



WINTER 2023/2024

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YOU
gave Rahma a
SAFE PLACE
to turn

DONATIONS^{at}work

After arriving in Canada at five years old, Rahma never settled down. She attended seven different schools by grade six and lived in a home where mental health was stigmatized and overlooked. **CONTINUED ON PAGE 2**

Watch
Rahma's
story online:



COVER STORY: CONTINUED

Despite the efforts of caring teachers and educational assistants who tried to help, Rahma still felt lost. “I was too old to have my hand held, but too young to know what I was doing, or to have the skills I needed to get to where I need to be,” she recalls.

As a teenager, Rahma faced a traumatic experience that led her to The Royal, where our expert staff provides specialized mental health services for youth aged 16 and older. It was here that she finally received the help she had always needed.

Rahma’s resilience and courage shines bright when she offers this message of support to young people like herself: “There are people out there that want you to reach out. They want to hear when you aren’t doing so well and they want to help.”

The Royal is there for young people like Rahma because of generous donors like you. Thank you for ensuring she had a safe place to turn when she needed it most.



YOUR SUPPORT FUELS PRIZE-WINNING RESEARCH: Paving the way to equitable services for underserved communities

Dr. Srividya Iyer of McGill University and the Douglas Research Centre is the 2023 recipient of The Royal-Mach-Gaensslen Prize for Mental Health Research.

Through her visionary research and diverse partnerships, both in Canada and globally, Dr. Iyer is bridging equity gaps so young people from historically underserved communities can have access to supports that work for them.

One notable way that Dr. Iyer is making this goal a reality is by spearheading ACCESS Open Minds.

This multi-stakeholder youth mental health network serves urban, rural, remote, Indigenous, post-secondary and homeless youth. It focuses on transforming services to identify needs early, respond rapidly, and provide appropriate, inclusive care under one roof.

Annually, this prestigious prize – sponsored jointly by The Royal and the Mach-Gaensslen Foundation of Canada – is awarded to an outstanding mental health researcher enabling future exploration and discovery.

Dr. Srividya Iyer, 2023 winner of The Royal-Mach-Gaensslen Prize for Mental Health Research.



Scan here
to watch
an inspiring
video about
Dr. Iyer’s work:





BARE NECESSITIES: Providing essentials to those in our care

Donors like you provide the comforts of home to patients at The Royal. Because you care, our team can respond to patients' urgent and emerging needs throughout their journey to recovery. There are a number of ways you ensure patients feel comfortable, dignified, and supported, including:

- **Assistive devices** to improve safety and reduce the occurrence of falls for patients in the geriatric inpatient unit;
- **Access to technology** for students to stay current with their university courses;

• **Seasonal gifts** for residents of Royal Ottawa Place, a long-term care home located on the grounds of The Royal's Carling Avenue campus;

• **Groceries and cooking supplies** for occupational therapy groups in the schizophrenia inpatient unit;

• **A Family Voice Bulletin** to provide tools and resources to people supporting their loved ones.

Thanks to the generosity of donors, patients and their families are receiving the best possible care and the greatest hope for a successful recovery.

Meeting community mental health needs, thanks to you

Prominently located in central Ottawa, a quick access mental health clinic offers a beacon of support for people looking to better their mental and substance use health. Entirely funded by compassionate donors, the Prompt Care Clinic is one of The Royal's newest community mental health programs.

"The next person needing access to care could be your neighbour, co-worker, friend, or family member," says Haley Ashe, manager of the Prompt Care Clinic and Central Intake. "The amazing thing about the Prompt Care Clinic is how quickly someone can access the help they need."

There is currently a high demand for specialty mental services in eastern Ontario, meaning people are often faced with long wait times. The Prompt Care Clinic helps provide access within a matter of weeks.

The Clinic, which began as a virtual service in the wake of the pandemic, opened a permanent location in 2023 thanks to the generosity of donors like you and TD Bank Group. While fundraising continues to ensure the sustainability of the Clinic, thank you for contributing to this important evolution of care in Ottawa.



The multi-disciplinary team of staff at the Prompt Care Clinic in City Centre in Ottawa.



2,500

PATIENTS SEEN AT THE PROMPT CARE CLINIC IN JUST TWO YEARS



65%

OF APPOINTMENTS WERE FIRST-EVER VISITS WITH A MENTAL HEALTH PROVIDER



YOUR GENEROSITY: Healing Trauma, One Brushstroke at a Time



The creative process.



A wall mural titled Tangled Garden hangs in the Substance Use and Concurrent Disorders Unit.

A colourful hand-painted mural offers a warm welcome to individuals bravely advancing their recovery in The Royal's Substance Use and Concurrent Disorders (SUCD) program.

"As soon as our patients walk through the doors now there's a sense of calm, quiet, and safety," says Dale Patterson, a recreational therapist involved in the project.

The once bare, beige wall was recently transformed into a landscape of collaborative, trauma-informed design in action, thanks to the generosity of donors and the guidance of the Ottawa Art Gallery.

Trauma-informed design acknowledges that surroundings play a significant role in emotional and mental well-being. The new mural reflects an understanding of the sensory

impact of a physical space on people who have experienced trauma.

A mural boasting a symphony of flowers was painted by cohorts of patients, offering multiple therapeutic benefits, both in process and in outcome. As well, group therapy and recreational rooms were painted shades of "Serenity Blue" and "Fairmont Green."

Patterson says choosing "soothing" colours for areas where care and recovery take place enhances comfort, dignity, and wellness. Patients described the new space as "open," with "more space to breathe."

This transformation is one of many patient-first initiatives in the SUCD program. Thank you for supporting the wellness for patients at The Royal.