



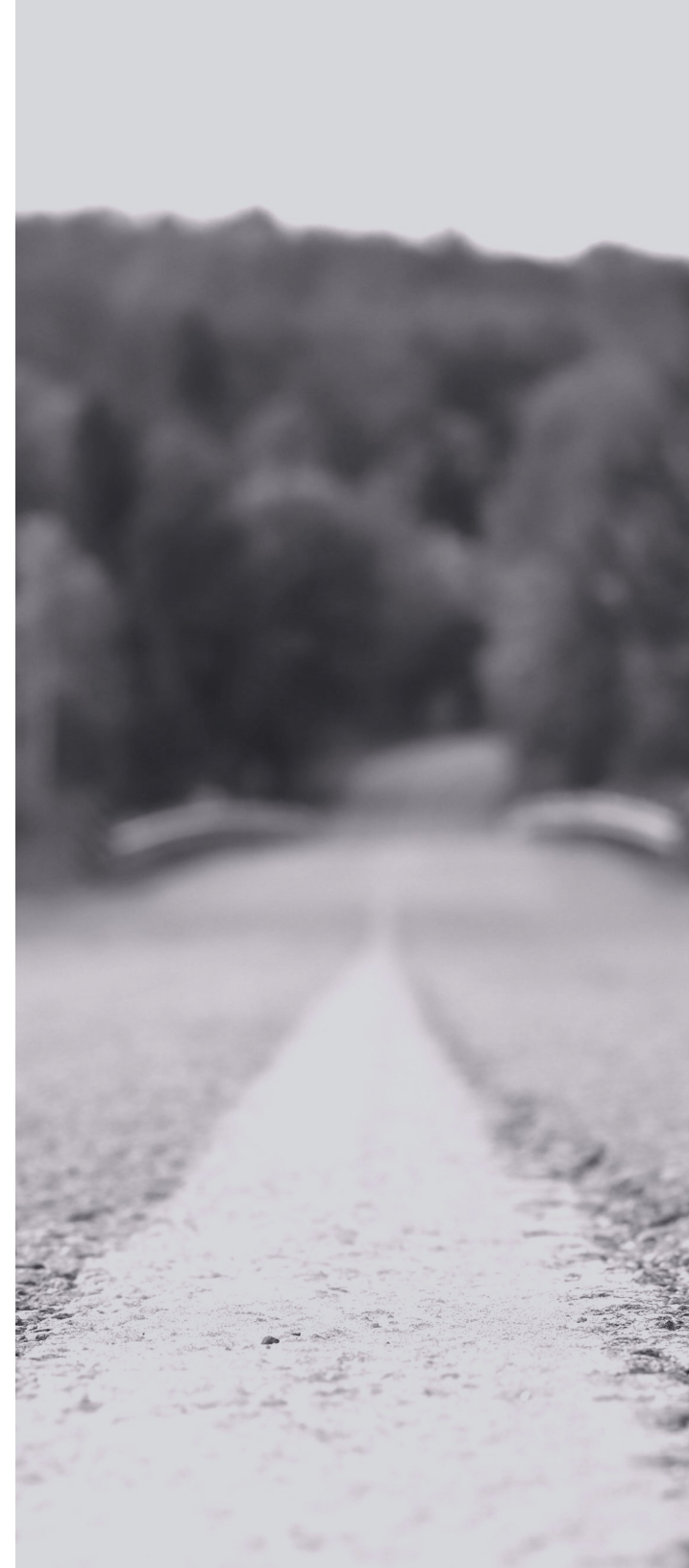
COMMUNITY SAFETY AND WELL-BEING PLAN

For the municipalities of Opatatika, Val
Rita-Harty, Kapuskasing, Moonbeam,
Fauquier-Strickland and Smooth Rock Falls

Report prepared by the CRRIDEC in December 2020

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A WORD FROM THE MUNICIPALITIES

In January 2019, a new requirement of the Ministry of the Solicitor General came into effect. Ontario municipalities were to develop a community safety and well-being plan within the two subsequent years, which meant by December 2020. It is in the context of this initiative that our municipalities - Opasatika, Val Rita-Harty, Kapuskasing, Moonbeam, Fauquier-Strickland, and Smooth Rock Falls - created a partnership in order to develop a joint plan combining our needs.

