

# Please Help Us to Help our Community

Dear Neighbour:

We are the future that Health Minister Deb Matthews likes to talk about.

At Frontenac Community Mental Health and Addiction Services we are the front line staff that provides a continuum of mental health and addiction services in the Kingston community and beyond.

The problem is that while the government talks a good line about their vision of community care, the funding is not flowing to make possible the job that needs to be done. If these services are not being delivered here, you can be sure that other more inappropriate and costly services are being called upon.

More untreated individuals on our streets impacts everyone. Its more calls to the police. More time spent in the hospital emergency room and more calls to emergency medical services.

When services are cut at the Providence Care's psychiatric hospital, we're supposed to pick up the pieces in the community. That's what politicians like Deb Matthews and John Gerretsen have been telling the media.

Last year the province gave Frontenac \$11.4 million in base funding. Despite downsizing at Providence Care, this year it will be \$11.3 million.

That means more pressure on front line staff to deal with patients with more complex mental health needs.

We are presently bargaining our next contract with our employer. We don't make a lot of money, but have already made sacrifices to fight the provincial deficit. Those sacrifices include having to do with less for our own families.

This time we were counting upon our employer to come to the bargaining table with an offer that would allow us to focus on our jobs and not on how to make our own ends meet, especially in the run up to the holiday season.

They tell us an increase that reflects the rising cost of living would mean fewer staff. Fewer staff means greater workload and fewer services for those who desperately need them.

This is simply not a sustainable model.

The sacrifices they are asking us again to make are not those that even our own managers are willing to accept.

We would urge you to support us to support our community members in need.

We would ask you to contact MPP John Gerretsen and tell him the government needs to live up to its commitments around funding community care.

We thank you in advance for your assistance.

**OPSEU Local 489**

Frontenac Community Mental Health Services



**Tell MPP John Gerretsen the government needs to live up to its commitments around funding community care.**

**John Gerretsen, MPP**

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