



**Canadian Mental
Health Association**
Northern BC
Mental health for all

ANNUAL REPORT 2022/23

Mental Health is a Universal Human Right

Mission Statement

The Canadian Mental Health Association (CMHA) Northern BC Branch exists to promote the mental health of individuals living within the Prince George and surrounding area and support the resiliency and recovery of people experiencing mental illness.

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PRESIDENT'S REPORT

The Canadian Mental Health Association of Northern BC continues to grow and expand with new programs and funding sources. Staff numbers increased during the past year and the organization has become more complex. This is good news but it also presents some challenges. With rapid expansion and growth, there is a need to be sure that existing programs and new programs have sufficient resources to operate smoothly and effectively. While we continue to look for new funding opportunities that fit within the parameters of our strategic plan, we also recognize that it is important to consolidate existing programs.

This past year we concluded the accreditation process with Imagine Canada. We have a few minor items to resolve in the area of Risk Management but we have been told by Imagine Canada that we will be reaccredited. Accreditation is always an enormous amount of work and I want to thank our previous Executive Director, Maureen Davis, for writing the accreditation report. I also thank our current Executive Director, Sarah Lloyd, for the follow-up work she completed with Imagine Canada.

The Board is planning to do extensive work on the CMHA of Northern BC bylaws, policies, and procedures. This work was begun before the onset of COVID but it was stopped given some of the challenges that the organization and the Board faced during the period of COVID.

I am grateful to our donors, volunteers, staff, managers, the Executive Director and funders for their support and work on behalf of the organization. Board members are included among volunteers and I appreciate the advice and assistance that Board members have given me during this past year. Our current Board members include: Jeffrey Wayow (Past President), Marlo Kawchuk (Vice President) Doris Fraser (Chair Finance Committee), Victoria Andrews (Secretary), Sydney Redpath, and Rob Rail. I count myself lucky to work with a dedicated and committed group of Board members. I want to single out Jeffrey Wayow, who will be leaving the Board. Since 2014, Jeffrey has been a volunteer and Board member for CMHA. His advice and knowledge will be missed.

The CMHA of Northern BC faces challenges in the year ahead but I believe we can move forward as an organization and that we will continue to do an effective job of delivering service, creating opportunities, and advocating for mental health in Northern BC.

Glen Schmidt

President, CMHA of Northern BC

EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR'S REPORT

As a new ED for CMHA-NBC I had the honour of jumping off from Maureen Davis's work for the last six months of the fiscal year. The latter part of the year has seen increased programming

While diminishing as a public health concern, COVID recovery for the agency has continued. We will be forever cautious about the protection of our staff and the people we serve; our measures have been cautious.

Efforts in 22/23 focused greatly on the implementation of a partnership with Active Support Against Poverty in the delivery of the First Avenue Supported Housing project, now called Nekoo. In the midst of management changes the work of providing a secure environment for our staff, as well as to assure ourselves of the best possible case management support for the residents was intense: as expected it eventually landed well. Our clients here have many complex needs and for some it is the first time in a long while that they have access to a care relationship and access to mental health support. The opioid crisis has impacted our residents significantly. Our staff lean in to the harm reduction care required as part of their day to day work. We have seen some wonderful outcomes, have experienced a lot of learning, and are looking forward to the continuing strengthening of the work. The program has had four managers in one year.

The Wellness Centre, under Cheryl Young's thoughtful stewardship has seen a full recovery. The activity schedules are full on a monthly basis and vocational support opportunities have significant uptake. The Recovery College is situated out of the Wellness Centre, and once again, under Cheryl's care has a thriving core group developing educational materials.

Shirley Hogan has continued to provide robust Public Education workshops via a hybrid approach to service delivery. There are partners who have asked for in-person classroom training, and some who have requested virtual delivery. The range of deliveries has included sports teams, Indigenous communities, agencies who deliver social care services, as well as for-profit business customers.

The Food Security Co-ordination position in Quesnel has welcomed Jennifer Reed into the role. She has been able to develop an Advisory Committee, and strengthen a coalition of passionate stakeholders to create a platform for this care in the community. There is an expanded vision, and many opportunities for augmenting and improving.

A great deal of effort went into a Northern Health bid to become the host for a Sobering Centre operation new to Prince George, but we were not the successful proponent. Other bids have gone out for additional potential projects and programs, and the hope is that over the summer we will see some of those opportunities land.

Two Rivers Catering (2RC) under Allen Zgaga's management has continued to flourish. The customers who came for service during COVID have stayed on with the enterprise, and a new contract with Aboriginal Housing has recently been signed. Prices for meals had to be increased slightly due to costs, but the company still offers nourishing food, at very reasonable prices to a variety of social care settings. 2RC now employs more staff and now has three Chefs.

The staff, volunteers and management employed by your agency are heroes. It has been a pleasure to work alongside them this last six months.

Sarah Lloyd, ED

PROGRAM MANAGER REPORTS

My name is **Amanjot Kaur**, and I started my journey at CMHA as a Program Manager on September 5th, 2023. As a Program Manager, my main responsibilities include overseeing the ESW/Outreach Team, Life Skills Outreach Housing, and New Directions Housing programs. I work closely with my amazing team, who are all very skilled at what they do.

Since joining CMHA, I have been adjusting to my new role, but I am excited about the opportunities and challenges that come with it. I will bring a wealth of experience, energy, and a strong work ethic to the program, and I'm enthusiastic about sharing these qualities with my team.

Working with the CMHA team has been a great opportunity for me, and I feel grateful to be part of such a supportive and collaborative group. I believe that together, we can achieve great things and make a real difference in the lives of the people we serve.

Amanjot Kaur

Program Manager

My name is **Ken Bish** I just started as CMHA manager. I began on September 4th, 2023, and am now in charge of three brand-new initiatives that debuted after the fiscal year's end. I eagerly await reports for the programs' progress for the 2023-2024 AGM report. Additionally, I oversee the Second Chance Thrift shop and the Connections Clubhouse.

With help from a ton of incredible employees at CMHA, I'm doing my best to understand the needs of my programs' staff and clients. I'm excited to increase my knowledge base, contribute to the ongoing success of ongoing and new programs, and meet the needs of the staff and clients. New programs include LINKS, a third party support for individuals needing income assistance support, and in November an Independent Rights service. These bundled together will allow us to serve at least 110 new individuals.

Ken Bish

Program Manager

I am **Alex Ovien**, the Program Manager responsible for 1st Avenue, IT Department, and Finance Department staff. I took on this role in September 2023, succeeding the esteemed Harman Dandiwal, whose contributions were pivotal to numerous program milestones.

It is truly an honor to share our remarkable success story, having moved from the position of a casual resident support worker to my current role as a Program Manager within our organization. This journey stands as a testament to the opportunities for growth and advancement within our organization and underscores the dedication and commitment that both the staff and the organization hold dear.

During the 2022/23 fiscal year, our workplace at 1201 1st Avenue, or the National building, was officially renamed "Nekoo," which means "Our home" in the Carrier-Dakelh language. This meaningful name change was approved by the Council of Chiefs of the ancestral, traditional, and unceded territory of Lheidli T'enneh, on whose land our place of work is situated. This approval was granted on August 31st, 2023, signifying our deep connection with the local community.

One of our notable achievements this year was the opening of the Nekoo Hair Salon/Barber Shop. This initiative has been instrumental in providing valuable training and supervision for two of our residents. They were fortunate to learn from a certified stylist from Lux Academy here in Prince George. I'm delighted to share that one of the residents who participated in this training has successfully graduated and is now working at the salon under the supervision of a certified stylist. Moreover, the Nekoo Hair Salon/Barber Shop is open to the public, offering free haircuts on Tuesdays and Thursdays from 11 am to 2 pm weekly. This not only benefits the community but also creates skills and job opportunities for our residents at Nekoo.

Through our opportunity funds program, three individuals secured employment within our building, contributing to the kitchen operations during breakfast and maintaining the building's cleanliness. This not only provided them with job opportunities but also enhanced an overall safe environment for everyone in the building. In addition to this success story, one of these residents has made significant progress. They have secured full-time employment with Two Rivers Catering. This is a remarkable achievement as the experience gained from assisting in the kitchen played a pivotal role in securing this employment opportunity, and now looking to move out of the building, reflecting the positive impact of our programs.

Three residents have transitioned to independent living, securing their rental homes, a remarkable milestone in their journey toward self-sufficiency and stability. Also, two other residents have taken the initiative to pursue long-term treatment at Baldy Hughes, a choice that appeared to have brought transformative changes to their lifestyles and decision-making processes.

I want to take this opportunity to express my heartfelt appreciation to all staff for their dedication and hard work, providing stability in our programs and making these achievements possible. Together, we are making a meaningful difference in the lives of our residents and the community. Thank you for your continued commitment to our mission, and I look forward to our future accomplishments.

Alex Ovien

Program Manager

MANAGER OF EDUCATION AND PROJECTS

During the 2022 fiscal year the requests for education continued to grow and we are certainly a go to for mental health education in Northern BC. CMHA Northern BC has continued to offer training throughout the northern part of the province. This past fiscal our education program has provided education and training to both the public and private sectors. We have provided training on and off reserve as well as on many of the local campuses both virtually and in person.

Mental Health First Aid has continued to be a core offering but many of our custom trainings are being requested as well. During the last fiscal we had the opportunity to travel and train on a variety of topics. Overall, the requests for training continue to come in and we are continuing to offer training almost every week of the year. As the year progressed, we offered more and more training in person and started to move away from some of the virtual sessions, although we will continue to offer training virtually when requested. Last year many folks were excited to be back in face-to-face settings and it was a pleasure to teach to a full room!

We are continuing to look forward to attending more health fairs and events as in person events increase. This has historically been a positive and impactful way to share information and we look forward once again attending events regularly. In March of 2022 I was provided the opportunity speak at the Provincial Bottom Line Conference in Vancouver, it was an honor to be invited to speak as well as attend sessions as a guest.

We look forward to another year of growth, changes and challenges in the coming year. We would also like to thank the Board, Management and staff at CMHA for the on-going support for our Education Program.

Shirley Hogan,

Manager of Education and Projects.

Total Training Events: **43** *(counting 2/3-day courses as a single event.)*

-In PG: **19**

-Virtual: **15**

-Northern BC Area: **9**

Total # of attendees: **517**

Total approximate gross: **\$110,507.00**

QUESNEL FOOD RECOVERY COORDINATOR

The Community Food Coordination Program has been working with community partners to achieve increased access to food by identifying and breaking down the unique barriers people face. In alignment with the Systems Change grant funding through Vancouver Foundation, creating awareness about poverty and food insecurity in our community to reduce stigma and empower individuals is a key initiative. Opening a community-based food centre with a market-style food bank and mobile food market would lay the groundwork to meet the requirements of our funder, and the needs of our community.

In January of 2023, we assembled a Food Security Advisory Group representing a diverse group of partners. We developed a Terms of Reference to define our goals and objectives, which positioned us well when we discovered The Salvation Army, Quesnel's primary food bank, was preparing to close their doors. We successfully acquired a membership with Food Banks BC and worked closely with The Salvation Army on a transition plan to transfer equipment and food to CMHA. We opened Nourish Food Bank on June 27, 2023 and achieved our goal of maintaining a continuum of service for both the monthly food hampers and the lunch program.

Since June 27, 2023, Nourish Food Banks has registered nearly 300 households, served over 1500 lunches, and recruited over 30 volunteers.

In partnership with the Quesnel Farmers' Market, participating market food vendors donate remaining items to CMHA after every Saturday market. We have received well over 200 lb. of fresh produce since June. The produce is distributed along with nonperishable hampers at Nourish Food Bank, donated to other community groups, and used in the Nourish Lunch Program.

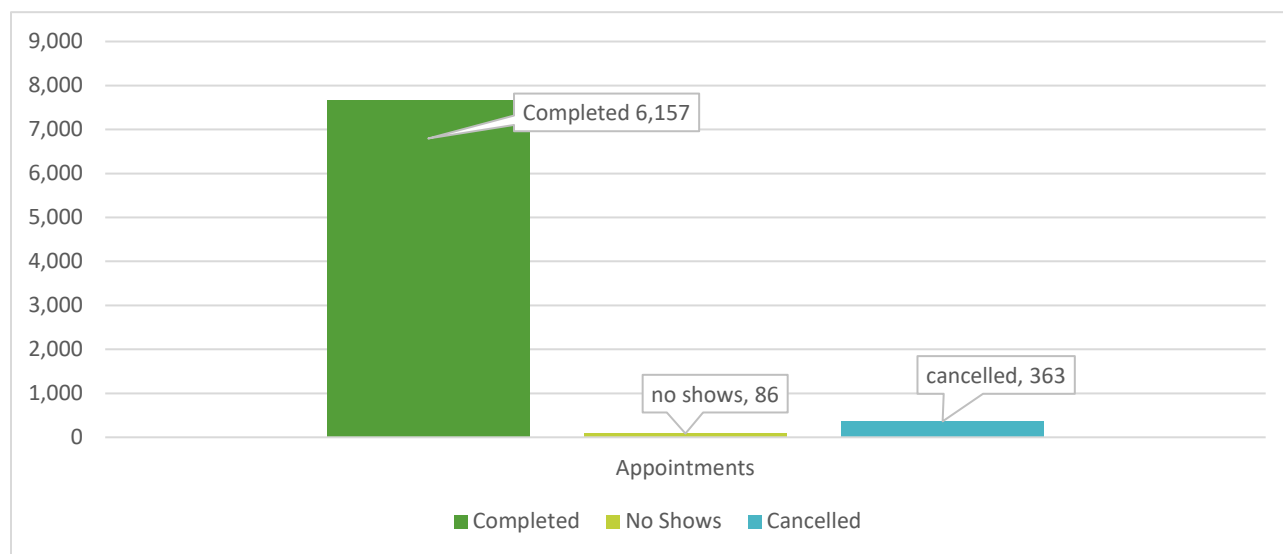
2023 was the third year for the Fresh Food Box Program, funded by West Fraser employees. Since 2020, CMHA has offered a monthly fresh food box, including a delivery service to meet the needs of our clients. We continue to offer this service as a separate CMHA program. Through a partnership with Save-On Foods and volunteer work, we've reduced costs by 23%. The savings has enabled us to begin a new initiative starting in October 2023 in partnership with the grade 8 and 9 students attending North Cariboo Christian School. Students will prepare soups for seniors once per month, distributed by North Cariboo Seniors' Council.

