

**For Immediate Release
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CHANTEL'S PLACE PROVIDES A SAFE HAVEN FOR SURVIVORS OF DOMESTIC VIOLENCE AND SEXUAL ASSAULT

(Mississauga, ON) – Survivors of sexual assault and/or domestic violence are one step closer to rebuilding their lives, thanks to the qualified staff at Chantel's Place, Trillium Health Partners' Sexual Assault and Domestic Violence Services. Chantel's Place is one of the first programs in Ontario that addresses the psychosocial, legal, medical and forensic needs of survivors and their support persons.

"A client who is sexually assaulted or a victim of domestic violence has their control taken away from them, and it is our role to give them back their control by helping them make treatment choices that fit their needs," says Mary Addison, a social worker at Chantel's Place and a recent award recipient from the Faculty of Physical Therapy, Faculty of Medicine, University of Toronto, for her work in the area of domestic violence.

The medical and counselling programs at Chantel's Place provide an understanding of trauma and operate within a framework of values that meets the survivors' individual needs. Services are offered in a unique setting that provides separate rooms for medical examinations, counselling and/or police interviews in a welcoming, comfortable and child-friendly environment.

"Because of the myths regarding sexual assault and domestic violence, clients may be reluctant to report to the police, family or medical staff, and therefore try to handle this trauma on their own," says Addison. "It is critical for family, police or other community members to refer clients to the hospital so he/she feels validated and supported by both the medical and counselling staff."

"Chantel's Place is one of the many important services we offer for the men, women and children in our community," says Alison Quigley, Associate Vice President, Patient Care Services. "Trillium Health Partners is fortunate to have a strong and dedicated team of experts to ensure that the diverse needs of survivors and their supports are met every day."

As of March 2014, Chantel's Place will have supported more than 3,000 clients since its inception in 1998.

For more information about Chantel's Place, visit
<http://trilliumhealthpartners.ca/patientservices/womens/Pages/Chantels-Place.aspx>

Ontario Women's Directorate facts about domestic and sexual violence

- Spousal violence has been consistently identified as one of the most common forms of violence against women in Canada
- Four in 10 women victimized by their spouse report being physically injured (42%), more than twice the proportion of male victims (18%) (2009)
- Less than one-third (30%) of female spousal violence victims state that the incident was reported to police (2009), down from 36% in 2004
- A one-day snapshot survey found 3,459 residents in Ontario shelters offering services to abused women. 54% of these residents were women, while 46% were dependent children. 74% of women were there primarily because of abuse (2010)
- Among female clients who turn to victims' services because they have experienced violent crime, 35% are seeking help for a crime that is sexual in nature (2009-2010)
- There were 7,979 police-reported sexual assaults in Ontario in 2012
- Women may not report because they fear they will not be believed, feel ashamed, blame themselves, or fear public scrutiny
- May is Sexual Assault Prevention month in Ontario. For more information about what the Ontario government is doing for women in Ontario, visit www.women.gov.on.ca

About Trillium Health Partners

Trillium Health Partners is one of the largest community-based, acute care facilities in Canada. Comprised of Credit Valley Hospital, Mississauga Hospital and Queensway Health Centre. Trillium Health Partners serves the growing and diverse populations of Mississauga, West Toronto and surrounding communities. Trillium Health Partners is a teaching hospital affiliated with the University of Toronto. Trillium Health Partners is an associate member of the Toronto Academic Health Science Network.

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