

NAVIGATING THROUGH LIFE



2018-2019 ANNUAL REPORT



HELPING PEOPLE NAVIGATE THROUGH LIFE

The journey through life can be challenging—especially for people who have a developmental disability and/or mental health condition—but not impossible, when you have some support to help you along the way.

Helping people navigate through life and supporting their journeys is essentially what we do. We have spent the last 37 years communicating, connecting and collaborating with provincial, regional and municipal levels of government, local social services and community organizations, and people with lived experience, their families and their caregivers. We help people gain access to the services and supports they need in order to live a meaningful life.

Recent proposed changes to the provincial health care system have served as catalyst for us to promote our person-centred services and supports and to launch our new strategic plan. The goals we have set out for the next three years are guided by our principles: to be compassionate, accountable, resilient, collaborative, and to take initiative.

As a caring partner and a leader in the developmental services and mental health sectors, we have spent this past year creating and offering programs and services that empower individuals, families and caregivers. **We served a total of 18,317 people living with developmental disabilities and people living with mental health challenges**, giving them the tools and information necessary to navigate through confusing service systems and to deal with difficult situations while they are in services and waiting for services.

Support in times of crisis. This year we have seen an increase in the need for mental health crisis support. In response, we have increased access and awareness of our Community Crisis Response Services across York Region and South Simcoe. In addition to our core crisis services, we now offer an after-hours urgent response service provincially for adults with a developmental disability, their families and their caregivers. We provide a safe short-term bed stay for those who are referred to us by local police partners, and we also offer mobile and online access to a crisis worker through text or live chat support. As a result, we were able to serve 11,142 people through their mental health crisis.

In addition, we were able to connect more people to mental health, addictions, dual diagnosis, and housing supportive services across York Region and South Simcoe through Streamlined Access, helping 1,600 people access services.

Helping to build a peer-based, inclusive and supportive community. We have seen the remarkable impact that support from peers has on individuals and caregivers in times of need and even in times of recovery. With the support of the Ontario Trillium Foundation, we have been able to revitalize our popular peer-based resource guide, *York Region on a Limited Budget*, into an online York Region self-help resource called Up Hub, and create peer-based tools to assist York Region residents who are seeking services or need peer support to live a meaningful life.

We have created programs and services that give people the opportunity to connect with others living through the same challenges, learn self-help practices and get practical user-friendly information to help them through their current situations.

Building on our foundation, as a case management agency, this past year we supported 650 children and their families, 1,132 adults with developmental disabilities, and 1,225 individuals with mental health challenges by helping them develop a plan with achievable goals.

As the host agency for Developmental Services Ontario Central East Region, we helped 1,218 individuals complete their application for ministry-funded adult developmental services, so that they can become more independent and active in their communities.

As the Communications Lead agency for Developmental Services Ontario, we have produced clear and provincially-consistent process material and created an inclusive website that helps adults with a developmental disability and their caregivers understand how to access ministry-funded services.

Additionally, as a Passport agency, we were able to allocate Passport program funding to 2,300 individuals with a developmental disability allowing them to participate more fully in their local community.

Collaborating with over 60 community partners, our agency also works alongside colleague agencies providing training, creating new and innovative ways to offer support together to address systemic gaps.

We know that the year ahead will offer many challenges as our service systems undergo transformation and modernization. We are up to the challenge, and will work diligently with our partners to ensure that people who need support, receive the high-quality services they deserve.

Thank you for your support!

We would like to thank everyone that has contributed to our ability to support more individuals. We wouldn't be able to do the work that we do without the help of the people we serve, our staff, Board, donors and funders, and our community partners.

Larry Palmer
Board Chair



Marie Lauzier
Executive Director



OUR 2018–2019 BOARD OF DIRECTORS

Larry Palmer, *Chair*

Susan Dobson

Ursula Rehdner, *Vice-Chair*

Rosalyn Gambell

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Penny Hubbert

Lois Alderson-Wigelius

Heather Meikle

Sarah Butterworth

Michelle Song



Thank you to everyone who donated and helped to make a difference in the lives of the people we support. We received \$26,412 in donations which helped pay for food, shelter, hygiene products, and other basic necessities. Your donation helped people with developmental disabilities and people with mental health conditions facing financial challenges get their lives 'back on track'.

