# Table of contents

A message from our Board Chair and CEO  
Governance  
Board of directors  
A year in review: maintaining strength and resilience during a most challenging year  
Integration: the process  
Thanks to our supporters  
Recognizing our employees  
Better together: partnerships with local police services  
Supportive housing snapshots: adapting to the pandemic  
Expanding support for Londoners affected by homelessness: Holly’s House and Henry’s House  
Collaborative health care: partnership with the Parkwood Institute’s Ambulatory Care  
CMHA Elgin-Middlesex in statistics  
Community fundraising highlights 2020-2021  
Community fundraising highlights 2020-2021: a community at work  
Financial report
At the close of last year, in the 2019-2020 annual report, we commented that we stood “on the brink of a very ‘new normal’ in a world that has changed beyond our imagination.” To say that we are living in unprecedented times seems clichéd but the past year has presented challenges like no other in recent memory. How could we envision the ways in which our world would change; how could we imagine that we would still be living in similar circumstances one year later? It’s difficult to describe the many experiences of this past year, which have affected so many and to such an extent; however, the pandemic has truly changed all aspects of our lives, perhaps forever.

At CMHA Elgin-Middlesex, COVID-19 has had a significant impact on our structures, processes, and practices. We have had to renovate our physical environments, acquire personal protective equipment for staff and participants, and find new ways to conduct our business virtually. Despite this transformation to our services, the pandemic has not changed the importance of our values of compassion, accountability, integrity, welcoming, innovation and inclusiveness – if anything, we have become even more committed to them. Throughout the year, we have maintained our focus on three key goals – to provide assistance to those we serve, to keep our staff healthy and safe, and to respond to the growing needs for mental health and addiction supports in our community – and we have been successful in accomplishing them.

Since the declaration of the pandemic in March 2020, we have continued to provide essential programs such as supportive housing and crisis services, both in-person and through virtual means. We have also modified programs such as case management, outreach programs at My Sisters’ Place and Elgin Social Recreation, as well as community wellness programs. We responded to the needs of our community through the creation of our Friendly Callers program, a call-out phone line for seniors, providing check-ins, supportive listening, and assistance with community services, and our partnership with the City of London to create Holly’s House and Henry’s House, transitional opportunities to help women and men experiencing homelessness in securing housing.

We would like to extend our sincere thanks to our incredible leaders and staff for ensuring that the valued services and supports of CMHA Elgin-Middlesex were sustained or expanded this past year. Your tireless efforts have made a difference to a struggling community and enabled those we serve to survive and thrive in a new and ever-changing world. Our whole organization has truly been forced to find a new centre of gravity and we have found innovative ways to stand.

Unfortunately, when the pandemic begins to wane, its impact on mental health is likely to remain for quite some time. Numerous research findings have demonstrated the increase in feelings of isolation, loss, anxiety, and grief, along with the family stress, unemployment, and broken relationships that have occurred during the pandemic. At CMHA Elgin-Middlesex, we have already started to see the growing demand for supports and services, as well as requests for education and access from those we might never have engaged previously. We are actively collaborating with others to address the escalating needs and advocating to ensure that the system can respond.

In spite of the all-consuming work related to the pandemic over the past year, CMHA Elgin-Middlesex has continued to plan for the integration of our organization with Addiction Services of Thames Valley and CMHA Oxford. A more detailed overview of the integration process is provided on page seven of our annual report. As a result of all this hard work by leaders, staff and Board members, we are pleased to announce that effective April 1, 2021, we are now CMHA Thames Valley Addiction and Mental Health Services. The integration is a culmination of many hours of planning and discussion, which have been led by a true partnership of four organizations with a shared vision and mission – to provide the citizens across Thames Valley with accessible, comprehensive, and high-quality addiction and mental health services and supports.

Although we are at the closure of CMHA Elgin-Middlesex and it is difficult to say good-bye, we stand on the threshold of an exciting future that will bring a new era for mental health and addiction services to our region.
Governance

The Governance Committee of the board of directors establishes and maintains good governance structures, systems and practices. They recruit new directors who bring the required knowledge, skills, experience and philosophy to meet organizational goals.

During each fiscal year, a thorough review and update of the work plan and board orientation are a priority.

VISION
An inclusive community with mental health and wellbeing for all.

MISSION
We promote mental wellness through responsive and innovative services and empower individuals on their recovery journey.

VALUES
Accountability, Compassion, Integrity, Welcoming, Innovation, Inclusiveness.

