Dr. Zachary Kaminsky has built an algorithm that identifies people who are at high risk of suicide. His algorithm analyzes speech patterns and geographic location to predict suicide risk. It uses these analyses to create a risk pattern and then scores and matches these patterns against public data related to suicide attempts.

“This isn’t identifying only people saying ‘I’m going to kill myself’ or those who are in a direct threat to themselves,” says Dr. Kaminsky. “It’s identifying people who are at risk of suicide, which could be a partner who are moving towards that decision.”

Dr. Synthia Guimond, an executive director at the Royal’s Institute of Mental Health Research (IMHR), says that a key component of Kaminsky’s approach is the use of virtual reality (VR). “It’s a tool that they’re using to mitigate the risk,” she says. “It’s a tool that they’re using to help people deal with their mental health issues.”

Dr. Guimond says that VR has the potential to improve individuals’ confidence and allow them to feel more in control of their daily routines. This can be particularly important for people who are struggling with mental health issues, as it can help them to feel more in control of their thoughts and actions.

The Royal is working to help people understand the importance of mental health care. “We’re trying to get people to understand that it’s not just about health care, their concerns are not just about the quality of care we offer at The Royal, but about how hard it is to access care,” says Joanna Brzezinski, President and CEO of The Royal. “This is what we are working on increasing the number of hospital without walls.”

The Royal’s vision is of a hospital without walls. It involves making mental health care more accessible at many different places across the community. Dr. Susan Farrell, The Royal’s new President of Community Mental Health, has spent most of her career working outside of hospitals, delivering care in people’s homes, schools, and workplaces, and familiar face at The Royal, is Ottawa’s Anita Manley, a friendly face at The Royal, has spent most of her career working outside of hospitals, delivering care in people’s homes, schools, and workplaces.

“Reaching out to make it more accessible, bringing its services and expertise out to the community,” says Dr. Farrell. “When I speak to people across Ottawa, they’re concerned about the quality of care we offer at The Royal, but about how hard it is to access care,” says Joanna Brzezinski, President and CEO of The Royal. “This is what we are working on increasing the number of hospital without walls.”

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Going the extra mile at the Brockville Mental Health Centre car wash

Research shows that employment is an essential part of the recovery process for people with mental illness. Work-related responsibilities may result in a reduction of symptoms and hospitalization, and, in turn, give a boost of confidence, independence, self-esteem and an improved quality of life.

Vocational rehabilitation designs to help clients gain valuable work experience is available to inpatients at the Brockville Mental Health Centre car wash program, which is the longest-standing program of its kind in the vocational car wash programs. 

In Brockville, minivans, SUVs and trucks are in need of TLC. Car owners can bring their vehicles to the car wash and get them cleaned. Two clients work at the car wash, from calculating the customer's payment, to cleaning the vehicles, to handing them their keys. Good work feels good, whether you're in an office tower, dental office, or restaurant. Good work feels good, whether you're in an office tower, dental office, or restaurant. Good work feels good, whether you're in an office tower, dental office, or restaurant. Good work feels good, whether you're in an office tower, dental office, or restaurant.

I like the car wash because I am doing something I value. I like it and I view the customer's face and see that they're happy.

Serge was part of the vocational car wash program at the Brockville Mental Health Centre for almost three years. He has been part of the program for several years and he has spent a good amount of time cleaning the cars. He enjoys the work and is working hard to do a good job for his clients.

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Erica had played competitive hockey in the OTIA, and 2013 Chair of the Ottawa Health was going to be their passion for the treatment he received for a psychiatric unit was intimidating and filled with an awkward sort of nervousness. I knew that what he needed from me most was friendship. What he needed most was to help or what getting better even looked like. But I did know that I would bring back an even kinder and more generous person who I am proud to be remembered as.

The Royal had helped him get on a path of recovery. I am forever grateful for the treatment he received and how it gave him back a good life. Recovery did not mean my friend was cured. It did however, bring back an even kinder and more generous person who I am proud to call a very close friend.