OUR VISION

A Meaningful Life for All:
Relationships, Community,
Well-Being.

.....

OUR MISSION

Communicate. Connect.
Collaborate.

.....

OUR GUIDING PRINCIPLES

Compassion
Accountability
Resilience
Initiative
Collaborate

OUR 2018-2021 STRATEGIC DIRECTIONS

STRATEGIC GOAL #1



ENHANCE SERVICE EXPERIENCE

Enhance services to meet the needs of those who we support and reduce wait times for supports.

STRATEGIC GOAL #2



INNOVATIVE PARTNERSHIP

Work collaboratively with partners to deliver essential services.

STRATEGIC GOAL #3



EXPAND STAFF CAPABILITIES

Find ways to enrich staff capabilities and support their well-being.

STRATEGIC GOAL #4



DIVERSIFY FINANCIAL RESOURCES

Explore innovative ways to diversify funding to support growth.

STRATEGIC GOAL #5



IMPROVE INTERNAL PROCESSES

Identify opportunities for improvement and create process efficiencies.

OUR IMPACT



18,317 people living with a developmental disability and people living with a mental health condition were supported.



45,101 support questions from individuals, families and caregivers were answered.



98% of our programs and services exceeded their targets.

DEVELOPMENTAL SERVICES



Case management

1,703 people with developmental disabilities, their families and caregivers, worked together with our family and adult case managers to assess, plan and implement achievable goals and learn practical skills.

“Your case manager has been so extremely helpful in so many ways for our son, his caregiver and our family by facilitating, setting goals, and recommending resources in the community so he can integrate, socialize and communicate. He is so happy in his new living arrangements... he is more independent and is socializing and communicating better than ever before... we are all extremely grateful for her support.”

– Family member



Children’s case coordination and transitional-aged youth coordination

80 children and youth with complex social, emotional, developmental and/or physical services needs had a coordinated service plan created for them through our case coordination services.



Passport program

2,300 adults with developmental disabilities accessed Passport program funding, helping them participate in their community, an **82% increase** from the previous fiscal year.

“I wanted to let you know that in the last two and a half years I have been speaking with [one of your staff members] on a regular basis. I have a very unique situation with my son as I’m sure most parents have... When he turned 18, if I did not receive funding his very successful school program, [it] would have to end. I would not have known what to do and it was extremely anxiety inducing. She [staff member] was not only always extremely professional but so patient, kind, understanding and truly what I needed every time I got in touch. I could only imagine how difficult it can be to hear parents on the other end of the phone crying on a regular basis. In the end, everything has worked out well for us and I can breathe again.”

– Family member



DEVELOPMENTAL SERVICES ONTARIO CENTRAL EAST REGION (DSO CER)



1,218 adults with developmental disabilities completed their application packages.



1,032 people were interested in applying for ministry-funded adult developmental services and completed the intake process.



827 eligibility confirmations occurred that identified whether an applicant was eligible for ministry-funded adult developmental services.

"I'd like to commend you personally for the care you have taken with our son and his file. The family is approaching a very frightening transition as he moves from children's services and the Ministry of Education to adulthood, and we have growing fear and anxiety about it all. Although this is only the beginning of the process, I don't think we could have had a more comfortable entry. You were a careful and active listener throughout the interviews, very patient, and translated what you heard and observed accurately and succinctly onto the assessment documents. We never felt rushed or under pressure, and we had ample opportunity to review results and suggest amendments."

– Family member



MENTAL HEALTH SERVICES



Community crisis response services

11,142 people worked through their mental health crisis with the help of our crisis workers. They were able to connect to supports through telephone and text at 1-855-310-COPE, live chat via cope.yssn.ca, mobile response, an overnight stay at our short-term bed program, our mental health support teams who work with emergency services, and through our peers.