The main goal behind the development of this plan was to identify the problems and challenges faced by our communities in order to subsequently identify the main areas of concern our communities need to address over the years to come in order to ensure the safety and well-being of the population. Our quality of life, our community infrastructures, our local businesses, our post-secondary institutions, our natural resources, our bilingualism and our residents constitute many of the strengths on which we can capitalize to implement our Community Safety and Well-Being Plan in order to build stronger and safer communities.

The plan was developed based on the needs of our communities. These needs were identified through a process which made it possible for our residents to have their voices heard and to bear a significant impact on the development of the plan. First, our municipalities hired the Centre régional de recherche et d'intervention en développement économique et communautaire (CRRIDEC) to carry out the process in consultation with an advisory committee, the Kapuskasing Mobilization Committee, comprising representatives of key regional organizations. The first step was to launch a public survey developed according to guidelines proposed by the Ministry, a survey which generated a large number of responses. Based on these, the research team was able to identify the issues and challenges our communities face.

Semi-structured interviews were conducted with key people from each of our communities (including the members of the steering committee). The analysis of the collected data allowed our team to narrow down the areas of focus our communities needed to address. Finally, the plan was drawn up by the CRRIDEC, in cooperation with the municipalities and the advisory committee, after which it was reviewed by an expert in community planning.

It is important to stress that this Community Safety and Well-Being Plan is intended to be dynamic in nature so as to adapt to future circumstances, in order to meet the needs of our communities. Thus, this plan serves as a foundation upon which our communities will be able to build together in order to foster safe environments for our populations. Our municipalities will work together in order to rally and engage our communities in the implementation of the plan to ensure their safety and their well-being, as well as to enable them to grow and thrive.

When implementing the plan, it will be critical to push for inclusion and, in doing so, to properly represent diversity in the various projects, activities, and initiatives. Indeed, people from diverse backgrounds are often more affected by the issues related to community safety and well-being.

We would like to thank the Kapuskasing Mobilization Committee, our communities which actively participated in collecting the data through the survey and semi-structured interviews, as well as any other person who played a role in the development of this plan and without whose contribution this project could not have been completed.

Municipalities of Opasatika, Val Rita-Harty, Kapuskasing, Moonbeam, Fauquier-Strickland and Smooth Rock Falls

INTRODUCTION

This Community Safety and Well-being Plan has been developed for the communities of Opasatika, Val Rita-Harty, Kapuskasing, Moonbeam, Fauquier-Strickland, and Smooth Rock Falls. It is mainly based on four areas of focus selected by analyzing the results of the survey conducted among the communities targeted by the plan. The four areas of focus are the following: crime, housing, mental health, as well as substance abuse and addiction.

In this plan, each area of focus is briefly explained, accompanied by supporting evidence to demonstrate the needs and risks associated with the said area of focus in the targeted communities. Then, courses of action accompany each area of focus in order to allow communities to take the first step in mitigating or overcoming the risks identified. It is important to note that the proposed courses of action are not only aimed at the municipalities, but also at the community organizations. In a nutshell, the six communities will have to work collaboratively in order to undertake the targeted approaches and, therefore, more often than not, they will have to carry out these initiatives at a regional level rather than at a municipal one.

The proposed courses of action have been developed based on the comments gathered via the survey addressed to the communities, on the results of the interviews with key players within the communities, and through research undertaken based on specific needs of the communities. It is important to note that this plan is not intended to be carried out in one single year.

