

FAMILY PEER SUPPORT

Integrated Forensic Program
The Royal

We define “family” as trusted others whom our loved ones can count on for help and support: parents, spouse or partner, siblings, other relatives, or even friends. Ultimately, a family member is someone who supports recovery.

Family peer support recognizes the struggle that the members in a person’s circle of support experience in relation to the mental health challenges of a loved one. For the integrated forensic program, families may experience a dual stigma that results when the mental health system and the criminal justice system intersect.

PEER SUPPORT IS

- Confidential, emotional and practical support between people with lived experience in common
- Skilled expertise – a unique professional practice
- Grounded in peer support values that are the cornerstone of the relationship between peers
- Encouraging people who are coping with challenges to make decisions based on their knowledge and expertise about their own needs
- A relationship of equals, based on an authentic connection, mutual respect and trust
- A focus on a hopeful, healthy and full life

ACCESSING FAMILY PEER SUPPORT SERVICES

Integrated Forensic Program at The Royal

Ottawa 613.805.5013 **Brockville 613.805.5160**

or familypeersupport1-forensic@theroyal.ca

BENEFITS OF PEER SUPPORT

- Peer support empowers people to voice what they feel is best for their own health.
- The person seeking support has someone in their corner, outside of the clinical part of the journey.
- Peer support helps counter stigma, discrimination and isolation, as the person knows they are not alone in their journey.
- A key emphasis on hope is necessary for recovery as the journey moves from an illness to a wellness focus.

WHAT IS THE ADDED VALUE OF FAMILY PEER SUPPORT?

Family members strive to recover from the emotional turmoil, grief and/or fatigue that may result from supporting someone with mental health challenges. The family member’s path to their own wellness is likely to be enhanced by a better understanding of their loved one’s illness and through the development of more effective coping skills. Greater confidence and acceptance of the situation, and having hope for their loved one, will help family members to be more effective caregivers and supporters while also helping them sustain their own wellbeing.

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Family peer support for the Forensic Program is available on a one-on-one basis, either in person, by Zoom, or by phone. An online family peer support group for the forensic program takes place on Monday evenings, 7:00 – 9:00 PM, EDT. To register, please email familypeersupport1-forensic@theroyal.ca

