**NEWS RELEASE**

**For Immediate Release**

**Free Same Day Mental-Health Clinic Coming to Harriston, Surrounding Area**

**June 29, 2020 – Guelph, ON** – Thanks to a grant through the Emergency Community Support Fund from United Way Guelph Wellington Dufferin, the town of Harriston and the surrounding area in Minto County will now have access to 100% fully funded same day mental-health services through Family Counselling and Support Services for Guelph-Wellington (FCSSGW).

The weekly clinic is set to start on Tuesday, July 28, 2020 and will be virtual in nature to begin. Clients will be able to call in to arrange a same-day appointment between 11 am – 6 pm with a registered therapist. Brief therapy will be offered in follow-up sessions as required. The physical office will reside in LaunchIt Minto located on Elora Street North in Harriston.

“We are excited to welcome Family Counselling and Support Services for Guelph-Wellington to Minto. The service provided by FCSSGW will support the mental health and wellbeing of residents within the Town of Minto and surrounding communities, including members in the agricultural community,” said Jessica Dettman, Minto Mental Health Coordinator/Children’s Programs Coordinator.

“Mental health related services and supports are often less accessible and available in rural communities. Rural communities such as the Town of Minto and surrounding areas have felt the direct impact of these barriers to accessing mental-health services, which emphasizes the need for greater support services in our area. Individuals living in rural communities often have to travel to urban areas to access the services they require, however with the FREE Same-Day Counselling coming to Harriston, we are hopeful that community members will receive the appropriate mental-health support they need in a timely and affordable manner.”

Mental-health issues can escalate quickly and having access to early intervention through same-day services delivered by expert therapists means clients can expect to leave the clinic with an action plan and hope.

“We have seen mental health struggles impact rural communities especially hard and have been advocating to make this service available for a long time. Clients ranging from farmers in distress, families coping with youth depression, students with school and social pressures, and more have found hope in an otherwise tough time,” said executive director Joanne Young Evans.

Funding for the clinic runs until March 31, 2021, and FCSSGW is hopeful it will be able to find funding to continue this critical service. More information about call-in times, contact numbers, and protocols will be made available closer to the launch date.

FCSSGW provides a range of individual and group services to children, youth, individuals, couples, families, and seniors and is LGBTQ+ friendly with safe, accessible storefront locations in Guelph, Fergus, and Mount Forest. Visit [www.FamilyServiceGuelph.on.ca](http://www.FamilyServiceGuelph.on.ca) to find out more about the agency’s programs and services.

**For more information, please contact:**

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**BACKGROUNDER**

**Family Counselling and Support Services for Guelph-Wellington**

Family Counselling and Support Services for Guelph-Wellington (FCSSGW) has grown and complexity since its inception in 1964 as a prevention-oriented program of the Children’s Aid Society (now called Family and Children’s Services of Guelph and Wellington County).

FCSSGW continues to be an integral part of the community and provides support services to a growing number of individuals, families, and children. Over 96 per cent of our clients feel that their ability to deal with their specific situations improved significantly after treatment, which further reinforces that our services are much needed and beneficial. We are a premier provider of exceptional yet affordable and cost-effective services in the community.

The agency is committed to strengthening individuals and couples and family life for those dealing with trauma, grief, stress, anxiety, depression, physical, sexual and emotional abuse, and supporting people with developmental challenges, and those caring for them and more. FCSSGW offers quick access, single-session mental health clinics for those wishing to stop in and speak with a counsellor without making an appointment in Guelph, Fergus, Mount Forest and Harriston (July 28/20). In January 2020, FCSSGW also assumed the TeleConnect and Distress Line services, which include an inbound distress line, and an outbound phone check-in service for all Guelph and County of Wellington residents. We are also the only non-profit provider of customized EAP (Employee Assistance Programs) in the area.

www.FamilyServiceGuelph.on.ca