Photo by Robert Lowden Photography.

"... [Your staff] listened to my needs, in what was a very stressful situation, offered insight to the process and systems and provided expert advice and assistance. They put me in direct contact with the social worker in the field with a police officer on that day with whom I spoke and was able to have the team arrive at [the location]. Where my family along with the team, police officers and paramedics persuaded my brother to go to the hospital for much needed help with his mental health issues... After a very long stay at the hospital my brother was discharged, pleased to let you know that he is on medication, seeing his psychiatrist and coping extremely well."

– Family member



Case management

1,225 people with mental health challenges were able to identify their needs, develop individualized plans, set goals and learn new skills through our case management and specialized case management services.

Sue's story



I was in bad shape—drug and alcohol addictions, full of fear and seriously depressed. I had suicidal thoughts, was homeless, had no friends, and I was feeling hopeless.

Then I met someone who connected me to York Support Services Network (YSSN).

I was able to get a case manager. They helped me go from hopelessness to where I am today, which is no comparison—I've never been happier in my life! I went from hating myself and the world to liking myself and being proud of what I have accomplished.

I now feel I belong in this world as a productive member of society. The case managers I worked with taught me life skills, advocated for me and taught me how to advocate for myself, connected me to services and support programs, helped me apply for income and housing support, and encouraged me even when I couldn't hold my head up.

Because of their support, I have been able to do facilitation in substance abuse programs such as Narcotics Anonymous (NA), Alcoholics Anonymous (AA), and am involved in YSSN's Up Hub initiative, as well as, the Heart of the Matter Peer Support Group.

Photo by Robert Lowden Photography

Streamlined Access

1,600 people were assessed and connected to mental health, addictions, dual diagnosis, and housing supportive services through our Streamlined Access service.

"My adult son was experiencing severe depression and I was worried for his safety. The worker took the time to speak to me about different supports, signs to look for and made me feel like I wasn't alone. Not only were they able to support my son, they were able to support my family and me as well. My adult son became very paranoid and delusional. I did not know how to help him or where to turn. My family doctor gave me the Streamlined Access phone number so I called. The worker at Streamlined Access took the time to explain the mental health system to me. They were able to educate me on the Mental Health Act, how to admit someone to the hospital, signs to look for, and available supports for both my son and myself. They made me feel empowered knowing that I was not alone."

– Family member

BUILDING COMMUNITY, AWARENESS AND SUPPORT

We held numerous group and one-on-one informational events across York Region and South Simcoe to help people with developmental disabilities, their families and caregivers, and people with mental health challenges understand how to cope through difficult situations, connect to services, resources and peers, and learn how to create a plan to achieve their personal goals.

Our popular **Mindfulness classes** have had a substantial impact on high school students with developmental disabilities, parents and caregivers, helping everyone learn new ways to deal with everyday stresses.

"I wanted to thank you again for doing such an amazing job with the mindfulness classes with my grade 9 class.

I could tell that the students got a lot out of your sessions... you truly have a gift for this! I too used many of your techniques and passed them on to my own children.... so again thank you!"

- High school teacher



Our **Expressive Arts Wellness workshops** gave participants renewed hope by helping them learning new coping strategies.

"For those of us that have been disenfranchised and robbed by disease and other societal norms, [art] creates a new opportunity for us to recreate ourselves and to dislodge harmful baggage. It is restorative as it allows us to create a newer, stronger, better self. It allows for fleeting moments of joy and growth. It nourishes the soul when practiced over time.

For those of us that have been rejected by our families and friends, have no money and no real home, there is a discovery of new worth and meaning. Even this gift of life must be given the chance to grow over time. Life is art and art is life. It is always precious no matter what the circumstances. So thank you for this great gift of art that has the power to bring forth new life...

I am a part of the universe, and with all my senses I declare my right to be here. Thank you for helping me to discover my worth. It is a gift that I will not soon forget."

