

SYSTEMS CHANGE

WHAT IS IT? HOW DO
COMMUNITY ORGANIZATIONS
APPROACH IT?

“ Shifting power dynamics and building relationships across sectors and political divides is essential work in systems change. Transforming a system is really about transforming the relationships between people who make up the system. Far too often, organizations, groups and individuals working on the exact same social problem work in isolation from each other.”

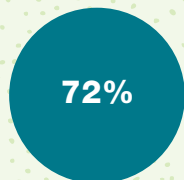
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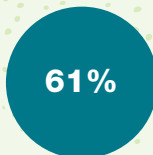
A majority of 2018 sector survey respondents (79%) said they **partner with other community-based organizations** when working to influence the broader system. Many also indicated that they partner with health authorities and regional governments (72%) and meet with and engage policy makers (61%).



Partner with other Community Based Organizations



Partner with Health Authorities and municipalities



Meet with and engage policy makers



Seek to build trust through dialogue across sectors



Host knowledge exchange events



Submit articles or letters to media



Organize planning tables

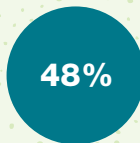
Municipality



Health Authority



Provincial Ministry



12%

No strong connection



19%

Federal Department / Agency

28%

Regional District

27% of organizations surveyed said they were often / all the time engaged in activities to influence government policy.

Community organizations in the 2018 sector survey identified particularly strong connections with local policy makers within municipalities and regional health authorities.

2018 Sector Survey respondents were asked to describe the most important actions needed to significantly improve the community-based MHSU sector in BC. A few respondents expressed the **need for actions based on transforming relationships** between various system actors:



“ Legitimate, transparent, respectful and power-sharing relationships must exist between the larger system and the non-profit sector (community-based services) to get any significant changes to occur. ”

“ A practice which reflects embodiment of care, compassion and empathy, and which is anti-oppressive, intersectional and radical. ”



Others described the need to transform the system to **focus on and enhance key elements of community care**:

“ A system of wraparound care that is easy to access, and includes professional assessment, diagnosis and treatment, and affordable housing. ”



“ Integrate it with primary care providers, ensure peer support and peer navigation is available across the province, and ensure evidence-based counselling is available to all who need it. Support organization’s core mission and critical services (sometimes called admin) to ensure they can research and develop new programs and measure the effectiveness of existing ones. ”



“ Operational and capital funding that supports community-based MHSU. Youth and families need access points to care that are rooted in community and outside the walls of hospital setting. Invest in upstream approaches to mental health, health promotion, and illness prevention for children and youth. We need to address a critical lack of psychiatric services in rural settings. ”

Others spoke about the need for **revision of broad legal frameworks** amid the ongoing overdose crisis:



“ Decriminalization / legalization of drugs / safe drug supply. ”