After operating Nourish Food Bank for two months, we have a better understanding of day-to-day food bank operations, and budgetary and staffing needs. Fundraising and developing policies and procedures are our next priorities. We are forming a fundraising committee to develop and implement a fundraising strategy and action plan, and we have been awarded funding by Food Banks Canada for policy development to apply for the Food Banks Canada Standards of Excellence Accreditation.

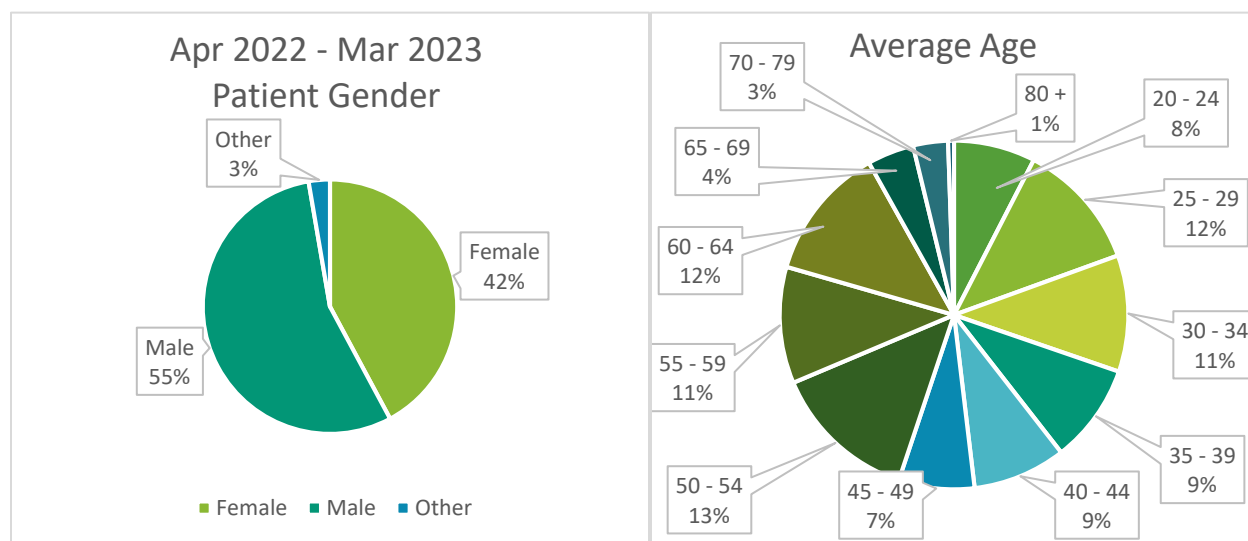
The next step for the structure of Nourish Food Bank is to develop and implement a plan to transition the pre-assembled hamper-style food bank to a market-style food bank. This new model will allow clients to choose the foods they need and enjoy, while reducing waste. It creates more opportunity to offer well-rounded nutrition with a focus on fresh produce, meat, dairy and baked goods. We hope to complete the transition by the end of 2024. By **Jennifer Reed**.

OVERVIEW OF STATISTICS ~April 2022 – March 2023~

Total Appointments all of our programs – 7,668



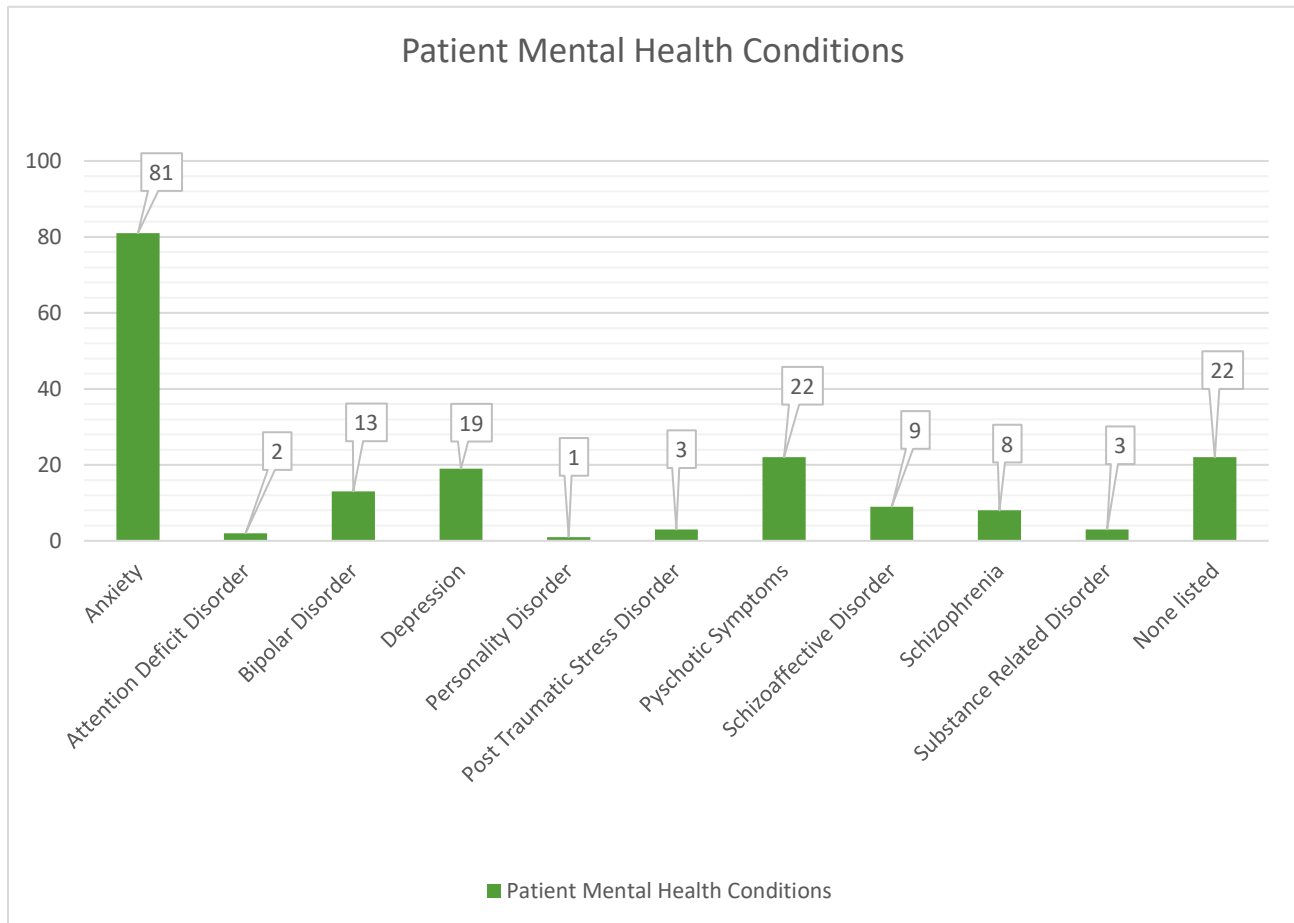
Clients Age & Gender



55% of our clients identify themselves as Male, 42% identify as Female, and 3% identify as Other.

The average age of our clients in these programs between April 2022 – March 2023 was 45 years old, as you can see in our pie chart we have a very diverse age group in our clients.

Reported Primary Mental Health Condition 185 Clients



We had 185 clients receiving ongoing contracted services through the fiscal year. Anxiety being the most common of our client's mental health conditions.

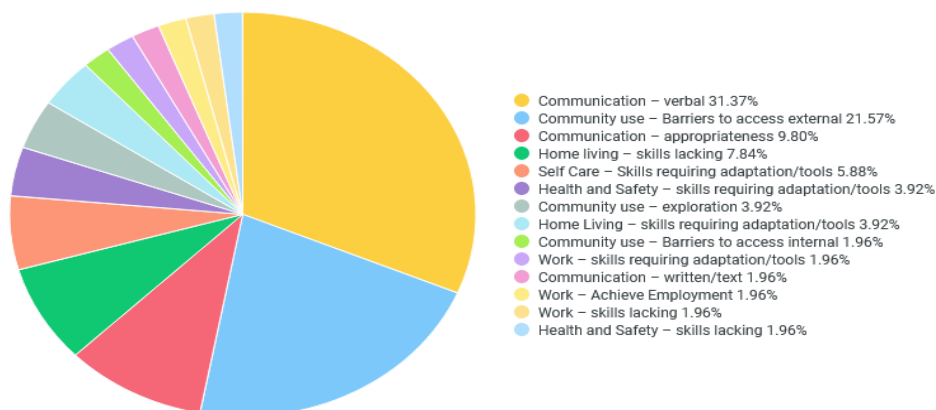
We are not yet able to pull a comparison of secondary mental health conditions, but the majority of our clients have two or more diagnoses and a significant percentage have coped by use of substances which is not reflected in this primary mental health conditions chart.

Client Objectives

Objectives established: 143

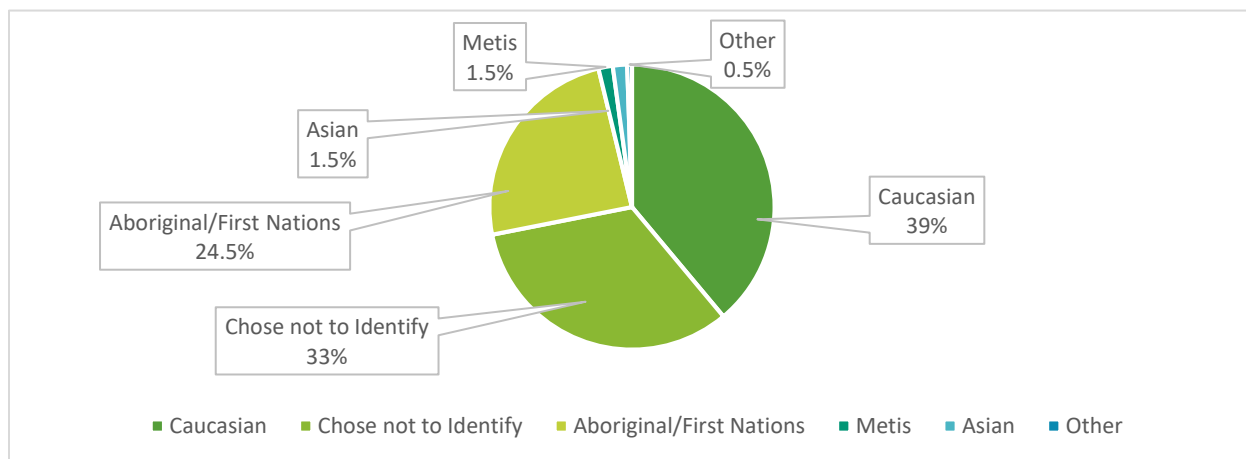
Objectives Achieved/Completed: 71

Patients by Goal



In general workers with their clients set between 2-4 major objectives, but we have expanded that to include up to 25 objectives to set, that the client will attempt to achieve over a 12-month period in hopes to meet their bigger goal. Objectives are usually smaller more achievable then goals as they work on that to build towards the clients current set goal which is usually bigger and will require multiple steps to get there.

