

June 2, 2014

Update from the Mid East Toronto Health Link Integrated Service Coordination Team (ISCT):

We are excited to announce that FOCUS, the METHL Integrated Service Coordination Team, is now actively accepting clients for care. This announcement includes the information needed for making a referral to the FOCUS Team.

Eligibility criteria for the program have been developed in partnership with the Toronto Central LHIN and the South Toronto Link Team (see attached FOCUS Team Eligibility Criteria). To ensure equitable access to care, all new clients will be assessed for eligibility using these criteria regardless of the referral source.

While working on implementation of coordinated access to the team a small number of new clients who meet the eligibility criteria have been referred via the St Michael's Hospital Central Intake system.

At this point we are happy to announce that The Access Point (formerly known as Access1) will accept applications, screen and process referrals to the team.

Who will be able refer to the team?

There are no restrictions on referral sources, whether from primary care, community or hospital.

Who should you refer to the team?

As per the eligibility criteria, adults, within the catchment area, who have serious mental health problems that significantly impair their functioning in community living, make frequent use of hospital, have a range of challenges that demonstrate complexity, and have a high level of service need. The FOCUS team is not able to safely support individuals who have been assessed as requiring admission to a medically monitored/supervised institutional or residential setting.

What should you do if you have a client you believe may qualify for this program?

Please call The Access Point at 416-640-1934 to obtain an application form. Once the application form is submitted, The Access Point will screen the client for eligibility; if the client meets the attached eligibility criteria, the referral will be sent to FOCUS.

What will happen if the client qualifies?

When The Access Point refers the client to FOCUS, we will initiate service right away. Please note that while we aim for a very rapid turnaround time, there will likely be times when pace of intake has to be managed and, so, may not be immediate. In addition to working with the client, our team will work with providers identified by the client as part of their care circle to support the development of a coordinated care plan.

What will happen if the client does not qualify for the team?

If the client requires case management supports, The Access Point will continue to process the application for other service providers and if eligible, put the client on the waitlist for those other services. METHL, FOCUS, and other partners are working together to identify opportunities for short term supports for clients whose level of service need is not high enough for the FOCUS Team, but who are nonetheless complex and waiting for other levels of service to become available (i.e. case management). Please look for future announcements from METHL.

FOCUS Team Eligibility Criteria

The FOCUS team has been developed to support people who:

1. Are experiencing current **serious mental health** problems that significantly impair their ability to function and live well within the community. Typically, challenges with functioning would be demonstrated by significant difficulty in being able to consistently perform the range of activities of daily living required for successful personal functioning in the community (e.g., caring for personal affairs; obtaining medical, legal, and housing services; recognizing and avoiding common dangers or hazards, meeting nutritional needs; maintaining personal hygiene; maintaining employment or carrying out the homemaker role).

And

2. Are 18 – 65 years old (in exceptional cases an older adult may be considered)

And

3. Are not currently served by an assertive community treatment (ACT) team.

And

4. Are residing in the Mid-East Toronto Health Link (METHL), or, are using acute care services at St. Michael's Hospital (SMH) and living within the SMH catchment area

And

5. Have experienced two or more psychiatric hospitalizations in the past two years, or, recurrent use of the emergency department (> 5 visits in the past 12 months) for mental health problems.

And

6. Exhibit a minimum of **two** of the following:

- Significant challenges in being able to consistently maintain a safe living situation (e.g., repeated evictions or loss of housing).
- An acute and/or chronic medical illness which requires intensive support (e.g. chronically bedridden, homebound, terminal illness, severe mobility limitations, unstable medical condition) and difficulty effectively utilizing traditional office-based out-patient services.
- A coexisting substance use disorder of greater than 6 months duration
- Criminal justice involvement in the context of mental health and addictions problems in the past year

And

7. Have been assessed as being able to be safely supported by the FOCUS team, within the limitations of the resources available. Please note that the FOCUS team is not able to safely support individuals who have been assessed as requiring an admission to a medically monitored/supervised institutional or residential setting.