Years later, when I saw the job posting for the CEO of the Royal's Foundation, I knew that it was the job for me. I loved the idea that I could spend time each day finding ways to help people, like my friend in 1990. I wanted to be part of the solution of getting better care to people faster, to discovering new and better ways to treat mental illness through research, and to working to end the stigma.

A few months into my new job at The Royal, I found myself in a store wearing a Royal branded jacket. I was amazed that two separate people came up to me to speak about their family's struggles with mental illness and to show their appreciation to The Royal. It shocked me that total strangers would speak to me about such deep, personal matters. It shocked me that total strangers would speak to me about such deep, personal matters. It shocked me that total strangers would speak to me about such deep, personal matters.

The event also featured the added recognition of Kathleen Grimes and Ersin Ozdemir of Site Preparation Ltd. On Nov. 11, 2014, the OCA un-locked a new way to give to mental health in the industry. A grateful corporation: Ottawa Construction Association

The OCA board began to have a commitment to mental health within the OCA is Richard Getz, the limited treatments that are available today. The Royal is committed to investing in research as future discoveries hold the promise of getting more people better faster. Our work involves studying fast acting anti-depressants, predicting and preventing suicide, and discovering ways to diagnose mental illness through medical tests. These exciting research areas can have a transformative affect on how people are treated in the future.

Government funding for healthcare is limited and stretched. Philanthropy is the way we can come together to support people, like my friend, and we are working at The Royal to do just that.

At The Royal we accept the challenges we face with mental illness, and enthusiastic board members like Mitchell Bellman, President and CEO, Royal Ottawa Foundation. We are also not satisfied with the limited treatments that are available today. The Royal is committed to investing in research as future discoveries hold the promise of getting more people better faster. Our work involves studying fast acting anti-depressants, predicting and preventing suicide, and discovering ways to diagnose mental illness through medical tests. These exciting research areas can have a transformative affect on how people are treated in the future.

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Cooking and baking skills patients learn at The Royal can be transferred to paid employment or volunteer opportunities.

Inspiriting hope through design

From learning essential life skills to building friendships and reaching personal goals, the Diagnostic Services Occupational Therapy Kitchen is part of the recovery of many clients at The Royal.

In celebration of their 20 years in the Ottawa community, in late 2018, Astro Design made a commitment to support a project with one goal—to positively impact care. Astro Design transformed the Diagnostic Services Occupation-Therapy Kitchen into a modern and well-appointed kitchen. The kitchen provides inspiring occupational therapy opportunities for clients throughout The Royal.

“The cause of mental health is becoming increasingly important and affects everyone we know in one way or another,” says David Šulbaško, co-president of Astro Design. “When the opportunity to gift a new kitchen to The Royal, we couldn’t pass it up!”

Each week, up to 20 clients use the bright, large and modern kitchen space.

“We wanted to help in a way that we can see real impact on the patients,” adds Jimmy Georgiades, co-president of Astro Design. “This new kitchen will help these clients prepare for when they are discharged from The Royal. We believe that the impact and difference this new kitchen space will have on them is huge.”

Formerly known as Sunshine Bakery, the service was recently rebranded as #Bakeology (Baking + Psychology + Baking). Clients prepare baked goods in the kitchen, which are sold in the Winter Garden volunteer café located at The Royal. The skills these clients learn can be transferred to paid employment or volunteer opportunities.

Join, a client at The Royal, says, “I like keeping it organized and clean; that’s my role in the kitchen. It’s my first time baking but I usually do inventory, so I do the cleaning—the shelves, the fridge and the freezer.”

The #Bakeology program would love to support your catering needs. If you have a request for baked goods and would like to support this initiative, please contact Love with your request at info@bakeologyotton.ca.

Psychiatric outreach team reaching Ottawa’s homeless

“I’m not here to give you any advice. It’s one of the first things Steve Walsh says when he sits down with a client.