- Expressive Arts for Seniors program participant

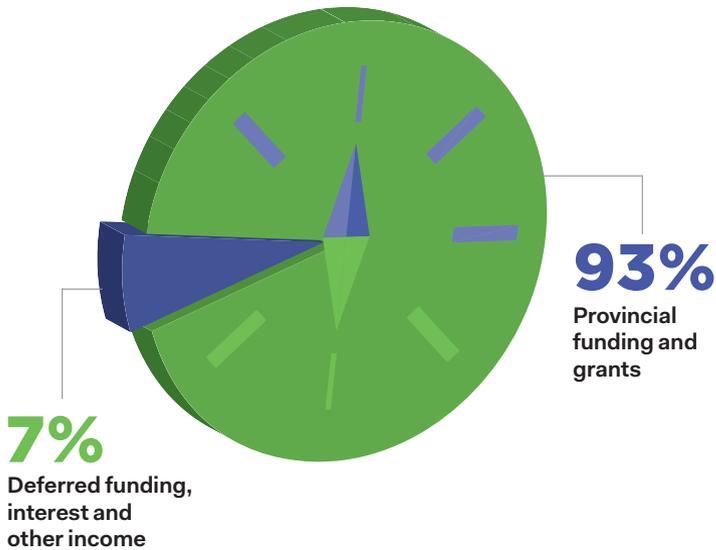
We also presented **Mental Health First Aid®** sessions to a variety of community partners, helping to increase mental health awareness in the community by giving participants tangible strategies that can be integrated within their own organizations to help breakdown mental health stigmas.

Our **Coaching out of the Box®** leadership skills development program taught industry leaders how to use coach-like skills to be more effective with their teams.

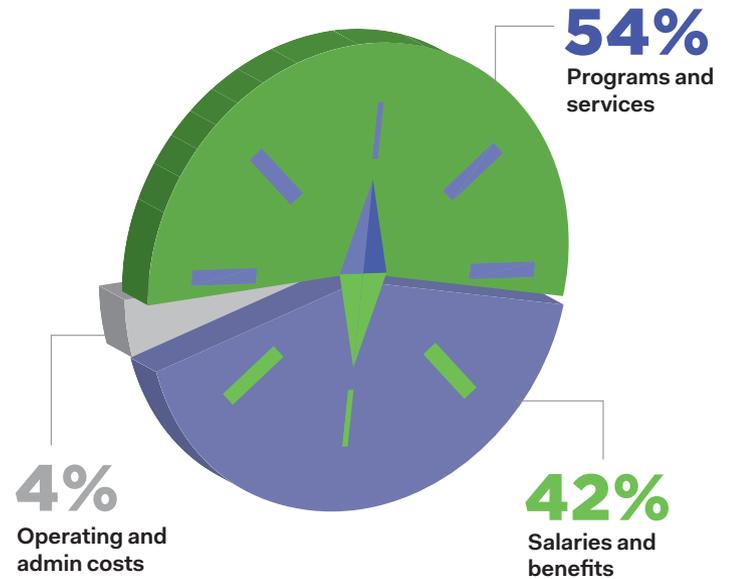
FINANCIAL HIGHLIGHTS

STATEMENT OF OPERATIONS YEAR ENDED MARCH 31, 2019

TOTAL REVENUE:
\$31,161,683



TOTAL EXPENSES:
\$31,166,398



Audited financial statements for 2018–2019 are available at yssn.ca or contact us at 1-866-257-9776.

OUR PARTNERS

Collaboration, one of our key guiding principles, is at the core of the work that we do to achieve person-centred care. As systems leaders, we continue to grow, nourish, and work together with our community partner agencies, school boards, and emergency services so that we can deliver essential services and supports to the people we serve.

