



**Eli's Place Residential Treatment and Transition Centre**

## **Clinical Director - Position Profile**

Eli's Place Residential Treatment and Transition Centre ("Eli's Place") exists because Ontario's mental health system, built around short stays, institutional settings and crisis response, cannot currently offer young adults with serious mental illness what they actually need — sustained recovery, resilience and the life and work skills to move forward. We are building something different. Canada's first long-term rural residential therapeutic community, where time, meaningful work and community life are the conditions for recovery.

Eli's Place will provide long-term residential care for young adults aged 18 to 35 living with serious mental illness, on a 600-acre farm and conservation property north of Guelph. Guests live and work together as a therapeutic community, combining individualized clinical treatment with structured, meaningful work in horticulture, conservation and land stewardship.



The Clinical Director will be a founding member of the leadership team, playing a central role in establishing a model of care that does not yet exist in Ontario. This is an opportunity to make a lasting difference — for the young adults Eli's Place serves and for how the mental health system responds to serious mental illness in this province.

Eli's Place is pre-operational and on track to open in fall 2026. Founded over a decade ago by a family with lived experience of serious mental illness, the organization has spent years developing its model, securing its location, and building the board, partnerships and funding foundation needed to launch. The Clinical Director will join the founding team this summer, contributing to clinical team building and program development in the months before opening.



**If this is the kind of work you have been looking for, we want to hear from you.**

## About Eli's Place

Eli's Place is a non-profit organization providing long-term residential care for young adults aged 18 to 35 living with serious mental illness, including schizophrenia, schizoaffective disorder, bipolar disorder and major depression. The program is not of a fixed duration, but responds to the therapeutic needs of each individual Guest. We anticipate that, on average, this will involve residential care of approximately six to nine months, integrating individualized clinical treatment, structured meaningful work and community living within a therapeutic community model. This is followed by several months of support for Guests as they transition out of Eli's Place into housing, education and work.

The program is built on the Gould Farm model, a 113-year-old residential therapeutic community on a working farm in rural Massachusetts with a strong evidence base and documented long-term outcomes. Gould Farm was selected as the Eli's Place program reference following a global review of 33 comparable centres.

At Eli's Place, work is real, not simulated — the largest single block of time in a Guest's day, and purposefully therapeutic. It produces something that needs to get done and makes each Guest a functional contributor to community life. It is also continuously adapted to each Guest's circumstances and capability on a given day, with staff working alongside Guests and observations from the work setting feeding directly back into the clinical team.



Eli's Place is designed to feel like a home rather than a facility. The physical environment, the daily rhythms and the relationships between Guests and staff are all understood as mechanisms of the therapeutic model, not backdrop to it. Where clinical safety requirements and therapeutic design intent come into tension, the resolution requires reasoned judgment grounded in the program's values and the needs of the Guest population. That judgment sits with clinical leadership.

Eli's Place was founded by David and Deborah Cooper following the death of their son Eli Nathan Cooper in 2010, after a long struggle with serious mental illness. In their grief, the Coopers committed to building what Eli himself said he needed — a place where people living with serious mental illness could find time, community and meaningful work, especially on the land in a natural setting, as the foundation for recovery. That commitment has driven the organization for over a decade. It is the reason Eli's Place exists and the reason it matters.

Eli's Place is governed by a skilled and experienced board of directors with deep expertise across mental health, clinical practice, finance, law and community leadership — and grounded in the lived experience of serious mental illness and loss that gave the organization its founding purpose. The board has been the driving force behind the organization since its founding and remains actively engaged in its development.

## Location

Eli's Place will operate from Loyola House on the grounds of the Ignatius Jesuit Centre (IJC), a 600-acre working farm and conservation property in Guelph/Eramosa Township, just north of the City of Guelph, Ontario. The IJC is a longstanding charitable organization with deep roots in land stewardship, conservation and community agriculture. Eli's Place is a non-religious program — the relationship with the IJC is an operational one, not a religious affiliation.



Under formal agreements with Eli's Place, the IJC provides the residential facility and coordinates access to the farm and conservation lands on which the outdoor work program is delivered. The IJC brings over three decades of experience in regenerative agriculture, agroecological training and ecological land management, and its Farm and Conservation team works directly alongside Eli's Place staff and Guests in facilitating the land-based work program.