Patients by Ethnicity



Caucasian: 72

Chose not to identify: 61

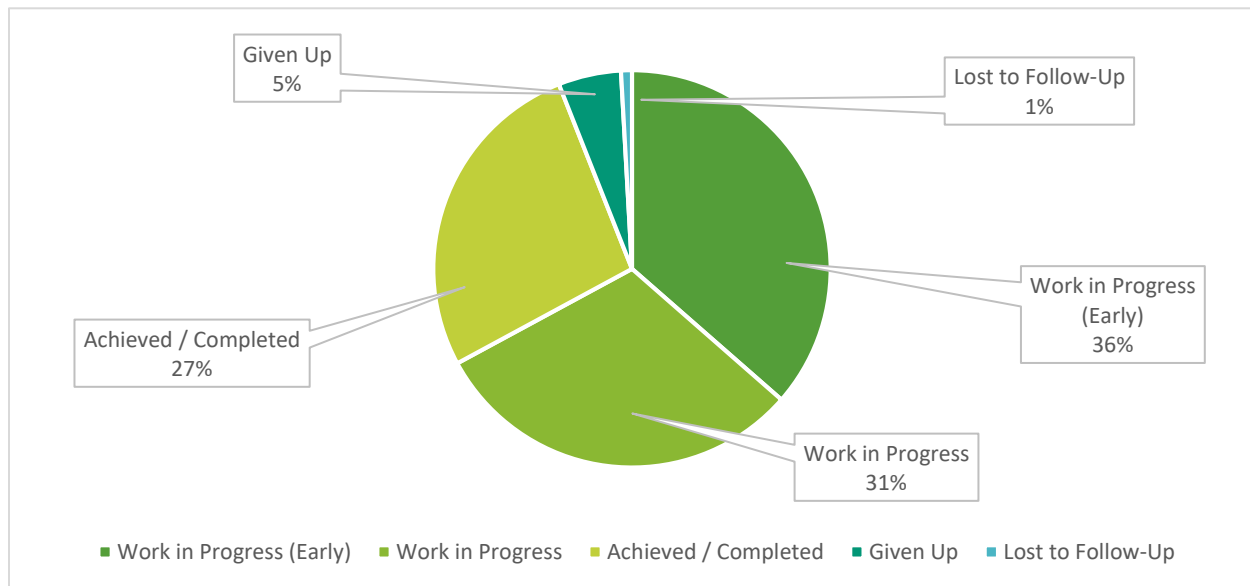
Aboriginal/First Nations: 45

Asian: 3

Metis: 3

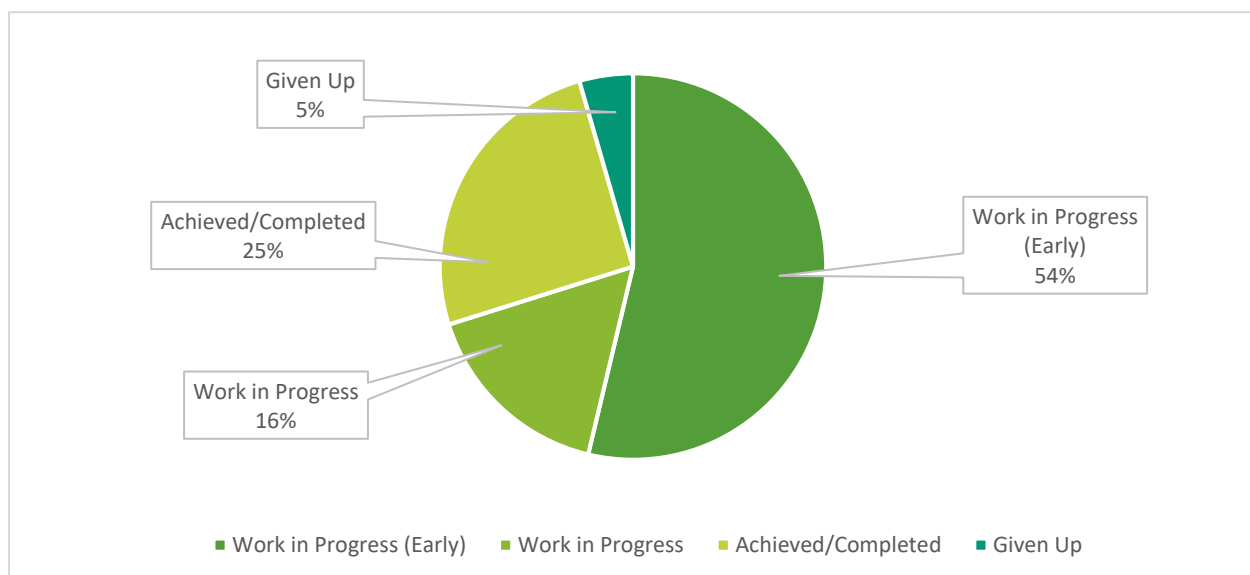
Other: 1

All Time Clients by Objective #1-4 Status



Our all-time objective status visually shows the percent of our client objectives that have either been completed, a work in progress or given up on or lost to follow up. This pie chart shows that the majority of our clients that set objectives, either achieve them or are still actively working on achieving them. It also shows that very few of our client's objectives are lost or given up on completely.

April 1st 2022 – March 31st 2023 Clients by Objective #1-4 Status



PROGRAMS



1201 First Ave Residential Support – ‘Nekoo’

In July 2023, our supportive housing program marked a significant milestone, celebrating its one-year anniversary. The journey began with the establishment known as the National Hotel, located at 1201 1st Ave in downtown Prince George. BC Housing transformed this facility into a supportive housing complex, offering shelter and support to individuals facing homelessness and addiction challenges.

Our first year was dedicated to moving individuals into the building in groups of ten, cultivating relationships, and developing and implementing engaging programs. We have maintained a focus on providing a safe and stable environment, significantly impacting the lives of those facing homelessness and battling mental health and addiction challenges. Thanks to 2 Rivers Catering, we provide breakfast and dinner to our residents. Residents actively participate in serving breakfast under staff supervision from 8:30 to 10 am, while 2 Rivers Catering continues to serve dinner at 4 pm. CMHA staff are present during dinner, further strengthening connections and interactions with our residents.

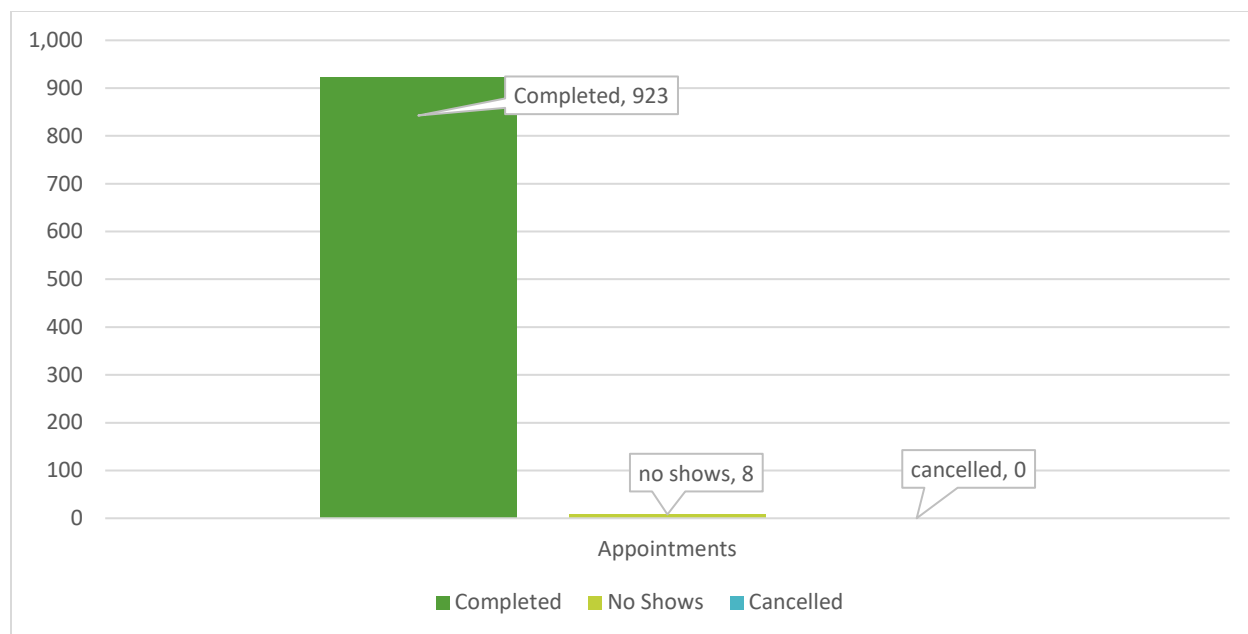
The operations and programming at 1st Avenue Supportive Housing are a collaborative effort between the Canadian Mental Health Association (CMHA) and Active Support Against Poverty (ASAP). 1st Avenue offers 26 units, including two wheelchair-accessible beds, to individuals in need of housing and therapeutic, trauma-informed support from our Residential Support Workers. 1st Avenue staff has played a remarkable role in meeting the diverse needs of our residents, including obtaining government IDs, setting up bank accounts, acquiring birth certificates, managing welfare and income assistance cheques, applying for educational programs, enhancing job readiness with resume building, assisting with housing applications, and facilitating referrals to community resources. This approach has fostered collaborative relationships and improved holistic wrap-around support.

There was a need to rename 1st Avenue to infuse a sense of ownership and pride among our residents, who were then encouraged to propose names and vote for one that encapsulates our shared culture and aspirations. Consequently, 1201 1st Avenue, formerly known as the National building, was officially renamed "Nekoo," signifying "Our home" in the Carrier-Dakelh language. This name change holds deep meaning, as it was formally approved by the Council of Chiefs of the ancestral, traditional, and un-ceded territory of Lheidli T'enneh. Our place of work resides on their land, and their endorsement was granted on August 31, 2023, reinforcing our strong connection with the local community.

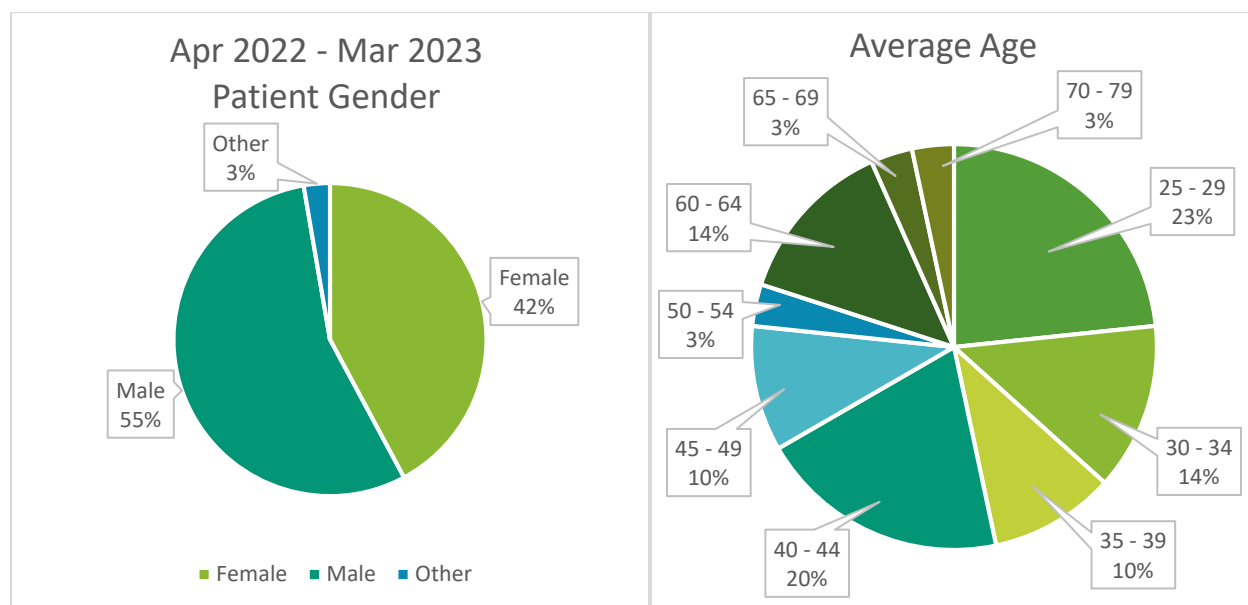
Our residents at Nekoo are also connected to various in-house life skills programs provided by CMHA, such as peer support and other life skills activities organized by our dedicated staff. Through the Opportunity Fund Program, we have created valuable employment opportunities within the building and partnered with 2 Rivers Catering to provide job opportunities for our residents.

Additionally, Nekoo proudly features a public Salon that offers free haircuts to the community on Tuesdays and Thursdays between 11 am and 2 pm.

Our commitment to ending homelessness has been renewed through inter-agency partnerships, focusing on transparency, trust, communication, and the efficient utilization of resources to enhance service delivery. Together, we work diligently to create a brighter future for all.



Total Appointments: 1,157



66.67% of our 1st Ave clients identify themselves as Male, and 33.33% identify as Female.

The average age of our clients in these programs between April 2022 – March 2023 was 42 years old, as you can see in our pie chart we have a very diverse range of ages in our clients.

