

Vince's initiative to enhance patient care at Southlake's Mental Health Department

Two weeks ago, Vince's announced the 2021 recipient of their Community Product Initiative. Southlake Foundation would be this year's beneficiary, with 15 percent of sales of the designated 'Community Product' - often a staple grocery item - supporting the Mental Health Program at Southlake Regional Health Centre.

'The focus on Mental Health has been growing, in particular during this pandemic,' said Giancarlo Trimarchi, partner at Vince's. 'Although there is much discussion about the need for mental health facilities, programs and initiatives, we also recognize there are shortfalls, and that there is room for improvement. On that note, we'd like our customers to know how funds from this year's Community Product Initiative will be used by our partners at Southlake, and how this will make a positive difference for patient care.'

Southlake Foundation's Better Begins Today campaign is a \$7.5 million campaign to support the surging demand for treatment that will be addressed with a newly built Emergent Mental Health Assessment Unit and a new 12-bed Adult Inpatient Unit, along with other site improvements.

Southlake's mental health spaces are smaller than today's standards, overcrowded and without basic necessities that promote healing and recovery. The exceptional mental health care at Southlake requires an urgent investment to create specialized assessment facilities, greater inpatient capacity and enhanced privacy.

The \$7.5 million fundraising goal will fund the creation of new mental health facilities including:

Emergent Mental Health

Assessment Unit (EMHAU)

The recently opened EMHAU has six private assessment rooms with beds, windows and televisions where patients can see a psychiatrist and begin treatment immediately until inpatient beds are available. Before the launch of the EMHAU, a mental health patient could spend up to five days in the Emergency Department in a windowless area, with only a curtain for privacy while waiting for admission and for their treatment to begin. Having a dedicated assessment unit will dramatically expedite care, treatment and, ultimately, healing.

New Adult Inpatient Unit

A new 12-bed Adult Inpatient Unit, scheduled to open in summer 2022, will boost Southlake's total inpatient mental health capacity from 24 beds to 36, and incorporate new indoor and outdoor common spaces for social interaction, recreation and treatment. This expansion reflects a more modern approach to care and includes many more private rooms, creating a better overall patient experience throughout the healing process.

'Right now, mental health is top of mind like never before with the ongoing effects of the pandemic. But at Southlake, it's only adding to an existing demand that we've been facing for years,' said Jennifer Klotz-Ritter, President & CEO of Southlake Foundation. 'This generous partnership with Vince's will play a vital role in increasing access to mental health care, and alleviating the strain on our mental health program by helping us get closer to our goal of creating physical spaces that mental health patients in our communities need to heal.'

Community Product Initiative

Vince's launched the Community Product Initiative in 2018, and since then it has raised more than \$58,000 for nine life-changing

causes. In 2020, it was decided that focusing their yearly efforts on a single, regional recipient would make an even greater impact in the communities they serve. Vince's has continued with this single focus in 2021, and expects tremendous community support for these vital mental health care programs.