At the end of the document, there is a section addressing the impact of the COVID-19 pandemic on the risks associated with the four areas of focus. This section is followed by another one listing some performance indicators which will be helpful in measuring the progress achieved by each community within these same four areas of focus.

It should be made clear that this plan is to be used as a tool that can evolve over time based on the circumstances and challenges the six targeted communities will face in the years to come, and not as a magic formula making it possible to overcome all challenges. Collaboration, commitment and communication must be applied here in order to build safe communities where the well-being of residents is given priority.

LEVELS OF INTERVENTION

In its Community Safety and Well-being Planning Framework¹, the Ministry of the Solicitor General has identified four levels of intervention, shown in the diagram below. The courses of action suggested in this plan are found at different levels of intervention. It is indeed crucial to have a balanced strategy, and therefore to keep from channelling efforts on only one of these levels.



Four areas of focus have been identified as priorities for the community safety and well-being of the municipalities targeted by this plan:

Crime

Housing

Mental Health

**Substance Abuse
and Addiction**

CRIME

The communities located between Opatatika and Smooth Rock Falls face an array of crimes different from elsewhere in the province, for instance in comparison to a large Southern Ontario city. When collecting the data to draw up this plan, the recurrent themes pertaining to crime were theft, breaking-and-entering with damage to private property, domestic violence, as well as possession and dealing of drugs. More specifically, burglaries and break-ins, as well as damage to private property were identified by the general public as the most important risk for community safety and well-being. In the past three years (2018 to 2020), the Ontario Provincial Police (OPP) detachment reported 170 calls for break-ins and 460 calls for burglaries between Opatatika and Smooth Rock Falls.

As for domestic violence, the OPP reported 903 calls related to domestic disturbance in the targeted communities, between 2018 and 2020. Similarly, in 2019-20 the HKS Counselling Services received 273 demands for these kinds of services from residents between Hearst and Fauquier. However, it is important to bear in mind that these statistics do not accurately reflect a true picture of reality because oftentimes, in the case of domestic violence for instance, one may wait for a certain number of incidents to occur before

reporting their spouse, and in some cases they do not report them at all.

Finally, between 2015 and 2018, the OPP reported 105 calls related to the possession of illicit drugs between Opatatika and Smooth Rock Falls.

Calls to OPP between 2018 and 2020

(from Opatatika to Smooth Rock Falls)

Breaking-and-enter:	170
Theft:	460
Domestic disturbances:	903
Possession of illicit drugs:	105

Courses of Action

Mobilization Committee

- ✓ Maintain the meetings of the Kapuskasing Mobilization Committee to ensure communication and collaboration between community agencies.

Youth Crime

- ✓ As part of a feasibility study, survey the population in order to possibly open a meeting place for youth where there would be recreational activities and equipment such as computers, internet connexion, board games, a pool table, a table tennis set, etc.
- ✓ Participate in the Bully Awareness and Prevention Week by organizing activities, mainly in schools (e.g., an information session with someone who gives a personal testimony).

Awareness and Prevention

- ✓ In partnership with community agencies, hold workshops or information sessions on different themes in order to reduce crime in the communities (e.g., discrimination and racism, domestic violence, human trafficking).
- ✓ Complete a gap analysis in order to identify the strengths and the areas that need to be improved with respect to crime in communities. Develop an action plan to address the identified shortcomings.
- ✓ Explore the possibility of applying to become a member of the National Municipal Network for Crime Prevention (NMNCP)². The NMNCP is a grouping of municipalities whose mission is capacity-building and community involvement in order to reduce crime and increase community safety and well-being.
- ✓ Hold consultations in each communities in order to explore residents' interest and possible voluntary involvement in setting up a neighbourhood surveillance and patrol program (*Neighbourhood Watch*).

Courses of Action (continued)

Police Force

- ✓ Maintain the Police Liaison Team, where plainclothes officers participate in community activities in order to build a bond of trust with the population, raise awareness on substance abuse and addiction, and commit to reducing street crime.
- ✓ Maintain the meetings of the Police Services Board in order to continue to address crime-related problems in the communities.

