



Fueled by Another \$100,000 in Donor Funding, St. Joe's Mobile Mental Health Clinic Keeps Rolling

New funding from SC Johnson and Alectra Inc. will enable the mobile clinic to continue to run into spring of 2024.

A mobile clinic on wheels that first hit the road to deliver essential mental health care to St. Joe's patients during the peak of the COVID-19 pandemic continues to roll thanks to two recent donations from local corporations.

In the summer of 2020, the Mental Health and Addictions Program team scraped together funding to create a mobile clinic as an innovative way to ensure clients of the Hospital's [Schizophrenia Outpatient Clinic](#), [Transitional Outpatient Program of Schizophrenia Service](#), [Cleghorn Early Intervention Clinic](#), and [Hamilton Assertive Community Treatment Teams](#) could continue to receive essential treatment while simultaneously reducing foot traffic into the Hospital to slow the spread of COVID-19.

Originally, the pilot project had funding to operate for just 10 weeks. But after seeing and reporting back on its impact, Hamilton Community Foundation made and facilitated two donations totaling \$100,000 in 2020, and when those gifts were coupled with another \$10,000 anonymous gift, the mobile service had enough funding to continue its outreach into the community into the summer of 2021.

Over time, the clinical team realized that bringing mental health care to the doorsteps of clients helps them to maintain their treatment schedule. The mobile clinic has also helped break down common barriers to care by serving patients in remote areas, reducing the need for transit to and from appointments, and offering a number of services together under one roof to address varying health concerns that can often be associated with mental illness.

But although the mobile clinic has become vital to the care St. Joe's delivers as the leading provider of mental health services in the region, and the second largest in Ontario, it's not something that's funded by provincial operating dollars. That's why the Hospital relies on community support to continue fueling the successful program.

Recently, \$100,000 in donations from two local corporations has provided the funding needed to keep the mobile mental health van rolling until spring of 2024. SC Johnson, a Brantford-based manufacturer of household favourites like Glade®, OFF!®, Windex® and more has committed \$75,000 to the program while local electricity provider Alectra Inc. has donated \$25,000.

"This is a great example of a solution that was born out of necessity during the pandemic but has proven to be so successful that we hope to continue offering this mobile service long after the pandemic has stabilized," says Alycia Gillespie, manager of the Hospital's Schizophrenia Outpatient Program. "We're so grateful that our donors and supporters recognize how important this program is to sustaining the mental health of our community."

St. Joe's mobile clinic is staffed by a compassionate team of nurses and other specialty care providers equipped to provide health assessments, bloodwork and medication to patients in their own communities. Since first launching, it has supported about 225 patients living in Hamilton and surrounding areas, including in Niagara, Halton, and Brantford, with nearly 1,200 mobile visits annually.

"We couldn't be more grateful to both SC Johnson and Alectra Inc. for helping us keep the mobile mental health clinic on the road, and for strengthening St. Joe's ability to serve some of the Hospital's most vulnerable patients," says Sera Filice-Armenio, President and CEO, St. Joseph's Healthcare Foundation. "This mobile clinic plays an important role in supporting healthier outcomes for those who live with mental illness, while also reducing disparities in healthcare by providing easy access to care, closer to home."