

FY24-25 Q4 Executive Director's Report

Client Services and Partnerships

Programs and Services

The work of the Director, Client Services was both inward and outward focused in Q4. During this time, FST started to prepare for our accreditation visit in June 2026. The director is part of the COA Leads team and has worked with the other co-leads and managers to complete the requirements to begin the accreditation process. Much work lies ahead but with the tremendous support of the Chief Operating Officer and Senior Executive Assistant, a clear work plan has been developed.

Externally, the Director has been working on advancing the implementation of a common risk assessment tool when working with women experiencing gender-based violence. This work is being done through the Toronto Region Violence Women Coordinating committee. Additionally, much work has been devoted to bringing the Developmental Services Case Management program to life, starting April 1, 2025. Work has also been done on raising the profile of FST's programs and services through a presentation to service providers in North York and Scarborough who work with older people experiencing abuse. This provided an opportunity to also highlight the work of FST across all program areas

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

A new Community of Practice was formed: Children Impacted by Parental Separation and Divorce Community of Practice (CIPSD CoP). What started as a series of meetings between three managers from Strides Toronto, Children's AID Society of Toronto and FST (Cou, DKS, FIT Clinical Manager), led into a vibrant CoP. The first two meetings were held with 30 members (including several from the FIT Team, as well as SAU at FST, and the three co-chairs. There is a focus on how to best support children's wellbeing, safety, and privacy. We have also been working on a partnership with YWCA housing on Church Street and were finalizing an MOU for FST to provide group support. The Toronto Walk-in Network (TWIN) has continued to mobilize and FST has been actively involved in developing and activating the new TWIN strategic plan. Our In-Person Single Session Walk-in Counselling at FST now has 5 volunteers (2 admin, 3 clinical) and the WIC co-leads have done a fantastic job supporting the volunteers. The teams participated in Inter-team Day involving clinical consults and health and safety presentation; they also completed First AID training and the Rainbow Health Ontario 2SLGBTQIA+ Foundations course.

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

The Violence Against Women team (VAW) successfully organized 4 International Women's Day celebration, including an English-speaking, Arabic-speaking, Tamil-speaking, and Spanish speaking IWD events. Approximately 350 unregistered clients were reached through these events. In addition, the VAW has launched new financial literacy workshops in partnership with Canadian Foundation of Economic Education to help empower clients by providing them with the necessary tools to manage their finances effectively, an essential resource for those facing financial barriers.

The Senior and Caregiver Support Services team (SCSS) has continued its support for the Still With It group, focusing on providing ongoing care and assistance to the 2SLGBTQ+ seniors community with the

support of trained peer facilitators. Furthermore, the Still With It group has collaborated with the Community Engagement program (CE) to enhance services for 2SLGBTQ+ newcomers and refugees. This internal collaboration has strengthened client's access to service. In addition, the SCSS team also started a new Spanish-speaking Narrative Group, collaborating with the CE program to use story telling to support Senior Spanish-speaking clients to tell their stories.

Next Steps-Partner Assault Response (PAR)

The Next Steps PAR program continues to see increasing complexity in the clients who are being referred by the courts and probation officers. Client characteristics include histories of generational trauma, mental health concerns, active substance use, income insecurity, housing insecurity/unhoused and other issues. Staff work to support clients to be able to actively participate in groups included differentiated approaches to the work, pulling on client strengths and working to hold clients accountable for their actions. In this quarter, specialized groups were run for Farsi and Tamil speaking clients as well as men-identifying members of the 2SLGBTQ+ community. Additionally, four English language groups were offered, with interpretation in a range of languages provided for up to two groups members at a time.

Community Engagement

The Healthy Families, Health Community Team continues to provide workshops and peer support sessions while hosting events and celebrations for Eid and International Women's Day. The Afghan community collaborated with Turtle House to provide concurrent sessions where parents attend educational workshops, while their children participated in arts-based learning. The SALC program has obtained the New Horizons grant, which will allow Seniors in the Afghan and Spanish communities to participate in workshops focusing on writing autobiographies from a narrative therapy lens and will be publishing their works to share with the community.

Growing Up Healthy Downtown (GHUD) has been incredibly busy working on their funding request from Public Health Agency of Canada, including a community needs assessment. This work included bringing together the data with the experiences of the community to identify needs and further develop the program.

