

## Providence Care welcomes postgraduate residents in first provincial Mental Health Nursing Residency Program

**(KINGSTON, ONT. – September 4, 2008)** -- Nursing residency students at Providence Care who are considering specializing in mental health will get an official welcome from Ontario's Chief Nursing Officer Vanessa Burkoski tomorrow, during a special ceremony to launch the new Mental Health Nursing Residency Program.

"We want to help new nurses with their transition to this challenging and important role," said David Caplan, Minister of Health and Long-Term Care. "By helping to recruit and retain nurses in this field, this program will ultimately lead to better access to care for patients with mental illness and addiction."

"As part of this new program, the three nurse residents at our Mental Health Services site (MHS) will gain first-hand experience in care relating to geriatric psychiatry, mood disorders, schizophrenia and personality disorders," said Allen Prowse, Vice President of Mental Health at Providence Care. "We need to attract more nurses to mental health care – this program supports that goal and will benefit our community."

Friday's launch, including the official welcome from Burkoski, is taking place at Whitby Mental Health Centre. Providence Care's residents will be linked in through videoconference at MHS.

Nineteen nursing students are enrolled across the province in this the first year of the residency program, which is a collaboration between the Ministry of Health and Long-Term Care, Providence Care Mental Health Services, the Centre for Addiction and Mental Health, Mental Health Centre Penetanguishene, Royal Ottawa Health Care Group and Whitby Mental Health Centre.

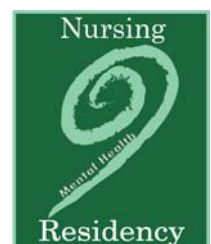
The Mental Health Nursing Residency Program is a specialized three-month postgraduate residency program, developed by an expert team of mental health nursing professionals. It is anticipated this postgraduate residency program will provide the foundation for a network of nurses dedicated to excellence in mental health care.

Nurses interested in participating in the next residency program should contact one of the five participating mental health sites or visit the program's website at [www.beamentalhealthnurse.ca](http://www.beamentalhealthnurse.ca). Information on the Providence Care residency is available at [www.providencecare.ca](http://www.providencecare.ca).

*Providence Care is the leading provider of specialized care for some of the most vulnerable patients in southeastern Ontario – the frail elderly, people coping with chronic illness, stroke survivors and those living with serious mental illness. One of Kingston's university hospitals, Providence Care has three main sites in Kingston: Mental Health Services, St. Mary's of the Lake Hospital and Providence Manor, as well as 18 community locations. Affiliated with Queen's University, Providence Care is a major centre for teaching and research.*

**For more information on tomorrow's event, or to set up an interview, please contact:**

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