



# Hospital Partner Reports 2020-21

## Michael Garron Hospital

*Submitted by Dr. Michael Rosenbluth, Chief Dept Psychiatry/Medical Director Mental Health Program*

The goal of the Department of Psychiatry and the Mental Health program is to optimize patient outcomes while working to increase the capacity of community based clinicians to treat psychiatric out patients. The Program is aligned with the MGH/TEHN commitment to providing equitable access to care for some of Toronto's most marginalized patient populations. Despite the considerable pandemic challenges, we have continued to strive for clinical excellence and innovation with our clinical efforts and program building.

The department is committed to increasing the capacity of community clinicians (primary care physicians, nurse practitioners, and community-based psychiatrists and therapists' capacity to treat patients optimally in their own offices. The primary means of increasing capacity that we have focused on include education, collaboration, and phone and e-consultations.

We believe that by the considerable range of services including a 40 bed inpatient unit, consultation liaison, a wide variety of outpatient therapy and medication clinics—including same day access for those in crisis, 6 bed Child and Adolescents unit with multiple C&A OPD services as noted below, nursing home consultation, psycho-geriatric in and outpatient services, and two group homes and an ACT team—we are able to provide an effective, comprehensive, and rapidly accessed service which facilitates community clinicians knowing that there is a place to turn when treating patients who worsen.

As part of a hospital wide initiative, we have been involved with the creation of an Ontario Health Team to achieve greater integration of hospital and community agency services to improve care for our community with regard to psychiatric and substance related services. In the field of addictions, we are providing coordinated and rapid access to care with community and hospital partners.

The Department and Program continues to be one of the busiest in the city with a large number of patients being seen in the emergency, outpatient, 40-bed inpatient program, through our extensive Aftercare program, and in our community programs. We average >39,000 outpatient visits/year. We are the anchor hospital for MCIT (mobile crisis intervention) teams expanded to cover police divisions 53, as well as 54 and 55 divisions.

We are in the third year of a \$700,000 grant for the Transitional Youth Navigation Program pilot. This has been a priority initiative because of the significant mental health needs of this age group, particularly as they transition from child and adolescent to adult services and in and out of hospital- and community-based care. Current services are not always optimally designed for this age group and their needs are often seen as "falling through the cracks." This has involved establishing strong relationships with community stakeholders and mental health partners in our catchment area, with input from local youth, young adults and families; and reaching out to youth and young adults, aged 16 to 29, during periods of transition in services, e.g. child to adult services, inpatient or emergency department to the community and vice versa. The focus has been on those who need more intensive support during the transition process, as the clinician-navigators provide direct clinical assessment and accompanied transitions to appropriate community resources.

In our Child and Adolescent Mental Health Program, the inpatient program has been busy and volumes are about 20% higher than in 2019, after dipping significantly in 2020 in the context of the COVID-19 pandemic. Our outpatient department is moving to a measurement-based care model, using the Greenspace program. Implementation is expected in August 2021. We will also be moving to an eReferral system for outpatient referrals, using the OCEAN platform. Finally, we are partnering with MentalHealthTO, a service of Toronto's Lead Agency for Infant, Children and Youth Mental Health, to have them provide our outpatient intake function. This will be implemented in August 2021. In order to build capacity and address wait-list concerns, our Anxiety Clinic will be partnering with community agencies to build a larger system of therapists trained in providing evidence-based cognitive behavioural therapy for children and youth experiencing anxiety. This has already started with Strides Toronto and the George Hull Centre. A trial of a MGH developed CBT app that will allow for increased volumes, is being conducted.

Thus, by emphasizing education, innovation, collaboration and integration, and responsivity, we strive to optimize clinical care of those challenged with mental health issues both acute and chronic, and increase the capacity of community-based clinicians to engage and treat patients more effectively.