

Community Counselling Fund Survey Findings

Community-based counselling across British Columbia

Grantee organizations report they fill important roles in their communities by connecting clients to other services.



CCF grantee organizations serve clients in

22

communities

&

52

First Nations communities

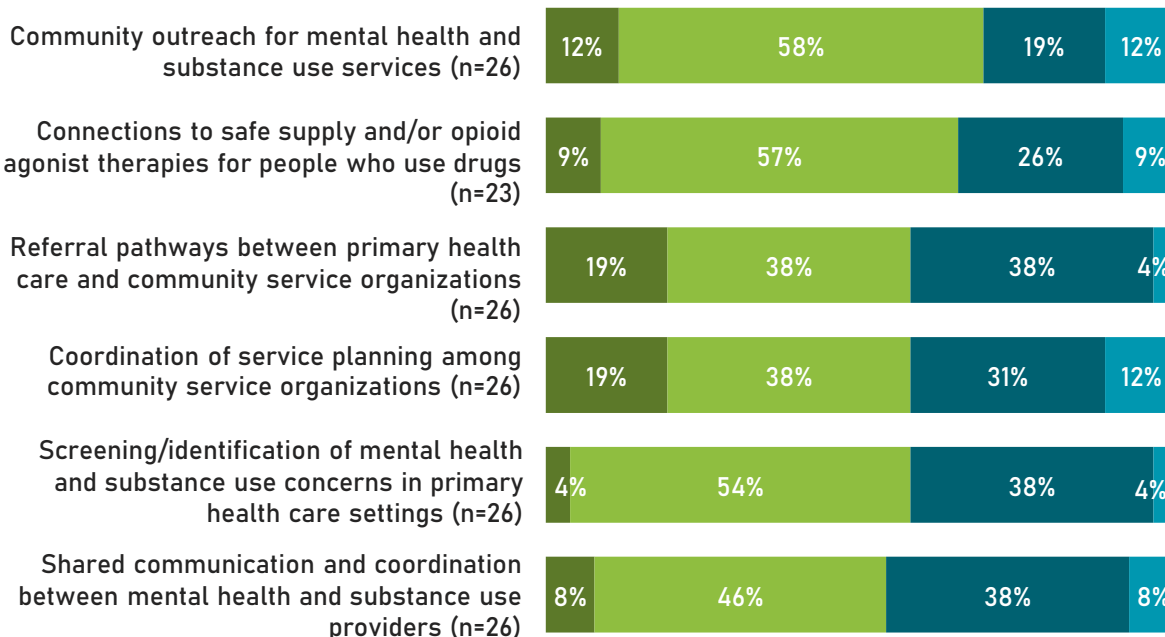
About the Survey

This survey was administered to grantee organizations of the Community Action Initiative's (CAI) Community Counselling Fund (CCF) to develop a baseline for the next two years of the fund's evaluation. 27 of 29 grantee organizations responded to the survey.

Perceptions of current systems of care

What elements of a system of mental health and substance use care do organizations think are effective?

Very effective Somewhat effective Not very effective Not at all effective



Continuing needs identified by community organizations:



