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Waypoint Annual Program Report 2022-2023

About us

Waypoint is a unique four-month residential treatment program that serves young men aged 12 to 18 whose substance use is problematic. The young men accessing this program live with PLEA Family Caregivers in the community and participate in day, evening, and weekend programming at our treatment centre in Surrey.

Only one or two youth live in each home. The Family Caregivers are members of our treatment team who support and reinforce what the youth learn while they are at the centre. They are also trained to support youth through detox, stabilization, and the treatment process. We have provided these services since 2002. Since that time we have increased our overall program services by including Reintegration Support to provide more service post treatment as well as added cultural services during and post treatment.

Programming is tailored to each youth's individual strengths, needs and circumstances. It includes individual and group counseling, parent-teen mediation, teacher-supervised education, addiction awareness learning and practical life skills. A range of social, arts, cultural and recreational activities are integral components of the program and take place in the community. A School District #36 teacher (Surrey) delivers the educational component.

We follow a strengths-based and culturally sensitive approach to treatment and emphasize social learning and solution focused interventions that help participants to build the skills and competencies they need to live safe, fulfilling lives. Our model is gender-specific, addressing the learning styles and developmental needs of young men.

Waypoint's goals are to increase each youth's self-esteem, physical and mental health, educational and vocational functioning, and family connections, and decrease their substance use, criminal activities, and high-risk behaviours. This year we placed greater intentional focus on supporting successful transitions back to the community as well as support for housing post treatment.

For probation referrals, the youth must have a probation order that directs them to attend a full-time alcohol and drug treatment program. The order must be long enough to see them through the 4-month program. These 6 beds are funded by MCFD (Ministry of Children and Family Development) and are an alternative to custody. Access is province wide. Additional beds are available through private referrals from parents, social workers, community-based addiction counsellors and other professionals. Access is nationwide.

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Who we served...

Profile of FTAP Youth	2022-23	2021-22	2020-21	2019-20	2018-19	2017-18
# of youth	14	15	28	24	29	23
% self-identified as Indigenous	14.29%	47%	50%	33%	34%	39%
Average age when cases were opened	16.93	16.8	17	17	16	17
% of youth in MCFD care	35.71%	20%	35.71%	17%	45%	35%
% of youth who had spent time in custody	71.43%	87%	82.14	88%	90%	70%
Average # of days in program by discharged cases. (N = number of discharged cases)	134.20 (N-10)	112.75 (N-12)	81.39 (N-23)	89 (N-17)	67 (N=27)	77 (N=20)
# of youth who successfully completed the program	11	12	16	12	12	10

The number of young men who successfully completed the program this year was 91.66% which is an increase of 2.5% percent from the previous year which was 89%. Of the fourteen youth we served this fiscal year two remain in the program and therefore not included in the completion statistics for this year. Our discharge rate was 7.14 %, discharges are either voluntary (youth decided that they want to leave the program) or involuntary (program or care team decide that the youth is not the right fit for the program). This year we had 1 voluntary and no involuntary discharges. The participants who discharged early transitioned safely back to their home communities with the support of their care team. On a significant note, we had only one fewer youth referred to the program this fiscal year however the average number of days in the program increases by almost 22 days.

The number of participants who self-identified as Indigenous decline significantly in the past year with a drop of 32.5 %. We continued to provide a culturally relevant program to the participants we serve and increased the number of sweats and cultural celebrations.

The average age remained consistent this year however the number of young people in care of MCFD increased. With youth in care, we were able to access additional supports for youth while in the program such as individual counselling, employment programs and this ensured wrap-around support to help most of our graduates attain independent living in either their home communities or in the community that they chose to reside in post treatment.

The number of youth who have spent time in custody decreased slightly but has remained consistent over the past few years. The trend also continued with more youth being released from custody and coming directly into the program. This reduces the risk of AWOLs, relapses and other risk factors associated with youth being in the community before their intake. With youth involved in the youth justice system we were also able to access additional support services such as ISSP and Youth Forensics support.

Profile of Bail Youth	2022-23
# of youth	7
% self-identified as Indigenous	57%
Average age when cases were opened	16.43
% of youth in MCFD care	14.29%
% of youth who had spent time in custody	85.71
Average # of days in program by discharged cases. (N = number of discharged cases)	30.71 (N-7)
# of youth who successfully completed the program	6

Due to the low number in our FTAP beds our contract manger has support the program to use available beds to provide Bail placements. As we were able to identify the ability to provide this service, we were able to track the participant and some common trends for the first time this year. This year we were able to provide 7 bail placements to young men across the province. The completion rate was 85.5 %. Our discharge rate was 14.5% and that was due to a voluntary discharge as the youth did not wish to participate. He was supported to return to his home community. The number of indigenous participants in this program was higher that the FTAP by 40%.

