



FY24-25 Q2 Executive Director's Report

Client Services and Partnerships

Programs and Services

During this period, the Director joined several experts in elder abuse at the Toronto Police College where she presented on Pat's Place, FST's elder abuse consultation team and the counselling work that FST does in the area of elder abuse. This day was held in response to one of the recommendations of the Ryan inquest, an inquest into the murder of an older woman by her husbands and the subsequent shooting death of the husband by police in an emergency department outside Toronto. 145 police officers were present for this training day.

The director continues participation in the Toronto Region VAW Service System Planning Table and is active in the risk management sub-group. The goal of this group is to introduce a common risk assessment tool to assess risk for violence and/or lethality amongst clients accessing VAW programs. The Risk Identification and Safety Assessment (RISA) tool has been selected for implementation and an implementation work is under development. FST has expressed interest in being a pilot site.

Counselling Service, Families in Transition (FIT), David Kelley Services (DKS) and Walk-In Counselling

The quarter started with an inter-team clinical day with all 6 teams offering counselling at FST. It was a rich day of collaboration, connection and consultation. The teams continue to see clients facing a wide range of issues. In DKS and Toronto Community Crisis Service Counselling (TCCS), we see higher rates of substance use and psychosis than in other programs. As the funding expanded for TCCS anchor organizations, including our community partner, Gerstein Centre, funding was also increased for TCCS counselling at FST, and we were able to expand service. There is a high demand for counselling in Spanish in our Walk-in Counselling and our most recent hire for TCCS is Spanish speaking. We have 3 clinical students who started in September and who will be seeing clients.

Service Access Unit (SAU) staff have been attending Metrac trainings as part of internal training. SAU Tech Lead and a Program support staff collaborated to lead a training for all of Program Support on Partner Assault Response (PAR) processes. PAR admin takes up a substantial amount of time as there are extensive time sensitive requirements by the courts. Processes continue to evolve with TREAT and as programs evolve (such as TCCS). A huge thank you to our Admin and SAU teams as they have continued to effectively support the work of the agency while dealing with many transitions.

Violence Against Women (VAW) and Seniors and Care Givers Support Services (SCSS)

The Violence Against Women team has been starting the process of planning our annual International Women's Day event that will be held on March 10, 2025. The team has also been refreshing some group initiatives and hoping to re-launch some groups and building new groups. A couple of colleagues had provided a keynote workshop on preventing gender-based violence for another agency in Scarborough.

The Partner Contact team has put in significant efforts in revamping the information brochure that is sent to clients, and to ensure that the clients have the most up-to-date information regarding service navigation.

During September, both the Violence Against Women team and Senior and Caregiver Support Services team had signed a Memorandum of Understanding with the Canadian Foundation for Economic Education to provide financial literacy support for clients.

The Senior and Caregiver Support Services team has been restarting some groups during this Fall season and collaborating with partners in hosting community events and information sessions. A colleague in this program represented FST at a Geriatric Psychiatry conference in Vancouver, BC in September, and shared about the work being done with the 2SLGBTQ+ and Seniors population, an intersection that is often overlooked in service provision.

Partner Assault Response (PAR)

The Next Steps team operated nine groups in Q2. Clients continue to present with increasingly complex mental health and/or substance use issues. Staff are working to support each individual within the constraints of the program. In some instances, where resources allow, clients are being offered individual sessions. PAR providers continue to collectively advocate to the Ministry of the Attorney General for differentiated programming including the addition of funding for case management supports for clients who present with complex challenges.

Community Engagement

The Community Engagement Team has been busy participating in outreach events, including the Canadian Immigrant Fair and the Senior's Active Living Fair. Many outings have been had by different groups, including watching the salmon run at Etienne Brule Park and BBQs at several local parks. Two team members have come together and developed a multicultural youth group, to allow female identified youth from a multitude of backgrounds to come together and learn and share. The first cohort has begun for the Arriving Together group, in partnership with Rainbow Railroad, supporting newcomers who have arrived in Canada, after fleeing persecution in their home country.

