

February, 2012

Dear Donor:

Imagine that you are experiencing a mental health crisis – you are frightened and unsure of what the future holds. On top of this, your financial resources are very low. This would make it extremely difficult to cover the extra expenses that are related to support and treatment, such as transportation to and from the hospital, parking or child care.

As a clinician at London Health Sciences Centre (LHSC), I find it troubling when a patient has to compromise their care because of the financial strain of attending therapeutic appointments. Without funds to cover extra treatment-related costs, someone who is suffering from a mental illness may experience heightened stress and worsening symptoms, yet possibly discontinue or forgo treatment altogether.

In order to best help LHSC's mental health patients who are facing financial hardship, we have established the ***Mental Health Services Patient Assistance Program***.

Through this important initiative – which is completely donor-funded – financial support is available to mental health patients in need for emergency, short-term situations when funding from other sources is just not there.



Recently, the Mental Health Services team cared for a distressed patient who drove herself to the emergency department to seek the treatment she needed through the inpatient program. At the time of her release, the patient was not able to pay the parking fare associated with her stay and was anxious about being able to get her car from the parking facility.

The Mental Health Services Patient Assistance Program was able to assist this patient – and, with your help today, can support more patients in need.

This newly created program will provide financial support to the full spectrum of mental health patients – individuals who may be dealing with problems related to psychological trauma, mood and anxiety disorders, psychosis or addictions. The extra treatment-related expenses covered might include child care, transportation, parking and therapeutic activities as well as even basic necessities – expenses that can quickly add up.



The mental health program has a new, modern home within the North Tower at Victoria Hospital. As we enter this new era in mental health care at LHSC, physicians like me, as well as nurses and allied health staff, want to ensure that those who are struggling with both a mental illness and financial hardship receive the optimal support – leading to the best possible outcomes.

How You Can Help

Our Hospital is striving to increase the funds available through the Mental Health Services Patient Assistance Program, building a stronger base of funding from which we can offer support to a greater number of patients. Without the continued generosity of our community, this program will not exist and this population will not receive the needed financial assistance.

Please consider making a gift of \$1,000 or more toward the Mental Health Services Patient Assistance Program. Your contribution will provide much-needed support to mental health patients experiencing financial hardship – allowing these patients to focus their energy on healing.

Thank you for your thoughtful consideration.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, reading "Jeffrey P. Reiss".

Jeffrey P. Reiss, MD, FRCPC
Site Chief, Adult Mental Health Care Program
London Health Sciences Centre

P.S. Please do consider making a gift toward this important initiative today. If you would like more information regarding this program or wish to explore other ways to make a donation, please contact Jackie Ellefsen, Development Officer at London Health Sciences Foundation, at jacqueline.ellefsen@lhsc.on.ca or 519.685.8823.