

Ontario Trillium Foundation Grant Brings Art Programs to Youth Living with Mental Illness

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

1 February 2018

(Oakville, ON) – On Thursday, February 1st, the Ontario Trillium Foundation presented Oakville Galleries with a plaque in recognition of funding for *Art-ish*, a new visual arts program for youth living with mental illness, delivered in partnership with Halton Healthcare.

The Hon. Kevin Flynn, MPP for Oakville and Mark Egbedeyi-Emmanuel, the Chair of Ontario Trillium Foundation's Halton-Peel Grant Review Team were on hand to congratulate Oakville Galleries and hear more about the project. The one-year pilot program, funded with a \$63,800 Seed grant from the Ontario Trillium Foundation, sees Oakville Galleries delivering weekly hands-on art programs to youth living with mental illness at the Oakville Trafalgar Memorial Hospital.

"Ending the stigma and raising awareness of the mental health challenges of our neighbours, families and friends here in Oakville and across the province has long been and continues to be a personal mission for me. This Ontario Trillium Foundation Seed funding grant for Oakville Galleries' weekly arts therapy pilot program for adolescents and teens with mental health challenges is being delivered right here at Oakville Trafalgar Memorial Hospital, whose mission is to to deliver exemplary service and care for the whole patient—body, mind and spirit." — Kevin Flynn, MPP for Oakville

Through the program, youth in Halton Healthcare's Child and Adolescent Psychiatric Inpatient Service (CAPIS) and Recovery Through Education for Adolescents and Children of Halton (REACH) programs now have access to weekly art workshops that include both discussing and making art. Led by art teacher Lindsay Rett, and professional art therapist Brianna Kestle, weekly workshops feature a range of art-making activities, ranging from traditional to digital, that foster healthy self-expression and establish positive self-identities.

"Integrating high-quality visual arts experiences into Halton Healthcare's mental health services is a dream come true, continuing Oakville Galleries' ongoing efforts to bring art to those parts of our community where it's needed most," said Elizabeth Underhill, Education Officer at Oakville Galleries. "We are seeing firsthand that discussing and making art has great benefits for the well-being of patients, including increased self-confidence, empowerment and social engagement."

"We know that art inside the hospital provides comfort, inspiration and joy and can help in healing or reducing stress. Art therapy is one approach that has proven to benefit both mental and physical health," said Denise Hardenne, Halton Healthcare President & CEO. "Thank you to our partners at the Ontario Trillium Foundation, Oakville Galleries and the OTMH Art Council for their support of this initiative to bring art therapy to our mental health programs and for helping us transform the community hospital experience."

The Ontario Trillium Foundation (OTF) is an agency of the Government of Ontario, and one of Canada's largest granting foundations. With a budget of over \$136 million, OTF awards grants to some 1,000 projects every year to build healthy and vibrant Ontario communities. For more information, please visit www.otf.ca.

ABOUT HALTON HEALTHCARE

Halton Healthcare is a healthcare organization comprised of three community hospitals—Georgetown Hospital, Milton District Hospital and Oakville Trafalgar Memorial Hospital. Together these hospitals provide healthcare services to more than 350,000 residents in the communities of Halton Hills, Milton and Oakville. Halton Healthcare hospitals have been recognized for their best practices in a number of patient safety and patient care initiatives. For more information, visit www.haltonhealthcare.com. Follow us on Twitter @HaltonHlthcare and Facebook.

ABOUT OAKVILLE GALLERIES

Oakville Galleries is a not-for-profit contemporary art museum. Housed in two spaces—one alongside a public library in downtown Oakville, and another in a lakeside mansion and park—Oakville Galleries is one of Canada's leading art museums, driven by a belief in the singular power of art and artists to deepen our understanding of ourselves and our communities and move us toward a better world. For more information about Oakville Galleries, our exhibitions or programs, please visit www.oakvillegalleries.com or call 905.844.4402.

For more information, please contact:

Victoria Arbour
Communications Coordinator
905.844.4402 x28
victoria@oakvillegalleries.com

Emma Murphy, Interim Manager, Communications and Public Affairs
Halton Healthcare
905-845-2571 ext. 4586
Cell: 289-218-7413
emurphy@haltonhealthcare.com