



PREVENTION AND EARLY INTERVENTION PROGRAM FOR PSYCHOSES

**PEPP**  
MONTRÉAL

*Putting  
the pieces  
together*

*Douglas*  
INSTITUT  
UNIVERSITAIRE EN  
SANTÉ MENTALE

MENTAL HEALTH  
UNIVERSITY  
INSTITUTE

[www.douglas.qc.ca](http://www.douglas.qc.ca)

**Psychotic disorders** are the most serious of all mental disorders. These disorders usually first affect adolescents and young people. They may go unrecognized for many months, and even years. Research has now shown that one of the greatest obstacles to successful treatment may be the **duration of untreated psychosis**. Early detection and early treatment can result in full recovery in the majority of cases, and thus avoid prolonged suffering and disability.

PEPP is a new and innovative program at the **Douglas Mental Health University Institute**, offering treatment to young people who are experiencing the first onset of a psychosis. Clinical services, education, and research are integrated. This means that young people seeking treatment will benefit from the new knowledge that will be generated through participation of clients and their families in our education, and research activities.



## Mission and Values

The mission of the PEPP is to engender hope for the full recovery of a young person suffering from psychosis. We endeavour to provide quick and easy access to clients and their families, and state-of-the-art treatment for psychotic disorders.

## Objective

The main objective of PEPP is to provide early assessment and treatment of psychotic disorders in young people, who either have never before been treated, or have received no more than one month of treatment with an antipsychotic medication.

## Services

### Assessment

When a young person shows possible signs of early psychosis, an initial screening assessment interview will be conducted by a case manager from PEPP. Such an assessment can be carried out in the Douglas or in the community. A case manager will respond to a referral within three working days. A more detailed assessment will then be conducted by an expert team. The team consists of a psychiatrist and other multidisciplinary professionals. The assessment will usually be completed within one week.

## Treatment

A treatment team will provide comprehensive medical and psychosocial treatment to young people who are experiencing their first psychotic episode. If the client is identified in the Douglas, the PEPP team will help to manage the client's care, and after discharge from the Hospitalization Unit, the case manager will be responsible for delivering the treatment in the community. Treatment will consist of a combination of:

- **Medication (newer atypical agents)**
- **Skills training**
- **Family support and education**
- **Cognitive behavioural therapy**
- **Supportive psychotherapy**
- **Other group interventions**

The case manager will develop an individualized intervention plan with each client and his/her family. Help is offered to the client for re-entry to school/or work according to his/her needs. Families are always encouraged to get involved in the treatment of the individual and we work closely with families in the provision of services. Our goal is full recovery from the illness, and recovery of functional status at the earliest possible time.

## Follow-up

All clients will receive intensive case management services for up to two years. We endeavour to help the client regain the highest level of functioning possible. Such follow-up also provides crisis intervention when, and if, it becomes necessary.

Some individuals will require longer than two years of follow-up. Extended follow-up may be provided to a small proportion of individuals with appropriate medical and psychosocial needs.

# Research

Our research focuses on how biological and environmental factors combine to influence the risks for, and outcomes of, psychotic disorders. Our research activities include:

- 1. Risk factors for psychosis**
- 2. Predictors of long-term course and outcome**
- 3. Imaging studies**
- 4. Genetic studies**
- 5. Psychosocial and pharmacological studies**

# Education

As an integral part of an teaching institution, our program will provide training to undergraduate and post-graduate students/residents/fellows in a variety of health sciences, including nursing, medicine, psychology, occupational therapy etc.

Our own staff will receive continuous upgrading in their skills and knowledge, as we generate and assimilate new knowledge.





## Criteria

### To obtain PEPP services, clients must:

- Be between the ages of 14-30;
- Suffer from an affective or non-affective psychosis;
- Have never been treated or have not taken an antipsychotic agent for more than 30 days.

### Those excluded:

- Clients who suffer from organic brain damage, pervasive developmental disorders, mental retardation, epilepsy, and severe substance abuse (substance use alone will not be an exclusion criteria if the person has a primary psychotic disorder);
- Forensic clients.

## Referrals

Referrals to PEPP (consumers, families, healthcare professionals, schools etc.) are open to any member of the Montréal community.

All people wishing to make a referral should communicate with PEPP at:

**514-888-4453 • 514-761-6131, ext. 4121**