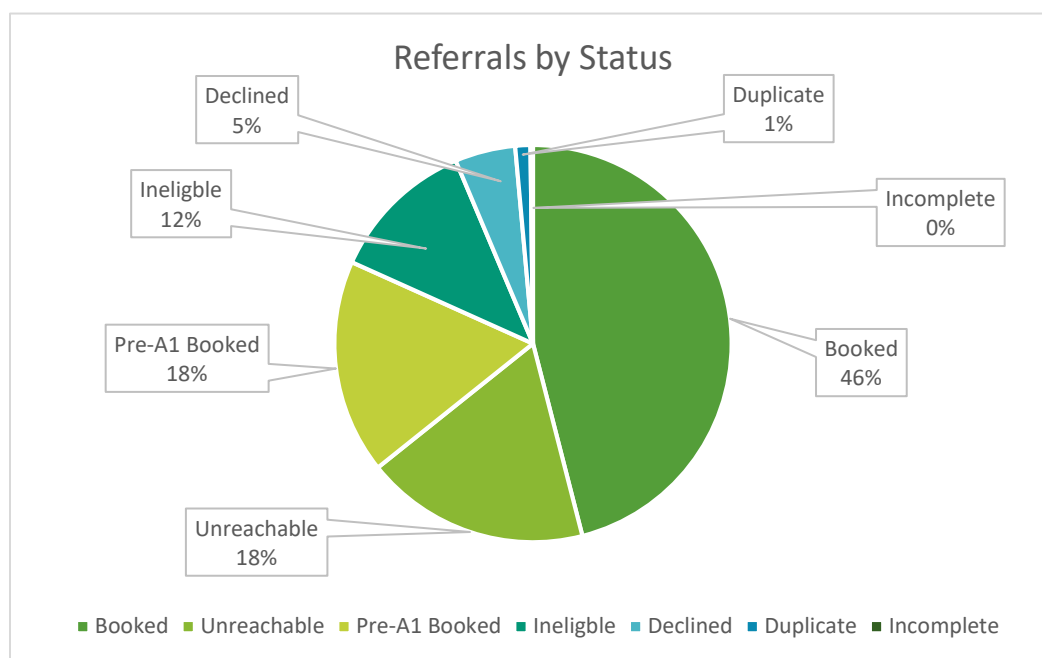
Bounce Back: Reclaim Your Health

Funded by Ministry of Health

Bounce Back continues to be a valuable provincial program providing phone coaching services to individuals who are experiencing mild to moderate anxiety/depression. This program is based on Cognitive Behavioral Therapy techniques and now serves those aged 13+. In the past this program was only available for youth 15+. There has also been a change with the referral process allowing other professionals like school counsellors and practical nurses to make direct referrals along with family doctors.

We serve the entire Northern Health region with a team of 2 Coaches and .4 Scheduler. This past year we did have the opportunity to do some in person promotion and one of the coaches travelled to Fort St John doing promotional work along the route. We have continued our virtual outreach and mail-outs to regional agencies and doctors as reminders about program services.

Referral numbers for 2022/2023 for Bounce Back: 487 total referrals



Booked – 224
Pre-A1 Booked – 85
Declined – 24
Incomplete – 1

Unreachable – 89
Ineligible – 58
Duplicate Referrals – 6

Our branch had the highest % of Bounce Back appointments completed, with 65% of our appointments being completed and signed. The other branches came in at 62%, 59%, 36% and 35% of appointments completed. Showing our Bounce Back program is operating quite efficiently.

CMHA Housing

MOSS HOUSE

Moss House nestled in a tranquil neighborhood, the CMHA of Northern BC runs a subsidized housing program catering to the needs of individuals with severe and persistent mental illness. Moss House is a 5-bedroom abode, stands tall as a beacon of hope for five men all year round. The residents enjoy a serene and secure environment where they can engage in friendly conversations with their neighbors and foster a sense of community. The house's warm and welcoming atmosphere creates the perfect ambiance for social and group interactions, providing opportunities for the residents to bond and share their experiences. Our two furry feline companions, Sasha and Charlie, thrive in this home, adding a touch of comfort and joy to the lives of the residents.

Over the past year, Moss has maintained a stable community of five residents, two of whom are still employed. This is a significant accomplishment for both the individuals and the community as a whole, as it demonstrates the effectiveness of the supportive housing programs offered by CMHA. The achievement is a testament to the resilience and determination of everyone involved and highlights the positive impact that supportive housing can have on individuals and communities.

Connections Wellness Centre

Funded by CFIF and Sales



This report highlights the key achievements, community involvement, and program developments of Connections throughout the past year.

Community Volunteers:

During the year, we were fortunate to have the support of six dedicated community volunteers. Their time, effort, and commitment have greatly contributed to the success of our organization. We extend our sincere gratitude to these volunteers for their invaluable contributions.

Vocational Placements:

Our vocational placements program experienced remarkable growth, offering 18 positions to individuals in our community. These placements resulted in 650 volunteer hours contributed by 17 dedicated individuals who received training and skill development opportunities.

Continued Programs:

Seniors Elite: Our Seniors Elite program has continued to provide essential services and support to our senior community members, enhancing their overall well-being.

Stitchers Wellness Corner: This program continues to be a source of comfort, creativity, and wellness for our participants, fostering a sense of community through various stitching and crafting activities.

Art Heals: Art Heals has remained a cherished program, offering artistic expression as a therapeutic outlet for individuals facing challenges.

PG Men's Shed: The PG Men's Shed program has maintained its commitment to providing a welcoming space for men to engage in meaningful projects and social interaction.

Floor Hockey: Our popular Floor Hockey program continues to promote physical activity and team spirit among participants.

New Programs:

Therapy Dog Visits: We are thrilled to introduce Eddy, our therapy dog, as a new addition, offering comfort, joy, and emotional support to our community members.

Chair Yoga: Chair Yoga is another exciting program designed to promote physical and mental well-being, making it accessible to all, including those with mobility challenges.

Ladies Group: Our new Ladies Group aims to empower and create a supportive network for women within our community.

Education:

During this fiscal year, the "Living Life to the Full" program was held at Connections Wellness Centre twice. This evidence-based program has played a crucial role in promoting mental health and well-being within our community.

Practicum Placements for UNBC Social Work Students:

We are proud to have provided practicum placements for two UNBC Social Work students during the year. These students played a significant role in the development of two Recovery College workshops:

"Sleep & You": This workshop focuses on sleep management and offers valuable insights to improve sleep quality.

"Anxiety & You": This workshop addresses strategies to manage anxiety, a common concern in our community.

In addition, the students also developed and facilitated the following programs:

Sip & Chat Program: A supportive platform for open discussions and social interaction.

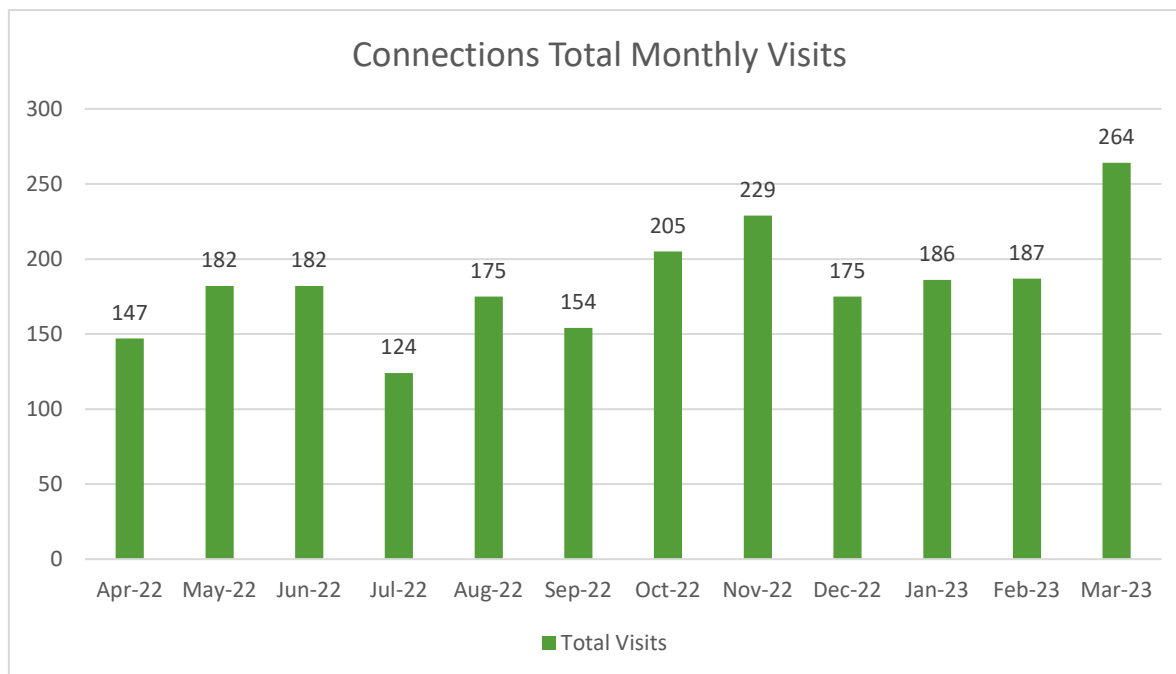
Relaxation Station: Offering relaxation techniques to manage stress and promote mental well-being.

Our partnership with UNBC Social Work students has been instrumental in expanding our service offerings and providing valuable learning opportunities for these emerging professionals.

We are proud of the progress and growth achieved over the past year. We are committed to our mission of providing support, fostering well-being, and building a stronger community. We look forward to another year of continued progress and community involvement.

Cheryl Young

Coordinator,
Connections Wellness Centre



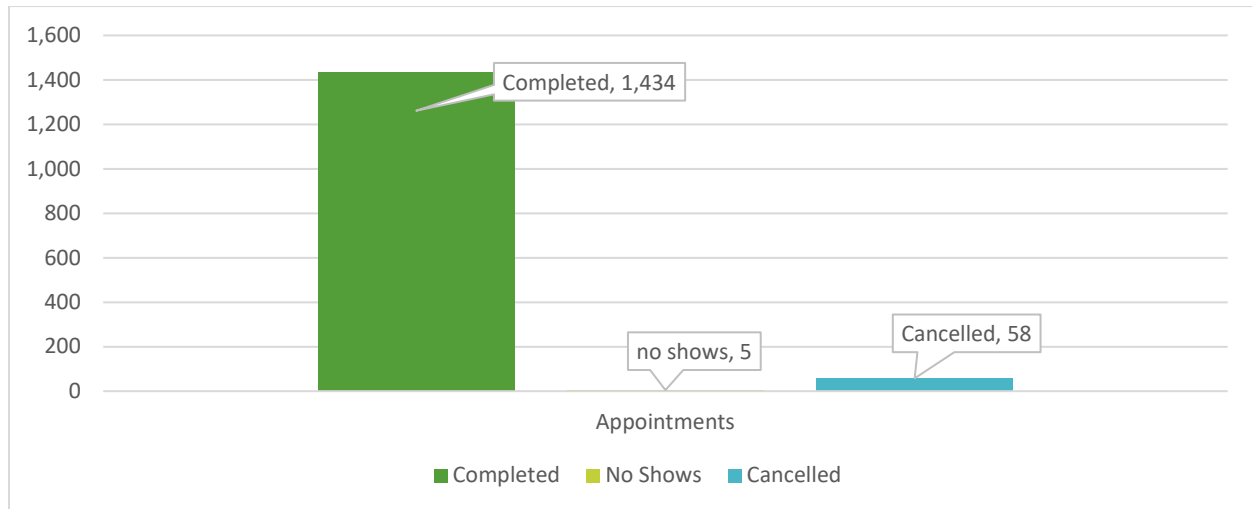
Employment Supports, Mosaic Employment Services and Outreach Funded by CLBC

The ESW/Outreach program, which is being funded by CLBC, managed to remain stable throughout the year, despite the decrease in demand for employment referrals. As a result, the outreach aspect of the work had to be expanded significantly. The primary goal of the program is to assist clients with neurological, developmental, and/or physical disabilities, who are also impacted by mental illness and/or addictions. This is achieved by determining the appropriate care and interventions that meet the unique needs and situational requirements of each individual.

The program has been successful in adapting its teachings to individuals with neurological and learning challenges, thanks to the hard work of the three ESWs.

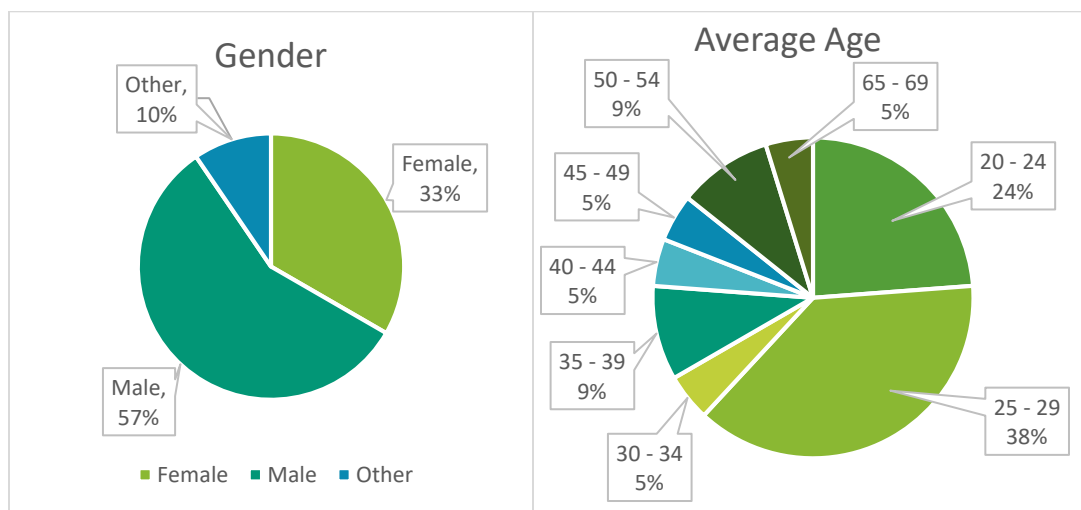
During the fiscal year 2022-2023, ESW provided valuable assistance to our clients, encompassing essential employment and educational services, as well as comprehensive outreach offerings. As a result of our dedicated efforts, three individuals were successfully enrolled in an educational assistance program at CNC, where they are presently continuing their coursework. Additionally, we are pleased to report that one client successfully completed the Living Life to the Full course, while another was able to secure a position as a janitorial staff member at CMHA during this period. We remain proud of the progress that our clients continue to make towards their respective goals, and we remain committed to continuing our efforts to provide them with the support and guidance they need to achieve success.

