

partnersformentalhealth

January 22, 2014

Donna Green
Founder, Stella's Place

Dear Donna:

I am writing in support of Stella's Place, an integrated assessment and clinical treatment centre for young adults with mental health needs.

As the founding chair of both the Mental Health Commission of Canada and Partners for Mental Health, I am well aware of the fact that there are thousands of young adults in Ontario who are suffering from mental health disorders who far too often fall through the cracks of an overcrowded and poorly coordinated system.

Although there are many excellent mental-health clinics and support groups serving adults with mental health disorders, young adults are being overlooked.

The way the mental health system in Ontario is structured, a newly diagnosed 16-year old with a mental illness will be treated through the adult system. But a teenager's experience of a mental-health disorder is very different from that of an adult. Consequently, in the adult system, teenagers often feel out of place, alienated and abandon the attempt to deal with their mental health problems.

When it opens, Stella's Place will provide comprehensive assessment and treatment services at no cost to young adults with complex mental-health needs. It will not duplicate existing services, but rather help people navigate through the services available in Ontario while simultaneously offering crucial missing pieces. These will include:

- Comprehensive, INTEGRATED assessment and clinical treatment services;
- A diverse set of services so that a program of treatment can be designed which feels right to each individual;
- Access to interdisciplinary clinical staff (psychiatry, psychology, social work, nursing, nutrition);
- A suite of clinically proven individual and group therapies, creative arts, fitness, health, wellness and life management strategies, vocational and educational support and planning;
- Peer mentorship; and
- Transition coaches to help clients navigate throughout their recovery process and make connections in the community.

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The Stella's Place model aligns with Ontario's comprehensive Mental Health and Addictions Strategy. It is a perfect example of a private-public partnership as government continues to look for new ways of delivering mental health care to Ontarians.

Additionally, Stella's Place can potentially relieve stress on Community and Provincial Social Services and specifically target the ongoing problem of young adults who otherwise fall through the cracks.

Young adults should not be defined by their mental illness. Through comprehensive assessment, traditional and non-traditional therapies and a focus on lifestyle management, Stella's Place will offer the support and tools young adults need to help them regain and manage their lives.

For more information on this incredible project, please visit www.stellasplace.ca or contact Donna Green at dgreen@stellasplace.ca.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Michael Kirby". The signature is fluid and cursive, with a large, sweeping flourish at the end.

The Hon. Michael Kirby
Founding Chair