The property includes working farm fields, market gardens, an orchard, old-growth forest, conservation lands, wetlands and maintained trails. Guests participate across a range of work streams drawn from the IJC's decades of land-based programming — from crop planting and seasonal harvesting through to ecological restoration, orchard care and trail construction. The work itself is the vehicle through which Guests develop strengths, form working relationships, build resilience and recover a sense of purpose and worth — the real-life skills and confidence needed to move toward greater independence.

Guelph is a mid-sized city with a strong and growing health and social services sector, a well-established community mental health presence and deep institutional connections through the University of Guelph. Consistently ranked among the safest cities in Ontario, it offers over 1,000 hectares of parkland and trails, a vibrant arts community and a strong civic culture. It also offers a more affordable cost of living than Ontario's larger urban centres. Guelph is widely considered one of the best places to live in Canada.

Eli's Place is also within commuting distance of Kitchener-Waterloo, Cambridge, Fergus and Milton, and approximately 90 minutes from Toronto.



## Role

The right person for this role recognizes that recovery happens through sustained relationships and community belonging — not through treatment alone. They are drawn to a model that reflects that, and ready for the responsibility of leading its clinical implementation.

The Clinical Director is the most senior clinical role at Eli's Place and a core member of the organizational leadership team. The role reports to the Executive Director and carries full clinical leadership responsibility for the program.



At opening, the clinical team will include a Nurse Practitioner, a complement of Clinicians across disciplines and a consulting Psychiatrist engaged on a sessional basis. The Clinical Director oversees the clinical team, leads clinical hiring and professional development, and holds ultimate accountability for clinical standards, regulatory compliance and the safety and quality of care delivered to Guests. The Clinical Director also provides clinical guidance to Guest services staff — including the residential and work program teams — ensuring their day-to-day work with Guests supports and reflects each Guest's therapeutic goals and care plan.

The Clinical Director has a program-building mandate that distinguishes this role from a steady-state clinical leadership position. In the pre-launch and Year 1 phases, the Clinical Director will develop and implement the clinical model, establish clinical protocols and documentation standards, contribute to the admissions framework and help translate the therapeutic community



approach into the day-to-day life of Eli's Place. Central to this is establishing a culture of continuous quality improvement — building the feedback loops, outcome measures and review practices that allow the program to learn from its own experience and improve over time. This requires both strong clinical judgment and a builder's orientation — someone comfortable assembling and leading a team while putting in place the foundations for a program that holds itself to account.

At full capacity, Eli's Place will serve up to 30 Guests in residence at any given time, with up to 40 additional Guests being supported through the transition phase as they move into housing, education and work in the community.

# Key Accountabilities

## Clinical Leadership

- Provide overall clinical leadership for the Eli's Place program, including clinical supervision consistent with the standards of regulated health professions
- Hold accountability for clinical standards, regulatory compliance and the safety and quality of care delivered to Guests
- Oversee the clinical team, including the Nurse Practitioner, Clinicians and consulting Psychiatrist
- Lead clinical hiring, onboarding and professional development for the clinical team
- Provide clinical guidance to Guest services staff, ensuring the residential and work program environments support and reflect each Guest's therapeutic goals and care plan

## Therapeutic Community and Milieu

- Safeguard the therapeutic value of community life at Eli's Place — the daily rhythms, relationships and shared expectations that are central to the model
- Support cohesion within the Guest community, attending to group dynamics and the conditions that allow Guests to participate meaningfully in community life
- Ensure families are meaningfully engaged as part of the Eli's Place community, and provide clinical leadership on how family involvement is integrated into each Guest's care and recovery
- Foster a culture among all staff in which the milieu is understood and treated as a primary therapeutic mechanism, not incidental to clinical treatment
- Collaborate with the Executive Director and Guest services leadership to ensure that decisions about the physical environment, scheduling and program design support the therapeutic milieu