Employment & Outreach Support Appointments



Total Appointments: 1,515

Employment & Outreach Support Client Age & Gender

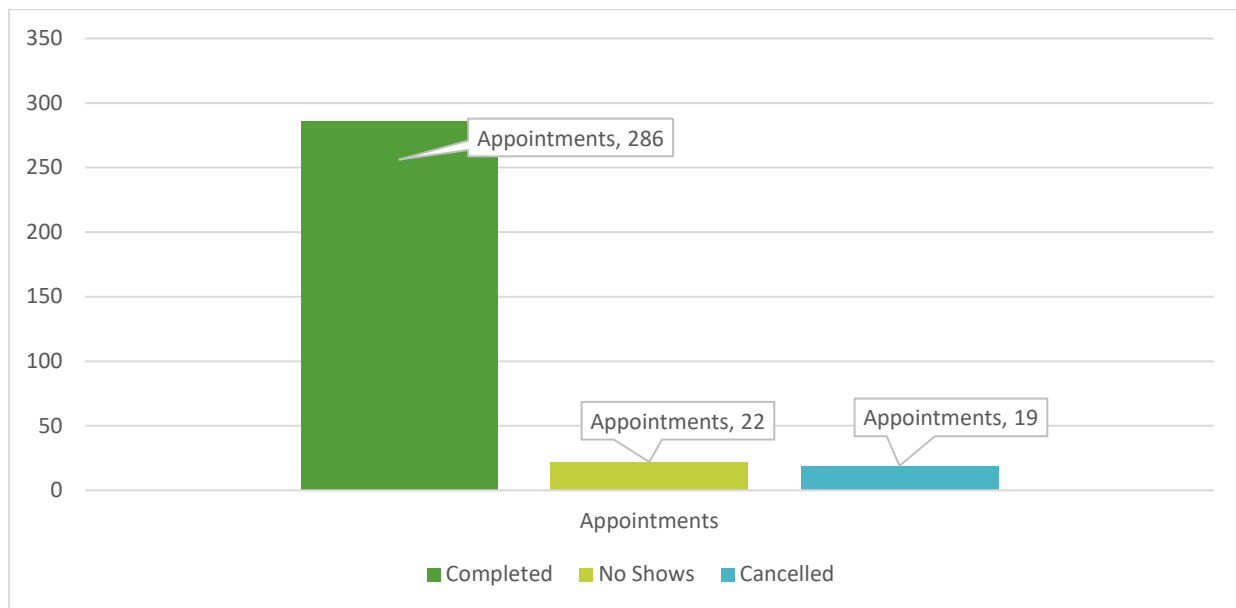


The average age is 33 years old

Forensics Life Skill Program Funded by Forensic Services

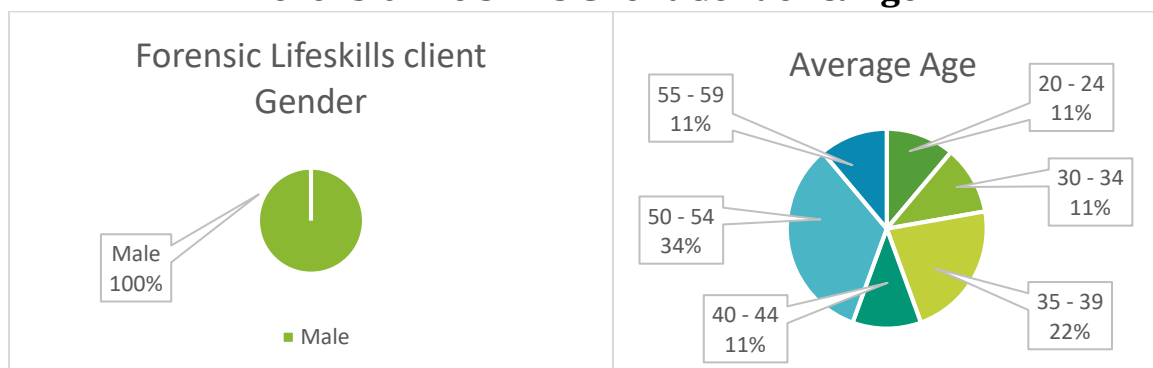
Our service via this contract came to a close on March 31, 2023. The caseload was returned to internal staff at Forensic Services. We were reassured that this was a result of a re-structuring of the Branch. We were able to re-position our staff member within CMHA.

Forensic Life Skills Appointments



Total Appointments: 391

Forensic Life skills Client Gender & Age



Average age: 42 years old.

Housing Outreach

Funded by City of Prince George and the United Way

Resource Housing Outreach is a 16 hour per week part time position. We assist people who are experiencing mental health concerns access safe and affordable housing in the community. We also assist seniors who are applying for Safer.

We have seen an increase in people coming in that can't afford their rent, in this case we help with finding them some short-term help through the HPP program.

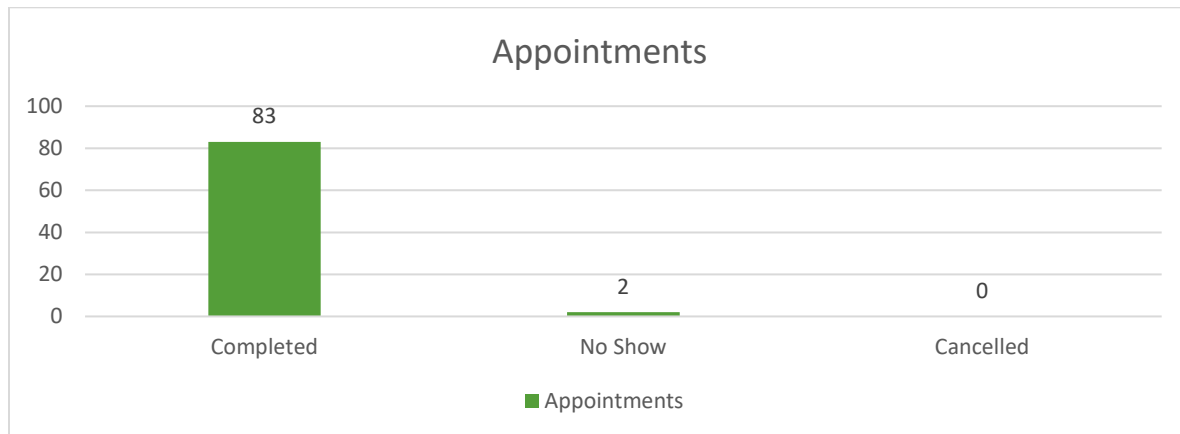
Rent prices have increased dramatically in the Prince George area, this has meant that it was virtually impossible to find affordable housing for people, which adds to our homeless population. Even a room to rent is more than the allowed 375.00 that is given for shelter allowance.

In the upcoming year we are hoping to start our Ready to Rent (Rent Smart) course.

This course PROVIDES THE FOLLOWING:

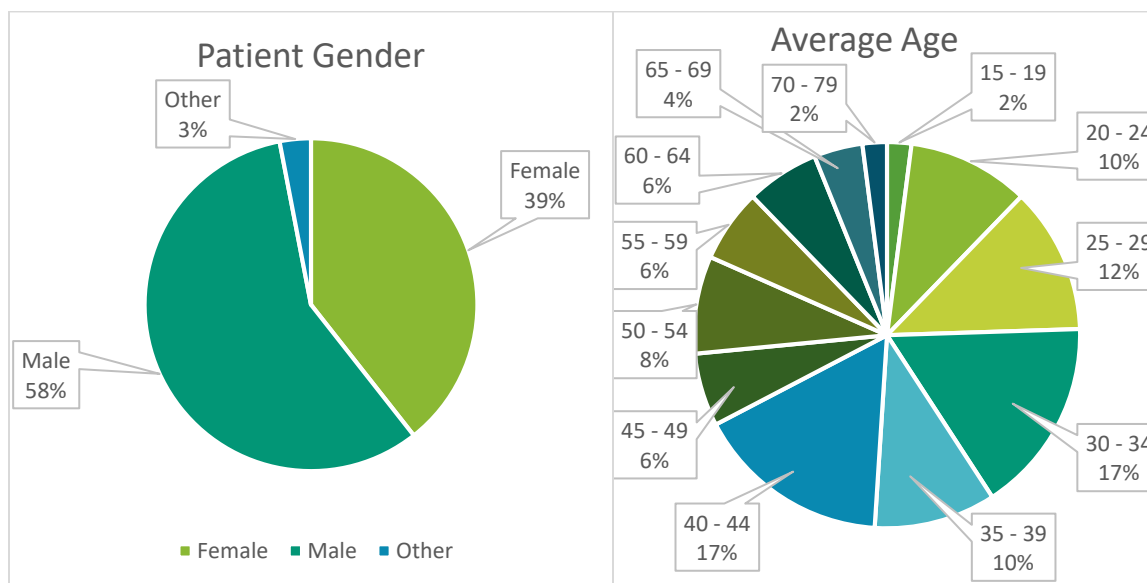
1. Tennant Rights
2. Landlord rights
3. Budgeting
4. Living effectively with others
5. Pest management
6. Communication Skills
7. Crisis Management
8. Maintenance do's and don'ts

Housing Outreach Appointments



Total Appointments: 85

Housing Outreach Patient Age & Gender



Average age: 47

Life Skills Outreach

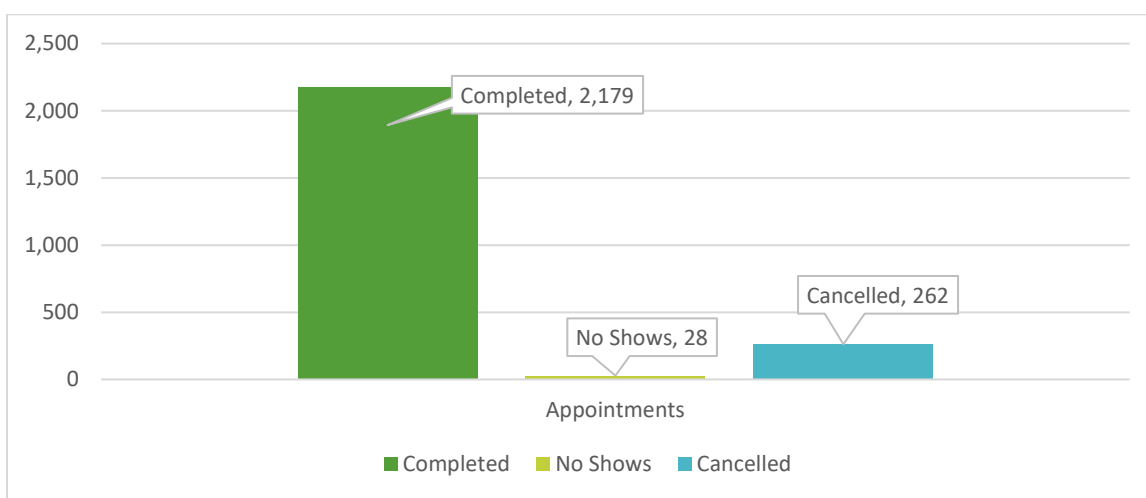
Funded by Northern Health

The life skills program is a crucial part of the CMHA of Northern BC's mission to support individuals with mental health and addiction concerns. The program delivers personalized support to help clients attain independent living within the community. The Life Skills team consists of four highly trained full-time staff members who are dedicated to providing outstanding services to clients.

The program accepts referrals from Northern health staff, family doctors, other agencies, and individuals who self-refer. Upon referral, the Life Skills team works closely with clients to identify their unique needs, goals, and aspirations. The team then creates a personalized support plan, which may include a range of services such as counseling, education, and life skills training. The Life Skills team is committed to providing support to clients for as long as needed. They are constantly monitoring their clients' progress, and adjusting their support plans accordingly.

