Welcome

Working to Overcome Client Barriers: Intensive Support to Ontario Works Clients

June 13, 2019
• At your tables, introduce yourselves to each other.

• We’d like to know who you are, where you’re from and what agency you represent

• Identify 1 thing you’d like to take away from our presentation today

• Have 1 person report back introducing their table, where people are from and what you would like to takeaway
Who do we serve: The County of Wellington
Our Caseload Profile

Total caseload: 2012
City of Guelph: 1610
County of Wellington: 402

• April 2019 Operations Performance Report
Life Skills Team

The Life Skills Team supports Ontario Works clients through an intensive case management approach to help them stabilize before exiting to employment, returning to the main caseload or transitioning to ODSP.

• Life Skills Workers (LSW) have smaller caseloads of 45-50 clients to allow for more intensive stabilization focused service
• LSW will assist clients through providing 1:1 supports, referrals to community partners, as well as guidance and support through the ODSP application process
Life Skills Team Cont.

Life Skills Workers:
• facilitate service connections with community agencies, including case conferences
• help develop crisis plans
• have greater flexibility around appointment times and where they meet clients
• are active members at community tables around mental health and addiction
Referral Process

Clients are referred to the Life Skills Team when:
• The client is struggling with mental health, substance use or both
• Mental health and/or addiction are a primary barrier to moving forward
• Client is in crisis and requires intensive supports to help stabilize their current situation
• The client is open to the referral - the referral is voluntary
2018

• Number of clients added to the caseload: 140
• Total client’s served: 241
• Total Closures: 101
  • Number of clients transferred to ODSP: 39
  • Number of clients terminated for employment: 11
Wrap Around Services

Community Connections:
- Housing First Workers
  - Work with individuals who are:
    - Homeless or at risk of housing
- SOS (Specialized Outreach Services) Workers
  - Work with individuals who are:
    -Disconnected from services
    - Street-involved, homeless or at risk of homelessness
    - CMHA – HERE 24/7
- Homewood Health Centre
- Stonehenge

Community Involvement:
- Drug Court
- Guelph-Wellington Drug Strategy
- Community Hub Meetings
Service Prioritization Decision Assistance Tool (SPDAT) Analysis

TAKING A CLOSER LOOK AT CLIENT BARRIERS
The Service Prioritization Decision Assistance Tool (SPDAT) is a widely used, evidence based assessment tool that assesses an individual’s acuity. The tool assists with case management planning and guidance to the right services, with functionality in prioritizing individuals towards intervention. The SPDAT assesses conditions within the following domains:

- Wellness
- Risks
- Socialization and Daily Functioning
- Housing
Overview
Caseload Trends
Mental Health
Physical Health
Abuse and Trauma
Housing and Homelessness
Recommendations for Case Management
OVERVIEW

• Full Single Adult SPDAT was administered to 92 individuals
• Objective – gain insight into client barriers and challenges to inform service delivery
• Results representative of single adult city caseload (ASI and Life Skill not included)
• Scores are self-reported
• Average length of time on assistance for the sample was 2.7 years
• Time on assistance ranged from 1 month to 13 years.
46% on assistance for 2+ years
Caseload Trends

Our clients report poor health—majority have concerns about their mental and physical health.

75% have experienced some kind of abuse or trauma and 50% have challenges with daily functioning as a result.

50% have experienced homelessness and have challenges maintaining housing.
**ACROSS CANADA AND ONTARIO:**

The poorest people in Ontario are more likely to have health risks, less access to important health services, multiple chronic conditions, and shorter life expectancy.

Low income persons are 4x more likely to report poor or fair health status than are high-income persons.

Living in poverty can quadruple a child’s risk of being exposed to trauma.

