Adam's Story

as told by his father, with October 2026 update from his mother

Adam is a young man living with both addiction and mental illness. His father wrote to Adam's doctor not with anger, but with desperation -- a detailed account of what the family endures every day, and what the system cannot seem to see.

Adam barely eats. He sleeps from ten at night until mid-afternoon. He takes knives from the kitchen drawer to his room; his mother has had to hide them all. The family has found fresh cuts on his wrists. He has overdosed twice in their home, and four or five more times on the street. He talks to himself, once called 911 convinced someone was trying to kill him, and can turn verbally abusive in an instant. Government support money vanishes into drugs within days of arriving.

And yet -- when Adam was on his full course of prescribed medication, his father writes, "for the first time in years" he was starting to socialize and participate in his life. When two of those medications were reduced, he fell backwards into the darkness again. Treatment works. The problem is keeping him in it.

His father's letter ends with the sentence that should haunt every policymaker in this province: "I cannot wrap my head around how he can make any prudent, positive decisions for himself based on how he behaves, his addiction and mental health. This will undoubtedly lead to his death. The system that is available to him right now has failed him."

Adam's story is still being written. His family shares it because a system that waits for Adam to choose treatment -- when his illness has taken his ability to choose -- is not respecting his autonomy. It is abandoning him.

Update from Adam's mother, October 2026

Adam was bailed out of the East Correctional Facility in Lindsay. He had breached his house arrest on September 2nd -- he wasn't thinking, just walked out of the house because he thought he could go get wings. He didn't remember he was under house arrest. That's the severe mental illness.

While he was incarcerated, Adam was badly assaulted: two eyes swollen shut, a broken arm that required surgery -- a plate to hold the bones together. The care inside was not the best. He kept telling the nurse his arm was still bleeding, and nobody came to look at it. It wasn't until the next nurse came on shift and actually listened that someone changed the bandage. By then, the damage was done.

And when they released him? No medication. No direction. No follow-up. Nothing to tell him he had to continue his meds.

Now that Adam is out, we can see how badly infected his arm is. His mother had to take him to Lake Ridge hospital -- the doctor took one look and said, that's definitely infected, you need antibiotics. Adam sees the surgeon on October 7th to have the staples removed -- but that arm has to heal first, or it will split right open.

Now that he's back in the community under house arrest, he gets to continue with his psychiatrist for his mental health and addiction. But it is constant supervision -- making sure he takes his medication, monitoring how his arm is healing. As a mother, you do your best to assist and provide the best care possible when your loved ones can't, due to lack of insight.

In his mother's words: "We need people to recognize -- we need the Minister of Health to recognize -- that changes need to be made, so our loved ones get the necessary treatment to become stable."