

The **Personality Disorders Service** at Providence Care provides specialized care to individuals suffering from personality disorders who tend to experience intense and distorted thoughts and feelings and engage in self-destructive and socially inappropriate behaviours that are long-standing, hard to change, and affect many aspects of their lives. Borderline Personality Disorder (BPD) is the most frequently treated. BPD is characterized by marked impulsivity and instability of mood and interpersonal relationships. People suffering from BPD frequently also experience depression, suicidality, severe anxiety and eating disorders. The Personality Disorders Service offers the following Dialectical Behaviour Therapy-informed treatment groups:

Managing Powerful Emotions Group

Managing Powerful Emotions is a 12-week (90-minute) psycho-educational group offered several times a year for individuals who have significant challenges with tolerating their distress and regulating their emotions and behaviour. Participants learn specific strategies to help tolerate emotional crises and intense emotions and to enable them to examine the pros and cons of enacting destructive behaviour rather than acting impulsively. MPE teaches participants to use practical tools to understand their feelings and exercise control over emotional outbursts that create significant and ongoing difficulties in their lives.

- ▶ To participate in this group, a referral is mandatory.

Electronic Managing Powerful Emotions Group (E-MPE)

E-MPE is an electronic version of the Managing Powerful Emotions Group. Participants engage in the course and learn skills through email rather than attending a live group.

- ▶ To participate in this group, a referral is mandatory.

The pre-requisite for the following weekly Dialectical Behaviour Therapy (DBT) Groups is the successful completion of the Managing Powerful Emotions Group, live or electronic:

Mindfulness

Mindfulness is a 12-week (60-minute) skills-based group that is structured to help individuals learn to live in the present moment, build awareness, and allow the experience of emotions and physiological reactions to come and go. The goals of the group are as follows: to raise participants' awareness of internal and external responses and occurrences, to increase their threshold of accepting and enduring painful emotions, and to decrease their use of ineffective avoidance coping mechanisms, including self-destructive behaviours.

People Skills (Interpersonal Effectiveness)

People Skills is a 12-week (90-minute) skills-based group, based on Marsha Linehan's DBT module: Interpersonal Effectiveness. The group teaches participants effective ways to communicate when dealing with interpersonal challenges.

Chrysalis Day Program

Chrysalis Day Program an 8-hour, two morning a week, intensive group treatment for people with severe, persistent symptoms that have not been resolved in other settings. Participants must be highly motivated to struggle toward responsible, independent functioning in the community. The program is located at 303 Bagot Street, Suite 300, and its hours are Tuesday and Wednesday from 8:30 a.m. to 12:30 p.m.

Chrysalis is a highly structured treatment program that integrates DBT with a psychodynamic approach.

The groups are safe communities where people can experience and reflect on the dynamics of interpersonal relationships. How they respond within the groups can be both a source of insight into destructive personal patterns and a powerful catalyst for change. All Chrysalis participants develop short and long-term goals for personal change, and progress in meeting these goals is monitored in a weekly Goals group.

Chrysalis Day Program Continued

At the end of each 15-week semester, participants review their progress with staff. If they have demonstrated excellent attendance, active participation, and significant improvement in symptoms, and they show evidence of continuing need and motivation, they may re-register for a second semester.

Participants' community health care providers are expected to continue to manage their ongoing care, and the Chrysalis Program is considered an adjunct to their efforts.

- ▶ Pre-requisite for participation in the Chrysalis Program
Successful completion of the following three DBT-informed groups:
1. Managing Powerful Emotions, 2. Mindfulness, and 3. People Skills.

Seeking Safety Group

This 2½-hour group, which is facilitated weekly for a six-month time period, is structured for people with trauma in their backgrounds who struggle with drug and/or alcohol addiction and are motivated to become completely substance-free. This group is designed to teach participants a set of skills to deal adaptively with their emotional suffering, by understanding their emotional and behavioural dysregulation and by making more constructive choices to deal with their distress than using drugs and alcohol. This group includes lessons and homework assignments to learn about self-soothing, symptom management, relapse prevention, and harm reduction. Participants make weekly goals and are accountable to the group for meeting them.

- ▶ To participate in this group, a referral and screening process are mandatory.

Consultation and Education

Psychiatric assessments are provided upon request, and the program psychiatrist offers consultation to family physicians, community psychiatrists, community agencies, and other mental health workers and caregivers. Consultations are typically in the areas of medication management, diagnosis, and treatment strategies. Other members of the Personality Disorders Service team offer assessments and consultations to professionals and community agencies in their areas of specialty, as well as seminars about the management and treatment of individuals suffering from personality disorders. Upon request, community agencies serving this client population can be assisted in developing DBT-informed groups, such as the Managing Powerful Emotions Group, in their own clinical settings.

The Personality Disorders Service provides clinical placements for students in psychiatry, psychology, nursing, family medicine, and social work.

Referrals

All referrals and requests for service or consultation are to be directed to the Intake Coordinator, Michael Bruinix at (613) 542-8344 ext. 301; Fax (613) 542-1400.

Referrals for all programming offered through the Personality Disorders Service are accepted from family physicians, psychiatrists, and community mental health agencies. When a community mental health worker refers, the referral should be endorsed by the family physician whenever possible. The process of providing treatment to your patients can be fast tracked if all appropriate information is included with the referral. This includes social history, history of the presenting problem(s), any previous treatment, as well as any psychiatric/psychological assessments. If the MPE group has been attended in the community, we will require documentation confirming successful completion of the group. This can be done through a letter by the group facilitator or by completing our Community Managing Powerful Emotions (MPE) Group Participation Form.