Primary drugs of choice as reported by youth in FTAP	2022-23	2021-22	2020-21	2019-20	2018-19	2017-18
Amphetamines	7.14%	33.33	39.29%	21%	17%	22%
Heroin and other opiates	15.38%	13.33	7.14%	8%	10%	22%
Cannabis	21.43%	26.67	10.71%	21%	28%	9%
Alcohol	42.86%	6.67	25%	25%	17%	9%
Cocaine	7.14%		14.29%	17%	7%	13%
Over the counter medications	7.14%	13.33				
Benzodiazepines				8%		
Ecstasy/MDA/MMDA		6.67	3.57			
% Reporting a second drug of choice	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	91%
% of youth reporting intravenous substance use	7.14%	6.67%	17.86	8%	14%	13%

Alcohol was reported as the most frequent drug of choice by our FTAP participants this year, and there was a significant increase from years past, this is believed to be connected to the ongoing Covid Pandemic where alcohol use in this demographic is reported to be higher in society in general. Cannabis was our reported second most common substance and that was consistent from last year. All youth reported a secondary drug of choice, and again this year the substance that was the most reported was cannabis. This may be connected to legalization as well as an older cohort. Most referral documents and the youth themselves report that their substance use is connected to mental health, anxiety, depression, trauma, and boredom. A substantial percentage of program participants have experimented with multiple substances and have use a variety of drugs or alcohol if available. Reported intravenous usage remained consistent and is believed to be due to the ongoing concerns surrounding fentanyl.

Primary drugs of choice as reported by youth in Bail	2022-23
Amphetamines	14.29%
Heroin and other opiates	14.29%
Cannabis	42.86%
Alcohol	28.57%
Cocaine	
Over the counter medications	
Benzodiazepines	
Ecstasy/MDA/MMDA	
% Reporting a second drug of choice	100%
% of youth reporting intravenous substance use	0 %

Cannabis was the primary drug of choice with the Bail youth with Alcohol at number two. Of significant note Cannabis was the most popular secondary drug of choice with alcohol being number two. Both substances being number one and two match a reported increase in use in the overall population.

How we did...service delivery

Measure	2022-23	2021-22	2020-21	2019-20	2018-19	2017-18
% bed utilization for FTAP	51%	64%	79.72%	85%	78%	72%
% bed utilization of Bail and FTAP	61%					
# of youth who completed final assessments in FTAP	10	8	12	12	7	7
# of youth reporting a decrease in substance abuse in FTAP	9	8	12	11	6	6

Waypoint's bed utilization was at 51% for the fiscal year, a 13 percent decrease from last year which could be due to the ongoing pandemic, as well as the continuing decline of youth in the youth justice system. However due to the ability to be more flexible and take young men on bail our overall utilization was 61%. This was discussed with our contract manger and if the program had available beds, it was able to provide bail opportunities to young men. Two of our more senior caregivers left us, one to join MCFD and the other to pursue employment in another province. We were able to add one additional caregiver with the capacity for two beds, which allowed us to continue to offer 6 beds for the contract. With our utilization being at low levels it allowed flexibility in the program as we have had the opportunity to provide some youth with single bed resources. One youth left prior to completing the program and a Final Snap was not completed. An additional two youth are currently in a portion of our program and have not yet completed the Final SNAP. On the Final Snap, 9 youth reported a decrease in their substance abuse. This, however, would be consistent with just completing 4 months of treatment. At 6 months discharged follow up 9 youth were contacted, and all self-identify that their substance use continues to be better. In the last fiscal year, we had no Fee for Service participants.

How we did...against last year's goals

- i. Despite the continued trend of youth in the justice system declining, we would like to continue to strive to increase our utilization rate by being as flexible and creative as we can with respect to meeting the needs of the young people in our province. Our goal for the 2022-23 fiscal period was to increase our utilization rate to a minimum of 80% with a completion rate of 70%. We also continued to expand our ability to accept youth on bail which will allow more access to the program.

We missed our contract deliverable of 85% as well as our goal for the year of 80% as we were able to achieve a combined utilization of 61% and cited two potential reasons for the miss: One was the continuation of Covid 19 pandemic which effected referrals as well as several potential intakes. The second was the Youth Justice numbers that continued to decline and therefore effect FTAP orders on youths' sentences. We did however meet the goal of 70% completion rate with a completion rate of 78.5%. Also of significance, we only had one voluntary discharge from the FTAP and one from Bail.

