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Waterloo Region, Ontario

SPECTRUM and KW Counselling Services partner to provide counselling to LGBTQ2+ people.

SPECTRUM, Waterloo Region's Rainbow Community Space, and KW Counselling Services, have partnered to provide no cost and subsidized counselling to members of the LGBTQ2+ community. SPECTRUM has started the Chrysalis Fund in memory of a member of their Board of Directors who died by suicide. Monies from the Chrysalis Fund will be used to provide counselling services through the OK2BME program at KW Counselling Services.

Since 2005, the OK2BME program at KW Counselling Services has provided counselling services to LGBTQ2+ people, leadership and recreation youth groups, and public education and consultations on LGBTQ2+ issues. "We're very grateful to SPECTRUM for recognizing the importance of accessible mental health services," says Rebecca Webb, Executive Director. "LGBTQ2+ people have some unique stressors that can make them especially vulnerable to mental health challenges. We're proud of the work we do through OK2BME."

Cait Glasson, President of SPECTRUM notes "The Chrysalis Fund is very important to our board members. Early this year, we lost a member to suicide and we want to ensure that transgender and gender non-binary folks have access to the counselling they need."

LGBTQ2+ people will be able to refer themselves to the program by calling KW Counselling Services at 519.884.0000. "The service will be offered on a sliding scale," says Washington Silk, OK2BME Program Coordinator. "Those who are able to pay something will be asked to do so. The Chrysalis Fund will cover the rest of the cost. No one will be turned away based on an inability to pay. The Chrysalis Fund will cover the entire cost where necessary."

"We were able to start the Chrysalis Fund with a grant from the 100 Men who Give a Damn," says Glasson. "We're very grateful for their support and we will be looking to the community to help us continue this work. People can make contributions at ourspectrum.com."

About SPECTRUM: SPECTRUM is Waterloo Region's first-ever LGBTQ2+ / Rainbow community space! Since opening our doors in 2012, SPECTRUM has developed into an organization with programming, social groups, special projects, research, events, and resources, plus a space where the community can connect. SPECTRUM is the centre of our rainbow community and continues to grow to support the needs of LGTBQ2+ folk across Waterloo Region.

About KW Counselling Services: KW Counselling Services is celebrating 70 years as a multi-service agency offering counselling supports to individuals, couples, and families in Waterloo Region. In addition to our accessible mental health services, we offer parenting education and supports through our Parenting with Passion and Parenting Now programs; specialized services including counselling, and recreation and leadership youth groups for LGBTQ2+ youth through our OK2BME program; community development and training opportunities for members of multicultural communities; as well as training and placement opportunities for graduate students in social work and related fields.

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