

2018 Annual Report
Home on the Hill

Introduction

This report gives a synopsis of Home on the Hill activities in 2018.

Developing a Strategic Plan.

Home on the Hill was accepted for pro bono consulting by the non profit organization, Endeavour Executive which completed an extensive review over the Spring and Summer of 2018. They assessed Home on the Hill by collecting and analyzing data from its clients, caregivers and professionals who interact with our organization, as well as interviews with Board members. This organization suggested revisions to existing vision, mission and principles statements – as a starting point to work from.

Accordingly, our new Vision, Mission and Guiding Principles are as follows:

Vision:

To facilitate systemic change by recognizing that mental health needs will never be addressed completely without the inclusion of family and friends who care.

Mission:

To provide an inclusive circle of supportive care, education and respite for families and their loved ones affected by serious mental illness living in our community.

Principles:

To be authentic in empowering those we serve -different clients have different needs.

To be engaged in fostering a sense of community and integration.

To offer information transparently and balance this with a need for client and regulatory confidentiality.

To provide a respite environment for growing, learning and sharing.

The extensive review by Endeavour Executive gave the organization insight into the needs which we were serving in the community. The Robert Veltheer Lecture Series was found to be important for Home on the Hill visibility in the community (as confirmed by Professionals who believe that Home on the Hill is best recognized for its lectures), which is acknowledged by Board members to support the long-term vision of success. The question and answer session following the lecture provides a unique opportunity, according to the report, for family members and those with mental illness to access the opinions of an expert in the field.

Tyler Scott a team member from Endeavour has volunteered to attend a board meeting to teach us how to monitor our programs for future funding purposes.

Home Matters

Under the leadership of former Board Director, Liana Sikharulidze , Home on the Hill submitted a well researched and detailed funding proposal to the Central LHIN. The proposal demonstrated the need for a family model of care and documented examples of gaps in our current system and how our organization was already addressing these gaps in our community. This proposal was supported by MPP Reza Moridi. The proposal was received favourably by LHIN CEO Kim Baker. Unfortunately, we were told that there was no funding available for this initiative.

Current Home on the Hill Programs

1. The Robert Veltheer Lecture Series on Serious Mental Illness.

Home on the Hill sponsored three lecture events this year. A recommendation of Endeavour Executive was to have four quarterly events each year so we will adjust the number our future lecture events accordingly. In 2018, the Home on the Hill Robert Veltheer Series screened the documentary “Pushback” about homelessness in the Peterborough area. The screening was followed by a panel discussion on homelessness. Panel members were from Loft Crosslinks Outreach Program, the Krasman Centre, and Ve’ahavta. We were honoured that MPP Reza Moridi also was a panel member. This event took place at the Plaza Suite, the Richmond Hill Centre for Performing Arts, 10268 Yonge Street, at 7pm, Wednesday, February 7th, 2018.

On April 24, Psychiatrist Dr. Kamran Bordbar gave a presentation on ADHD as well as co-morbidities such as mood and anxiety. This presentation was followed by a question and answer period. Many professionals from the school boards came. This event took place at the Parya Centre at 344 John St, Thornhill at 7pm April 24/2018.

On November 6th, Home on the Hill hosted a lecture event with psychologist, Dr. Lori Triano. The title was “Grieving the Losses of those affected by serious mental illness”. Many families that have been affected came to this event. In addition, Richmond Hill Councillors Karen Cilevitz, who gave a warm introduction to the evening, and David West were present. MP for Richmond Hill, Majid Jowhari also attended and gave an impassioned speech asking people to support Home on the Hill. Local expert on the topic of grief, Eleanor Silverberg introduced the speaker with a knowledge based sensitivity and respect for such a profound topic. There are thoughts about following up from this presentation as the evaluations indicated a need for knowledge of specific strategies to address grief. A video of Dr. Triano’s presentation can be seen on the Robert Veltheer Lecture Series page.

