

Final report

North Bay and Area Drug Strategy Committee



Where We Came From...

- Past 15-20 years, North Bay Focus served as the Drug Awareness Committee offering a number of programs and services
- March 2011, North Bay Drug Awareness Committee established and was then expanded to be the North Bay and Area Drug Strategy Committee
- November 2012, Ministry of Tourism, Sport and Culture provided funds to hire a Project Coordinator to oversee research, create greater awareness and to seek public input
- As a result of this history, and a lot of hard work by a number of people over a 20 year period, recommendations have been developed that will lead to the creation of a North Bay and Area Drug Strategy

Key Objectives...

1. Identifying and addressing the gaps in service, and the alternatives that are available or need to be made available, to the social determinants of health to reduce the risks such as housing, employment, education, health and social inclusion.
2. Enhanced coordination of care amongst service providers to reduce gaps and duplication of service
3. Reducing the risks and consequences associated with alcohol and drug use from youth leading into adulthood
4. To provide high quality, accessible treatment service delivery that emphasizes a client centered focus that will meet client needs, holistic needs and reduce the stigma associated with drug and alcohol misuse
5. A broad based education program focused on all sectors (from pre-kindergarten to University) that speaks to the need for a change in society's value system
6. Buy in from all service providers
7. The need for a stronger link between enforcement and treatment from an education and awareness perspective
8. Broadening out collective responsibility for awareness and solutions to the scope of the problem
9. The need for a judicial system that recognizes that the cause and the sentencing process needs to be geared to not only punishment of the offender, but also to aim towards the rehabilitation of the offender
10. The creation of a program of education for officers and decision makers as to the viable options available to offenders from a pre-sentencing perspective
11. Development of resiliency for substance abuse and contributing issue

Outcomes of Planning Session And Public Consultation...

- Over 200 participants had input into the outcomes that were identified
 - Public forums – 95 participants
 - Key stakeholders – 120 participants
 - Talk To Teens – 3500 participants
- 39 key outcomes were identified
- The outcomes were aligned to the 10 key objectives mentioned above
- Many issues and potential solutions were identified and if addressed, the one outcome that surfaced continuously was the need and desire of those directly and indirectly impacted by misuse of drugs and alcohol to have some sort of **HOPE**
- A key outcome was the identification of a structure that is required to address the outcomes
- The 39 outcomes were reviewed and lead to the creation of 30 recommendations

Summary of Recommendations

- Public campaign to increase the awareness as to the scope and magnitude of the drug issue in our area and the potential solutions
- Long term sustainability of the working group combined with a coordinated action plan for the 4 pillars
- More coordinated effort amongst all service providers in order to maximize resources, create one voice and avoid duplication of services
- Work with the legal system to include treatment along with punishment for the crime
- Better cooperation with police by citizens
- Creation of peer support groups for the various target markets
- Public education in order to reduce the misunderstanding between mental health and substance abuse
- Commitment from local government that they have a responsibility to be part of the solution
- Work with the medical profession to track the use and abuse of prescription drugs

Recommended Future Structure...



Prevention..

- A set of interventions designed to avoid the physical, mental and emotional affects of disease and injury associated with substance misuse.
- Create supportive environments and promote the health resiliency of individuals and communities in order to prevent problematic use of alcohol and other illicit drugs.
- Prevention includes strengthening the health, social and economic factors that can reduce the risk of substance misuse. This includes but is not limited to access to health care, stable housing, education, employment, recreation and often divided into, primary, secondary and tertiary prevention.
- Primary prevention-seeks to prevent the occurrence all together
- Secondary prevention- seeks to limit the duration or amount of use before permanent damage occurs
- Tertiary prevention- seeks to minimize complications and premature deterioration association with use

Harm Reduction...

- Interventions that seek to reduce the harms associated with substance use for individuals, families and communities. It can include, but does not require abstinence.
- The focus is on the individual's behaviour, not on the substance use itself.
- Effective harm reduction approaches are pro-active, offer a comprehensive range of coordinated, user friendly, client centered and flexible programs and services and provide a supportive, non-judgmental environment
- Examples of harm reduction include needle and condom distribution, safer bars and low risk drinking guidelines

Enforcement...

- Interventions that seek to strengthen community safety by responding to the crimes and community disorder issue associated with the importation, manufacturing, cultivation, distribution, possession and use of legal and illegal substances.
- Enforcement includes the broader criminal justice system of the courts, probation and parole, etc.
- Effective enforcement also means being visible in communities, understanding local issues and being aware of existing community resources.
- Examples of enforcement include community policing initiatives and drug treatment courts.

Treatment...

- Interventions that seek to improve the physical, emotional and psychological health and well-being of people who use or have used substances (and sometimes their families) through various psychosocial and psychopharmacological therapeutic methods.
- The goal is to incorporate multiple client centered recovery focused treatment philosophies.
- Effective treatment is evidence-based, easily accessible and has the active involvement of the person being treated.
- Examples of treatment include withdrawal management (detox), residential and out-patient treatment, counseling and ambulatory medication assisted recovery.

Mobilization of 4 Pillar Structure...

- Each pillar has developed a vision statement and a goal statement
- As a result of the input from the consultations, the outcomes that were presented have been aligned to each of the 4 pillars
- Contributing factors related to each pillar have also been identified
- Next steps will include:
 - Identification of key stakeholders directly aligned to each pillar
 - Facilitated long term plan for each pillar
 - Implementation, monitoring and evaluation of long term plan

Changing the Culture...

- “If we keep doing what we do, we keep getting what we get”
- It was universally agreed that a change in how we address misuse of drugs and alcohol was necessary in order to –
 - a) *Maximize resources*
 - b) *Reduce duplication of service*
 - c) *Identify lead organization functions and deliverables*
 - d) *Follow a long term plan developed with input from all agencies and gain buy in to a terms of reference outlining a big picture scenario aligned to specific outcomes, deliverables, responsibilities and accountabilities (clients and fellow service agencies)*

Attaining Success...

- Success will only be attained if all everyone work towards:
 - More collaboration
 - Increased cooperation
 - Increased communications
 - Controlled treatment
 - Enhanced education and awareness

In conclusion...

- Champions are required from within existing agencies
- The 4 pillars will continue to be made up of strong, dedicated members who embrace the action steps that have been identified
- Increased education as to the cause of drug and alcohol misuse is required along with easier access to information as to where help may be found
- Improved overall communications with regard to education and awareness as to the issues and solutions

Next Steps...



Secure Funding
Through OTF

Form Steering
Committee to
Oversee Project

Develop Terms of Reference for
4 pillars and develop action
plan for each

Incorporate individual action plans for
each pillar into comprehensive plan for
the region

Implement Year One Plan with ongoing evaluation

Implement Year Two plan and prepare final report