learned a new respect for my daughter and for how she deals with it, and a new determination to go the extra mile for her. I learned I'm not the only one, and how pervasive the illness is.



My parents were loving and always did their best for me and my four siblings, but their divorce during my teenage years hit me hard. Not wanting to choose sides, I moved out on my own. That's when I struggled the most. I had a lot of anxiety which led to difficulty at school. I was isolated and I felt that I could not be myself – if I was myself, then people would reject me. These feelings have stayed with me ever since; I feel like a chameleon, afraid to let my true self show.

I made a decision several years ago to return to school. At school, I felt bullied and rejected. Last year, my youngest brother passed away and that really took me downhill. I recognized I needed some support and started looking at what was available. That's how I found DMHS. I was relieved to know some help was available and registered as a client of their Community Support program.

My worker was a tremendous help to me. She provided a listening ear; she accepted "all of me" in a way I had rarely experienced; and she connected me with useful resources such as DMHS' New Winds Day Program and the consumer empowerment group called V.A.S.E. (Voices Against Stigma Everywhere). I can't say how good it feels to come to a place where there are people you can relate to, who share some of your challenges and also share in your good times too. I have a sense of belonging that I have rarely felt in my life. I feel capable and competent at New Winds and at V.A.S.E., and I feel less pressure to hide who I really am. It is a wonderful feeling to be accepted and it has given me hope for my future too.

Now I am working on a children's book – I gave up on it years ago, and now I have the confidence to continue. It encourages children to embrace their uniqueness and to become "exceptionally you." I am going to sign up for Ontario Shores' Recovery College and I am saving up for a camera as I would love to pursue photography.

I am grateful to DMHS for providing a welcoming, encouraging environment and I appreciate all of the staff and the people I have met. They are helping me meet my future with confidence.

401 people attended 1430 Day Program groups. New Leaf Day Program runs 4 days a week in Ajax, and New Winds Day Program runs 5 days a week in Whitby. Day Programs are managed and run by Peer Support Specialists.

Our Residential Program runs in 7 houses in Ajax and Whitby. It supported 63 people to leave hospital and learn the skills that will help them to enjoy healthy lives in the community.

Our Community Partners

DMHS staff work together with our many community partners to ensure that services meet each client's unique circumstances.

We are grateful for the ongoing collaboration of: Ontario Shores Centre for Mental Health Sciences ♦

Lakeridge Health and Pinewood Addiction Services ♦ CMHA Durham ♦ CMHA Toronto ♦ CMHA HKPR ♦ Ajax Municipal Housing ♦ Region of Durham ♦ Durham Region Non-Profit Housing Corporation ♦ Durham Alternative Secondary School ♦ Kinark Child and Family Services ♦ Frontenac Youth Services ♦ Chimo Youth and Family Services ♦ Community Living Ajax-Pickering-Whitby ♦ Central East Network of Specialized Care ♦ Crisis Response Network ♦ Kerry's Place ♦ Community Care – COPE Mental Health Program ♦ Seamless Care Pharmacy ♦ Salvation Army ♦ Ministry of the Attorney General ♦ Toronto Bail Program ♦ Community Development Council Durham ♦ United Way Durham ♦ Local Diversity and Immigration Partnership Council ♦ Welcome Centres in Ajax and Pickering ♦ and the primary care practices in Ajax and Pickering .



Long Service Award Recipients 2017

25 Years

Jacques Vanderluit
Robert Adams
Richard Weatherall

20 Years

Donna Barton

15 Years

Marcee Van Noord
Jennifer Smith
Lyndsee McKnight
Jennifer Lawson
Magdalena Fairfield

10 Years

Betty Mann
Barbara Serroul
Claudette Kellam
Natalie Werner
Matthew King
Juliet Singh

5 Years

Breighan Savage
Vivienne Bretherick
Nicole Brown
Nicole Costain
Melissa Schultz

Financial Report 2017-18

REVENUE	2017-18	%
Central East LHIN	10,161,7558	83.14 %
Ministry of Health -Housing Branch	255, 115	2.09
Durham Region Social Services	735,806	6.02
Youth Court Worker	81,328	0.67
Rent and Board	305,009	2.50
Miscellaneous	682,948	5.59
Total Funding	12,221,964	100 %

EXPENSES

Compensation & Staff Costs	10,221,449	84.86%
Housing—Group Houses & Crisis	383, 677	3.19
Housing—Administration	64,022	0.53
Program	873,989	7.26
Administration	190,263	1.58
Capital Purchase	67,363	0.56
Capital Reserve Fund	6,653	0.06
Rent Supplement	213,198	1.77
One Time Funding	25,166	0.21
Total Expenses	12,045,780	100%

*Listen to
what your
loved ones
have to
say.*

*Be patient
and kind.*



DMHS FOUNDATION 2017-18

We wish to thank all of the many people and organizations who made donations, many of which were in memory of loved ones. Your donations directly support the clients we serve.

Revenue	\$57,690
Expenses	\$30,854
NET INCOME	\$26,845

We provided community education and awareness through

- 79 community events
- Over 4117 Suicide Prevention App downloads

We also engaged the community through

- Twitter
- Facebook
- Flickr



We provide integrated and collaborative community based mental health services in Durham Region with funding and support from:

- Central East Local Health Integration Network
- Ministry of Children and Youth Services
- Ministry of Health and Long-Term Care
- Regional Municipality of Durham

Hope is Essential

DMHS is committed to working with the Central East LHIN and our community partners to support people in achieving an optimal level of mental health and living healthier at home by spending 15,000 fewer days in hospital and reducing repeat unscheduled emergency department visits for reasons of mental health or addictions by 13% by 2019.



Search Durham Mental Health on



Find our Suicide Prevention App at



Apple



Android