



Community Outreach Centre Evaluation Findings

January 2020 – March 2022



Evaluation Approach

- Documentation review
- Client interviews
- COC staff survey
- COC staff focus groups/interviews
- COC partner survey
- COC partner focus group

Clients Accessing the Centre:

- # of people accessing the Centre has steadily increased since it opened
 - from 27 to 175 unique people per month
- Majority tend to be male – about 60%





Client Interviews

- 15 client interviews
 - 10 identify as male
 - 5 identify as female
- How long been going to the Centre:
 - 8 – since it opened in January 2020
 - 5 - between 5 to 13 months
 - 2 - less than 1 month

Client Interviews

Services Accessed/Used:

Warming centre – 15	Laundry facilities - 7
Coffee and snacks – 15	Addiction support – 7
Connect with staff - 15	Mental health support - 7
Bathrooms - 15	Social services support - 6
Help with housing - 15	Help with food – 6
Socialize - 14	Transportation support - 5
Wi-Fi - 14	Help connecting with other services – e.g., PEERS Alliance, JHS, Victim Services, Soup Kitchen, etc. - 5
Emotional support - 10	Hygiene supports and other necessities – 5
Lockers - 9	Harm reduction supplies - 4

Client Interviews



- All interviewees are comfortable with staff and feel comfortable coming to the Centre
- 14/15 would go to staff if they had any issues or concerns or needed some support

“...they have set up a safe space which has made our lives so much easier...” (Interviewee)

“...were able to give me the support I needed...it saved me...would be devastated if it wasn't here...” (Interviewee)

Client Interviews

Challenges/Issues:

- People using bathrooms as an injection site/to take drugs – spending a long time in the bathroom and leaving it unsafe for others – 10
- Lack of consistent rules/regulations – need to ensure all clients receive the same treatment – 6
- Stigma – centre has a bad reputation – drugs, drinking, fighting, police presence, etc. – 6
- Long wait times to access services – e.g., housing, mental health, addictions, etc. – 5

Client Interviews



Suggestions/Needs:

- More bathrooms or better bathroom monitoring – 12
- Showers – 10
- More computers – 7
- More security – to prevent people stealing stuff from lockers, storage and laundry - 7
- More social/support programs and have them located at the Centre – housing, mental health, health, medical care, life skills, education, counseling, etc. – 7
- More social programs/activities – e.g., games, music program, exercise equipment, chess, crafts, art, holiday events, etc. – 5

Client Interviews

Suggestions/Needs:

- Quiet space/place to rest – quiet room with some cots or reclining chairs for those who want some quiet time – 5
- Staff need training and experience working with people dealing with poverty, homelessness, behavioral issues, trauma, addiction issues, and mental health issues – 5
- Help with employment – e.g., job search, writing resumes, interview skills, clean clothes, place to shower, etc. – 4
- More staff – not enough staff for the number of people access the Centre daily – 4

Client Interviews



Suggestions/Needs:

- Ensure the right people in the job - staff need to be understanding, empathetic, flexible, non-judgmental, supportive, consistent, fair, and caring – 4
- Help accessing food when living on your own or to take in the evening when Centre closes - community cupboard – 3
- More transportation supports – 3
- More washers and dryers – 3
- Kitchen facilities - 3

Client Interviews

Suggestions/Needs:

- Need a safe injection site, but it shouldn't be at the Centre – hard for those trying to stay clean and deters others from coming – 3
- Peer support – e.g., AA, NA, mental health, etc. – 3
- Extended hours/open 24/7 – especially during the winter – 3
- Better promotion of support services available – posters with addresses and hours – e.g., food bank, soup kitchen, Harvest House, etc. – 3

Length of time working at Centre:

5 - more than 18 months

3 - 13 to 18 months

1 - between 6 to 12 months

3 - less than 6 months

Staff Survey -

12 completed it



Staff Survey:

Most common services/supports requested by clients:



Help with shelter and housing

12

Help with food security

10

Basic needs supports – e.g., lockers, bathrooms, laundry facilities, computers, warming centre, etc.