Domestic Violence

- ✓ Raise awareness and do prevention work in schools to educate young people on specific topics related to domestic violence (e.g., inappropriate and unhealthy behaviours in a relationship, available resources and services, reporting such behaviours, the links between addiction and mental health) in order to decrease the number of possible future domestic violence conflicts.
- ✓ Get involved in the *White Ribbon Campaign*³ to raise awareness among men and mobilize them to reduce violence against girls and women (e.g., by organizing a *Walk a Mile in Her Shoes*⁴ march).

Theft, Break-Ins, and Damage to Private Property

- ✓ Organize awareness-raising and information events on burglaries and break-ins as well as damage to private property. These could cover types of robberies, their frequency, how to prevent them, people or services to contact to report such acts, etc.

HOUSING

Many important risks associated with community safety and well-being facing the communities between Opasatika and Smooth Rock Falls can be grouped under one area of intervention: the challenges with respect to housing. Lack of housing includes, among others, challenges relating to a shortage of affordable housing, of housing units for seniors, as well as poverty-related challenges.

There is a shortfall of affordable housing units in the targeted communities. Indeed, according to the census completed by Statistics Canada in 2016⁵, the 10.5% unemployment rate of the targeted municipalities, a higher rate than elsewhere in the province (7.4%), could place many people at risk of being unable to find affordable housing in suitable conditions. According to the Canada Mortgage and Housing Corporation (CMHC)⁶, housing is considered affordable if its monthly cost does not exceed 30% of the occupant's monthly income. According to Statistics Canada's last census, in 2016⁷, 35.3% of the tenants in the targeted communities spent 30% or more of their income on housing costs (monthly costs of housing and utilities).

Although a program enabling needy people to access subsidized housing is available in the targeted communities, it does not meet the demands, concludes the report *Community Profile - Housing Needs Assessment* published in 2019⁸, a report prepared by the Housing Services Corporation and covering the Cochrane District. Indeed, on July 31st 2019, 1 361 people were on a waiting list to access subsidized housing in the Cochrane District. Among them, 51.7% were over 60 years old.

Although efforts have been made in recent years to resolve the lack of housing units for elderly people, this risk remains important in the targeted communities. According to Statistics Canada's 2016 census⁹, the population aged 65 years and older represented 22.2% of the total population of the targeted communities, compared to 16.7% for the province. This shows that, on average, the population between Opasatika and Smooth Rock Falls is generally older than elsewhere in the province.

Courses of Action

Job Creation

- ✓ Continue to build on job creation in partnership with regional employment agencies and economic development agencies in order to foster positive growth of the job market and thus reduce the unemployment and poverty rates, and ensure attraction as well as retention of a young skilled, talented, and professional workforce.

Maintenance of Housing Units

- ✓ Review and update municipal by-laws concerning housing conditions and examine the possibility of implementing an inspection system for all rental properties.

Homelessness

- ✓ Conduct a needs analysis to assess the possibility of opening a shelter which would offer a few short-term safe beds to homeless people from the area.
- ✓ Favour the 'Housing First' approach popularized by Sam Tsemberis¹⁰ which aims to find accommodations for homeless individuals or for those at risk of becoming homeless without requiring that they submit to a placement beforehand to address any issues of substance abuse, addiction or mental health. The underlying principle of this approach is that individuals are better equipped to overcome their challenges if they are first housed.

Long-term Care Beds

- ✓ Work closely with government authorities and long-term care facilities in order to sustain the efforts to increase the number of beds at the North Centennial Manor and at Extendicare Kapuskasing, and thus better serve the aging population.

Housing Units for Seniors

- ✓ Nurture partnerships with current private sector housing development projects for elderly people by maintaining communications with those responsible for these projects in order to better understand their needs and be able to support their initiatives.
- ✓ Explore the possibility for residents to create a second unit within their house or on their property (*secondary suites*¹¹) where one or more aging family members could move in, and identify possible barriers which may interfere with such initiatives.