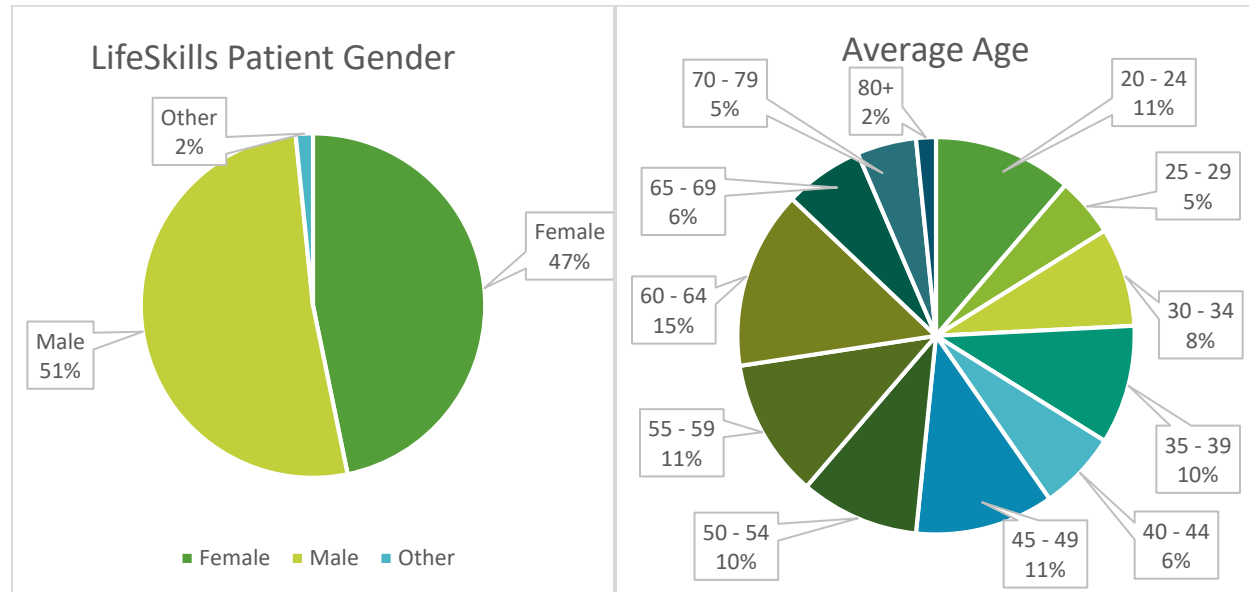
Our organization provides a comprehensive range of services, available every day of the week throughout the year. In the fiscal year 2022-2023, we facilitated the progress of 62 distinct individuals, each with unique objectives and goals that were tailored to promote mental health stability. Our suite of services encompasses a variety of areas, including budgeting, self-care, home maintenance, hygiene, communication skills, physical health improvements, and social support enhancement, among others. We work intimately with other support professionals involved in the lives of our clients, with the ultimate aim of helping individuals uncover the root cause of their presenting issues, such as social anxiety, generalized anxiety, depression, and so on. Our participation in case conferences with the individuals we serve is an integral part of the overall case planning process, whereby we can develop a comprehensive and cohesive approach to meet the needs of each client.

Life Skills Appointments



Total Appointments: 2,873

Life Skills Clients Gender & Age



Average age: 48 years old.

Little of This N' Little of That

The store reopened within Connections Wellness Centre, on April 1st 2023, with a Vocational training focus, run by six individuals, enrolled in Vocational Services with CMHA. The store was open on Wednesday, Thursday, and Fridays from 10am to 12:30pm. The store aims to provide our clients with Vocational training and experience to help them improve their skills and abilities, so they can not only go out and confidentially gain employment but also thrive in their position once they do.

NEW DIRECTIONS HOUSING

Funded by BC Housing and Residents

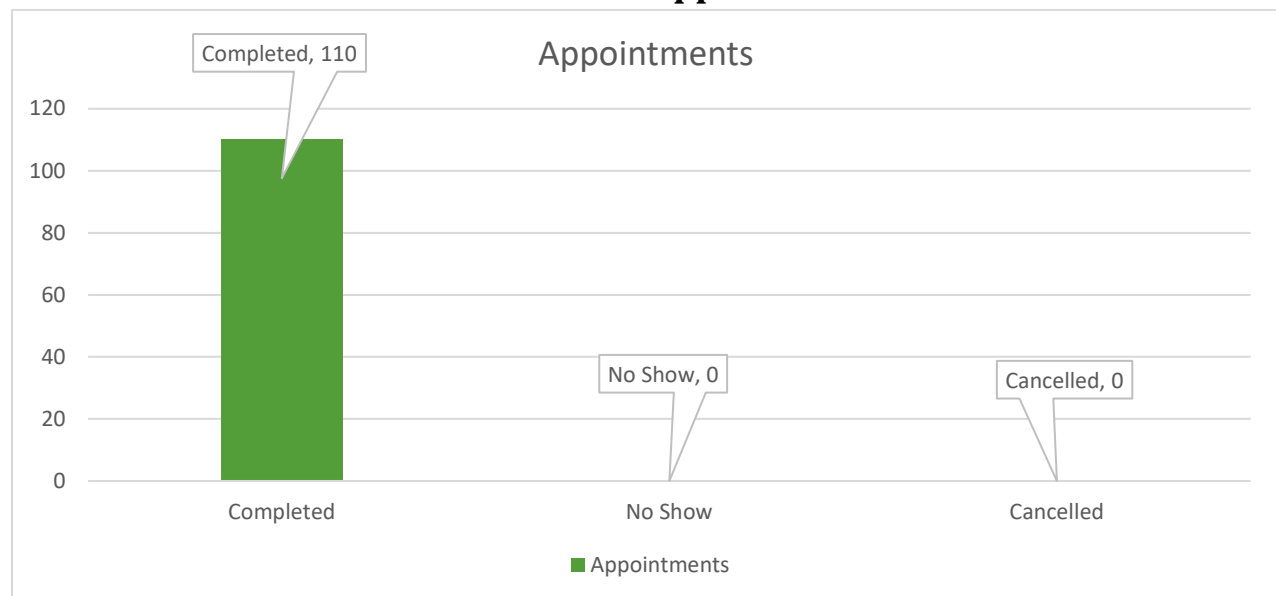
CMHA of Northern B.C. operates 19 BC Housing, subsidized apartments. These apartments are for persons with severe and persistent mental illness. These apartments are scattered throughout Prince George, allowing the residents to integrate with the community, it also supply's the residents with safe and affordable housing. Staff provides 5 hours per week to support this program.

The New Directions Role is:

1. Intake for applicants and to find housing that meets their needs
2. Develop connections with Landlords and tenants.
3. Advocate for their housing needs and repairs to the landlord
4. Submit all yearly evaluations/ rental increases to BC Housing

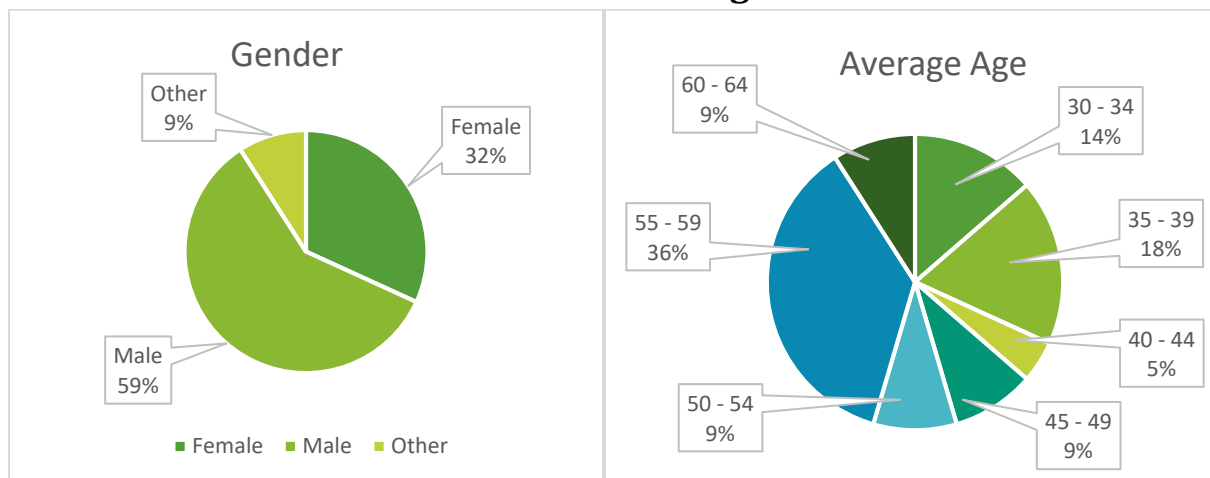
We had two individuals leave our program one because she moved in with her daughter, and one unfortunate death. We are still in discussion with BC Housing to ensure the safety of this program as the 30-year program contracts are coming to an end. As our program shows great success with our clients, we would love to see a new contract for more subsidized housing.

New Directions Appointments



Total Appointments: 110

New Directions Client Age & Gender



Average age is: 48

Peer Support Funded by Northern Health

Peer Support is a well-explored style of service delivery in which a peer with firsthand knowledge of the effects of mental illness or addiction on one's life offers guidance and support to someone else who is traveling a similar road to recovery. The **Peer Support Program** offers a range of in-office and community outreach services to assist people with mental health issues. The majority of our peer support efforts continues to have gone to people affected by the opioid crisis and the homeless population, though our services have expanded further to include the Prince George Regional Correctional Center, UNBC, and the Simon Fraser Lodge. The program has assisted **44** people with a wide range of needs. In our community, the issues of individuals who are homeless continue to cause division. With that, we continue to offer regular supports to those who are targets for considerable bullying and discrimination. All of our peer support workers have received their certification with Peer Support Canada.

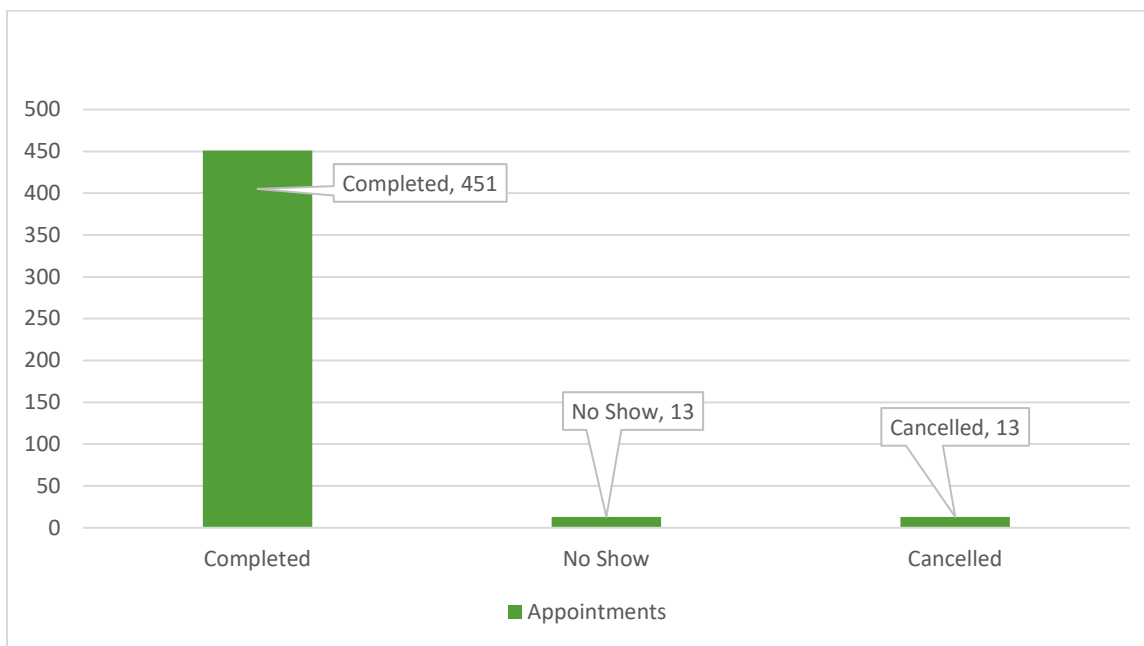
Peer Support Outreach is a dedicated program that offers peer support to people who have been discharged from a mental health institution and are now living on the streets or in a shelter. People who are released in this way are provided initial appointments, but receive little support. Unfortunately, this leads to poor medication compliance and little to no follow-up. The stability of folks who are frequently referred to with disparaging terms and have faced discrimination have been considerably aided by our programming. 13 of these people received our assistance during the fiscal year 2022-2023. With this population, peer support also frequently entails actively seeking out individuals on the streets.

Patients in the hospital's psychiatric unit can get help and community services from the **Positively Peer Program** and the **One on One Program**. CMHA peer support workers visit the unit 3 times per week and speak to 5-8 people on average, per visit. This continues to be a positive program and there are hopes of expanding the visiting days by 1 or 2 more days per week.

The **Keeping in Touch program (KIT)** offers phone support to those who have left institutions and could use a reassuring call once a week to ease the adjustment. Devin Sluchinski provided the main supports for this program. CMHA is actively working toward onboarding more volunteers to this program and expanding the demographics.