Social Action and Campaign 2000

No report this quarter.

Options Program

The Options Children Team welcomed a new staff member, and a student completing an MSW placement. We were invited and delivered a Developmental Disability Workshop through OCASI to a national audience, a follow-up session to the Ottawa Region YMCA Inclusion, Equity, Diversity, and Accessibility Committee. The team developed and implemented a Service Coordination Consultation Service for the community. The team participated in an Infant Mental Health Symposium, and two community resource fairs which resulted in several program referrals and consultation requests. The team has also begun developing an Autism workshop with partners at AccessOAP.

Options Adult Team completed a review of their existing clients to assess their goals and needs to create space for new clients who are waiting for service. The triage case managers received training to receive referrals via DSCIS. The Program Manager and triage staff met with DS partners for creating service pathways. The Options program hosted the first DS CM Community of Practice (CoP) meeting with case managers. The session included discussions about the working definition of case management, similarities and differences of the APSW/FSW work using the case studies. 38 individuals participated in the first season.

The MCCSS approved communication for the new case management model was mailed out to clients and families during the week of January 6, 2025. Triage staff called clients to confirm their interest in FST's case management service. Case management updates continued in monthly meetings to DS partner agencies managers. Drop-in sessions for clients are planned for the next quarter.

Passport

During this quarter, Passport had 229 new approvals, and the team worked on onboarding them to the program and on year-end work. We had a placement student from Humber College, Social Service Worker program (SSW) complete 147 hours and worked with clients on utilizing their funding.

The team also facilitated information sessions with DSO and ODSP to 2 high schools with the TDSB and one to the TCDSB school board. We also facilitated an information session to staff and parents of the South Asian Autism Awareness center (SAACA).

Corporate Services

PassportONE

PassportONE has successfully completed another fiscal year amidst growing claim submissions. In Q4, 193,546 claims were processed with total disbursement of \$137.86 million and average processing time of 2.2 days.

PassportONE in collaboration with Community Living Toronto continues its attempt to improve web submissions. In early February, an important change was implemented by mandating invoices for MDP submissions which will reduce the workload on PAs; PassportONE has also been working on RBR optimisation along with MCCSS which was recently deployed; the aim is to enhance efficiency and focus on claims with higher risk. PassportONE continues to actively participate in OPAN workgroups; updates on Misuse of Funds guidelines were presented to OPAN in March, the Passport Procedural manual is being drafted, and preparation is underway to gather PMF/Client survey.

Communications and Special Projects

Communications began closer collaboration with the Social Action/Campaign 2000 team in development of joint objectives for the 2025-26 operational plan around targeted thought leadership and media training for staff in the areas of mental health, gender-based violence and developmental services. Work also continued work on FST's 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. Q4 analytics indicate the Staff Update was viewed weekly by an average 78 per cent of staff. Q4 external communications through FST's website and social media channels focused on several events including Black History Month, International Women's Day events and Social Work Week in March. The department was also involved in the planning and rollout of a new internal voice communications platform for launch in Q1 of 2025-2026.

Technology and Business Intelligence (BI)

No report this quarter.

Human Resources, Payroll and Volunteers

Collective bargaining was successfully completed, with the ratified agreement receiving 98% approval on March 24, 2025. The agreement spans a three-year term. FST HR is currently providing consulting support to Newcomer Women's Services (NEW) as they navigate their own collective bargaining process.

We officially launched our new HRIS on February 14, 2025. The system, ADP, was renamed “MoneyPenny” through a staff voting initiative. The first phase of training has been completed with all staff, and the second phase is scheduled for mid-April.

Our virtual Wellness Yoga sessions concluded with positive feedback from all 10 FST participants. This initiative was a collaborative effort with City Wide Commons members: NEW, and Madison.

Finance and Facilities

In Q4, Finance worked with Management to prepare a budget with a shortfall that required the use of the general fund reserves that was presented to the Financial Affairs Committee and approved by the Board in February. All Q3 reporting to funders was completed and submitted in a timely manner.

The Facilities team started receiving tickets in Q4 from staff and Citywide Commons partners in Maintenance Care a computerized maintenance management system (CMMS).