Courses of Action (continued)

Lack of Affordable Housing

- ✓ Develop, in partnership with the Cochrane District Social Services Administration Board (CDSSAB) and local organizations, plans to increase the number of affordable housing units in the communities.
- ✓ Further collaborate with CDSSAB in order to share knowledge and best practices, as well as identify potential housing-related investments in the communities between Opatatika and Smooth Rock Falls.
- ✓ Continue lobbying government bodies in order to increase the number of housing units managed by *Ontario Housing* available in the communities and thereby reduce the waiting list for this type of housing.
- ✓ Review and update municipal planning tools (e.g., subsidies, financial assistance in the form of grants, loans, property tax exemption, special taxes) in order to facilitate access to affordable housing (course of action drawn from the Kapuskasing Community Strategic Plan¹²).
- ✓ Assimilate the report *Community Profile - Housing Needs Assessment*¹³ prepared by the *Housing Services Corporation* for the CDSSAB and use the results to point out housing needs in the communities and to identify gaps in this area of focus.

MENTAL HEALTH

Mental health has been identified as a priority risk to safety and well-being in the targeted communities. Indeed, the Porcupine Health Unit's (PHU) *Community Health Status Report 2014*¹⁴ indicates that the population served by the PHU is generally in poorer mental health than elsewhere in the province. For instance, the prevalence rate of self-reported mood disorders (7.3% compared with 6.7%), the prevalence rate of self-reported anxiety disorders (5.9% compared with 5.2%) and the rate of repeat hospitalizations because of a mental illness (15.7% compared with 10.7%) are higher than the provincial average. In addition, the report indicates that in the area serviced by the PHU suicide rates are three times higher than the provincial average.

Among youth from 10 to 19 years of age, the difference is even more significant: the rate is 24 times higher for girls, and 12 times higher for boys. Programs and initiatives are already in place in the targeted communities to lower the risks associated with mental health, and a high demand is noted. For example, HKS Counselling Services have provided services to 841 people aged 16 years and over, and 251 consultations with a consulting psychiatrist in Kapuskasing in 2019-2020. Moreover, the Mobile Mental Health Crisis Rapid Response Team handled 71 requests for assistance in the first six months of its implementation (April to October 2020)¹⁵. This reflects the needs related to mental health in the targeted communities. Finally, the PPO reported 502 calls related to the *Mental Health Act* between 2018 and 2020 in the targeted communities.

Courses of Action

Access to Mental Health Services

- ✓ Encourage organizations to improve their staff members' work conditions by offering them free access to mental health services.
- ✓ Identify community leaders who could get involved as volunteers to help reduce stigma and promote mental well-being within various social groups to which they belong. Research shows that such community leaders are *lay health workers* and that their interventions increase the demand for services while reducing stigma and barriers to care¹⁶.
- ✓ Implement a voluntary registry of vulnerable people from the area so that social workers and emergency services (e.g., police officers and paramedics) have easy access to critical information at the time of an intervention. Information in this online secure registry could include description of the person, routines, medical needs, specific needs, as well as an emergency contact person. Such initiatives already exist in Timmins and in North Bay¹⁷.

Partnerships and Collaborations

- ✓ Pursue efforts of coordination of services related to planning and implementation of mental health services between community organizations working in this field.

Quality of Life

- ✓ Maintain efforts to ensure an excellent quality of life for all residents of the region, and thus participate in the creation of a better environment promoting community well-being.

Mental Health Among Youth

- ✓ Ensure mental health services are provided directly in schools through a provider present on site. Research has demonstrated that young people are more likely to seek assistance directly in schools rather than from community services¹⁸.