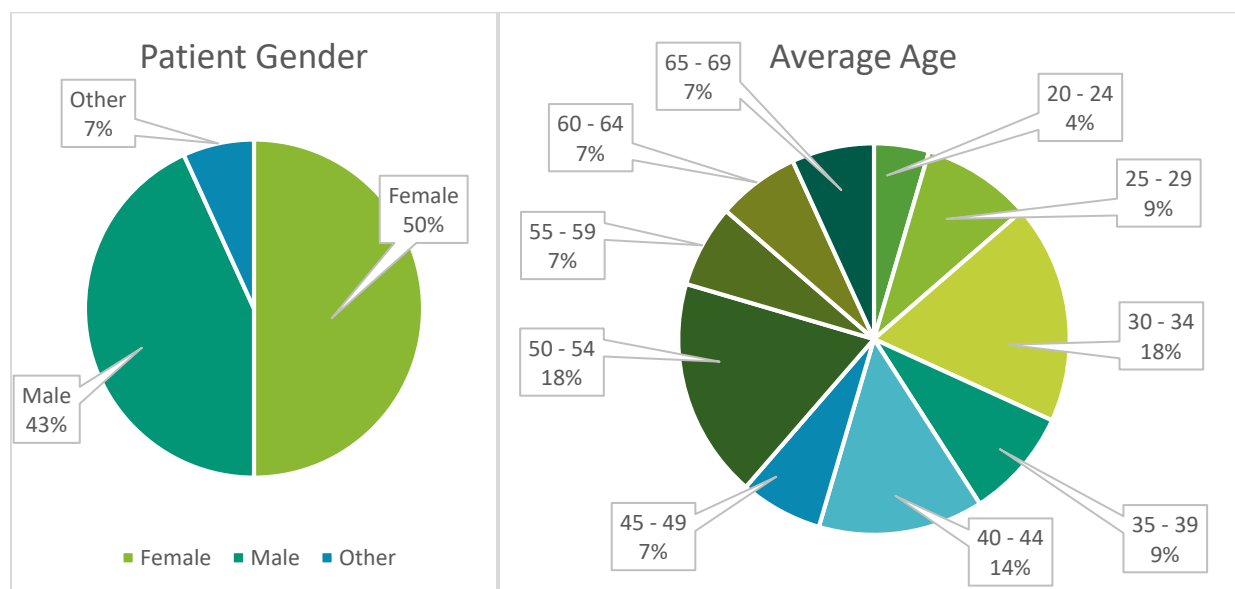
CMHA Newsletter called **"Bridging the Gap"** – formally called **"Peers Prospective Newsletter"**. Special thanks to Devin Sluchinski and Loanne Bannister who have taken the lead on publishing this newsletter in our 2022/23 fiscal period.

Peer Support Appointments



Total appointments: 527

Peer Support Client Age & Gender



Average age: 44 Years old.

Peer Support Northern BC

Funded by CMHA BC Division and Northern Initiative Development

As the Clinical Supervisor for the Northern Peer Program this fiscal year has been one of significant growth, enthusiasm, hurdles and success. The communities that are participating include Smithers, Alton and Haida Gwaii. Each community has approached their program in a way that encourages community engagement unique to their community's needs.

This can look a social event where Elders teach youth traditional ways. These skills and the connectedness between the generations has been significant for all those involved. There have been fun events as well so that people can come together and support one another as they have found that during Covid this was limited but now people are craving connectedness and it is an essential part of culture.

Another community has created weekly drop-ins where people gather and there is a health-related topic that is discussed and socialization occurs. These are like minded individuals who are now able to gather and support one another in a safe environment thanks to our program.

Accompanying individuals to appointment and social gatherings, groups and meetings is another way in which this program has benefited individuals. Having a support person who is familiar with the lingo and walking beside you can make the world of difference.

Feedback of the program in each community has been positive, having peers support each other has been very impactful.

Quesnel - Clinical Program

Funded by the Red Cross

Quesnel's Clinical program has continued to be consistently busy. Clients have the option to meet virtually, over the telephone or in person depending on their preference. Having these options allows people to keep their appointments, even if feeling under the weather which allows them to develop skills, heal and continue on their journey of wellness. We continue to meet people where they are at, non-judgmentally in an empowering and supportive environment that focusses on each client's unique strengths and resiliency.

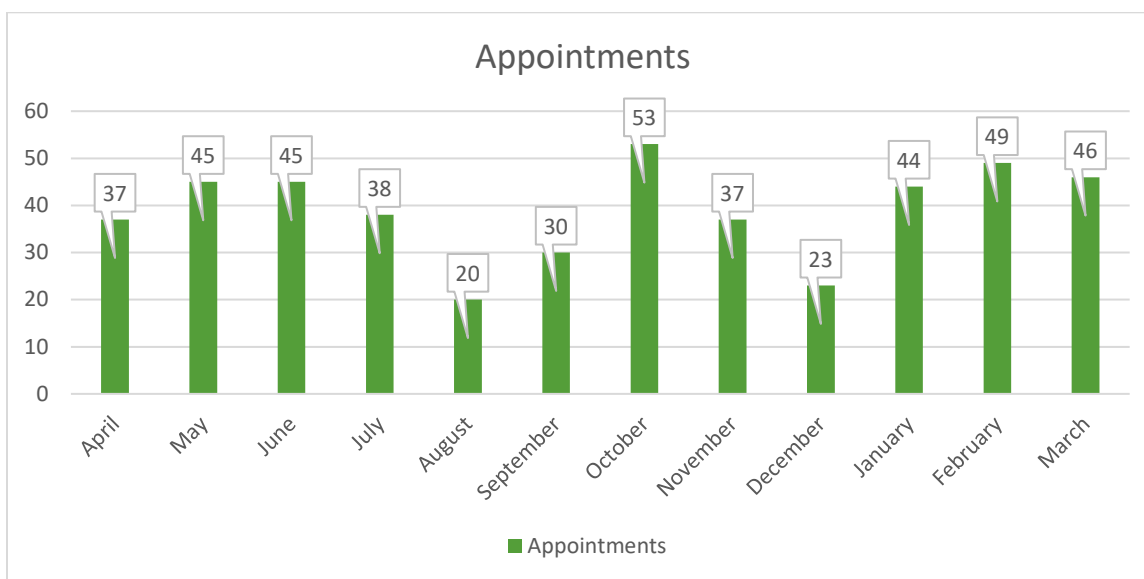
As a community Quesnel has been significantly impacted by natural disasters. The wildfires increase stress and anxiety while decreasing the available wood supply which is a main source of income for many of our folks. There have been more mill closures and shut downs as well as people having their shifts changing. The impact on families is significant as families have to readjust to maintain the ability to meet the cost of living which has increased.

The amazing resilience of the people of Quesnel is something to marvel. Tragedy has struck in the way of wildfires, floods, land slippage as well as the opioid epidemic and yet the community comes together and supports one another. To ensure we are doing our part we try and meet with people the day that they first connect so that the contact is made and they are heard and know that they are not alone.

We continue to collaborate and work with community partners to ensure we are providing the best support to our clients and the people of Quesnel. We have provided Mental Health First Aid and there have been educational in-services with AXIS. In the winter we held two days of "Winter Wear and Food Drive" that we worked with CSUN and CAT and had gracious donations from the community that assisted in providing those in need with weather appropriate clothing as well as food. The Quesnel CMHA of Northern BC office continues to work closely with the Situation Table, CAT, CSUN, QSSS, Bridges, QCLA, Northern Health, Rotary, CNC, AXIS as well as Literacy BC and continues to build relationships with our First Nations Communities.

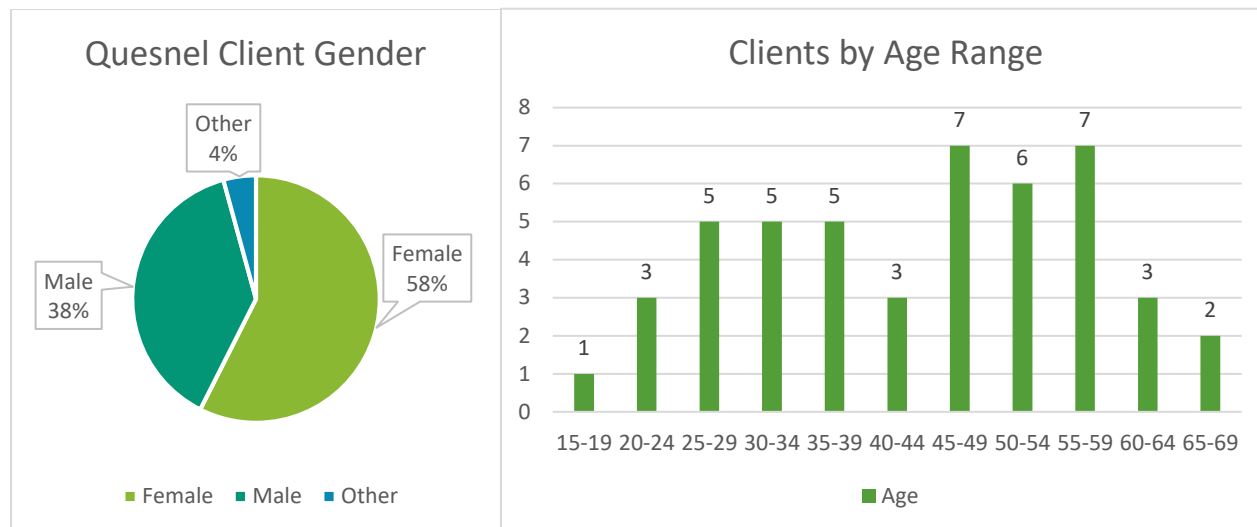
Securing funding to keep the office open is vital to Quesnel. Unfortunately, we lost funding for the administrative assistant position, meaning that the clinical program coordinator has had to incorporate this into their job duties as well. The hope for the program is to continue to provide education and support for the community members and to collaborate with community partners to assist in providing services that are needed in an empathetic, trauma informed, low barrier and timely manner.

Quesnel Total appointments



Total: 467 appointments

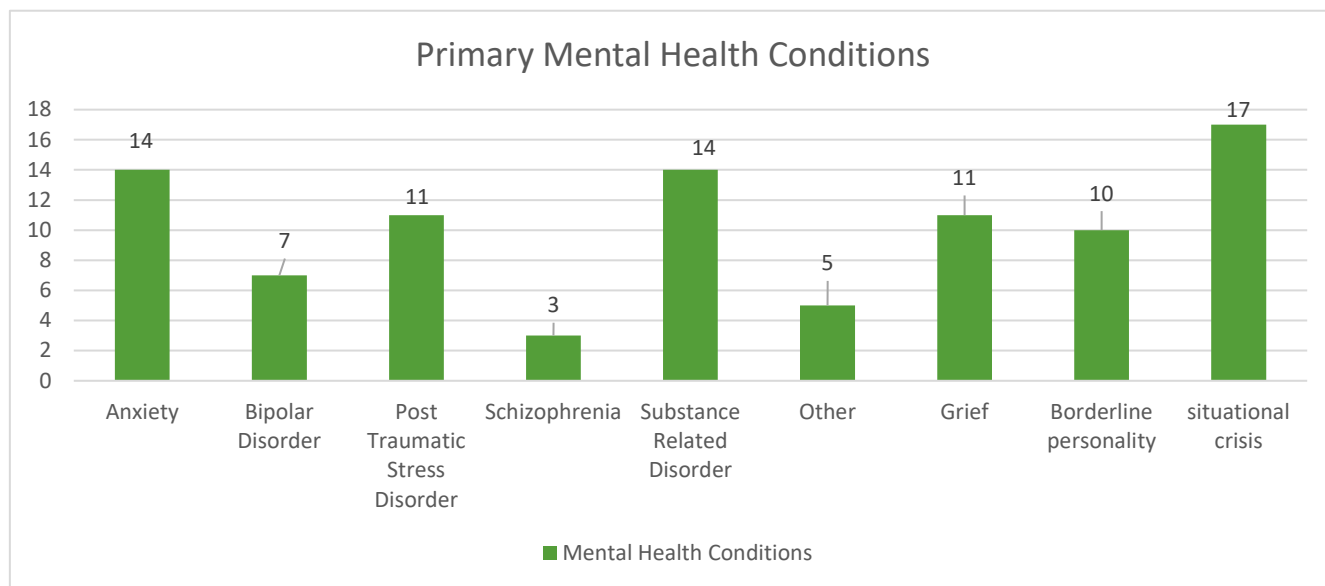
Quesnel Client Age & Gender



Our Quesnel Clinical program actively served 27 female clients, 18 male clients, and 2 clients that identify as other throughout this fiscal year.

We served a wide range of clients varying in age, but the age range that we saw the most in our clients was 45-49 years old, as well as 55-59 years old with 7 clients in both of those ranges.

Mental Health Conditions



This chart shows us that Situational Crisis, Anxiety and Substance Related Disorder are the 3 leading mental health conditions that our clients in Quesnel are dealing with.

Quesnel - Food Coordination Program

March 31 of 2023 we lost our private donor: great things have been happening in spite of that!

The Community Food Coordination Program has been working with community partners to achieve increased access to food by identifying and breaking down the unique barriers people face. In alignment with the Systems Change grant funding through Vancouver Foundation, creating awareness about poverty and food insecurity in our community to reduce stigma and empower individuals is a key initiative. Opening a community-based food centre with a market-style food bank and mobile food market would lay the groundwork to meet the requirements of our funder, and the needs of our community.

In January of 2023, we assembled a Food Security Advisory Group representing a diverse group of partners. We developed a Terms of Reference to define our goals and objectives, which positioned us well when we discovered The Salvation Army, Quesnel's primary food bank, was preparing to close their doors. We successfully acquired a membership with Food Banks BC and worked closely with The Salvation Army on a transition plan to transfer equipment and food to CMHA. We opened Nourish Food Bank on June 27, 2023 and achieved our goal of maintaining a continuum of service for both the monthly food hampers and the lunch program.

Since June 27, 2023, Nourish Food Banks has registered nearly 300 households, served over 1500 lunches, and recruited over 30 volunteers.