Walsh is a psychiatric outreach nurse, and the person he’s talking to is typically homeless or marginally housed and dealing with severe mental health issues, so this state of affairs often comes as a surprise.

“Look, you’re here. You’ve made it all this stuff we’ve been about to talk about, so you’ve obviously got lots of strength. I’m here to listen to you very carefully, add in some questions and try to get you to tell us what you think you want.”

Then I’m going to help you find that,” he says.

Members of The Royal’s Psychiatric Outreach Team are working in dozens of organizations across the city in any given week. They’re working with shelters, drop-ins, community health centres, family resource centres, Indigenous service providers and social housing.

It’s a team of 35, composed of nurses and social workers, serving the mental health needs of people who are homeless or marginally housed.

Walsh, who has been with The Royal for 25 years, says the key to the Psychiatric Outreach Team’s success is its flexibility. “Team members must be creative, and sales staff must be able to sell the skills our clients have,” he says. “People don’t want to feel like they’re being evaluated, and they don’t have the insight to know what they need,” he says. “They’re there to listen and understand them. If they’re going to take steps towards recovery, we need to get them buy-in.”

The team sees the individual they are working with as a whole person. They can refer the person to other treatment options—including addiction. Also very important, however, are the community agencies the team partners with—agencies doing amazing work, who don’t always have mental health expertise.

For example, many agencies help people access services—housing, for example. A housing caseworker may have specialized mental health training, yet they’re still engaging and supporting people without that level of mental health support. They may simply be helping.
**My beautiful mind**

**ALLY COOPER**

My whole life I’ve felt different, strange and even wrong.

I’ve seen psychiatrists, therapists and counsellors since I was 15 years old. I was misdiagnosed, put on the wrong medication, told I’d just be better off, stop whining. “Take it all out of me,” (one of my personal favourites).

Then I came to The Royal. After my initial intake interview I was diagnosed properly and put on the proper medication. Within six weeks I started to feel better. I wanted to achieve more and do more, and my stomach wasn’t as sick.

You know what The Royal really did for me? They made me feel important, special, and most importantly — heard. I truly felt these people cared about me and witnessed them treat me like people each day, not because they’re their job, but because it’s their passion.

Without The Royal I would be lost, still not understanding why I am different and feeling scared and alone, even in the most crowded room.

I realized that you have to put the work in therapy and take your medication, but you also have to commit to lifestyle changes. I learned that doing everything in modération has affected me in such a good way. I now make a commitment to put myself first. And I like the person I see in the mirror now.

The race to end the stigma

The 2013 edition of the SHOPPERS LOVE YOU! Run for Women took place on a cold and wet day in June but that didn’t stop thousands of enthusiastic participants from breaking major records that day.

The awareness raising event takes place in 17 cities across Canada, and Ottawa maintained its place as the top city for fundraising and participation. 3,712 participants registered this year and raised $15,255, The Mindful Movement of Companies: The Ground Breakers included Taggart Group.

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In June, the race to end stigma was witnessed in Ottawa for the first time, breaking major records that day. Without The Royal I would be...
In my own words: How can biomarkers transform diagnosis, treatment and understanding of mental illness?

What if health care professionals used machine learning to predict the development of certain mental illnesses before they even happened? How could such an approach help companies create a more effective treatment? These are some of the questions discussed in the Royal's latest Recovery Room.

**Dr. Clifford Cassidy** is the *Royal’s* in-house psychiatrist and leads the **Recovery Room** on mental health. The Royal is a not-for-profit health care organization and research centre located in Ottawa, Ontario.

Dr. Cassidy is an expert in the treatment of mental health disorders, including schizophrenia, depression, and anxiety disorders. He has published extensively on the use of machine learning and artificial intelligence in mental health care, and his work has been featured in several national and international publications.

