

Attention: City of Guelph Council

Submitted by: Kristin Kerr, Executive Director, Stonehenge Therapeutic Community

Background:

In 2019, the Mayor's Task Force on Homelessness and Community Safety was convened. From this Task Force, cross-sector community leaders identified five priorities one of which included re-starting an Addiction Court Support program, which provides an addiction counsellor for people who are in bail court and connects them to services and supports. This program helps to create a safer and healthier Guelph Wellington community by supporting residents whose substance use has resulted in criminal charges to make positive changes regarding their substance use and criminal behaviour, access the most appropriate treatment, and understand and comply with bail requirements. This program has focused on the following City objectives:

- a) The right services delivered in an effective and efficient way,
- b) A culture of collaboration and openness with our community outside parties, and
- c) The Mayor's Task Force on Homelessness and Community Safety objectives to have a quick and measurable impact on the homelessness issue.

Program Overview

Addiction Court Support is delivered by a single clinician on an outreach basis, and focuses on disrupting the cycle of recidivism that is so often the norm for those whose addiction/mental health issues result in conflict with the law. The program works with individuals to address substance use issues, criminal offending behaviour, and health and social needs. Engaging individuals at key moments when motivation for change is likely to be higher, such as when they are in Bail Court, and as they are preparing for release from custody – is a key element of the program's success.

ACS provides:

- Outreach-based services
- Support to access and fully engage with community resources
- Brief counselling focused on consolidating motivation for change
- Referrals to ongoing treatment
- Assessment and consultation to Drug Treatment Court

Program Impact

Since its inception in 2019, the Addiction Court Support program has provided support to **132 individuals and over 1000 client interactions**. In the first 6 months of this fiscal year **31 individuals** have already received service.

The outcomes of this program include:

- Decreased interactions with police/court
- Increased adoption of health behaviours and enhanced motivation for positive change
- Increased connections to treatment and social services
- A safer and healthier community for all

Client Impact

- 100% of clients reported that involvement with ASC helped them meet their goals
- 95% of clients made healthier and safer choices
- 89% of clients reported fewer interactions with police as a result of ACS
- 95% of clients were connected to supports/treatment for substance use

Program Funding

This innovative program relies on a collective impact funding model, which recognizes the cross-sector outcomes that it delivers, including

- Decreased interactions with police/courts (municipal)
- Increased connections to treatment and social services (health and social services)

The annual budget for the program is \$100,000. In 2020/2021 budget contributions included \$61,200 one-time funding from the City of Guelph with the remainder of the budget covered by other funding surplus.

At this time, for the 2022 year, we respectfully request that:

- The City of Guelph consider an annual funding contribution in the amount of **\$50,000** and consider extending an agreement beyond a one-year period to support the sustainability of the program.
- Formal funding requests have been submitted to Ontario Health to support the ongoing sustainability of the program.