



## FY23-24 Q1 Executive Director's Report

### Client Services and Partnerships

In Q1, the Director, Clinical Services worked with the COO and several staff on a project designed to provide mental health and gender-based counselling supports to clients living with a developmental disability. We met with senior staff from Willowbridge (formerly Brant Family Service) to learn about how they implemented their model. Based on this work, and previous research, an outline of how we will approach this work at FST was developed. Staff from all areas of the organization joined this conversation. The Director also worked with other system partners on the momentum building to have intimate partner violence declared an epidemic. This was the first recommendation made by the Coroner's inquest into the tragic femicide of three women on the same day in 2015.

### Programs and Services

#### David Kelley Services

In David Kelley Services (DKS), Queer and Connected, a three-year project funded by TUHF wrapped up at the end of this quarter. Essential virtual peer groups were held regularly for 2SLGBTQ+ youth ages 16-29. One of the three groups, which is for trans and non-binary youth, will carry on as part of DKS until March 2024 along with a presence on social media. DKS took a central role in the FST Pride Committee and ran a community art event called Queer Existence and Resistance. DKS also got out to a fair at George Brown and continues to engage with community networks.

#### Families in Transition

Families in Transition continued to engage with our external consultant at U of T and received a training on Informed Consent with regard to working with children. FIT is working on updating our practices with a focus on risk reduction when working with children in high conflict families. The FIT team facilitated a WIC Inter-team presentation on supporting clients experiencing separation and divorce. All three teams met with Knowledge Building to look at next steps for Story of Our Work and program evaluation.

#### Seniors and Care Givers Support Services (SCSS)

The SCSS team has been diligently working towards reaching high risk seniors through, direct intervention, community engagement and therapeutic groups. The team has successfully launched two new groups and is actively increasing their volunteers to support client requests. The Senior Clients have been enjoying the summer by actively engaging in social events organised through SCSS groups. Pat's Place continues to see referrals and be a temporary safe haven for seniors experiencing abuse. Mosaic Home Care and Chartwell are organizing an amazing fundraiser for Pat's Place in July. The teams' efforts have gone a long way in improving the quality of life of seniors in our community.

#### Violence Against Women (VAW)

The VAW team successfully organized an internal information session to enhance the WIC team and FST staffs' support to women survivors of violence. The team has further been involved in providing information sessions externally to the VAW network committee on "Trauma informed practices and supervision", as well as provided information sessions on THSP to external stakeholders. We continue to drive advocacy efforts through internal and external partnerships throughout the region by actively seeking opportunities to engage in committees that are working to eradicate GBV. The VAW team was represented at the Renfrew Inquest anniversary held at Renfrew County. These

efforts continue to bring about positive changes in the lives of women and drive systemic changes to address gender-based violence.

### **Next Steps Partner Assault Response Program (PAR)**

The Next Steps program continues to provide one group on site at our Church Street location and the other 6 groups are being held virtually, based on client requests. The on-site group attracts people who work night shifts, people who have limited access to technology and several clients in our most recent groups have been underhoused, living in shelters, couch surfing or homeless. We are seeing an increase in the number of people living with significant mental health issues. Referral flow to the program has been hampered with the consolidation of all Toronto area courts into a new courthouse on Armoury Street. PAR providers have met regularly with the Ministry of the Attorney General and other system partners to discuss the impact on programming and our concerns about delayed referrals as the delays lead to delays in contacting victim survivors. The Courts and MAG have made some one-time concessions to processes to decrease delays. We are still working with system partners to bring some clients into programming where there were delays of up to five months.

### **Community Engagement**

The Community Engagement team held a highly successful Indigenous learning event in April that brought together newcomers from the Somali, Afghan, Iranian, Nigerian, Spanish speaking and Arabic speaking communities. The trainers travelled from Alberta for this event and were welcomed to the territory upon which FST sits by staff from Native Family and Child Services of Toronto, who performed a smudge and invited all participants to participate in this opening ceremony. The event included teachings on the history of white man arriving on traditional territories, the impact of residential schools and the Truth and Reconciliation calls to action. A traditional Indigenous meal was served at lunch. The event was very well received and commitments from many in attendance to take the learnings from the day to their communities.

On June 28, a group of 30 Spanish speaking seniors participated in a walking tour in one in Centre Island and learned about the history and the life in the island. These events are used to inform our participants of the historical events, provide them a space to socialize and share their learnings.

### **Welcome Desk**

Since opening its doors to the public on April 11, the Welcome Desk at 355 Church Street saw an increase of visitor and client traffic to our Hub colleagues on FL2 and to FST on FL3. FST staff welcomed 1,374 individuals in Q1.

### **Social Action**

In April, Ontario Campaign 2000 responded to the provincial budget, *"Building a Strong Ontario"*, which did not offer much in critical areas for low-income families, children, workers, and marginalized communities in Ontario. You can read the statement here: <https://ontariocampaign2000.ca/ontario-campaign-2000-responds-to-the-2023-provincial-budget/>.

The SDGs project completed their national tour. The final community conversations were held in Toronto, Sydney Mines NS, Halifax, Charlottetown, Toronto, Vancouver and Regina.