235,000 Canadians experience homelessness in a year and 35,000 are homeless on any given night.
1 MENTAL HEALTH

- 25% Heightened concerns about mental health, significant impacts to functions of daily living and/or serious mental illness
- 26% No mental health challenges reported
- 49% Concern for overall mental health, mild impairments to functions of daily living and/or currently engaged with mental health supports
1 MENTAL HEALTH

- **74%** of individuals indicated some concern with their mental health or reported that they were engaged with mental health supports
- **25%** reported acute mental health challenges
- About **2/3** report that they consistently have planned, legal activities in their lives that provide fulfillment or happiness

![Icons representing mental health](image)  
- **Have planned activities (62%)**  
- **Struggling to find/commit (38%)**
2 PHYSICAL HEALTH

23%
More than one chronic condition and/or not connected to professional resources for care

35%
No serious/chronic condition and minor conditions are managed appropriately

42%
Medical conditions are managed appropriately with some impact on daily living
2 PHYSICAL HEALTH

Nearly **50%** report challenges managing their medications appropriately in the last year

- **20%** report experiencing serious health impacts as a result of their substance use
- Males and females were equally represented in this category
- Females with high acuity scores for substance use also had high acuity scores for mental health and abuse/trauma

**12%** reported 4+ interactions with Emergency Services in the last 6 months – this is at least one interaction every 6 weeks

Emergency Services includes police, fire, ER, ambulance, hospitalization, crisis services, distress centres and suicide prevention services
3. ABUSE AND TRAUMA

51%
Experience of abuse or trauma impacts daily functioning

26%
Reported experience of abuse or trauma

23%
No reported experience of abuse or trauma
77% report an experience of abuse or trauma

More than half report that this impacts their daily functioning, including ability to hold down a job, maintain housing or engage in meaningful relationships with others

38% report being involved in at least one potentially harmful, high-risk, or exploitative situation in the last year, including

- leaving an abusive situation
- physical altercations and violence
- being harmed or threatening, attempting or actually harming self or others
- injection substance use
- unprotected casual sex
- sleeping outside
4 HOUSING AND HOMELESSNESS

- 12% 2+ years of homelessness in the last 10 years
- 52% 7 or fewer days of homelessness in the last 4 years
- 29% 30+ days to 2 years of homelessness in the last 4 years
- 7% 7+ days to 30 days of homelessness in the last 4 years
Housing and Homelessness

- Individuals were asked about their cumulative total days of homelessness.
- Nearly half have experienced homelessness at some point in the last 4-10 years.

- 40% report challenges with daily living skills and taking care of self and surroundings.
- 50% report challenges with managing tenancy and maintaining housing.
- Majority report no difficulty managing financial resources independently and 32% report challenges managing finances, administrative tasks, difficulty budgeting and frequent changes to their source of income.
5 CASE MANAGEMENT RECOMMENDATIONS

- Awareness that most clients coming in may have mental health challenges, experiences of abuse and trauma and challenges with housing

- Importance of motivational interviewing

- Critical to build rapport and assess for most urgent needs

- Once immediate priorities are identified, use that as a starting point for building a plan with the client to most effectively meet their needs going forward

- Awareness of crisis intervention strategies
REFERENCES


[3] Children’s Health Policy Centre, Simon Fraser University, 2011

  http://homelesshub.ca/SOHC2016
Staff Training:
• Motivational Interviewing
• SAIL Training
• Mental Health First Aid
• ASIST Training
• De-escalation training
Client Programming and Service Delivery:

- Connection with Conestoga College to deliver their Personal Tools for Success course in house
- Connection with Family and Counselling Services to provide counselling at a reduced cost
- Getting Ahead
- Triage approach with clients when a referral is sent to the Life Skills Team
Table Activity – 15 minutes
At your tables discuss best practices you may have regarding:
• Addiction
• Mental health
• Community Connections
• Case Management
• Other
Write on the stickie's at your table and place on the flip chart paper under the appropriate headings.
Have 1 person report back on 1 or 2 of the best practices that have been identified at your table.
Contact Information and Links

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Taking a Closer Look at Client Barriers: Ontario Works SPDAT Report