



# Families for Addiction Recovery

Newsletter Fall 2016

## Introducing Families for Addiction Recovery (FAR)

We are pleased to announce the new charity, Families for Addiction Recovery (FAR). This Canadian registered charity was founded and is run, primarily, by parents of those who struggle, or have struggled, with addiction and associated mental health disorders. We understand what it means to have a member of the family who struggles with addiction and invite anyone who cares for someone with addiction to join FAR.

### Our Mission

FAR's mission is to:

- support families affected by substance use disorder (“SUD”); and
- protect persons, particularly youth, struggling with SUD by:
  - promoting publicly-funded, timely, compassionate, evidence-based treatment;
  - supporting research; and
  - working to end stigma.

## 3 Three Ways To Become Involved

### Become a member

By joining FAR you add weight to our voice, support other families affected by SUD, and help those struggling with addiction to receive effective treatment. To learn more about becoming a member of FAR visit our website at [farcanada.org](http://farcanada.org).

### Volunteer

We are looking for parents who understand and have experienced a child's struggle with addiction to support other parents in a similar situation. As a parent coach you would receive thorough training, held over a weekend, and be asked to commit at least an hour per week to supporting other parents. If you are interested in learning more about getting involved please contact us at [info@farcanada.org](mailto:info@farcanada.org).

FAR is working on a public awareness campaign to bring hope for recovery and end the stigma associated with addiction. With a planned launch in early 2017, we are looking for someone with experience in PR and/or marketing communications to volunteer their time to help us launch and support this important campaign. If you are interested, and feel you can help, please contact us at [info@farcanada.org](mailto:info@farcanada.org).

### Donate

Your financial support allows us to continue our mission of supporting families affected by SUD and protecting persons with SUD. As a registered Canadian charity all donations to FAR are tax deductible and can be made via cheque to our business address: **Suite 200, 100 Consilium Place, Scarborough, ON Canada, M1H 3E3**. Donations via [CanadaHelps.org](http://CanadaHelps.org) will be available in the future.



### Recovery Day 2016

FAR will be celebrating Recovery Day in Toronto on September 18th and in Ottawa on September 25th. Come join us to celebrate and help draw attention to our cause. For location details and start times visit [recoverydaycanada.com/cities](http://recoverydaycanada.com/cities).

### Supporting Families Affected by Addiction

Starting in 2017 FAR will be providing peer-to-peer support for parents whose children struggle with addiction. Trained parent coaches with lived experience will lend an understanding ear and provide coping strategies and communication skills to parents whose children are in active addiction.

### What Happens to Families While Youth Wait for Treatment?

FAR is excited to announce that we have partnered with Pine River Institute (PRI) to conduct a research project on what happens to youth and their families while they await treatment at PRI.

PRI is the only long-term residential treatment facility in Ontario for youth with addiction and other mental health disorders. The wait list is currently 16 months for males and 10 months for females. PRI interviewed youth and their families when the youth were placed on the waitlist and again just prior to admission for treatment. The study will be published January, 2017.



Photo by CBC

## In the News

Co-Founder of FAR, Louise Lemieux White, and her daughter Chloe were recently [interviewed](#) by Matt Galloway on CBC Toronto's Metro Morning. Chloe is 16 years old and is two years in recovery. Louise discussed the two major barriers facing parents seeking treatment for their children:

- provinces, including Ontario, do not have the capacity to provide timely treatment for youth; and
- youth often don't feel the need for treatment and are unwilling to go.

Chloe expressed her belief that if her parents had not taken her to the U.S. at 14, against her will, she would not be alive today. You can read more [here](#).

## The Need to Fund Addiction Treatment

Funding for addiction and mental health in Canada is inadequate. Addiction and mental health represents almost 11% of the overall burden of disease yet receives only 7% of provincial health care budgets. Toronto's Centre for Addiction and Mental Health (CAMH) has estimated that this represents a deficit, for Ontario alone, of about \$1.5 billion.

FAR and Faces and Voices of Recovery (FAVOR) Canada have asked the Federal Minister of Health, Jane Philpott, in a [letter](#) to ensure that all government profits from the sale of marijuana are used to fund the treatment of addiction and mental health until the underfunding is addressed.

## Doctors Need to be Trained in Addiction Medicine

None of Canada's 17 medical schools currently teach a core course in addiction medicine. FAR has sent [letters](#) to the bodies that determine what these schools teach and regulate the continuing medical education of physicians. These letters urgently requested that:

- all medical schools have a core course in addiction medicine;
- all post graduate family medicine and ER residency programs have a core rotation in addiction medicine; and
- all existing medical doctors who are involved with persons with substance use disorder ("SUD"), such as family physicians, pediatricians and ER physicians, be required to take continuing medical education courses regarding SUD.

## Ontario Alcohol Strategy

The Province of Ontario is currently developing an alcohol strategy. FAR has met with members of the Ministry of Health and Long Term Care (MOHLTC) in July to present our [recommendations](#). One of our main points is that the voices of people and families affected by addiction need to be heard - not just the voice of the alcohol industry.

## Submission on Marijuana Legalization

The federal government asked for submissions regarding the proposed legalization and regulation of marijuana. FAR's [submission](#) emphasizes:

- the need to ramp up capacity to treat those with SUD (including physician education regarding SUD);
- the need for dedicated funding for treatment (meaning a portion of the profits must be used for treatment);
- a minimum legal purchase age of 21 years; and
- a government run monopoly distribution model which is significantly different from the Liquor Control Board of Ontario (LCBO).

## Proposed Good Samaritan Drug Overdose Act

The purpose of this Good Samaritan Legislation is to reduce the fear of reporting a drug overdose by giving those who call 911 during an overdose amnesty from being charged with drug possession for personal use. FAR supports the proposed legislation but believes the bill would save more lives if the immunity granted were expanded to cover all drug offences, as outlined in our [brief](#).

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[www.farcanada.org](http://www.farcanada.org)

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