In partnership with the Quesnel Farmers' Market, participating market food vendors donate remaining items to CMHA after every Saturday market. We have received well over 200 lb. of fresh produce since June. The produce is distributed along with nonperishable hampers at Nourish Food Bank, donated to other community groups, and used in the Nourish Lunch Program.

2023 was the third year for the Fresh Food Box Program, funded by West Fraser employees. Since 2020, CMHA has offered a monthly fresh food box, including a delivery service to meet the needs of our clients. We continue to offer this service as a separate CMHA program. Through a partnership with Save-On Foods and volunteer work, we've reduced costs by 23%. The savings has enabled us to begin a new initiative starting in October 2023 in partnership with the grade 8 and 9 students attending North Cariboo Christian School. Students will prepare soups for seniors once per month, distributed by North Cariboo Seniors' Council.

After operating Nourish Food Bank for two months, we have a better understanding of day-to-day food bank operations, and budgetary and staffing needs. Fundraising and developing policies and procedures are our next priorities. We are forming a fundraising committee to develop and implement a fundraising strategy and action plan, and we have been awarded funding by Food Banks Canada for policy development to apply for the Food Banks Canada Standards of Excellence Accreditation.

The next step for the structure of Nourish Food Bank is to develop and implement a plan to transition the pre-assembled hamper-style food bank to a market-style food bank. This new model will allow clients to choose the foods they need and enjoy, while reducing waste. It creates more opportunity to offer well-rounded nutrition with a focus on fresh produce, meat, dairy and baked goods. We hope to complete the transition by the end of 2024.

Second Chance Thrift Store

Funded by Sales and by Gaming for Skills Development

Second Chance is a social enterprise thrift store that has been open from 1 to 4 PM on Tuesdays and Thursdays. However, we are considering extending the hours once again. It offers the community reasonably priced, hygienic goods and clothing. The store is filled through contributions from the local community. The store's goal is to offer places for people to receive vocational training as they rehabilitate from mental illness or addiction.

Two Rivers Catering

**Funded by:
Sales from Catering
With Gaming Support for Skills Development**

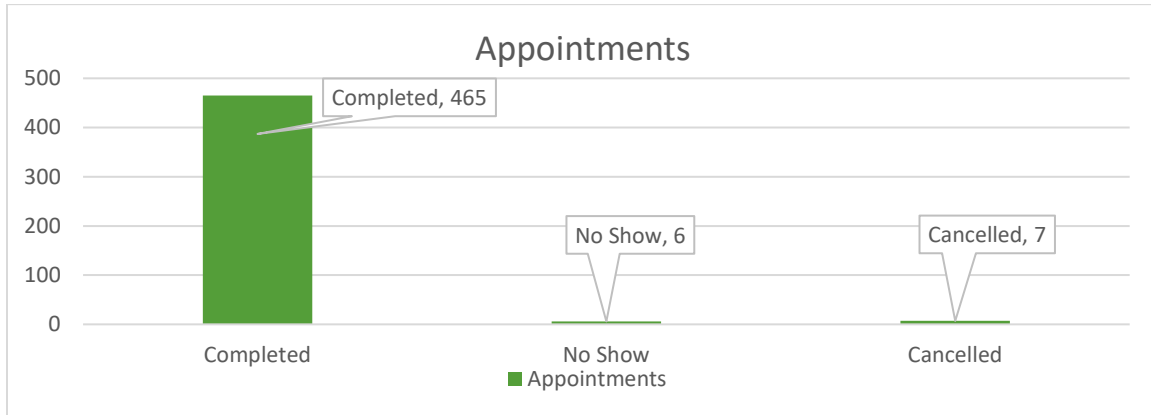
Two Rivers Catering was running right through the Covid 19 Pandemic. We served the meals at ASAP every weekend and did quite a few other jobs. We started doing the Pounds Project in 2021 serving frozen meals, we also sold frozen meals to varying customers. Moving into 2022 we started serving meals to AWAC – Mark’s House, and in July we started serving First Ave. 2023 has been a good year for Two Rivers Catering. We have gone from having, one kitchen at Connections Wellness Centre, to having the kitchen open at Aboriginal Housing in June 2023. We have gone from two chefs and eight workers, to employing three chefs, two first cooks, one administrator and 14 workers spread among the three locations: Connections Wellness Centre, Aboriginal Housing and First Ave. We serve up to 634 meals a week to AWAC (112), ASAP (80/180), First Ave (224) and Connections Wellness Centre (38).

Vocational Support

Funded by Northern Health

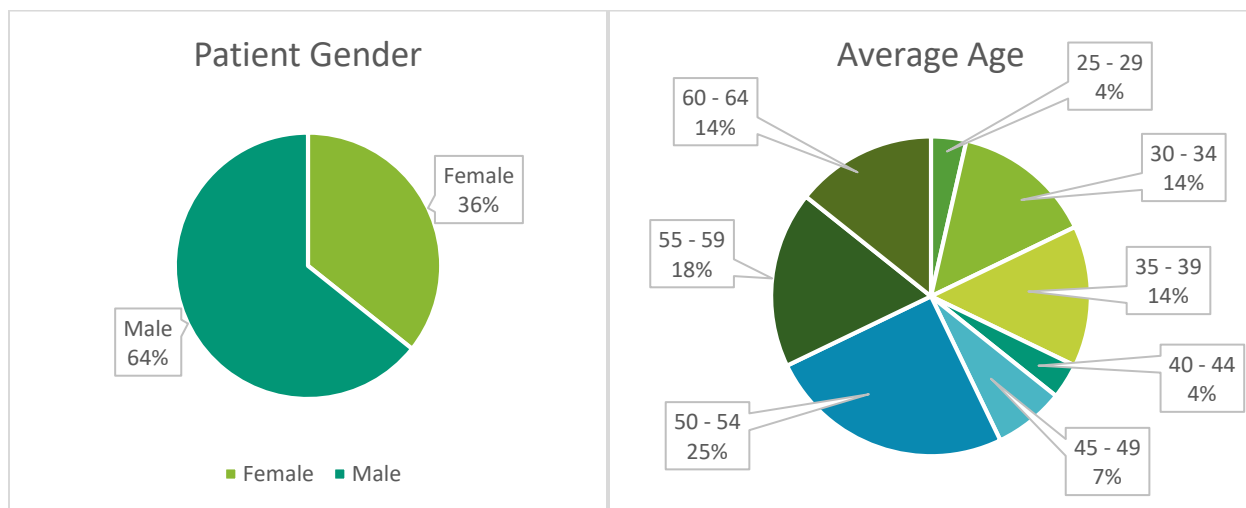
In the past, Northern Health's Rehab Services for Mental Health and Addictions and the Vocational Support Program have collaborated. However, Covid led to a total shutdown of the rehabilitation program, with CMHA being the only aspect of the program that was kept going. We intend to keep working to return to the pre-covid support standards. The purpose of the vocational support programs is to aid clients who are dealing with mental illness and/or addiction disorders in gaining employment-related skills. Individuals can increase their chances of success when they search for paid employment, volunteer positions, or educational possibilities in their field of interest by building employment readiness skills.

Vocational Support Appointments



Total Appointments: 522

Vocational Support Client Gender & Age



Average age: 48

EVENTS & PROJECTS

Depression Screening/ Beyond the Blues

Given the lifting of COVID restrictions we were able to work in partnership with UNBC once more on the delivery of **"Beyond the Blues"**. The participation levels on the part of students was high, and they received excellent support in completing screenings. Our staff showed up in force and it was a pleasure to see them doing their great work. We heard from students at the university that they would benefit from peer support, and from there our Peer Support professional, Christine MacKay, has done a great deal of work training volunteers for that function.

"Holidays of Hope"

Once again, we were able to offer a tailor-made Christmas event for our clients. Two Rivers helped us with providing a sit-down meal and the feedback was expectedly positive and there is a keen interest in reconvening for a larger partnered delivery should COVID restrictions remain suspended. We had a number of staff involved in collecting donations, purchasing gift cards, building delivery packages, distributing food and gifts. Marianne Sorenson and Shirley Hogan worked closely with volunteers from the St. Mary's congregation. The effort made was immense and heart-felt. This coming year plans are underway to reconvene the **"Holidays of Hope"** with ACE for December 2023: planning is well underway.

HML Counselling – April 1, 2022 to March 31, 2023

Funded by Community Action Initiative

HML Counselling continues to be a highly valuable adjunct to our continuum of care. The “**Community Action Initiative**” has been our funder, and we were able to negotiate to sustained funding (with a slight increase) for the next two years. This service lead out by Tracy Larson provides our clients with counselling services where their circumstances don’t otherwise permit.

HML had a total of **37** clients over the fiscal year, with a total of **575** therapeutic sessions.

HML Wellness Solutions also provides a case management function as part of this program where they liaise with workers from CMHA, Northern Health, and other community organizations to provide wrap-around care for the CMHA clients they are serving. As well as planning to very cautiously opened the program up to community members who experience severe and persistent mental health issues and who are at high risk of unemployment due to lack of services. They have a great need for therapy but are unable to access it through their work or privately.

Lift the Mask on Mental Health



The Spruce Kings Goalie approached CMHA-NBC this last year to offer himself as a campaigner for funds for our agency. He is committed to de-stigmatizing mental health concerns in his own career in hockey, but also in community. Jordan was able to auction a goalie mask and with the support of CMHA staff support fund-raising at Spruce Kings games. The campaign generated over \$6000. He expressed a keen interest in seeing those dollars go towards supporting a new regional peer support service in his home town of Fort St. John. Jordan has since moved on from the team to a Psychology Degree program at University of Toronto!



Mental Health Week May 2-8, 2022

Get ready to **#GetReal**

CMHA Mental Health Week May 2-8, 2022

Download tools and materials
at mentalhealthweek.ca today!



Our agency continues to benefit from the media tool-kit that is packaged for us by BC Division. Our IT specialist, Noah Plain, continues to steward the external facing CMHA online presence.

This year's Mental Health Week's theme was #GetReal, where individuals were encouraged across social media to be honest and open about their own personal stories and journeys with Mental Health and how it affects all of us. Believing that talking, and communicating about it supports mental health and reduces stigma.

PEOPLE OF CMHA

CMHA Board of Directors 2022-2023

The Board of Directors has moved into a virtual and in person process for a few months in 2021/22 fiscal period. The lack of face to face interaction has definitely made it more difficult for the board to do its work and we relied more on email motions. It is hoped that the return to face to face meetings will assist the stability of the board.

Glen Schmidt	President
Marlo Kawchuk	Vice President
Victoria Andrews	Secretary
Doris Fraser	Treasurer
Robert Rail	Director
Jeffrey Wayow	Director
Sydney Redpath	Director
Tracy Peters	Director

Volunteers

The volunteer program had a substantial decline in participation as a result of COVID 19. Volunteers continued to be active on the board of directors, but activities related to info fairs and booths, as well as those at the thrift store and other services provided by volunteers, saw a sharp fall. However, over the past year, we have noticed a gradual increase in our volunteer base, and we are working to bring that number back to or even above pre-COVID 19 levels.

Staff 2022/23

Abena Pokuuaa	Casual
Alex Ovien	Casual
Allen Zgaga	Head Chef Two Rivers Catering
Andrew Szabo	Residential Support Worker
Anita Antonenko	Life Skills
April Daniels	Casual
Ashley Bakke	Chef Two Rivers Catering
Cassie French	Life Skills
Charmaine Makelke	Life Skills
Cheryl Young	Clubhouse Coordinator
Christine Habsburg	Program Manager
Christine Mackay	Peer support and Outreach
Corbin Bright	Food Recovery Coordinator Quesnel
Corey Baraniuk	Residential Support Worker
Dena Russman	Chef Two Rivers Catering
Devin Sluchinski	Peer Support Northern
Felix Okorafor	Employment Support Worker/Outreach
Harmanjot Dandiwal	Program Manager
Harmanpreet Singh	Casual
Heidi Wilson	Vocational Support
Jeff Hodson	Life Skills
Jennifer Raskob	Casual
Jennifer Reed	Food Recovery Coordinator Quesnel
Johannah Bartkowski	Casual
Juls Budau	Casual/ Residential Support Worker
Kaleigh Mesic	Casual
Kama Katrinchuk	Employment Support Worker/Outreach
Karamjit Kaur	Residential Support Worker
Katherine Paul	Bounce Back Coach
Kiran Bassi	Employment Support Worker/Outreach
Lin Bai	Accounting Administrator
Marianne Sorenson	Program Manager
Marie Bradley	Bounce Back Coach
Marsha Barlow	Residential Support Worker
Mary Ellen Johnson	Forensic Life Skills
Maureen Davis	Executive Director
Nada Peters	Program Manager/Housing
Noah Plain	IT
Rebecca Crawford	Reception/Housing
Robin Boettcher	Residential Support Worker
Sarah Lloyd	Executive Director
Shawna Rasmussen	Vocational Support
Shauna Russell	Residential Support Worker
Sherry Campbell	Bounce Back Scheduler
Shirley Hogan	Program Manager/Manager of Education & Projects
Stephanie Aaslie	Clinical Coordinator Quesnel

Thank you

**We appreciate all you do for
and with us!**