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## Champlain Local Health Integration Network (LHIN)

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### **NEW RECOVERY PROGRAM LAUNCHED FOR PEOPLE WITH MENTAL HEALTH CONDITIONS**

**July 14, 2011** – Clients with mental health conditions are benefitting from a new and innovative program developed by the Royal Ottawa Health Care Group in partnership with the Champlain LHIN. The program focuses on recovery, helping people with a mental illness to get on with their lives after a hospitalization or crisis.

Now fully operational, the program is located at the Royal Ottawa Mental Health Centre. It offers life skills training and guidance on how to live responsibly and independently. Thirty-two clients are enrolled at any one time and stay for an average of six months.

“The program helps me see hope in life, and to me that’s a big thing,” says Luc, 37, a client who lives with severe depression. “At home, I didn’t have any structure.” Luc takes part in a number of activities including morning exercises, cooking classes, wellness seminars and job skills training. When he returns home, he aims to become a volunteer at a local charitable organization.

Saverio, also 37, explains he was admitted to the recovery program after a hospitalization due to schizophrenia. “I was really a mess, I was working too much and coping with the illness,” he says, adding staff at the program taught him “how to put things in perspective, how to organize myself, how to live better and support myself.” Saverio now feels he has the confidence to go back to university to complete his degree.

The 32-bed program is a unique model of care in our region that provides solid support for clients who would otherwise fall through the cracks of the health system. Historically, people with mental health conditions were kept institutionalized for years, or abandoned to struggle on their own, often left despairing and homeless. By offering short-term assistance from a variety of health professionals, the new program adds a new level of care that allows clients to transition safely from crisis to recovery and from hospital to home.

This is just one initiative of a larger restructuring effort conducted by The Royal in recent years to better serve the population. The Champlain LHIN provided strong support during The Royal’s transformation to ensure resources are reallocated in a way that most benefits the region’s residents.

“The new recovery program is an example of how the Champlain LHIN works closely with health-care providers to improve access to a wide range of health services,” says Champlain LHIN CEO Alex Munter. “As the demand for mental-health services rises due to lessening stigma, the LHIN is bringing more and more communities and providers together to find creative local solutions to local challenges.”

The mental-health recovery program is staffed by a multi-disciplinary team at The Royal that includes psychiatrists, nurses, personal care attendants, occupational and recreation therapists, and a social worker. Clients can be admitted to the program from hospitals across the Champlain region or from home through community agencies.

“It just seems brighter here somehow,” says another client of the program, stating the program has helped her plan her days better and become more motivated. “It just feels like there’s more sunshine in here.”



*In photo from L to R: Luc and Saverio, two clients of the new recovery program developed by the Royal Ottawa Health Care Group in partnership with the Champlain Local Health Integration Network*

If you are a media organization and would like an interview, please contact:

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The intake number for referrals to the program at the Royal is the following:  
613-722-6521 ext. 6070