

Mobile clinic will help Addiction Services meet people where they are



A new mobile unit will be a game-changer for Addiction Services Central Ontario and the clients they serve in York Region and South Simcoe.

Addiction Services of York Region formally launched their new Mobile Rapid Access Addiction Medicine (RAAM) Clinic at their Aurora headquarters on Monday afternoon. RAAM will allow them to provide quicker and more efficient services to clients in the area.

The RAAM Clinic is funded by Ontario Health and is aimed at bringing addictions medicine, counselling, case management, and harm reduction support directly to youth and adults who need it most.

Penny Marrett, Executive Director of Addiction Services Central Ontario, says this will help eliminate further barriers to care.

"The van and the mobile clinic is going to help us serve individuals who have a harder time coming to our rapid access addiction medicine clinics that are actually in hospitals and pharmacies," says Marrett. "It is really important for us to be going to where the people are located versus them coming to us all the time. It's hard here in York Region and South Simcoe to always, if you don't have a car, come to where the service is being provided, so this enables us to go to where they want us to be."

Those who are looking to connect with the RAAM Clinic and the highly-qualified staff who lead it can be referred by community agencies, primary care providers, and even on a self-referral by simply making a telephone call or visiting helpwithaddictions.ca.

On-board services include addictions medicine, case management, referral to peer support and/or addictions counselling, and even just as an information resource. Staff include a team of professionals, including a nurse practitioner, registered practical nurse, case manager, addiction counsellor and peer support. Clients can speak directly with an addiction professional about their recovery journey, receive advice on treatment options, and learn about support services.

"As a trusted provider of addiction services for over 40 years, ASCO is committed to breaking down barriers to care," says Marrett. "We are grateful to Ontario Health for their support in making this initiative a reality. The launch of this mobile clinic will allow us to expand our reach, bringing vital support directly to those who may not have had access otherwise, ensuring that no one is left behind in their path to recovery."

"In the end, many people think that lots of people can come to where you are and where you're located, wherever it is in the community. The truth of the matter is it doesn't always happen. It's not always easy to do that; either you can't get transportation to

where the location is, or the hours are different. In the end, this is also recognizing that not everybody has the same capacity to get to where you're located. From our perspective, it's about how best we serve people. We serve people best when we go where they are located when they need us.?

For more information on the Mobile RAAM Clinic schedule or to contact the team, visit the website listed above or call 1-833-627-RAAM (7226).

By Brock Weir