



# First Episode Psychosis Program

Psychosis is a treatable medical condition.  
With early intervention,  
many people recover fully and never  
experience another episode again.

## Facts About Psychosis:

Psychosis is a medical condition affecting the brain. It refers to a loss of contact with reality in which people have trouble distinguishing between what is real and what is not real. When this occurs, it is called a psychotic episode. An affected individual may have unusual perceptions and beliefs including hallucinations, paranoia or suspiciousness, and feelings of anxiety and depression. This condition is often accompanied by sleep disturbance, poor attention and concentration, loss of energy and motivation, social withdrawal and a decline in functioning at school or work.

Psychosis usually appears in a person's late teens or early twenties. Approximately three percent of the population will experience a psychotic episode in their lifetime. Psychosis has multiple potential causes including stress, genetic factors, various medical conditions and the use of street drugs. It occurs in men and women, and across all cultures and socioeconomic groups.

Research has suggested that the earlier intervention can occur, the better the treatment outcome may be. The course of recovery from a first episode of psychosis varies from person to person. Sometimes symptoms go away quickly and people are able to resume a normal life. For others, it may take several weeks or months to recover, and support may be needed over a longer period of time.



## Who We Are:

The First Episode Psychosis Program is a regional program offered in collaboration with the Ottawa Hospital's **On Track** program. We see individuals aged 16 to 35 who are experiencing their first symptoms of psychosis. Your First Episode team includes a community mental health nurse who works in close collaboration with the attending psychiatrist, your family member(s) and other mental health partners. We provide out-patient intervention and support for a period of one to three years. Our goal is to promote the remission of symptoms through effective medications and coping strategies to prevent relapse.

*Mental Health Services of Renfrew County is a program administered by the Pembroke Regional Hospital.*  
[www.pembrokeregionalhospital.ca](http://www.pembrokeregionalhospital.ca)

### What You Can Expect:

Our first objective will be to determine the type of psychosis you are experiencing in order to guide treatment. This assessment includes providing a detailed health history and may require medical investigations such as blood tests or a brain scan. Treatment usually includes taking medications. We will help you understand how to manage your medication and their side effects.

Experiencing a psychosis may leave you feeling frightened, confused, overwhelmed or depressed. Sharing and learning to cope with these feelings will improve your ability to recover and resume normal activity including hobbies, school or work.

Your primary clinician will work with you and your family to identify your goals, educate and support you, and refer you to appropriate community resources. He or she will also liaise between your attending psychiatrist and your family doctor.

#### Other Important Community Resources For You and Your Family:

##### **Mental Health Crisis Line - 24/7**

1-866-996-0991

[www.crisisline.ca](http://www.crisisline.ca) | [www.lignedecrise.ca](http://www.lignedecrise.ca)  
or 911 if the crisis is life-threatening

##### **PLEO**

*(Parent's Lifeline of Eastern Ontario)*

613-321-3211

email: [info@pleo.on.ca](mailto:info@pleo.on.ca)

##### **Schizophrenia Society of Ontario**

1-800-449-6367

[www.schizophrenia.on.ca](http://www.schizophrenia.on.ca)

##### **Websites:**

[www.eppic.org.au](http://www.eppic.org.au)

[www.iepa.org.au](http://www.iepa.org.au)

[www.pepp.ca](http://www.pepp.ca)

[www.eMentalHealth.ca](http://www.eMentalHealth.ca)

[www.earlypsychosis.ca](http://www.earlypsychosis.ca)



**Learn More About How We Can Help**  
**613-732-8770 or 1-800-991-7711**

**Mental Health Crisis Line - 24/7**  
**1-866-996-0991**

*Recovery is a process, a way of life, an attitude, and a way of approaching the day's challenges. It is not a perfectly linear process. At times, our course is erratic and we falter, slide back, regroup and start again. The need is to meet the challenge of the disability and to re-establish a new and valued sense of integrity and purpose within and beyond the limits of the disability; the aspiration is to live, work, and love in a community in which one makes a significant contribution.*

*(Recovery: The Lived Experience of Rehabilitation, p.15, Patricia Deegan, 1988)*