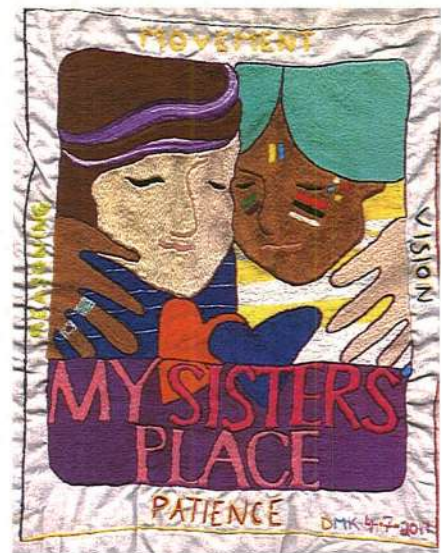


**APPLICATION FOR SUPPORT
FROM THE CITY OF LONDON**

January 17, 2012



My Sisters' Place is a program of WOTCH Community Mental Health Services

My Sisters' Place is a transitional support centre for women who are homeless, at risk of homelessness or street involved. It was borne from the efforts of vibrant and concerned citizens of London, including women of lived experience, who recognized the need for gender specific services for women on the street. Since 2004 we have welcomed women who have complex challenges related to poverty including mental illness, trauma, abuse, addiction and poor health, and offered a wrap-around, trauma-informed approach to recovery. Through a hot meal and access to basic needs we draw women in from the streets and slowly build relationships based upon trust. Eventually, our caring and talented team is able to help women to move along the continuum of supports to regain stability and grow in their recovery process. With over 25 community partners who offer their services through My Sisters' Place we embrace a collaborative approach to building a safe, vibrant community that empowers all its members to participate as valued citizens.

In 2006, My Sisters' Place became a program of WOTCH Community Mental Health Services (WOTCH). With expertise in clinical, rehabilitation and housing services and a strong administrative infrastructure, this was a complementary fit to support the growth of My Sisters' Place. In the beginning, My Sisters' Place opened their doors to 15-20 women a day. Today, we see up to 100 women on any given day. They are the faces of our sisters, daughters, mothers and closest friends. They are women with compelling stories of struggle and loss, courage and triumph. All women who come to My Sisters' Place are offered dignity and respect, celebrated for their strengths and offered hope for recovery.

Now, more than ever, it is important that My Sisters' Place become a sustainable support in the community of London. With unemployment, mental illness, addiction and survival sex work on the rise---the streets have become a complex, dangerous place for women. Simultaneously, we are weathering significant funding cuts and competition for donations and grant funding are at an all-time high. Yet, in this dismal landscape we have been able to stretch our resources and be creative in our service delivery so as to never turn away a single woman who has come to our doorstep.

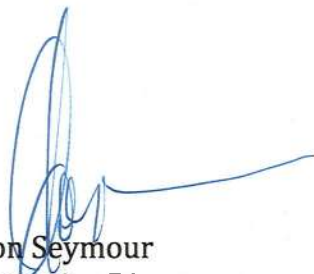
We want to ensure that we can continue to be a safe haven for women of London. To do this, we recognize that now is the time to strengthen our capacity and diversify our funding so that we can provide sustainable community services. Under new leadership WOTCH has declared My Sisters' Place a core service and is advocating through the Local Health Integration Networks for permanent, base budget funding through the Ministry of Health and Long Term Care. WOTCH has also invested in a full time fundraiser with a significant portion of time dedicated to developing a professional fundraising arm for My Sisters' Place. The Micro-Enterprise (M.E.) program, a jewelry enterprise empowering women to realize their potential through running their own business, is generating income for My Sisters' Place and has a waiting list of women who would like to join. All of these factors converge in the midst of a rare opportunity that was inspired by the most generous

gift in the history of My Sisters' Place. Dave and Noreen Bird, Londoners with a passion for the work of My Sisters' Place, purchased the historical Buchan home and revitalized the building to what it is today: a beautiful refuge in the core of London where women can come to feel safe, access help and be offered hope. In their last days before passing, Dave and Noreen shared their vision for a fully accessible and renovated home that meant no woman would ever be turned away. It is their vision, shared by the original founders, all stakeholders, and most importantly, the women of London, to see My Sisters' Place take its rightful place in this community and become a pillar of support to the women who need it most.

