Seniors Mental Health

Nova Scotia Hospital site:
Phone: 902-464-6054
Fax: 902-464-3002

Queen Elizabeth II site:
Phone: 902-473-7799
Fax: 902-473-5713
What services are provided?

**Education and Training:** Education of healthcare professionals and caregivers about mental health needs and treatment options for seniors.

**Health Promotion/Prevention:** The Seniors Healthy Living Program offers a range of groups.

**In-Patient Care:** Willow Hall is a 19-bed geropsychiatric acute care in-patient unit.

**Out-Patient Clinics:** Several locations throughout the Halifax area.

**Outreach:** Assessment, consultation, and, where required, direct care to individuals in their homes.

**Telemedicine:** Consultation through the telemedicine network.

**Seniors Mental Health Network:** Clinical team members participate in and chair the SMHN that supports and advances seniors’ mental health by promoting knowledge exchange and learning among its members.
Referral criteria

We can provide consultation for individuals who:

› Are over the age of 65 with new onset of psychiatric symptoms
› Have dementia with prominent psychiatric features (at any age)

• For patients with dementia or medical illness without the above complications, referrals should be directed to Geriatric Medicine.

• The SMH team is a subspecialty team rather than a general adult mental health service. Referrals for patients with chronic mental illness who are 65 or older should be directed to General Adult Mental Health Outpatient Services.

• The SMH team will consider, on a case-by-case basis, consultations for seniors with a prior history of complex psychiatric illness or whose illness is now complicated by multiple medical problems, complex issues in dementia, multiple medications, or frailty.
Access to SMH

Family doctors, healthcare professionals, family members, and individuals may contact the Seniors Mental Health Service. A referral form should be completed by a healthcare professional and faxed to SMH.

Facts

• In 2011 the Baby Boomer generation began to turn 65, and the proportion of elderly will double in the next 25 years.

• The national population trends will be especially pronounced in Nova Scotia, which is ranked the second “oldest” province in Canada.

• Mental illness is a reality for 20% of Nova Scotia’s seniors living in the community and up to 60% in institutional settings.

• Dementia cases in Nova Scotia will double in the next 20 years.
**Who are we?**

The Seniors Mental Health interdisciplinary team provides assessment, consultation, and time-limited treatment to meet the mental health needs of seniors that cannot be addressed by their family doctor or another mental health team. The clinicians work with the senior and with family members to identify the problem and provide treatment, education, and support. Clinicians communicate with the family doctor to ensure that care can be continued after Seniors Mental Health is no longer needed.

Seniors Mental Health is designed to provide as much care as possible for seniors in their community or home setting.
Who provides seniors’ services?
The Seniors Mental Health Team is committed to helping seniors manage mental illness and improve their mental health. Every healthcare professional brings unique skills to the healthcare team. The Seniors Mental Health Team includes:

- Doctors in Family Medicine, Geriatric Medicine, and Psychiatry
- Nurses
- Occupational Therapists
- Psychologists
- Recreation Therapists
- Social Workers

Looking for more health information? Contact your local public library for books, videos, magazines, and other resources. For more information go to http://library.novascotia.ca

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Nova Scotia Health Authority
www.nshealth.ca

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If you have any questions, please ask your healthcare provider.

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The information in this pamphlet is to be updated every 3 years or as needed.