

Taking Care of the Whole Individual; Mental Health Services of Renfrew County Operates A Successful Foot Clinic

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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PEMBROKE – The Assertive Community Treatment Team (ACTT), a program administered by Mental Health Services of Renfrew County, is helping ensure that those who live with serious mental illness are receiving proper foot care in order to reduce pain, improve mobility and enable them to be more active in the community.

This year alone, the ACTT Foot Care Clinic will accommodate 66 clients, an increase from the 30 who received clinic services in each of the past two years.

“As health care providers, it’s important to recognize the correlation between mental and physical illness, and to help manage all aspects of health,” said Sabine Mersmann, PRH Senior Vice-President, Clinical & Support Services / Partnerships & Integration. “The Foot Care Clinic is a great example of how this is done.”

Mireille Delorme, MHSRC Director said there is a real need to assist clients with their foot care. “Many with serious mental illness experience a number of barriers to good physical health which include, but are not limited to, the impact of mental illness symptoms, financial constraints and lack of transportation. Having proper foot care and securing proper footwear helps to prevent medical complications, improves comfort, and improves mobility and overall wellness.”

The prevention-based clinic is serviced by Registered Practical Nurse Brenda Kincade who has specialized training in foot care, and is open to clients on a first-come, first-serve basis, with a focus on those with diabetes. Ms. Kincade arranges followup for those who need it.

To date, the clinic has been housed at the MHSRC outreach site in downtown Pembroke, with free transportation offered to eligible clients from areas within Renfrew County. This summer, clinics will also be held in Renfrew and Arnprior in order to accommodate those who don’t have transportation options.

ACTT Recreational Therapist Janet Gleason Morris said client feedback for the regional program has been very positive, noting that four clinics have been held to date this year and others will be scheduled as the need arises, so long as program funding is available.

“Our goal is to ensure that they don’t have pain,” Ms. Gleason Morris said, noting that many who have other health issues have difficulty doing their own foot care. She also said many can’t afford such a service in the community or afford proper footwear, yet both factors contribute to poor foot health and impacts their mobility.

Mental Health Services of Renfrew County (MHSRC), a program administered by the Pembroke Regional Hospital, offers a full range of services supporting mental wellness and recovery for individuals ages 16 years and older, living in Renfrew County, who are in distress or living with mental illness and/or addiction.

Professional, compassionate, personalized care is offered at no cost, in-home and in the community, to all service users, both as hospital in-patients or recovering at home in the community, on a voluntary basis.

The Assertive Community Treatment Team (ACTT), a program of MHSRC, is a client-centred, recovery-focused mental health service for people with serious and persistent mental health illnesses. ACTT services are delivered by multidisciplinary mental health staff who work as a team to provide treatment, rehabilitation and support services to clients in achieving their goals.

FOR MORE INFORMATION, PLEASE CONTACT:

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