Courses of Action (continued)

Mental Health Among Youth (continued)

- ✓ Develop education workshops (either in person or in an online stand-alone format) for parents in order to increase their awareness and to inform them on dangerous behaviours which have negative consequences on their own mental health or that of their children (stress and anxiety, over-consumption of social networks, harassment and bullying, etc.).
- ✓ Work with various key partners in order to provide regional schools with more opportunities to raise awareness on mental health and to increase prevention. Indeed, research shows that *health-led programs* are more effective than *school-led programs*¹⁹ in curbing anxiety problems in youth.

Mental Health in Elderly People

- ✓ Undertake a study among older people in order to identify their needs in terms of mental health to better serve them through new initiatives and activities.

Awareness and Promotion

- ✓ Prominently display mental health services in communities where there is no office in order to further promote the available services.
- ✓ Increase the visibility and promote the existence of the Mobile Mental Health Crisis Rapid Response Team and its services to community partners and to the general public.
- ✓ Create a new full-time position entirely dedicated to raising awareness on mental health, substance abuse and addiction. This new position could be funded by a grant or by a group of community organizations wishing to increase awareness and prevention, but who do not necessarily have the time to do so or who are not mandated to do so.

SUBSTANCE ABUSE AND ADDICTION

In the communities targeted by this plan, the challenges associated with substance abuse and addiction are important risks for community safety and well-being. Indeed, the use of drugs, legal and illegal, represents a considerable problem. For instance, according to the *Community Health Status Report 2014*²⁰, published by the Porcupine Health Unit (PHU), the percentage of people who self-reported use of illicit drugs is higher in the region (50.6%) than elsewhere in the province (39.8%). As for overdoses from opioids, ambulance services from the PHU region received on average over 10 calls per week in that respect in the fall of 2020²¹, a rate increasing at an alarming pace. Furthermore, in Kapuskasing alone, Sensenbrenner Hospital's emergency department (5,972 visits) and the Ontario Provincial Police (2,046 calls) handled numerous cases involving mental health or substance abuse between 2014 and 2018. Finally, the Cochrane District Detox Centre (CDDC) received 1,365 demands in 2020, a majority of which had to be refused due to a shortage of available beds. The most recurring substance abuse among people admitted to the CDDC were alcohol (58%), amphetamines and other stimulants (53%), cannabis (45%), prescription opioids (27%) and cocaine (26%).

Therefore, it does not come as a surprise that the second most important risk to community safety and well-being identified by respondents to the survey destined to the

general public within the context of the development of this plan was consumption and trafficking of illegal drugs. Moreover, the Ontario Provincial Police detachment of Kapuskasing has reported 158 calls related to possession of illicit drugs between 2015 and 2018.

Most recurring substances among people admitted to the CDDC in 2019-20

Alcohol:	58 %
Amphetamines and other stimulants:	53 %
Cannabis:	45 %
Prescription opioids:	27 %
Cocaine:	26 %

Courses of Action

Cooperation Between Agencies

- ✓ Maintain partnerships between agencies so that they are made aware of the services provided in the six communities and have the possibility to refer their clients when necessary.
- ✓ Develop an inventory of tools, programs and community projects on substance abuse and addiction in order to facilitate access to information on these subjects.

Cyberaddiction

- ✓ Promote functions or applications such as *Screen Time* and *Moment* which allow parents to monitor the hours they or their children spend on social media in order to manage the risks associated with an excessive use of social media.

Alcohol Addiction

- ✓ Encourage participation in initiatives such as server training programs or designated driver programs designed to mitigate consequences related to alcohol consumption.

Gambling and Video Games Addiction

- ✓ Organize a promotional campaign to raise awareness among the population to ensure it is able to recognize symptoms of gambling and video games addiction, and to inform it of the possibility to access support services offered by local professionals.

Opioid Addiction

- ✓ Support Porcupine Health Unit and provincial initiatives for dissemination and sharing of free naloxone kits.
- ✓ Take an active part in the Porcupine Health Unit public awareness campaign on opioids and overdose prevention.

