

GRAND ROUNDS

Kim MacLeod knows she has really big shoes to fill after the retirement of Ron Parker from the Addictions Treatment Service (ATS), yet she is prepared, passionate about her line of work and well qualified to take over his position as the director of the county-wide service.

She has been a full-time addictions counsellor with ATS for almost 13 years.

“It has been a long-time goal of mine to take on this position,” she notes, adding that it did take much discussion with her family and colleagues before she applied. “They all gave me their full support and it has been a very smooth transition.”

In fact, it was Parker, who recently retired after 25 years with RVH, who encouraged her to take advantage of the opportunity. She took over on March 1 of this year.

“I’ve learned a lot from him over the years and I want to continue in the same vein he started with, which is very client-centred and focused on bringing down the barriers associated with addictions and gambling.”

ATS was established in 1979 and received the official sponsorship of RVH in 1986. The program provides confidential assistance to individuals 12 years of age or older who are experiencing problems with alcohol, drugs or gambling. Help

is also available to friends and family who have a loved one struggling with substance abuse and/or gambling difficulties, explains MacLeod.

Currently they see approximately 400 clients per year from Renfrew County. Service activities to clients include entry and intake, comprehensive assessment, mutually negotiated treatment plans, referrals, case management and brief out-patient addiction therapy. This can be offered in an individual or group format. In addition, the ATS coordinates its efforts with other addictions services at local and provincial levels and participates in community-based public education and prevention programs.

The current staff compliment has close to 100 years of experience providing front-line community-based treatment. They provide these services through six locations in Renfrew County: Renfrew, Pembroke, Arnprior, Deep River, Eganville and Barry’s Bay.

All intakes are processed through the main office which is located on the RVH campus at 510 Raglan Street North in Renfrew.

Any individual can make a referral to the ATS Program, such as self-referral, family members, physicians, employers, lawyers and staff of other community social agencies. All third-party referrals are asked to

ensure their client is aware of the nature of the referral and is agreeable to attending as it is a voluntary service.

MacLeod says her team of professionals provides an emphatic, non-judgemental, harm-reduction approach to treatment of individuals or family members who struggle with substance abuse or gambling difficulties in their lives.

“We begin by assessing each client’s needs and refer them to the right level of professional care. A trained counsellor first conducts an assessment to determine how alcohol, drugs or gambling is affecting the client’s overall quality of life. Then the counsellor and client work together to develop an individualized treatment plan that may include referral to treatment services or other community resources locally or within the province of Ontario.”

We are an active member of the Renfrew County Addictions Treatment System, the Women’s Addictions Treatment Centre Committee, and the Madawaska Valley Communities Health Integration Group. We have partnerships with the Renfrew County Catholic District School Board, the Pembroke Regional Hospital, The Royal Ottawa Mental Health Centre and many others.

“As a program, we will strive to build on our present partnerships, to be part of new opportunities, and to increase ease and accessibility for clients to addictions treatment services in Renfrew County.”

Help is always only a phone call away, contact us at 613-432-9855 or 1-800-265-0197. Regular office hours are weekdays from 9 a.m. to 4 p.m. or leave a message and someone will promptly return your phone call.



The Addiction Treatment Services team: Kim MacLeod (seated), with Mandy Afelskie, Maarit Ikavalko, Patrick McHugh, Eileen Rogers and Barb Scott.