Specific counselling services and modalities



Expand and increase existing services



Programs and services for specific populations



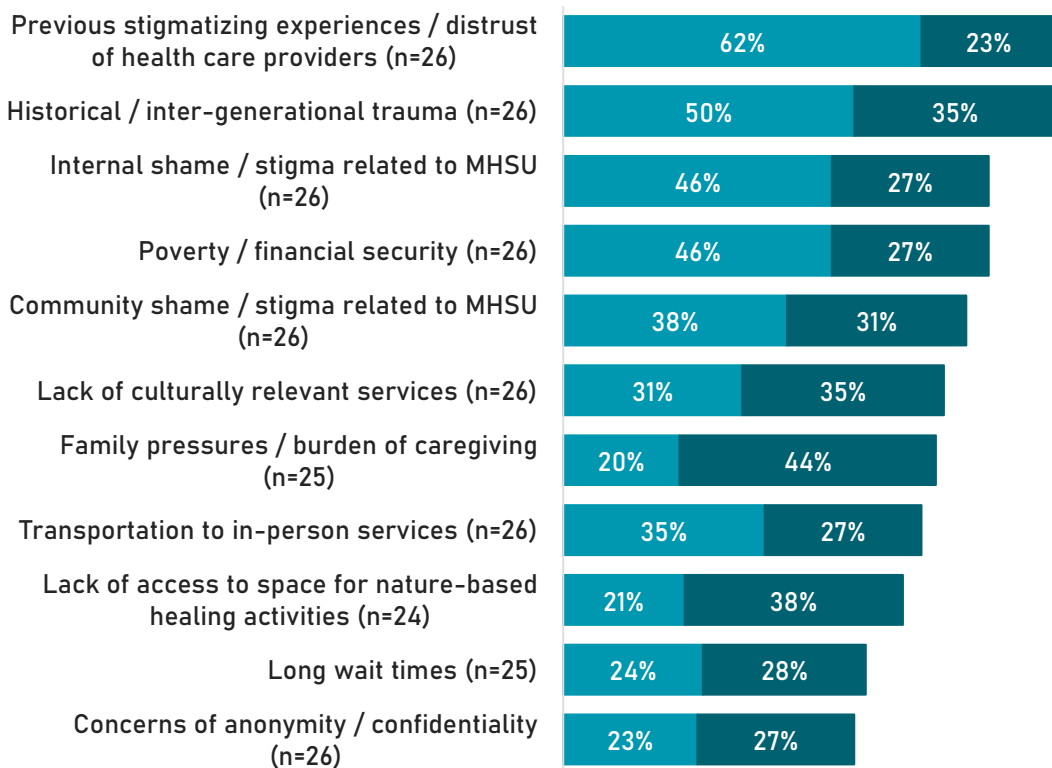
Additional staff with specialized skills and experience



Addressing systemic barriers such as housing, justice, and safe supply

Barriers to accessing counselling:

The following were described as “extreme” or “considerable” barriers to accessing counselling services for their clients:



What do community-based organizations think can be done to help address these barriers to access?



Education and awareness targeted at reducing stigma



Culturally relevant and language specific services



Staff with expertise specific to clients' needs



Improved coordination and partnerships between service providers

Most-reported challenges faced by community organizations



Securing funds that are applicable to planned programming



Lack of capacity to evaluate counselling programming



Recruiting and retaining counselling providers with the right fit of experience and credentials



Organizations identified flexible, long-term funding (that is also applicable to program administration and office space) as the greatest need to address these challenges.

Delivery of culturally-relevant services

Key supports include:



Funding for specific programming



Building relationships with Elders, Indigenous community leaders, and service providers from minority groups



Training for staff in all roles (not only counselling staff)

16 organizations reported offering counselling programs led by Indigenous people for Indigenous people. Of these programs:

100% Engage elders / knowledge keepers from local First Nations / Métis communities

81% Integrate traditional medicines

75% Offer land / nature-based healing

69% Integrate ceremony

31% Offer local Indigenous language learning

Engaging people with lived & living experience (PWLLE)

50%

have PWLLE in key decision-making positions around the design and delivery of counselling services.

Key supports in engaging PWLLE include:



Funding earmarked for staff positions and other roles



Policies, guidelines, and organizational values



Engaging PWLLE in leadership and advisory roles



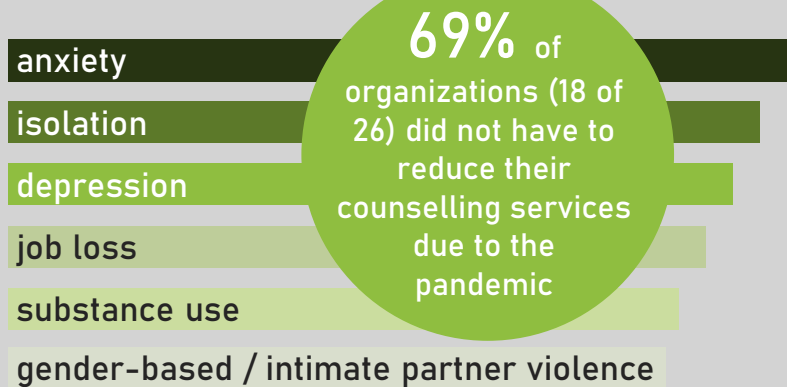
Client and community feedback and outreach

Response to COVID-19



of organizations (24 of 26) have seen an increase in demand for counselling services since the onset of the COVID-19 pandemic.

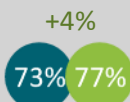
The most commonly-reported client concerns include:



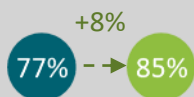
A greater percentage of organizations (n=26) agreed or strongly agreed their capacity to meet the needs of clients had increased since March 2020

● Before March 2020 ● After March 2020

Our counselling staff maintained a caseload that allowed them ample time for client maintenance.



