

Providence Care Summer Youth Program a Success

Kingston – August 5th, 2009– High school students volunteering at Providence Care this summer aren't letting the humid weather slow them down. In addition to assisting patients, clients and staff, the over two-dozen local students enrolled in the Summer Youth Program have held a Strawberry Social, are running weekly ice-cream sales and are planning a white-elephant sale.

The Providence Care Summer Youth Program is in its seventh year, offering students aged 13 to 17 volunteer opportunities in a health care environment. For the first time this year, the students are working with patients and staff in a mental health care setting as well as with rehabilitation, complex continuing care and geriatric care.

"Providence Care is a wonderful place to fulfill your high school volunteer service requirement," says Tara Thompson, Summer Youth Coordinator at Providence Care. "Our students tell me they love it, they love the interaction with patients and the experience looks great on their resume and college/university applications."

Emma McDonald is a 14-year old participant in the program who says she was attracted to Providence Care because she is interested in a career in health care and thinks the experience will benefit her when she looks to post-secondary education. "It was a good fit for me," says Emma. "And my favourite part is talking to the patients and getting to know them."

Janet Hunter, Director of Volunteer Services at St. Mary's and Mental Health Services says patients enjoy the experience as much as the students.

"The students bring such energy and creativity," Janet says. "It's a great learning experience and Providence Care is the only hospital in Kingston that offers so much patient contact and that's why so many students want to participate."

All proceeds from student-run fundraisers are added to the Patient Needs Fund, a fund that supports any number of patient necessities from equipment and devices to the annual Christmas gift program that ensures every patient receives a Christmas present.

A total of 25 students are participating in Providence Care's Summer Youth Program this year.

Providence Care is southeastern Ontario's leading provider of rehabilitation, specialized geriatric care, complex continuing care, specialized mental health care, palliative care and long-term care. 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.

-30-

Karl New

Writer and Communications Support, Providence Care
613-548-5567 ext. 5526