9

Emotional support

9

Shelter support line

8

Advocacy

7

Staff Survey:

Most common services/supports requested by clients:

Addiction counseling/support	6
Harm reduction services	5
Mental health counseling/support	5
Social development/financial assistance	5
Help accessing other services and supports in the community	4
Family violence support/counseling	3

Staff Survey:	Strongly Agree	Agree	Disagree	Strongly Disagree
I was provided with adequate orientation and onboarding when I first joined the COC team.	1	4	6	1
I am clear on my roles and responsibilities as a COC employee.	2	7	3	0
I have a good understanding of the COC intake and referral processes.	3	5	4	0
I have access to relevant COC policies and procedures.	0	4	6	2
I feel valued as a member of the COC team.	5	3	1	3

Staff Survey:	Strongly Agree	Agree	Disagree	Strongly Disagree
I am satisfied with the level of support and guidance provided by COC management.	2	4	5	1
I know who to go to if I have any questions or concerns.	5	7	0	0
I am aware of the different services and supports offered by the host agencies of the COC.	3	4	4	1
I was provided with adequate professional development opportunities.	2	5	3	2



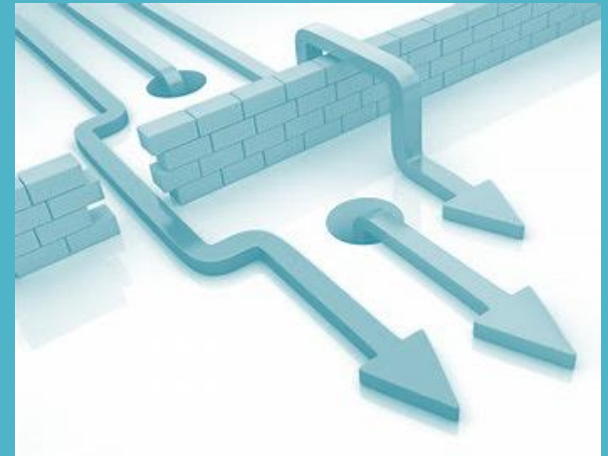
Staff Survey:

Challenges/Barriers to Offering Services:

Wait times to access services	11
Covid-19 restrictions	8
Inconsistent services/service providers	8
Client behavioral issues	7
Information sharing/communication with COC staff/host service providers	6
Management issues	5

Staff Survey:

Challenges/barriers to offering services:



Funding issues

4

Collaboration between COC staff/host services providers

4

Service demands

3

Intake process

3

Referral processes

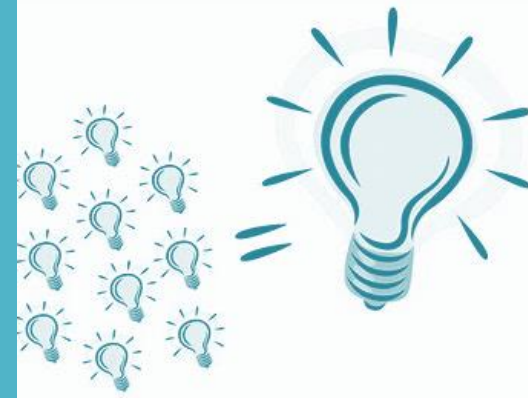
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Not enough staff

3

Staff Survey:

Suggestions for improvement:



Provide COC staff and host services with more opportunities to interact with and support each other – e.g., regular staff meetings, etc.

11

Renovate the facility to better meet the needs of clients – e.g., showers, private meeting spaces, group meeting spaces, etc.

10

Create and implement a communication plan to promote more communication and information sharing between COC staff and host service providers

10

Provide more orientation and onboarding support to new employees

9



Staff Survey:

Suggestions for improvement:

Provide more professional development opportunities to employees and host service providers

9

Review and refine intake and referral processes

8

Create and implement a safety and incident reporting plan

7

Review and refine the management system

7

Provide access to more community services and supports

7

Clearly outline the roles and responsibilities of all COC staff and host service providers

7

Staff Survey:



Other Services/Supports:

- Structured programs and activities for clients to help them learn life skills, take care of themselves and explore their interests (2 comments)
- More employment services and supports (2 comments)
- Transportation to the soup kitchen for those with mobility issues (1 comment)
- In-house counseling services (1 comment)
- More training and support for staff (1 comment)
- Social enterprise opportunities for clients (1 comment)

Staff Focus Groups – 4 participants

Challenges/Issues:

Lack of clarity of the purpose of the Centre – e.g., who do we serve, what services do we provide, what is our goal, etc.