Options Program

The Options Children Team welcomed a Job Bank Student employee who supported the program throughout July and early August. The Student and Peer supervisor had the opportunity to attend a community BBQ at the Davenport MP's office with other community organizations. The team developed and provided a Disability workshop to the Caregiver's program at Working Women with contributions from the Options adult team. The team began the development of a circle of care workshop series with Extend-a-Family.

The Adult Options Team and Corbrook's Food Market officially launched the monthly Community Market at The Social Brew following a successful pilot at the new location in the spring. The Summer markets in July and August welcomed up to 70 attendees including Salma Zahid, the MP for Scarborough Centre. Toronto Public Health had a table at the Market as a special guest from the community. The Options Community Networking team partners with Corbrook for the Community Food Market and the Advocates for a Better Future group for self-advocates. FST received the Partnership of the Year Award by Corbrook Awakening Abilities at their AGM.

Passport

The passport program approved 529 clients; this number includes clients new to the program and those receiving an enhancement (full allocation). The Passport team also facilitated onboarding sessions for new clients in Q2 that included 13 in-person sessions and 22 virtual sessions.

The team facilitated 4 external information sessions this quarter, to CAMH (2 to different teams), Peer group (Advocates for a Better Future), and Bob Rumball Centre (in person) The audience for these sessions consisted of external professionals and passport recipients looking for general information about the program and resources.

Corporate Services

Communications and Special Projects

Communications led event planning and asset production for the 110th FST Annual Members Business Meeting and launch of the Citywide Commons on Sept. 18. This included content updating and development of new decade panels celebrating FST's recent history including the 2000s and 2010s. Event co-ordination with the Commons agencies was also provided for the Open House portion of the event. Work also continued on FST's new PULSE intranet site, which launched in late 2023 as an enhanced platform for staff collaboration, engagement and connection to key resources including a revamped Staff Directory, Documents Centre and space booking tool and weekly Staff Update. Data analytics indicate Staff Update is being read by about 75 per cent of staff. Q2 external communications through FST's website and social media channels focused on several events including the August Church Street visit by Michael Parsa (Ontario Minister of Children, Community and Social Services) and FST's recognition of Truth & Reconciliation Day in September. Work was completed on the 2023-24 Annual Report with printing and distribution over the summer. Planning also began for the October launch of our annual staff campaign in support of United Way Greater Toronto.

Technology and Business Intelligence (BI)

In Q2, the Technology and BI team onboarded a permanent process analyst to support both TREAT and PassportONE and a new data coordinator.

The team continue to work on the PassportONE cloud migration. Development is now complete, and the Tech and BI team are focused on final testing and configuration. The Go-live date has been set as December 6th and training for Passport agencies has been organized.

Several infrastructure upgrades were carried out in Q2. The servers that Dynamics GP is installed on were upgraded to the latest versions. GoCo have installed new internet services at all three locations, the cutover to the new internet will take place in Q3 and will increase our internet speeds. Rollout of single sign on for the TREAT system has also been completed, this rollout extends the FST multi factor authentication to TREAT adding an additional layer of security.

Human Resources, Payroll and Volunteers

Recovery grant ended in June; all requirements fulfilled.

Trainings completed included: Critical Conversations: Conflict Management – all leaders -Newcomer Women's Services (NEW), FST and Madison Community Services (MAD); Indigenous training – all staff (NEW, FST and MAD); Equity training -all staff (NEW, FST and MAD); Wellness at work has now transitioned to a free monthly in-house model using TELUS Health EAP and facilitated by the HR managers of Madison NEW and FST. Regularly averaging 80 participants per session.

Distributed volunteer management newsletter highlighting National Volunteer Week and the accomplishments of volunteers and staff volunteer supervisors.

Finance and Facilities

During Q2 the finance team completed all external reporting for Fiscal Year 23-24. The team worked closely with management to submit the F24-25 budget to MCCSS. Work continued in setting up the new HRIS system with ADP.

The Facilities team assisted in preparing 355 Church St for the official launch of the Citywide Commons and FST's 110th annual members meeting on September 18th. The team worked to prepare Suite 100 at 128 Sterling to be vacated and ready for the new tenant.