

Andrew's Story

Andrew Bryenton was a bank manager, married with children. When he became ill and went off his medication, he lost his job and his family. Unmedicated, in the middle of winter, he got on a plane to Ontario to find them -- and ended up wandering the streets of Toronto with no coat and no shoes.

From Prince Edward Island, his mother Marlene started a social media campaign: help me find my son. He isn't dangerous -- he just doesn't know what he's doing.

What followed was a year-long ordeal no family should endure. Marlene obtained three Form 2s from three different justices of the peace. The first two hospitals held Andrew for 72 hours and discharged him as "fine." CAMH kept him about three hours and discharged him at 2 a.m. -- no money, ragged clothes, nowhere to live. Police who spotted him could do nothing; he was an adult, and he told them he was happy living on the street.

After months of public outcry, Andrew was hospitalized. Marlene's premier called Ontario's premier, and Andrew was transferred home to P.E.I., where he received months of sustained care.

Today Andrew lives on his own. He's back to bowling. He runs marathons. He visits his parents every week for dinner. He still can't work -- but he is doing really well.

In Marlene's words: "Why can't we have more success stories? Our laws and mental health act need serious reform."

Andrew's story also changed law: Prince Edward Island had no community treatment orders until Marlene's campaign. Her petitions -- more than 11,000 signatures -- helped bring CTOs into P.E.I.'s new Mental Health Act.

Shared on our Instagram