Courses of Action (continued)

Transition Beds

- ✓ Carry out a feasibility study to assess the possibility of obtaining transition beds for those on a waiting list for services (e.g., from a detox centre or from a residential treatment centre) or for those who have received services but who are not ready to return home.

Awareness-raising and Education

- ✓ Develop a checklist which will allow organizations to provide an overview of the awareness activities held within the current year. This tool would make it possible to identify gaps related to the different groups and subjects targeted by these initiatives. Examples of targeted groups could be elementary school pupils or elderly people, while examples of targeted subjects could be heavy consumption of alcohol or resisting social pressures.
- ✓ Educate different population groups on substance abuse and addiction realities, as well as on the concurrent disorders which may be associated with these.
- ✓ Plan more exchange opportunities, round-table meetings or information sessions on specific themes (e.g., management of risks associated with consumption) of which parents are the target audience.
- ✓ Plan and hold local and regional activities during the National Addictions Awareness Week.

Current Services

- ✓ Maintain current services in order to continue to serve the population dealing with addiction and substance abuse problems.

CURRENT OUTLOOK IN THE PANDEMIC CONTEXT

On March 11, 2020, the World Health Organization (WHO) declared that the outbreak of COVID-19 had reached pandemic proportions. The subsequent events had significant impact everywhere, including in the six communities targeted by the plan, and that, equally when it came to lifestyle and economy, as well as crime rate, housing, mental health, and substance abuse and addiction. The next pages discuss the impacts the pandemic has had on the major focus areas of this plan, considering each one separately in order to show how the pandemic has increased the related risks.

The key message is that the communities of Opatatika, Val Rita-Harty, Kapuskasing, Moonbeam, Fauquier-Strickland, as well as Smooth Rock Falls will need to redouble their efforts and to actively cooperate in order to mitigate these risks and to ensure the safety and well-being of their residents.



CRIME IN THE PANDEMIC CONTEXT

The pandemic seems to have influenced crime-related trends everywhere in Canada, especially when it comes to domestic violence and family violence. Indeed, confinement seems to have led to many problems within households, such as seclusion, financial stress, family stress, child care and loss of employment. Many representatives of regional community organizations indicated that they were concerned about the increasing number of calls related to family violence. As a matter of fact, according to Statistics Canada, a 4% increase of such calls has been reported during the first four months of the pandemic. In some regions, this increase even reaches 20

to 30%²². It is important to note that such statistics have historically tended to underestimate the actual number of cases, and that many health professionals believe that the pandemic has increased this statistical bias. For instance, for certain abusers the pandemic has become a new means of gaining power over their victim who is now completely isolated from its social network and in a considerably more vulnerable position.

HOUSING IN THE PANDEMIC CONTEXT

Access to housing is closely linked to poverty. At the beginning of the pandemic, many lost work hours, their job or even their business, which has resulted in a decline in income. According to an article published in the *Nouvelliste* in September 2020, the pandemic has resulted in a labour market downturn in the country²³. Indeed, according to this same article, the current number of jobs in the country is inferior by approximately 1.1 million jobs compared to the number of jobs before the pandemic. Thus, according to many experts, despite the benefits provided by the government to people whose income has been affected by the pandemic, poverty rates are on the rise in the country. In addition, the number of people making use of food banks

due to a lack of financial resources has increased during the pandemic.

An article published in *L'Acadie nouvelle* revealed that according to the accounting firm BDO Canada, the revenues of “close to 40% of Canadians have deteriorated during the first wave of the health crisis (*L'Acadie nouvelle*, 2020)²⁴. In addition, according to the same article, the people in Canada most vulnerable to losing control of their indebtedness seem to be the residents of Ontario, of British Columbia and of Alberta.