### **Clinical Model Implementation**

- Translate the Eli's Place program model into clinical protocols, documentation standards and operating practices
- Implement and continuously refine the admissions framework, including screening, assessment and onboarding of new Guests
- Lead treatment planning, progress review and discharge planning processes
- Establish clinical escalation pathways appropriate to a voluntary residential setting
- Provide clinical oversight of transition planning, ensuring Guests are supported through the move from residential care into housing, education and work, with continuity of care maintained through the transition period
- Ensure clinical practices remain grounded in the Gould Farm model and aligned with the therapeutic community approach

### **Continuous Quality Improvement**

- Establish feedback loops, outcome measures and review practices that allow the program to learn from its own experience
- Refine the clinical outcomes and quality of life measures that the program tracks, working with the Program Evaluation Specialist to ensure evaluation frameworks align with clinical practice
- Use evaluation findings to inform clinical decision-making, program refinement and care planning

### **Organizational Leadership**

- Contribute to organizational leadership as a core member of the senior team
- Represent Eli's Place's clinical approach to external partners, funders and professional networks as required
- Support research and knowledge-sharing that advances the evidence base for the therapeutic community model in Canada

# Ideal Candidate

## Education and Registration

- Master's degree or doctoral qualification in social work, psychology or a comparable qualification directly relevant to Eli's Place's therapeutic program
- Registration in good standing with the relevant Ontario regulatory college

## Clinical Experience

- Sustained clinical experience working directly with people living with serious mental illness, including schizophrenia, schizoaffective disorder, bipolar disorder and major depression
- Experience in residential, community-based or long-term care settings is strongly preferred
- Candidates whose experience is primarily in acute or crisis-oriented care should be prepared to speak to how that experience translates to a long-term, voluntary, recovery-oriented model

## Clinical Leadership

- Experience hiring, supervising and developing regulated health professionals across disciplines
- A demonstrated approach to clinical supervision that is collaborative and growth-oriented rather than hierarchical
- Experience developing clinical protocols, programs or standards — not only delivering within frameworks established by others

## Clinical Judgment and Risk

- Familiarity with the regulatory environment governing mental health services in Ontario
- Understanding of clinical risk in the context of a voluntary, non-institutional residential setting where the default is openness and trust rather than restriction and control
- Ability to hold therapeutic intent and safety in balance when they come into tension
- Sound professional and ethical judgment in complex clinical situations

## Alignment with the Model

- Genuine openness to or familiarity with the therapeutic community model and non-institutional approaches to recovery
- Recognition that clinical leadership at Eli's Place is exercised from within the life of the community, not from a removed position
- Willingness to work on-site and be present as a full participant in the daily life of the Eli's Place community — this is not a role that can be performed remotely or at a distance from the people it serves

## Compensation

The salary range for the Clinical Director is \$125,000–\$155,000, commensurate with experience and qualifications. Eli's Place offers a competitive health and wellness benefits package including extended health and dental coverage and access to an Employee Assistance Program. The Clinical Director will receive four weeks of vacation annually.

Eli's Place is committed to the ongoing professional development of its staff. College registration fees are paid by the organization where registration is a condition of employment, and professional development is supported through a dedicated organizational fund.

Compensation at Eli's Place reflects both the financial and non-financial value of the work. This is a small founding team building something that has never existed in Canada, on a 600-acre property where the daily work environment is unlike anything available in an institutional or urban clinical setting. The Clinical Director will work closely with a committed Executive Director and an engaged board, with genuine autonomy to shape the clinical program. For the right person, that context is as much a part of the offer as the salary.

## How to Apply

Eli's Place is committed to equity, diversity and inclusion. We encourage applications from individuals of all backgrounds and identities and are committed to a fair and accessible hiring process.

To apply, please submit a résumé and a cover letter addressed to Dr. Chris Joseph, Executive Director. Your cover letter should speak to your relevant clinical experience, your understanding of the therapeutic community model and what draws you to Eli's Place specifically. The substance of the cover letter is an important part of the screening process.

Applications should be submitted by email to Ms. Annette Smith, Eli's Place Administrator, at [annette@elisplace.org](mailto:annette@elisplace.org).

**The posting closes June 22, 2026 at 5:00 PM ET.**

Only candidates selected for an interview will be contacted. We thank all applicants for their interest in Eli's Place. In accordance with Canadian immigration requirements, priority will be given to Canadian citizens and permanent residents.

Candidates should ideally be available to commence employment prior to September 1, 2026.