



## **MENTAL HEALTH PROGRAM, SOUTH SHORE HEALTH**

**“There is no health without mental health”  
World Health Organization, 2005**

Your mental health is directly linked to your overall health and well-being. To be well, we must all take care of our mental health. Too often, people experiencing common mental health problems such as stress, anxiety or depression are reluctant to access services. This can happen for many reasons, including fear of the unknown. The following information is designed to answer some common questions about Mental Health Services.

### **TREATMENT SERVICES**

#### **What is the Mental Health Program?**

The Mental Health Program is part of South Shore Health. Professional mental health staff (psychologists, psychiatrists, social workers, occupational therapists, nurses and community support workers) offer services across Lunenburg and Queens Counties. The services are free for individuals and families who wish to improve their mental health.

#### **What problems does the Mental Health Program deal with?**

Adults, children and families may come to the Mental Health Program seeking help for stress, anxiety, depression, grief or concern over troubling life events. We also provide Treatment and community support to individuals and families experiencing a serious mental illness.

#### **Do I need to be referred by a doctor?**

You do not need a referral; you can call Mental Health directly for an appointment. You should contact your family doctor to talk about your mental health concerns. He or she may be able to provide the assistance you need or may refer you to the Mental Health Program.

#### **Where is the Mental Health Program located?**

The Mental Health Outpatient Program is located at the Dawson Centre, 197 Dufferin Street, Bridgewater. Satellite clinics are also available in Liverpool (the annex behind Queens General Hospital) and Chester (3762 Highway 3). The Inpatient Mental Health Unit is located at the South Shore Regional Hospital.

#### **When are services available?**

The Bridgewater clinic is open 8:30 am to 4:30 pm Monday to Friday (the clinic closes from 12 noon to 1PM for lunch). Liverpool/Chester clinics are by appointment only.

#### **How do I contact Mental Health for a first appointment?**

To make a first appointment for all locations, call **(902) 543-4604 ext. 2449**.

#### **What do I do in an emergency or after clinic hours?**

8:30 am to 12:00 noon and 1- 4:30 pm Monday to Friday, call **(902) 527- 5228 (Press 1)**. **During lunch hours and on evenings, weekends and holidays please go to the closest hospital emergency room.**

### **What happens when I come for a first appointment?**

Clients will be asked to complete a form which gives professional staff some background information about you and the issues that have brought you to the program.

Clients will meet with a mental health professional for about 2 hours and together you will determine what treatment would be best for you. These choices include:

1. An appointment for individual sessions with a therapist
2. Referral to a group where clients can develop skills and learn ways to improve their mental health
3. Referral to a psychiatrist
4. Referral to a more appropriate health or community service

### **Does the Mental Health Program provide services for children and families?**

Yes. The Child and Adolescent Service sees children and adolescents 18 years of age and under for assessment and treatment. For a new referral, call **(902) 543-4604 extension 2449**. Children, adolescents and parents may also be referred to group sessions. This service also specializes in autism.

## **PUBLIC EDUCATION: *Know more about mental health***

With education and skill-building, people can improve their mental health and deal more effectively with life's challenges. Group experiences allow participants to share helpful ideas about staying healthy and give people information and tools to help them understand their condition, take control of certain aspects of their lives and improve their coping abilities. Groups also provide a support network that promotes the prevention and self-management of mental health problems.

Mental health professionals offer a free public education series (**Mind-Body Renewal series**). Topics are Stress Management, Health and Well-being, Problem Solving, Managing Stress Using the Emotional Freedom Technique, Self-Esteem, Managing Your Mood, Healthy Relationships and Dealing with Loss and Introduction to Meditation. There are three series throughout the year (Bridgewater, Liverpool and Chester). See the website or call **(902) 543-4604, extension 2320** for the full schedule.

Another popular program is Auricular (ear) Acupuncture, a relaxation technique helpful with anxiety, depression, sleep problems and other mental health difficulties including addictions. This is also offered free of charge to the public in Bridgewater, Liverpool and Chester. No referral is necessary. See the website or call **(902) 543-4604, extension 2320** for the acupuncture schedule.

## **HEALTH PROMOTION AND PREVENTION**

Our mental health is affected by many things. To be healthy we need exercise, good nutrition, safe communities, supportive workplaces, adequate employment and income, education, housing and social supports. The Mental Health Program works with other community agencies to address these health needs in the community.

For more information please call **(902) 543-4604, extension 2320** or visit the Mental Health website at **[www.mentalhealthsouthshore.ca](http://www.mentalhealthsouthshore.ca)**.