The SDGs team organized a three-part national roundtable series on advancing Poverty and Human Rights with a central focus of engaging people with living expertise of poverty and self-advocates. The recordings will be available shortly on the SDG's project website.

### **Research and Evaluation**

1. Client Engagement Surveying

- Passport Program: Client engagement surveys have been developed for both clients labelled with a developmental disability and their caregivers; data collection and analysis have been completed; development of the full report and the infographics is under way
  - Info graphics for the Options Client Engagement Surveys have been posted on the FST Website
  - Changing Lives/Family Violence Client Engagement detailed Report has been submitted to program leadership
2. An in-depth evaluation of the Afghan Newcomer program funded by IRCC has been completed. The report has been submitted to FST leadership.
  3. The monthly FST organizational dashboard, reporting on indicators for Financial Sustainability, Operational Excellence, Quality Services and Individual and Community Impact is now in place.
  4. The 2022-2023 United Way of Greater Toronto Annual Report has been submitted. It includes reports on the Service Access program, General Counseling and David Kelly programs, the Families in Transition program, Violence Against Women Program, Social Action and General Organizational Health.

### **Options and Person Directed Planning**

The Options Adult team created a partnership with Surrey Place to deliver Effective Solutions Response Trainings. We submitted a Request for Proposal (RFP) to MCCSS to become the lead agency for Case management Services in the DS sector. The team has implemented program model changes with Urgent Response for OAP specifically related to respite coordination and will be participating in URS CANS training in August to implement a pre/post service CANS. The team is beginning to prepare presentation packages for resources clinics/workshops to be implemented in the fall.

### **Passport**

We approved 311 new clients in Q1. The team continues to onboard clients by focusing on contacting recipients who have not used their passport funding in the last 2 fiscal years. Many clients have been unreachable; we are working with the DSO to locate people. The team also co-facilitated 2 information sessions with DSO to a TDSB high school, one to Easter Seals and a session to a TPR.

### **PassportONE**

The PassportONE team processed 141,733 claims totaling \$102.81 million with an average processing time of 3.79 days.

To align with Passport guidelines, the funding exception process has been changed to a Pre-Approval Request (PAR) process. The updated PAR process improves accountability and standardizes the process. CRM changes have been implemented in conjunction with the PAR Application Form, and training conducted in late June for Passport Agencies and Transfer Payment Recipients to ensure a seamless transition.

The PassportONE data team have been working collaboratively with My Direct Plan to support the implementation of their new Service Agency and Broker portal. The portal went live on May 1st. Initial feedback has been positive, and a full rollout is expected in the fall. The new portal will allow us to convert 20,000 claims submitted through email to e-submissions, drastically reducing the data entry requirements for PassportONE.

## Corporate Services

### Technology, Communications, Facilities

Technology efforts focused on continued migration of key business applications to a cloud-based environment. Approval was secured and development began on the move of FST's aging intranet platform to a cloud-based platform. A new and expanded Intranet will provide improved and secure access to key organizational documents and enhanced communications for staff working both onsite and remotely. Work also began on the transition to a new combined Technology and Business Intelligence Department resulting from FST's reorganization plan.

Facilities continued to refine modifications to its former ground floor Café space and its transition to a "Commons" at 355 Church Street with the opening of a Welcome Desk for FST and colleague agencies. Work also focused on refinements to the retail/resource space for Hard Feelings Mental Health, part of the Citywide Commons group of agencies. Facilities also prepared for the expansion of Newcomer Women's Services to 128A Sterling Road and assisted their move-in. A new space management app was selected, and work began to have online space booking opportunities available by early Fall.

Communications led the creation of content and layout for the 2022-23 Annual Report which was released online and printed in time for the June 28 Annual General Meeting. The report highlighted another full 12 months of pandemic operations and preparations to reopen to the public in April 2023. Work also continued on development of a strategic communications plan with senior leadership sessions planned for Q2.

### Human Resources, Payroll and Volunteers

FST's new Wellness Program was introduced in May 2023 to offer seminars to promote employee wellbeing, resilience, and work life balance. Initial sessions provided a comprehensive orientation to FST's Employee Assistance Program.

The FST Connect Program was expanded to include two new programs to further connect and support employees. The initial program created opportunities for employees to learn more about different positions at FST. The two new programs are Welcome Connect – which connects new employees with more experienced employees and Welcome Back Connect – which creates space for new parents to connect with parents who have experience transitioning back to work after a parental leave.

On May 31, 2023, FST's National AccessAbility Week Working Group held the third virtual Lunch & Learn on the changes to the Developmental Service sector and how it is affecting accessibility needs of people living with a developmental disability.

### Finance

During Q1 the finance team completed another successful audit for fiscal 22-23. FST received an unqualified opinion from the Deloitte auditors on the financial statements. In addition, there was no recommendations to management regarding internal controls. The financial statements were presented to members of the Financial Affairs committee and the Board on June 21, 2023 and were subsequently approved. External reports were prepared and submitted to various funders by the deadlines.