The Royal is proud to host the Recovery Room, a platform where experts and professionals in mental health can share their insights and experiences. The Royal supports this initiative to promote better understanding and treatment of mental health issues.
Research in the digital age

Dr. Guimond believes the novelty of VR may help engage individuals in cognitive rehabilitation and lower the stigma that exists around mental health. Together, these women inspired other like-minded women to help bring forth change in the way we deliver care for mental health. Small but mighty philanthropic group grew to over 400 members by 2016, raising efforts on supporting The Royal's Campaign for Mental Health — a truly inspiring achievement. As we look ahead, the Foundation will be centralizing their fundraising efforts on supporting The Royal's vision of a hospital without walls. The vision of an organization of mental health experts working alongside other health care and social service providers to effect change. We do it in our workplaces and in society; as decision makers, influencers and leaders. We know that the power of philanthropy, shared experiences, open conversations and true collaboration are the key drivers for change.

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From our purple hearts, to yours

Cynthia Clark

I am a mom who has chosen to share our story in the hope that it will help other families like mine understand our experiences of families like my mine, and the lessons I learned about youth mental health.

Our story is one of hope.

For all the reasons listed above, we have decided to share our story with others. It is our hope that this will help other families who may be going through a similar experience. We believe that the more people who hear our story, the more likely it is that they will be able to share it with others who may be going through a similar experience. We believe that the more people who hear our story, the more likely it is that they will be able to share it with others who may be going through a similar experience.

Cynthia Clark is Past Chair and Director of the Executive Advisor Council and of the Ontario Family Care Advisory Network.

To date, DIFD has seen over 400 community-led events across North America! Visit difd.com/howtohelp to learn how you can get involved.


cynthia.clark@theroyal.ca

The Royal's website, theroyal.ca, has been redesigned to create a more dynamic and responsive experience. Just hover your phone's cursor over the icon to go directly to the mental health resources, information, new research, stories of recovery, and more. For more information and resources, visit theroyal.ca.

The Royal also invites you to explore the #DIFD movement and begin sharing your own story of hope. To learn how you, your team, or your organization can get involved, please visit differoyal.ca/ or contact us at info@DIFDroyal.ca.

Follow us on Facebook, Twitter, and Instagram! Search for us at @DIFDroyal and use the hashtag #DIFD.

From one parent to another, my advice

THE ROYAL - IS IT JUST ME?

Can't say it? Write it down.

Remember that you can always talk to someone.

Don't dismiss what they say. If you think a friend or family member is struggling, please talk to them.

Find someone you trust.

Distress Centre of Ottawa — 613-377-7777

Mental illness is worth talking about.
YOU are worth talking about.

The first step toward recovery often begins with talking about mental health.

How to talk about mental health:

1. Find someone you trust.
2. Be honest and open.
3. Ask for help.

Helping others:

1. Listen without judgment and without responding with your own feelings.
2. Don't do what you think they want you to do.
3. Learn how to listen when they need to talk.

If you are worried about suicide, talk to someone — this pandemic is not something you should face alone.

BETHEL SERVICES:

DIFD-Fac-Mack-Gaensslen-MentalHealthApp

For more information and resources, visit theroyal.ca.

The Royal also invites you to explore the #DIFD movement and begin sharing your own story of hope. To learn how you, your team, or your organization can get involved, please visit differoyal.ca/ or contact us at info@DIFDroyal.ca.

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The Royal also invites you to explore the #DIFD movement and begin sharing your own story of hope. To learn how you, your team, or your organization can get involved, please visit differoyal.ca/ or contact us at info@DIFDroyal.ca.

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Mental illness is worth talking about.
YOU are worth talking about.

The first step toward recovery often begins with talking about mental health.

How to talk about mental health:

1. Find someone you trust.
2. Be honest and open.
3. Ask for help.

Helping others:

1. Listen without judgment and without responding with your own feelings.
2. Don't do what you think they want you to do.
3. Learn how to listen when they need to talk.

If you are worried about suicide, talk to someone — this pandemic is not something you should face alone.

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