MENTAL HEALTH IN THE PANDEMIC CONTEXT

The pandemic situation has also had a negative impact on the mental health of the Canadian population at numerous levels. For many, anxiety, worry and stress were amplified by the situation. Indeed, according to a study conducted by a researcher from the Royal Ottawa Hospital, anxiety and depression problems have significantly increased since the beginning of the pandemic. In fact, it was observed that in the country, among people who had never experienced mental health problems in the past, “one in three shows signs of anxiety disorder, and one in two shows signs of depression at the present time” (Radio-Canada, 2020)²⁵.

As for those people who were already experiencing mental health problems before the pandemic, their symptoms have amplified, becoming more severe and more frequent. Furthermore, being isolated can bear a negative impact on the mental health of Canadians. In fact, 25% of Canadians

live alone²⁶, and the fact of only seeing other people via videoconferencing and social media can be demoralizing.

Moreover, according to a study by the Centre for Addiction and Mental Health (CAMH)²⁷, in Ontario, the levels of suicidal ideation and psychological distress experienced by students from grades 7 to 12 are higher than ever. Indeed, according to that same study, one out of six young people (16%) have claimed having seriously thought about committing suicide, one out of five youth (21%) indicated experiencing severe psychological distress, and one youth out of seven (15%) declared having harmed themselves intentionally in the last year, data which has worsened since the beginning of the pandemic. This same survey also reveals that young people who experience mental health problems generally do not know where to turn to get assistance.

SUBSTANCE ABUSE AND ADDICTION IN THE PANDEMIC CONTEXT

Events brought on by the pandemic have had a serious bearing in the areas of substance abuse and addiction. Indeed, 42% of respondents to a survey conducted in Ontario stated increasing their intake of substances or their playing habits since the beginning of the pandemic²⁸. Furthermore, the opioid crisis has intensified since the beginning of the pandemic; the province has observed an increase of nearly 40% of opioid-related deaths²⁹. In the areas served by the Porcupine Health Unit, ambulance services received on average 10 calls per week in this respect in autumn of 2020, a total which represents almost the double of such calls in April 2020, which was an average of five to six a week³⁰. As for gambling problems, 28% of the respondents to a survey launched at the provincial level believe that they have been developing a gaming addiction since the beginning of the pandemic³¹. In

another sphere of addiction, according to a survey conducted in Ontario³², approximately three-quarters of parents who had laid down rules limiting the time their children were to spend in front of a screen have waived those rules since the beginning of the pandemic.

Challenges brought on by the pandemic in the area of substance abuse and addiction are complex: not only have the addiction rates soared, but most of the awareness-raising activities had to be cancelled and a great number of services were disrupted or faced with barriers in the delivery of their services. For instance, the Cochrane District Detox Centre has noted an 11% increase in its services refusal rate due to a lack of bed availability during the first seven months of the year 2020-21.

PERFORMANCE INDICATORS

Listed below are a few performance indicators which will help measure the progress in each of the targeted municipalities according to the four areas of focus, which are crime, housing, mental health, as well as substance abuse and addiction. A performance indicator is a value used to measure the impact of the adopted strategies and of the actions taken in the targeted communities (e.g., by comparing current data to data from a previous period).

Crime

- Crime-related data in the six targeted communities
 - ▶ Number of charges and calls related to certain categories of crime (e.g., domestic violence, possession of illegal drugs)
- Perception of crime in the communities

Housing

- Project assessment
- Number of beds in long-term care facilities
- Number of affordable housing units
- Number of affordable subsidized housing units
- Number of housing units for elderly people
- Proportion of tenants spending 30% or more of their income on housing costs
- Unemployment rate

Mental Health

- Development of new partnerships
- Data related to mental health in the six targeted communities
 - ▶ Number of services offered
 - ▶ Number of calls
 - ▶ Number of referrals
- Evaluation of community initiatives
- New services offered
- Residents' perception of mental health

Substance abuse and addiction

- Development of new partnerships
- Data related to substance abuse and addiction in the six targeted communities
 - ▶ Number of services offered
 - ▶ Number of calls
 - ▶ Number of referrals
- Evaluation of community initiatives
- New services offered

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