

August 10, 2017

Dear friends of Bruce House,

### **Thank you.**

We reached out to you for help, and you responded. We are overwhelmed with the support we have received—some \$11,500 to date—and the words of encouragement which so many of you thoughtfully included along with your donations. We are deeply touched with your statements on the importance of Bruce House to our community and your belief in our mission. These donations are tremendously helpful in shoring up the organization's finances as we continue to move forward to a sustainable future.

### **The road ahead, bumps and all.**

One of our most significant costs is the Transition House Program, housed in a seven-bedroom house in Westboro. Rent, utilities, operating costs, and staffing 24/7 require over \$300,000 per year. There is no question that this is an important and valued service, but at 30% of our annual budget this is a program we had to re-evaluate.

The immediate reality is that Bruce House cannot afford to continue operating the current Transition House. Therefore, we have made a difficult decision: our Westboro Transition House will close on September 1<sup>st</sup>, 2017.

We have stopped accepting new clients to the Transition House, and will find appropriate housing for the clients currently living there. Those clients will continue to receive support from Bruce House via the REST (Rehabilitation and Episodic Supportive Transition) Program, and we will make every effort to minimize the impact of this move on their well-being.

We are currently exploring options for a new location—one which would allow a renewed short-term housing program that would better meet the needs of our clients and significantly reduce costs. This involves negotiating for a new space, completing any required upgrades, and re-inventing our Transition House Program... steps which will take time to complete.

Regretfully this decision will result in staff layoffs. The Transition House staff have been integral to Bruce House, and their dedication to the clients and to the organization have been exemplary.

We at Bruce House are united in putting the future of the organization and the well-being of our clients first.

### **Your Words To Us**

*"Keep up the amazing work you all do in our community".*

*"My son had the best year of his life there. Thanks from the bottom of our hearts."*

*"Keep up the great work. The service you provide is essential in our community. I am proud to live in such a supportive community; having Bruce House available to those in need is one of the things that makes Ottawa great!"*

*"You can do it Bruce House! I believe in you!!!!!"*

**We can see the light at the end of the tunnel.**

These are difficult times for Bruce House, but our work continues nonetheless. Compassionate care and support are the very soul of the organization, and that will never change.

The generous donations received this month will help us bridge the current financial shortfalls. We currently have ten funding applications in progress or submitted, from smaller grants to significant multi-year funding. This is only the beginning—staff are meeting weekly to seek out new opportunities.

It is difficult for the entire Bruce House family to close the current Transition House, but we do so in the knowledge that we are doing this for the right reasons. The Supported Independent Living Program (SLIP) will continue to support clients living in our apartments, and the Rehabilitation and Supportive Episodic Transition (REST) Program will continue to support all clients from our Bank Street office.

From adversity comes opportunity. Next year will mark a new chapter in the history of Bruce House, and yet another challenge successfully met. 2018 will also mark 30 years of working for our community, one struggle at a time.

*The staff, volunteers, management, Board, and clients of Bruce House thank you for your understanding and support in this difficult time, and as ever we are grateful to be part of this community.*

*“Good luck, I hope you can continue to keep up with the amazing work that you do!”*

*“I admire the work you do.”*

*“Thank you for your work.”*