- ii. With low utilization rates this fiscal year, respite care has not caused as significant issue as in the past. As a way of ensuring the Family Caregivers are supported by the programming moving forward and with the hope that we will increase the number of participants in our program, we will continue to focus on the recruitment of both respite workers as well as respite family caregivers to ensure this issue does not arise again. To increase our program's capacity to serve more clients outside the FTAP mandated stream (fee for service and health authority), we will also continue to focus our efforts on the recruitment of new Family Caregivers as well.

Due to the continued low utilization numbers this was less of an issue than anticipated. Our existing caregivers provide respite for each other with their available beds. We were able to secure one additional respite caregiver who did provide support when needed to the program.

- iii. We would like to seek an alternative source of funding to supplement the existing Youth Justice contract we

currently hold. Obtaining funding through one or more health authorities would allow us to increase our service mandate outside of the FTAP requirement. This would allow us to provide more opportunities to more youth in our communities to receive the care and support they need to make changes to their problematic substance use.

We did not secure any permanent contracts through health authorities over the last year and did not secure any Fee for Service opportunities. We did continue to work on a pilot project with the Surrey School Board. The pilot was working in conjunction with the Surrey School Board to provide a safe supported space to youth to further their education in a smaller ratio setting. The referred youth have identified substance use challenges.

Other selected accomplishments...

- i. Indigenous programming and reintegration work continues to work very well within the program. They continue to provide an increase in support to youth during the program and for transitions back to participants' home communities. Indigenous program works to connect to culture for our Indigenous clients as well as non-Indigenous clients. This programming has also increased elder support and strengthened our cultural curriculum. The reintegration worker supports clients with their goals and needs specifically related to transitioning back into their home community's post-discharge. This work allows us to remain connected to clients once they have left the program and support them in applying all their acquired skills out in the 'real world.' Due to Covid restrictions we have not been able to travel to home communities with clients which in past years has supported youth in setting up pro-social activities, re-organize their homes to decrease triggers, find housing and help them participate in meetings with professional supports.
- ii. We were able to provide 214 Bail and Transition bed nights. Some of these participants were entering Waypoint or leaving Waypoint and need additional housing support. This did allow staff to continue to work on their substance goals by providing a continued supported environment. We were able to provide additional support toward housing, employment, and families.
- iii. Provincially referrals to Full-Time Attendance Programs (FTAPs) are in a continued decline. However, although Waypoint did not meet its contract requirement it was successful in achieving 51% in an ongoing pandemic. We believe this is a continued testament to the level of different components we offer including culture, reintegration, school, counselling, and theme. Staff were able to provide more intensive 1:1 support to meet the more complex needs of the clientele we are serving.

Selected story ...

Jordan's story is one of success and personal growth. He joined Waypoint's program on May 9, 2022, and completed it on October 10, 2022. At intake, Jordan expressed optimism and a willingness to work towards his goals, including improving his overall health, graduating from high school, securing stable housing, and increasing his employment readiness.

Jordan initially struggled with homesickness and lacked motivation, but soon began engaging positively with the program. He built a strong therapeutic relationship with staff, which allowed him to feel safe, ask for help when needed, and grow his self-esteem and confidence. Jordan also improved his interpersonal and leadership skills, which enabled him to advocate for himself and engage in "change talk". Moreover, he improved his emotional regulation, stress management skills, and peer relationships.

Jordan strengthened his employment readiness, by receiving his Food Safe and First Aid certificates, updating his resume, and participating in mock job interviews. Jordan improved his physical health as well. He enjoyed swimming, biking, playing tennis and going for hikes. Jordan strengthened his life skills by engaging in cooking, completing several budgeting exercises, and increased his knowledge around nutrition and sexual health. Jordan improved his dental health by attending several appointments to have his teeth cleaned, cavities filled, root canals (3) and an extraction. Jordan was also taken for an MRI on his shoulder (no structural damage). Jordan strengthened his cultural awareness through participation in a sweat lodge ceremony, interacting with elders positively, and attending

the Change of Seasons Potluck and Orange Shirt Day events. Program staff assisted Jordan in getting his birth certificate, BC Services Card(photo) and bank card prior to leaving. The program also got him set up with a cell phone with a plan. Program staff assisted Jordan in successfully applying for a Youth Agreement and he was able to secure housing prior to leaving Waypoint.

