



Addiction & Mental Health Services | services de lutte contre les dépendances et de santé mentale
Kingston Frontenac Lennox & Addington

Memo/Note

Date May 24, 2019 (Update to May 7th Memo #1)
To/Destinataire AMHS-KFLA Partners
From/De Karen Berti, Supervisor
Subject/Sujet Transformation Update

As AMHS-KFLA continues to implement a number of important changes, we want to ensure you receive accurate and up-to-date information – valuable information that you may need to support your staff.

It is important that you reach out to me directly if you have any questions as to changes underway. I am committed to getting you the information you need and have been meeting directly with partners.

Your support, patience and trust are important to me, our care team and the clients we serve. Our guiding principle for all changes being considered and implemented is that our transformation supports our clients first and foremost.

In follow-up to the partner memo distributed on May 7th, please read the following to assist in addressing misinformation and update you on recruitment and our housing program.

Addressing Misinformation

Budget

Are changes at AMHS-KFLA occurring due to budget cuts?

No. AMHS-KFLA has had no cut to its budget. Changes we are making are aligning more dollars from our existing budget to direct client care and an expansion of our workforce that will result in greater outreach to our rural communities.

As shared in the May 7th partner memo, AMHS-KFLA has historically not kept pace with advancements in addictions and mental health care and offered a broad range of services that are more appropriately provided by other community partners. As a result, AMHS-KFLA was unable to be responsive to the needs of a growing number of people

experiencing mental health and addictions challenges, many who have been waiting several years for the right kind of care.

Consultation

How are changes being informed?

Broad and extensive consultations have and continue to occur as transformation plans are implemented over the next six months. All changes have been informed in part by the Investigator's Report (September 2018) initiated by the South East Local Health Integration Network (South East LHIN). The report indicated that the agency had drifted from its mission and was no longer delivering on its mandate.

A transformation team is in place. We continue to meet with partners to consult on opportunities to embed staff where they have the greatest opportunity to connect with clients across our communities to ensure timely access to programs and services, and enable appropriate client diversion from interactions with police, court services, emergency departments visits and unnecessary hospitalizations.

Staffing

How are you expanding services when you have laid off staff?

While we have some exceptional staff, our clinical care models needed to evolve to include a greater number of regulated roles. Our workforce changes have impacted union (OPSEU Local 489) non-union and management roles which no longer supported our refocused programs and services.

As you may be aware, we are hiring over 50 new roles of which 45 are union (OPSEU) positions. We are able to do this through redirecting existing dollars to client care.

I am pleased to share that we have received over **370 job applications** and welcome all partners to support spreading the news of opportunities with our care team. A poster about careers with AMHS-KFLA has been attached for your use and distribution.

Overall, we are adding more regulated health professionals (such as Registered Nurses, Nurse Practitioners and Psychiatrists), expanding teams with addictions counselling and therapy providers, and will be introducing new Peer Navigators, which will bring individuals with lived experience to our staff team.

Housing

Will your housing changes put tenants at risk of being homeless?

In no way do the changes being implemented leave any tenant homeless. In fact, for clients that need wrap-around care (24 hours a day/7 days a week), we are supporting their transition from a group home setting to a newly renovated, customized building.

We are preparing a detailed update on our housing plans that will be shared with partners in the coming week. In the meantime, please note the following:

Administrative Buildings: AMHS-KFLA will sell two administrative (non-client/tenant) buildings in Kingston. These are empty buildings that have never been used as a residence. We have relocated all Kingston area office-based services to our 552 Princess Street Location.

Housing and Office Locations in Napanee: There are no plans to sell any of our buildings in Napanee.

John Street, Albert Street and West Street: These buildings house clients we serve. They are houses that have been converted group homes and do not best support our client's recovery journey. These clients will all be moving to 35 Lyons Street and John, Albert and West Street properties will be sold after all clients have moved and the buildings are vacant.

NEW Opening 35 Lyons Street - Specialized Rehabilitation**

We are very excited about the renovations taking place at 35 Lyons Street which will soon be accessible to clients we serve that need specialized rehabilitative supports.

As clients and their families plan for the move to 35 Lyons, we are supporting their transition needs and have engaged them in personalizing their space through the selection of household items such as bedding and towels.

We are adding housing stock for clients. This four-story building has 43 independent apartments. Overall this build increases future access to 18 more units for clients with severe mental illness. The building has been designed to include all safety, security and accessibility supports and enables staff to be centralized in one location versus three.

35 Lyons will be staffed with an interprofessional care team that will provide wrap around service (24 hours a day/7 days a week).

AMHS-KFLA is committed to supporting efforts by the City of Kingston and housing partners to maintain, and where possible, create affordable housing stock.

AMHS-KFLA does have properties in the Kingston area where we operate as a landlord. We are looking to partner with those interested in operating as a landlord so we can focus on direct-client care.

While we will start to explore opportunities to transition from being a landlord for some properties, there is no urgency or set timeline to this.

We will be undergoing thoughtful, direct conversations with partners interested in ensuring these buildings remain as affordable housing stock. AMHS-KFLA will not proceed to sell them if we do not have a guarantee of housing continuity for existing tenants.

Next Steps

We will be sending out weekly partner updates to keep you informed of our progress.

More information on our overall housing plan will be shared with partners in the coming week and great progress is being made on a new centralized intake and booking process.

Starting the week of May 27th clients, families and partners will notice new staff at our Napanee office reception, and partner conversations are ongoing as we refine the future state design of some of our programs and services.

Ongoing Communications

At a time when we are seeing a lot of miscommunication, which could be distressing to clients and their families, the following is provided to assist you in accessing various information or reaching a member of our care team.

To set a meeting or call with Karen Berti, contact Debbie Jones, Acting Executive Assistant via djones@amhs-kfla.ca or 1-613-544-3554

To connect with a member of our care team, call the main office at 613-544-1356 Monday to Friday 8:30 a.m. to 4:30 p.m.

To access the current message to clients, families and care partners, click [here](#)

To view AMHS-KFLA externally posted careers, click [here](#)

Submit questions related to changes via info@amhs-kfla.ca

Reach the Communication Team's general mailbox at 613-544-9210

As a valued care partner, thank you for your patience and support as we work to enhance clinical models of care across our region.