

# Internal Key Messaging Guide

General

## SECTION 0: Background & Use of Guide

This document, which is internal and confidential, is designed to assist fundraisers, staff, and volunteers in their early conversations with potential donors about The Royal and how philanthropy can support its work. It provides key messaging for the 'Hope Starts Here' campaign.

This guide is most useful when a prospective donor expresses a general interest in mental health, but has not yet identified a specific area of interest within mental health.

## SECTION 1: Hope Stars Here Campaign Key Messaging Guide

	Key Messages	Supporting Facts
<b>Issue Overview</b>  <i>What problem are we addressing?</i>	The mental health recovery gap is a significant issue, devastating individuals and families globally.	Mental illness impacts 1 in 4 people in Canada and 450 million people worldwide. However, fewer than 1 in 3 people seek care, and less than 1 in 5 of those receive care that meets their needs.  Conventional treatments like counselling or medications are ineffective for nearly 30% to 50% of people with depression.
<b>Consequences</b>  <i>What are the consequences if this problem is not addressed?</i>	Untreated or improperly treated mental illness can lead to severe outcomes, including disability, job loss, homelessness, imprisonment, financial hardship, and suicide.	Suicide is the 2nd leading cause of death among young people aged 15 to 24 in Canada.  Despite representing only 1% of the population, nearly 12% of all suicide deaths in Ontario are among people with schizophrenia spectrum disorder.

		<p>People with mental illness and substance use disorders are more likely to die prematurely than the general population, reducing life expectancy by 10 to 20 years.</p>
<p><b>Root Causes</b></p> <p><i>Why does this problem exist?</i></p>	<p>The lack of effective, personalized diagnostic, treatment, and prevention methods for mental illness in clinical care is a major issue.</p>	<p>Worldwide, mental health research receives \$3.7 billion (USD) annually, less than \$0.50 per person.</p> <p>Mental health diagnoses have relied on symptoms and clinical interviews for the past century, with no significant changes.</p> <p>Unlike physical illnesses that can be confirmed with blood tests or scans, mental illnesses lack objective biological markers for diagnosis.</p> <p>Before the approval of esketamine in 2019, the last major breakthrough in mental illness medication was the introduction of Prozac in 1987 and antipsychotics in the 1960s.</p> <p>Effective non-medication treatments for treatment-resistant mental illnesses, such as rTMS, are often not publicly funded and are largely inaccessible outside of research settings.</p> <p>The field of mental health currently lacks personalized prevention tools, leaving individuals with mental illnesses without tailored strategies to preemptively manage their conditions.</p>
	<p>There is insufficient access to quality care across all levels of the healthcare system, especially in community-based care.</p>	<p>The mental health care system is underfunded in Canada. Mental illness account for about 10% of the burden of disease, but it receives just 7% of healthcare dollars. This underfunding amounts to about \$1.5 billion relative to the burden of disease.</p> <p>In Ontario, wait times of 6 months to 1 year are common.</p>

	Underfunding of community-based mental health services leads to dependence on costly services such as emergency departments or hard-to-reach psychiatrists, contributing to long wait times.
Stigma exacerbates mental illness by fostering isolation, deterring help-seeking, and straining relationships.	<p>This year alone, 7 million Canadians will need help for mental health concerns. Many will not get it because of the stigma attached to the illness.</p> <p>Stigma attached to mental illness can lead to isolation and can strain relationships.</p>

<b>Our Approach</b>  <i>How does The Royal plan to address the issue?</i>	<p>The Royal is committed to closing the mental health recovery gap by:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Accelerating breakthrough discoveries into care.</li> <li>2. Increasing the health system's capacity for effective, community-based care.</li> <li>3. Upholding patient dignity on their journey to recovery.</li> </ol>	
<b>Value Proposition</b>  <i>Why is The Royal the ideal organization for this work?</i>	<p>The Royal, located in Canada's capital city, is a leading mental health care and academic health science centre, uniquely positioned to address this problem. With a dedicated team of experts, direct access to a diverse patient population, and a strong commitment to research, education, and advocacy, The Royal is at the forefront of mental health care innovation and where the latest breakthroughs directly benefit those who need them most: patients.</p>	<p>The Royal has 437 inpatient beds, serves over 15,000 people annually, has 156 active research studies, engages 6,000 people in research studies, has 78 researchers, and is home to the only brain imaging centre in our region dedicated to mental health research.</p> <p>Research is fully integrated with care at The Royal, enabling immediate application of discoveries and real-time research feedback. This stands in contrast to non-Canadian systems where research and patient care can be more disconnected, potentially slowing the pace of healthcare innovation.</p>

<b>Impact</b>  <i>What will be different when The Royal is successful?</i>	More people with mental illness will have access to effective, personalized care.	
--	---	--