Underfunded – limited resources to support clients – e.g., adequate staff, support services, clothing, food, hygiene products, transportation, etc.

No structure in place to guide and support staff – e.g., staff onboarding/training, staff roles and responsibilities, policies and procedures, client rules and regulations, referral/case management processes, etc.

Lack of clear and consistent leadership at both the local and upper SA level

Safety concerns for staff and clients – no clear safety protocols and not enough staff with the right training/experience to deal with the issues that arose

- **More staff and staff support**

Hire more staff and more staff per shift

Staff onboarding and initial job training/mentorship

Clear staff roles and responsibilities

Staff support and guidance – e.g., staff meetings, debriefing, opportunity to grow and be heard, etc.

More staff training - mental health support, addictions support, trauma, suicide, advanced first aid, etc.

More opportunity for advancement and staff benefits

Foster an environment where all staff are supported and given the opportunity to grow and be heard

**Staff Focus
Groups:**

Suggestions:

- **More leadership and organizational structure**

Clear description of our purpose – what we do and who we serve

Set policies and procedures and formal referral process and case management approach

Strong and consistent leadership – onsite management

Enhanced safety/security measures to protect staff and clients – e.g., security guard, panic buttons, quiet rooms, etc.

More onsite services – e.g., mental health, addictions, medical care, etc.

Expand services – e.g., employment, education, life skills, etc.

Expand/enhance partnerships to provide more services and supports

**Staff Focus
Groups:**

Suggestions:

- **More structured client services and supports**

Clear rules and regulations for clients

Follow up services for clients – check in with them once they have housing

Quiet space for clients to rest/relax– break out rooms for different needs

More programs/daily activities to give clients so structure/way to fill time – e.g., life skills, employment, hobbies, music, exercise equipment, etc.

Promote services and supports available and how to access them

More help with transportation to appointments/community supports

Increase hours of operation - 24/7

Safe injection site, but not at Centre

**Staff Focus
Groups:**

Suggestions:



Partner Survey:

- 9 partners completed the survey
 - 7 - offering services at the Centre between 13-18 months
 - 2 - offering services for more than 18 months

Partner Survey:

Most common services/supports partners have directly provided to clients or helped clients access:

Help accessing other services and supports in the community

6

Help with shelter and housing

5

Help with food security

5

Advocacy support

5

Harm reduction services

4

Partner Survey:

Most common services/supports partners have directly provided to clients or helped clients access:

Transportation services	4
Shelter support line	3
Addiction counseling/support	3
2SLGBTQIA+ supports/connections	3
Education support/guidance	3
Basic needs – e.g., lockers, bathrooms, laundry facilities, computers, etc.	3



Partner Survey: <u>Satisfaction with areas of operation:</u>	Very Satisfied	Satisfied	Dissatisfied	Very Dissatisfied	N/A
The types of services/supports offered through the COC	0	5	3	0	1
The consistency of services/ supports offered at the COC	0	2	5	1	1
The client intake process	0	2	1	0	6
The referral process	0	1	3	0	5
The case management process	0	2	2	1	4
The ease with which client can access services at the COC	0	5	3	0	1

Partner Survey:

Satisfaction with areas of operation:

	Very Satisfied	Satisfied	Dissatisfied	Very Dissatisfied	N/A
The level of information sharing/communication with COC staff	0	3	5	0	1
The level of collaboration with COC staff	0	4	3	1	1
The level of support received from COC staff	0	6	2	1	0
The space provided at the COC to offer your services/supports – e.g., office space, groups space, etc.	0	5	2	0	2
Days/hours made available to offer your service – e.g., Monday afternoons, Tuesday mornings, etc.	1	6	0	0	2
The new COC location – 241 Euston St.	3	4	1	0	1

