

**BRIEFING NOTE****FINANCE AND ADMINISTRATIVE SERVICES  
MEETING WITH MPPs****Geriatric Bed Divestitures  
Regional Mental Health Care London****March 2, 2012****Issue:**

The Geriatric Psychiatry Program operating through St. Joseph's Health Care, Regional Mental Health Centre (RMHC) offers inpatient treatment for elderly clients with long term or late onset mental health problems or severe behavioral disturbances<sup>1</sup>. The bed divestiture strategy includes the reduction of beds available for Geriatric Psychiatry from 87 to 42 for beds operated by RMHC and St. Thomas. Seniors are being transferred to long term care facilities.

Seniors experiencing psychiatric issues are a specialized population requiring specialized services that exceed the capacity and mandate of a long term care facility.

The current bed divestiture plan at RMHC is being implemented as part of the 1997 Health Restructuring Commission through a three tier planning approach. Tier 2 refers to the divestment of beds, services, clients and associated resources of in-patient psychiatric beds. By 2014 the bed divestment plan will be complete. Of the 391 beds that operated in London, 156 beds will remain in London and 89 beds are allocated to St. Thomas for a total of 245 beds. A total of 70 beds in London will be closed. All other beds will be transferred from RMHC to Waterloo, Windsor and Hamilton.

**Key Messages:**

- On October 18, 2010, the Executive Director of Community Services, Ross Fair, presented a report to the Community and Protective Services Committee "Towards a Comprehensive Addictions and Mental Health Strategy for Vulnerable Londoners. This report identified that in 2010/2011 there were 87 beds for Geriatric Psychiatry operating at RMHC and St. Thomas.
- In February 2011, RMHC presented their bed divestiture and roll out plan. The presentation included the current patient distribution chart. This report identified that 15 geriatric psychiatry patients had resided at RMHC for greater than 365 days, and that 15 of the remaining 57 were not receiving current treatment and were transferred to Long Term Care (12 transferred to Middlesex, 2 to Essex and 1 to Elgin)
- RMHC has a Geriatric Psychiatry Discharge Liaison Team that prepares and assists in the transfer and transition of a patient. The Liaison team provides only initial and not ongoing support.
- Long Term Care homes including Dearness Home continue to receive inappropriate applications and admissions that exceed the scope, mandate and resources of the long term care facilities. Challenges to date include assessment and background outlining the extreme psychiatric and behavioral challenges of the resident information not being fully released. This has resulted in significant disruption to other residents, their families and staff; increased use of emergency services including police and ambulance, and emergency department admissions; and disruption to the affected and existing resident. At times, and if a bed is available patients are readmitted to RMHC. In addition, individuals have been admitted with unmanageable, aggressive and territorial behaviors, violent tendencies and inappropriate sexual behaviors. Beds are

<sup>1</sup> [www.sjhc.london.on.ca](http://www.sjhc.london.on.ca) Rehabilitation and Specialized Geriatric Facts and Stats, accessed 2/10/2012



rarely available at RMHC despite confirmation by professionals that more active psychiatric treatment is required.

The move toward de-institutionalization of patients in psychiatric facilities to the community is seen as a positive and successful direction. However, there is evidence describing how some individuals and their specific problems make them difficult to successfully relocate in the community. In general, this is characterized by long-stay patients with severe and persistent mental illness and includes seniors with a range of diagnoses. Long-stay patients often have long histories of hospital admissions and lack social support networks or families who accept and advocate for them<sup>2</sup>

### **BACKGROUND**

- Tier 1- transfer of regional facilities London Psychiatric Hospital and St. Thomas Psychiatric Hospital governance and management to St. Joseph's Health Care. This was completed in 2001.
  
- Tier 2 – divestment and closure of the reduction of beds, services, clients and resources. – London's is implementing its three year plan on bed closure
  - 2011/12 - 21 closures
  - 2012/13 – 14 closures
  - 2013/14 – 35 closures
  
- Tier 3 – concurrent investment in the community through the SW LHIN System Capacity Planning. This is the ongoing investment in community programs and the process to provide ongoing support to individuals discharged from RMHC in non bedded services.

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<sup>2</sup> “From Hospital to Home; The Transitioning of Alternative Level of Care and Lon-stay Mental Health Clients”, Centre for Addiction and Mental Health, September 2009