

MEDIA RELEASE

For immediate release
Sept. 15, 2023

Community Plan for Safety
& Well-being
Lanark County & Smiths Falls



CSWB Advisory Committee releases progress report and outlines plan update

The Community Safety and Well-being (CSWB) Advisory Committee for Lanark County and the Town of Smiths Falls has released its 2022 update on activities outlined in the CSWB plan.

“This will be our final update for the current CSWB Plan,” explained Committee Co-Chair Elle Halladay, who is United Way East Ontario’s regional director for Lanark County. “We are now in the process of updating the existing plan to reflect the changes that have happened in our community since it was adopted in early 2019.”

The advisory committee consists of more than a dozen representatives across a range of human service sectors, including health/mental health, education, justice, victim services, the Indigenous community, social services/housing, community services, youth and local government. The CSWB plan was a community-driven initiative that included about two years of research and consultation. The provincial government has since mandated municipalities to complete the plans, which look at community assets, determine gaps and develop strategies to enhance community safety and well-being.

The Lanark County and Smiths Falls plan includes 12 risk areas (mental health, substance use, housing, transportation, health and well-being, domestic violence and sexual assault, youth and families, seniors, justice, Indigenous health and well-being, and culture and diversity. Strategies to address specific issues were created in four zones (social development, prevention, risk intervention and emergency response), and outcomes are outlined for each risk area.

Some of the community work identified in the plan since it began includes:

- Creation of programs such as the Mobile Crisis Response Team, the Lanark County Child and Youth Advocacy Centre, Lanark County’s Homelessness Response Team (including a Housing Based Case Manager), a Victim Advocate position, the Inclusive Voices video series and the See It Name It Change It campaign
- Expanded walk-in clinics and virtual or in-person opportunities for adult and child/youth mental health services
- Ongoing trauma-informed care training, Applied Suicide Intervention Skills Training programs, and anti-racism/anti-oppression training opportunities for agencies
- Planet Youth Lanark County established and proceeding with student surveys and community goal setting
- With support of Lanark County and local municipalities, ongoing advocacy with provincial government regarding mental health and addictions services and intimate partner violence
- Increased collaboration amongst community partners on many projects, but notably to meet community needs with creative solutions during the pandemic (e.g. Isolation Centres and food-delivery programs)

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- Supportive housing projects in partnership with Lanark County Interval House and Community Support and Carebridge
- Creation of multiple routes in local communities as part of Lanark Transportation Association's Ride the LT program
- Lanark County Community Paramedicine program expands and is able to support more seniors and vulnerable individuals in their homes, which has helped to reduce 9-1-1 calls
- Multi-agency care conferencing has expanded through such venues as community rounds, the Lanark County Situation Table, and others
- Lanark County was the first municipality in Ontario to declare intimate partner violence an epidemic and has taken a leadership role on several recommendations from the Culleton Kuzyk Warmerdam Inquest
- Partnership between Plenty Canada and Upper Canada District School Board for Indigenous culture training.

“Over the last four years we have made progress in all of the identified risk areas, but there is more work to be done,” explained Smiths Falls Police Service Deputy Chief Jodi Empey, co-chair of the advisory committee. “A number of programs and services have been created or expanded to meet needs and fill gaps, and our community agencies continue to show remarkable collaboration in order to get important work done.”

The advisory committee is in the process of reviewing data and identifying risk areas for the updated plan. Surveys for service providers, the public and local government, as well as consultation with priority populations and feedback from partners, will be part of the process. The committee is planning to seek municipal council approval for the updated plan in the new year.

The progress update for 2022 can be accessed at

<https://www.dropbox.com/scl/fi/a3ucvor3l74wjtvcvckset/CSWB-Plan-for-LC-and-SF-Progress-Report-2022-final.pdf?rlkey=bea4tzvgabsy8fz3o6569prs2&dl=0>

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