We are embarking on an ambitious \$1,000,000 capital campaign to install an elevator, restore the basement and third floor for expanded program use and revitalize the original coach house into a studio and store front for the M.E. Today, we are asking you to consider taking a role in this project with us.

This project represents a new era at My Sisters' Place. It represents significant growth, innovative service delivery and a commitment to strengthen our financial capacity. In the past, we have relied heavily on the support of our friends and community to sustain our existence. We thank you for your continued support, without you we may not have survived. However, it is time to for My Sisters' Place to step up as a significant service provider in this community, leading others into the future and planning for long-range goals.

Your support would be especially meaningful to us. We welcome your insight and thoughts as we take this next leap and hope that you are able to help us reach our goals in a viable, sustainable way.



Don Seymour
Executive Director
WOTCH Community Mental Health Services



Ross Collishaw
Board Chair
WOTCH Community Mental Health Services

My Sisters' Place Capital Campaign: A Campaign for my Sisters

Project Description

Elevator Addition and Installation

In 2005 the Ontario government recognized the importance of an inclusive community when it mandated that all public buildings create an accessibility plan. As a service provider for people who are already marginalized in our community, physical accessibility to our facility is the logical next step. An addition and installation of the elevator would allow access to all parts of the building for women of all abilities. Currently, more than 30% of the women who come to My Sisters' Place are unable to make the climb from the first to the third floor. With the addition of the elevator we are creating access to not only the main and second floor, but following the renovation, the basement and third floor as well.

Renovations to Third Floor and Basement

When the Bird family purchased the Buchan home it was to create a greater space for the growing population that was coming to My Sisters' Place. At that time we were seeing 60 women a day come through our doors. However, we have continued to grow and are now seeing up to 100 women a day. With the main floor being the only barrier-free space we are unable to offer all programs to all women. As well, there have been opportunities for expanded programming that cannot be provided in our limited space. The renovation of the third floor and basement would more than double our accessible space and create new opportunities for growth. The third floor will be renovated to house an onsite Nurse Practitioner clinic and partnership through UWO Faculty of Nursing. As well, we are working in partnership to create a community-based day-time addictions management program that would be offered in the new space.

Coach House Restoration

One of the last remaining original coach houses in London sits behind My Sisters' Place, boarded up and unattended. By revitalizing this building we will be contributing to restoring an important historical building in our community. Once finished, The Coach House will host a large studio space for the artists of the M.E. and offer a store front where the public can come and purchase art and gifts made in the program. The Micro Enterprise is one of our fastest growing programs helping women to regain stability, increase confidence and realize tangible outcomes while generating income to offset the costs of providing important community services.

There is a group of volunteers and donors who have articulated an interest in collaboratively supporting this project. To date they have met over the summer and had structural and artistic drawings created for The Coach House project. The group is actively engaging in fundraising activity, collaborating with the larger

capital campaign over the winter months, with hopes of breaking ground in the spring of 2012.

The Peace Garden

One of the greatest assets of the home where My Sisters' Place resides is the rich and abundant green space that sits in the centre of downtown. Bordered by a wrought iron fence, it is within this space that many women spend their day. On any given day you may witness women having conversations on the lawn, taking time for quiet contemplation, comforting a sister or meeting for a ceremony to honour the life of a woman who has passed. The garden of My Sisters' Place tells an important story about what happens within the gates...it tells the story of community. We see the garden space as an important part of our vision. It offers women who may never have an opportunity to connect with nature a chance to learn about gardening, to grow food, to contribute to the care of a place they consider home and to find peace. As part of this campaign we hope to install an irrigation system, food and flower gardens and a monument to honour women of the street who have passed on. This portion of the project represents a sacred space for women who don't often have an opportunity to smell the roses or sit quietly without fear and danger. As well, it contributes to the façade of My Sister's Place.

My Sisters' Place Capital Campaign: A Campaign for my Sisters

Project Budget:

Expenses:	\$475,000	(Elevator Installation, Including Addition)
	\$150,000	(Renovate the Third Floor)
	\$100,000	(Renovate Basement)
	\$200,000	(Coach House Restoration)
	\$75,000	(Garden Beds, Irrigation and Security)
Revenue:	\$1,000,000	(Fundraising Goal)

My Sisters' Place Current Fundraising Report

2011/2012 (Fundraising For The Period From April 1 - Dec 31)

MSP Capital \$ 169,000

2010/2011 (Fundraising For 12 Month Period)

MSP Capital \$117,000