360° Kids
Access Community Services Inc.
Addictions Services for York Region
Alive Church, Newmarket
Alternatives Community Program Services
Alzheimer Association of York Region
Aptus Treatment Centre
Array Services
Behavioural Support Ontario
Belinda's Place
Blue Door Shelters
Cadence
Camphill Communities of Ontario
Canadian Mental Health Association
Catulpa Community Support Services
Cedar Centre
Central Community Care Access Centre
Centre for Addiction and Mental Health (CAMH)—HSC program
Centre for Behavioural Health Sciences
CHATS Community & Home Assistance to Seniors
Collaborate Nottawasaga Situation Table
Children's Treatment Network
Christian Horizons
Community Living: Georgina; Central York; York South; Ajax, Pickering
and Whitby; Durham North; Oshawa/Clarington; South Simcoe; Huronia;
Campbellford/Brighton; Trent Highlands; West Northumberland Services
Community Networks of Specialized Care
Deaf/Blind Ontario Services

Developmental Services Ontario (DSO): Central West Region, Eastern Region,
Hamilton-Niagara Region, North East Region, Northern Region, South East
Region, South West Region, Toronto Region
Durham Association for Family Respite Services
Durham College
e3 Community Services Inc.
East York Region North Durham Ontario Health Team Ontario Health Team
Empower Simcoe
Families for a Secure Future
George Brown College
Home and Community Care Program (CLHIN)
Imani's Place
JRCC Furniture Depot
Kerry's Place Autism Services
Kinark Child and Family Services
Keswick Gardens and Simcoe Manor
Krasman Centre
L'Arche Daybreak
Lakehead University
Lake Ridge Community Support Services
LOFT Crosslinks Housing and Support Services
Mackenzie Health's Centre for Behaviour Health Sciences
Mary Centre
Mary McGill Community Mental Health Centre (MMCMHC)
MCIS Lang ces
Meta Centre
New Leaf
Northumberland Family Respite
Ontario 211
Ontario Provincial Police, Nottawasaga Detachment
Ontario Shores Centre for Mental Health Sciences
Participation House: Markham, Durham
PassportONE
Reena
Ryerson University
Safehaven Project for Community Living
Seneca College
Simcoe Muskoka Family Connexions
Southlake Regional Health Centre

Southlake Ontario Health Team
South Simcoe District School Board
South Simcoe Police
South Simcoe Ontario Health Team
St. James the Apostle Church, Sharon
St. Matthew's Hospice
Telehealth Ontario
The Access Point
The Regional Municipality of York
The Region of York's Homelessness Community Program
and Community Health Services
The Regional Municipality of Durham, Adult Community Support Services
Tri-County Community Support Services
University of Windsor
Vaughan Community Health Centre
Vaughan Community Ontario Health Team
Vita Community Living Services
Waypoint Centre for Mental Health Care
Women's Support Network
Women's Centre of York Region
York Catholic District School Board
York Hills, Centre for Children, Youth and Families
York Region Public School Board
York Region Food Network
York Regional Police
York University

OUR DONORS

ORGANIZATIONS

100 Women Who Care York Region
ADG Architectural
Hartman Public School
Hannigan Engineering
New Roots Garden Centre
Newmarket Church
The York District
Turf Care Products Canada Employee Charity Fund
(Karla Sessford-Kennedy and Fabie Nault)

INDIVIDUALS

Daniel Chou
Judy Coultres-MacLeod
Franca Gatto
Randi Goodman
Debby Grant
Ron Gruenberg
Michael Holtzman
Pauline Hubbert
Garry James
Ken Newton
Frances McConnell
Maria Luisa Moscon
Pauline Quinn-Gardner
Warren Travell

OUR FUNDERS

Canadian Mental Health Association York and South Simcoe
Cedar Centre
CHATS Community & Home Assistance to Seniors
Children's Treatment Network (CTN)
Kinark Child and Family Services
Ministry of Children, Community and Social Services
Ministry of Health and Long-Term Care through the
Central Local Health Integration Network (CLHIN)
Ontario Trillium Foundation



York Support Services Network
240 Edward St., Unit 3, Aurora, ON L4G 3S9
905-898-6455 or Toll Free 1-866-257-9776
contact@yssn.ca

Connect with us!

Visit yssn.ca

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YSSN is a non-profit organization that receives funding from the Ministry of Children, Community and Social Services (MCCSS), and the Ministry of Health and Long Term Care.



Photo by Robert Lowden Photography.