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Group gives \$411,133 for mental health programs

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QUISPAMIS • MindCare New Brunswick awarded \$411,133 in funding Saturday to various mental health programs throughout the province.

MindCare is a committee of the Saint John Regional Hospital Foundation that helps fund community mental health initiatives.

The announcement was made at the complex in Quispamis, following the Investor's Group Skate to Care event where \$55,201 was raised for MindCare.

The funding was directed to treatment programs, professional development, and research in the mental health field, and was spread across 20 recipients.

The \$411,133 is a result of MindCare's various fundraising initiatives throughout the year.

Jean-Marc Poirier, chairman of the MindCare committee, said the group is finding it easier to raise money as the understanding of mental health issues increases through initiatives like Bell Let's Talk.

"The problem is mental illness ... there's always been a stigma attached to it. It's always been more difficult to raise money for these types of causes because it's not bricks and mortar, if you will. If somebody's raising money for a hospital, where you can see it's tangible, it's so much easier," he said.

"A lot of people have an issue, but they don't say anything. So they suffer in silence. But more people are coming out and because of that I think we're able to raise more funds, which is fantastic because there's such a need."

Recipients are chosen by the MindCare committee from a pool of applicants each year, Poirier said.

"We always get applications amounting to much greater than what we can offer," he said.

A number of Saint John organizations received funding Saturday, including the Saint John arm of the Canadian Mental Health Association-New Brunswick, which received \$18,113 for its

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