2. Supportive Housing Program. Since November 2016, Home on the Hill has one tenant at the Richmond Hill Hub who receives ongoing support and assistance from Home on the Hill and takes part in our cooking class, and recreational programming. This began as a pilot project and this experience helps us understand the needs of future Home on the Hill tenants. His tenancy is enhanced by the presence of his parents who are always made welcome by Home on the Hill. His mother takes part in our Art Expression program and from this also receives support. Home on the Hill is also on the waitlist to receive another unit from Richmond Hill Ecumenical Homes.

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3. The Cook Group We run a Soup's On Program at St. Mary's Anglican Church where seniors and others receive a lunch cooked by our clients. The original goal of the program is to support our current tenant by providing education about meal preparation as well as other clients who may be future tenants. This event is also an opportunity for clients to gain self esteem and to promote inter-generational relationships. A lifeskills coach works with clients who are taught hygiene, cooking skills, budgeting and nutrition.

4. The Art Therapy Program. A qualified art therapist runs a weekly program with clients who because of their disability are difficult to engage. This program has been beneficial for those individuals whose sense of well being and self worth have been improved which has enhanced their interpersonal skills.

5. Art Expression through Painting. This program is run by a volunteer who is a popular artist from the Richmond Hill Group of Artists. This is not an art therapy program. It offers an opportunity for people to relax and enjoy expressing themselves through painting. It takes place in Covernotes in Richmond Hill. Caregivers and others affected by mental illness are welcome.

6. Music Jamming. The members of this group have been challenged by mental illness. This program is currently closed but will continue in the future.

7. Family Support Group . This group takes place on alternate Wednesdays. It is run by a Family Caregiver and a registered psycho therapist. It offers a place where participants can express their concerns in a safe confidential environment.

8. Family Respite Program. This program is becoming increasingly popular. Caregivers value getting together for recreational outings with others who are experiencing the same struggles. They like getting together and forgetting their concerns for a little while. Caregivers have met for breakfast at What a Bagel on several occasions. Plans are underway to have a dinner and theatre evening in the New Year.

Outreach

Home on the Hill is the invited participant of the York Region community resiliency table. Board Director, Paul Scotland represents us with this organization and attended a related conference this summer in Hamilton. Board Director, Jonathan Nadler will be representing Home on the Hill in future planning and coordination of Headstrong in Richmond Hill/York Region. This is an initiative of the Mental Health Commission of Canada.

Social Media

Home on the Hill has a wide audience that follows our facebook and reads pertinent articles on serious mental illness, access to services, and other issues of real concern to families of those affected by serious mental illness. The Home on the Hill website also contains relevant information. We also have a twitter account.

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Funding.

Home on the Hill thanks the families and other members of the public who have sent cheques by mail, or contributed by donations at our public events. Each of these contributions are received with much gratitude.

Home on the Hill is delighted to announce that our organization will be receiving funding from Bingo World Richmond Hill. We are required to provide volunteers to staff Bingo events by welcoming customers and performing light clean up tasks. This funding will enable us to hire staff for our programs.

Our organization has also been the successful applicant of funding from the Town of Richmond Hill for which we are most grateful. We will be the proud recipients of a grant from Councillor Cilevitz' Summer Music Festival.

Home on the Hill is the grateful recipient of funding from St. Mary's Anglican Church Christmas Bazaar, the Richmond Hill Presbyterian Church Community Breakfast Program and St. Matthews United Church.

Home on the Hill is delighted that the Richmond Hill Lawn Bowling Club is sponsoring a fundraising event called "Lawn Bowling with a Goal" at their club on Sunday July 7th 2019 . This will be a fun day of lawn bowling, food and entertainment.

Home on the Hill has been the successful recipient of funding from the Canada Summer Jobs Program. In 2018, Home on the Hill in partnership with St. Mary's Anglican Church hired a student to help with social media.