



Ross Memorial Hospital
Mental Health Program
10 Angeline St. N. 2nd Floor
Lindsay, ON K9V 4M8
Ph: (705) 328-6064 Fax: (705) 328-6065
Visit www.rmh.org and search by Programs & Services

Information for Parents about Privacy Rights and Consent to Share Treatment Information

CIRCLE OF CARE

Circle of Care is the name for the group of people who are normally involved in a person's health care. This team can be comprised of the individual, their doctors, nurses and social workers in the mental health team, our office staff, sometimes school guidance counselors, etc. In many cases family members such as parents are considered to be part of the Circle of Care. Health information is legally allowed to be freely shared between any members of a Circle of Care.

WHAT THIS MEANS FOR YOUNG PEOPLE

They need to understand what the Circle of Care usually means, and decide for themselves who is inside the Circle and who is outside.

BENEFITS OF THE CIRCLE OF CARE FOR FAMILIES

The ability of the Circle of Care to speak freely is a major benefit when someone is ill whether that is physically or emotionally. Small problems can be caught early and big problems are better off for having all the information and support that can be provided.

RISKS OF THE CIRCLE OF CARE FOR FAMILIES

When young people are experiencing mental illness, it can increase their normal feelings of wanting to be more private and more free to make their own choices. Typical struggles between parents and teens over privacy can turn into major stressors. They may worry about parents and others knowing about their fears and worries. For some children and youth, it can actually make them too dependent on family to make choices for them. Parents need to be aware of giving young people the room to choose AND of not helping too much.

ROSS MEMORIAL HOSPITAL MENTAL HEALTH PROGRAM POINT OF VIEW

We believe every capable person has the responsibility to make this decision. **We support the Circle of Care** concept and recognize that each person will have special circumstances.

WHAT THIS MEANS FOR PARENTS

If your child includes you in the Circle of Care—Please support your young adult by respecting that some conversations should be private, and trust that as a member of the Circle of Care that your child's treatment team will alert you to any problems and welcome your input. If your child is well enough and can make their own appointments, this is a good way to show you trust them to learn to manage their illness with your support.

If your child does not include you in the Circle of Care—Don't take it personally. Young people are struggling to become individuals and having depression or another mental health challenge just complicates things.

If you become concerned, you may call anybody on your child's mental health treatment team and express your concerns of reasons for your worry. We will gratefully accept your information while respecting your child's expressed wishes.

EMERGENCIES

If your child is in danger of harming themselves or anyone else, the law allows and requires that we involve whatever means and whoever is needed to establish safety. You may count on us to alert you if we become aware that your child is at risk.

AGE OF CONSENT

Young people have a right to keep their treatment confidential if:

- they understand what they are being treated for
- they know what the treatment is intended to do for them
- they know what the risks and benefits of the treatment might be
- They know what the risks and benefits of sharing health information might be.

There is no special age of consent.

Your son or daughter will be asked to fill out a consent form regarding his or her wishes regarding information sharing.