Jordan also made significant personal progress during his stay at Waypoint. Although he remained in the pre-contemplative/contemplative stage of change, he recognized the harm that substances had caused him in the past and gained insight into his impulsivity around them. Jordan actively participated in counseling sessions and completed a Relapse Prevention Plan. He also completed 5 out of 9 Journals in the Seven Challenges Program, which helped him understand how his substance use had negatively impacted his life.

Overall, Jordan's journey at Waypoint was a success story. He gained knowledge, skills, and insight, and made significant progress towards his personal and practical goals. He left the program with a sense of empowerment and readiness to face the future with confidence.

Biggest challenges...

- i. Our biggest challenge this reporting period continues to be utilization rates. We received a small number of referrals this fiscal year due to Covid 19, a trend that happened across the province. There was also a small number of participants in the Youth Justice System.
- ii. A continued challenge in this reporting period was the lack of respite caregivers and respite workers available to support our full-time family caregivers. For most of the fiscal year, we had only one resources to offer adequate respite options for our full-time caregivers. Fortunately, with the additional caregiver and lower numbers it does provide some additional respite options.
- iii. We continue to have a higher number of participants over the past few years with significant, complex mental health issues. As Waypoint's structure is as a group-based program, dynamics between peers can become challenging. Staff are finding that a significant amount of time is spent working through group dynamics when the primary focus should be on the issues that brought each individual youth to the program in the first place. However, due to the lower numbers in the program, the staff were able to also provide intensive one-to-one support to youth who needed such assistance.

Our team...staffing



Our team...learning undertaken.

Throughout this reporting period, the team at Waypoint engaged in a variety of training and educational sessions on the following topics: Naloxone Training, Mandt Training, Smart Recovery, Medication Assistance Training, FASD, Wellness, Harm Reduction, Youth Forensic Training, Cultural Awareness, Attachment & Trauma Informed Practice, Suicide Ideation & Prevention, and Cyber Security. In addition to the sessions attended as a group, individuals within the team also participated in workshops and training sessions on their own. Some of the topics staff learned more about included Addictions and Mental Health, Trauma Informed Practice, Residential Schools, Decolonization, Drug Identification, Human Behaviour, Mental Health First Aid, Gender Pronouns, Self-Compassion, working with youth with Autism, Keeping Kids Safe Online, Seven Challenges, Privacy, Motivational Interviewing and Regulation Strategies of Children and Youth.

Our team...new relationships

Throughout the year we continued to solidify our relationships with various First Nations communities including Kwantlen First Nations, Semiahmoo First Nations, and Katzie First Nations. We have also had visits from Elders from the Musqueam, Matsqui First Nation and Semiahmoo First Nations. We continue to work collaboratively with our Probation Officer Liaison who supports our referral and screening processes, as well as continued consultation with Youth Forensics. We continue to have visits from Yankee 30 which includes a Liaison Probation Officer who works in a support car with an RCMP Liaison Officer in the Surrey area. Yankee 30 provides support to our program by working with our youth in a non-traditional way, encouraging them to develop a unique experience with probation and police officers. We have maintained communication with the Addictions and Medical Teams at Burnaby Custody Centre and are able to ensure the transition from custody to our program is much smoother than in the past. We have also started and connection with Blue Eagle Community Cadets. We also had practicum students from Native Educations College and Douglas College.

Next year's goals...

- i. Despite the continued trend of youth in the justice system declining, we would like to continue to strive to increase our utilization rate by being as flexible and creative as we can with respect to meeting the needs of the young people in our province. Our goal for the 2023-24 fiscal period is to increase our utilization rate to a minimum of 80% with a completion rate of 70%. We have also adjusted our contract and will have a protected

stream of bail beds which will include two beds being gate kept for bail placements.

- ii. With low utilization rates this fiscal year, respite care has not caused as significant an issue as in the past. To ensure the Family Caregivers feel supported moving forward and with the hope that we will increase the number of participants in our program, we will continue to focus on the recruitment of both respite workers as well as respite family caregivers to ensure this issue does not arise again. To increase our program's capacity to serve more clients outside the FTAP mandated stream (fee for service and health authority), we will also continue to focus our efforts on the recruitment of new Family Caregivers as well.
- iii. We would like to continue seek an alternative source of funding to supplement the existing Youth Justice contract we currently hold. Obtaining some amount of funding through one or more health authorities would allow us to increase our service mandate outside of the FTAP requirement. This would allow us to provide more opportunities to more youth in our communities to receive the care and support they need to make changes to their problematic substance use. We will continue to promote our Fee for Service availability.

iv. For more information...

Contact Paul Gordon, Program Manager at 604-506-0504 or email pgordon@plea.bc.ca