We were able to accommodate new counselling clients when they needed / wanted to begin counselling.



Our organization's counselling services were able to meet the demand from our clients / target population(s).

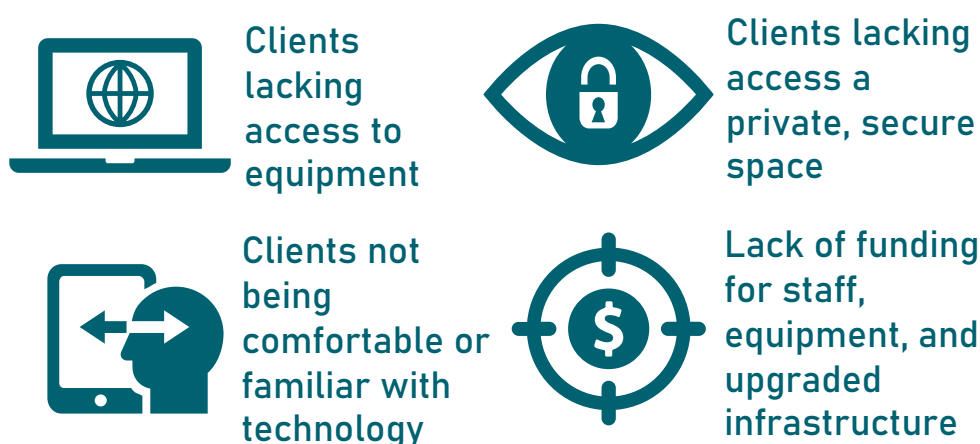


Transition to virtual services

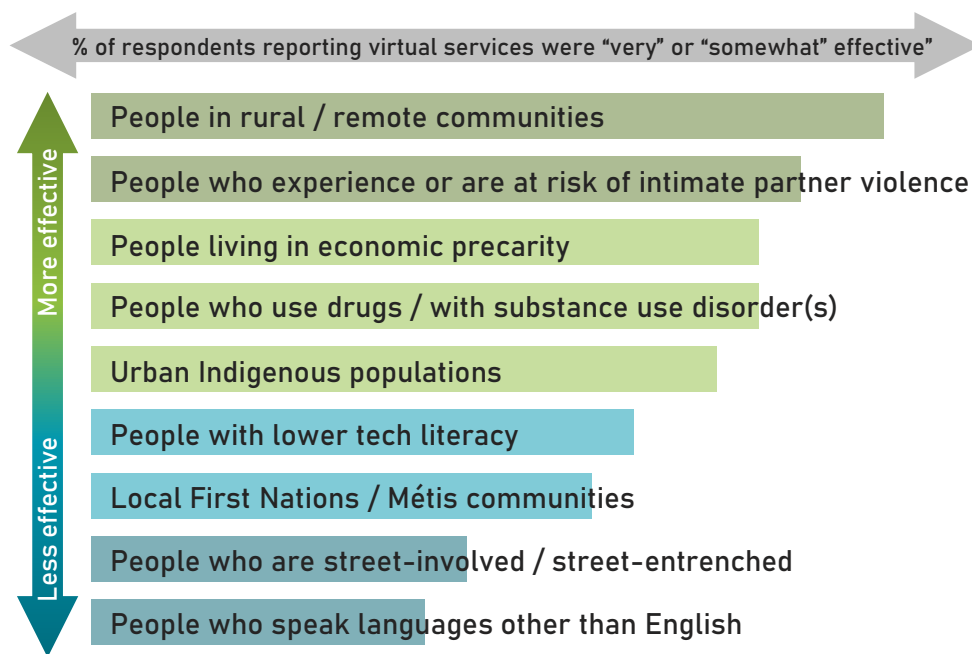


of organizations (21 of 26) now offer virtual services as a response to the COVID-19 pandemic.

Challenges to implementing virtual services included:



Virtual services were most effective in reaching:



Successes in implementing virtual services

Reduced barriers to access such as appointment times and travel



Ensuring client safety and alleviating anxiety around in-person services

83% of organizations (20 of 24) plan to continue offering virtual services after the COVID-19 pandemic

71% of organizations (17 of 24) have been able to reach new clients with virtual services

Efficient use of counselling staff resources



Maintaining connections to clients and communities

67% of organizations (15 of 24) have largely retained existing clients with virtual services