Partner Survey:

Benefits of partnering with the Centre:



Created/enhanced relationships with other service providers	8
Connected with some new clients – reached clients we might not otherwise have reached	7
Increased communication and knowledge sharing with other service providers	7
Increased our awareness and understanding of the diverse needs of clients and challenges they face	6
Increased awareness amongst service providers and clients of our organization and the work we do	6
Collaborated with other service providers to meet the needs of clients	5
Have a safe space to support clients and provide service	4
Feel more connected to the community	4

Partner Survey:

Challenges Offering Services/Partnering with Centre:



Covid-19 restrictions	5
Service demands	5
COC management issues	4
Changing locations	3
Turnover of COC staff	3
Client behavioral issues	3

Partner Survey:

Challenges Offering Services/Partnering with Centre:

Referral processes

3

Level of information sharing/communication with COC staff

3

Client file management system

2

Level of collaboration with COC staff

2

Managing the space – ensuring we have access to the time and space needed to support clients

2

Partner Survey:

Suggestions to improve services offered at the Centre:

Renovate the facility to better meet the needs of clients – e.g., showers, private meeting spaces, group meeting spaces, etc.

8

Clearly outline the roles and responsibilities of all COC staff and partners

8

Provide access to more community services and supports

7

Provide more orientation and onboarding support to new partners

6



Partner Survey:

Suggestions to improve services offered at the Centre:

Create and implement a communication plan to promote more communication and information sharing with partners

5

Review and refine the referral process

4

Review and refine the file management system

4

Provide COC staff and partners with more opportunities to interact with and support each other

4

Provider partners with more opportunities to support clients and the COC – e.g., more input into services/activities, more time and space to offer services to clients, etc.

4



Partner Focus Group – 6 participants

- The Salvation Army took on a big project to address a service gap – got the Centre up and running during a pandemic
- Provided a safe space for clients and helped them access housing and basic needs
- Provided partners with opportunities to connect with and provide services to clients



Partner Focus Group:

Lack of clarity of the vision and mission of the Centre – e.g., who do we serve, what services do we provide, what is our goal, etc.

Lack of community acceptance of the Centre – stigma, misinformation and genuine concern

Inconsistent leadership at both the local and upper SA level

Challenges/Issues:

Limited organizational and operational structure - e.g., policies and procedures, staff roles and responsibilities, partner MOU's, referral processes, case management, etc.

SA mission and mandate - not always in line with the needs of the population and the services partners provide – e.g., harm reduction

Partner Focus Group:

Suggestions:

Clear vision and mission – what is the Centre's focus and who does it serve

More collaborative approach – create care teams to share the work and responsibility

More structured referral and case management processes, and information sharing

Expand/enhance partnerships to provide more services and supports

Increase hours of operation – 24/7

Incorporate a trauma-informed care model/approach

Enhance community image/build relationships with neighbors – ways to engage neighbors and educate them on what we do

More staff and partner training opportunities

Safe consumption site near by

Provide easy and regular ways for clients to give feedback

More help with transportation

Partner Focus Group:

Suggestions:

Partner Focus Group:

Suggestions:

Clear rules and regulations for clients

Access to more basic living services – e.g., showers, places to rest/take a nap, green space, access food, etc.

More regular services onsite – e.g., mental health, housing navigator, nurse practitioner, addiction supports, harm reduction, etc.

Break out rooms for different needs – e.g., private counselling, group activities, classes, services/programs, etc.

More programs/daily activities for clients - e.g., life skills, hobbies, movies, music, field trips, yoga, mindfulness, etc.

Recommendations:

Continue to enhance and develop collaborative partnerships

Provide more opportunities for staff and partners to connect with/support one another

Create and implement a more formal communication plan that supports communication between staff, partners, and other key stakeholders, as well as includes ways for clients to share their thoughts and feedback

Hire more staff and provide staff with more support and opportunities – e.g., mentorship, onboarding, training, benefits, opportunities for advancement, etc.