Board of directors

Chair / Heather Bishop
Vice Chair / Bill Chantler
Secretary Treasurer / Lorri Lowe

Directors /
Nicole Adkin
Scott Barnes
Amy Cook
Kathryn Lambert
Patricia Potter-Bereznick
Hardeep Sadra
Tom Warner
here’s what we’ve been up to this year.
A year in review: maintaining strength and resilience during a most challenging year

The past year has been one unlike any other, defined by the COVID-19 pandemic. Located across three different health units with approximately 500 employees, 300 volunteers and serving on average more than 10,000 participants annually, our organization faced immense challenges this year. We have maintained our primary focus of supporting those we serve; and because of our employees’ resilience, determination and ingenuity, as well as our invaluable partnerships and connections with members of the community, we were able to face those challenges head-on and overcome many of them.

On March 11, 2020, the World Health Organization declared the spread of COVID-19 a pandemic. We jumped into action and established the Pandemic Team, led by our Health and Safety Manager Colette Nenez-Grover. The team was committed to protecting the health and safety of all employees, informing employees on all changes and developments resulting from the pandemic, and ensuring the organization was sufficiently prepared to face challenges caused by the pandemic. The importance of Colette and the Pandemic Team and their devotion to finding solutions as well as unswerving guidance during the past year has been vital – we thank them for their diligence and appreciate their work more than words can say. Throughout the pandemic, essential mental health services were maintained while those deemed non-essential were modified to meet restrictions. Employees across departments were cross-trained, redeployed to areas in need, or transitioned to remote work to engage with their participants virtually.

Operationally, we formed our Restoring of Services Plan, linking our tiers of precautions and protocols to the provincial framework. This helped guide our decisions throughout the many ebbs and flows of the pandemic. Furthermore, we were able to maintain a steady supply of personal protective equipment (PPE) for our front-line health workers, supporting the safety of staff and those they served. To date, we have filled over 1,000 PPE orders to employees.

New programs were developed to address new or emerging gaps in essential care and service. This included the creation of Holly’s House and Henry’s House – two transitional housing programs that were established to serve and support adults in London who were experiencing homelessness. Our Goderich site also established a new shelter for people experiencing homelessness. We were also able to expand our community wellness programs through virtual sessions and activities as well as public education. We provided meals and opportunities for connection at My Sisters’ Place and at our sites in Strathroy and Exeter. We also partnered with the City of London and other community agencies to support those who moved from shelters to temporary isolation spaces.

As we modified our existing services, the way we worked with participants changed too. In the past year, our Case Management team saw a 59% increase in contacts. Non-face-to-face interactions with contacts increased 78% – a direct result of social distancing and those who had to work remotely. Wait times for service decreased across our sites anywhere from 15% to 75%.
A year in review: maintaining strength and resilience during a most challenging year

We also saw trends that hint at the state of the mental health crisis in our region through significant increases in calls to our crisis and support phone lines. Our 24/7 crisis line Reach Out experienced a 26% increase while our Support Line faced an increase in calls of 43%. We added the options of webchat and text to increase accessibility to our crisis lines, as well as a call-out program for seniors.

Many of our programs and services are made possible through the generosity of friends and allies in our communities. Since the beginning of the pandemic, we have received extraordinary levels of support from them through donations of PPE and handmade fabric masks as well as groceries and prepared lunches and dinners for our meal services. The generosity and thoughtfulness of our communities knows no bounds and we are incredibly appreciative of everyone who supported us.

Through the many challenges and changes, CMHA Elgin-Middlesex would not have been able to continue as we did without our incredible employees. They remained engaged with and devoted to their work, with 99% of employees stating they are proud of the work they do and that they are committed to the success of the organization. Because of our employees’ diligence and compassion during this extremely difficult year, we were able to – and continue to – provide exceptional mental health care support and service across Elgin and Middlesex counties.

The impact of the pandemic is still felt every day in our organization as well as across Ontario and the world. While the physical threats and risks of the virus are evident, the significant repercussions of the pandemic on our mental health cannot be overlooked. The effects of the isolation, loss, fear and anxiety that have been felt globally have proven the necessity of mental health care for all. CMHA stands ready and willing to respond and serve those who need our care and support.

CMHA stands ready and willing to respond and serve those who need our care and support.
Integration: the process

Over two years ago, four organizations – Addiction Services of Thames Valley (ADSTV), CMHA Elgin, CMHA Middlesex, and CMHA Oxford – began discussions about the possibility of integrating to create a strong, comprehensive, and coordinated system of services across the region. We envisioned a new integrated addiction and mental health service model, building on client experience, staff expertise, and program strengths – a model that would improve access, coordinate services, and reduce barriers and duplication. In January 2020, CMHA Elgin-Middlesex was formed as a first step in the course of integration.

Building on our vision of an integrated mental health and addiction system in Thames Valley, we embarked on a careful and deliberate process, facilitated by Maria Sanchez-Keane of the Centre for Organizational Effectiveness. Our aim was to be as inclusive as possible in terms of stakeholder engagement and to ensure that we achieved our goal of creating a strong organization with regional benefits but local presence.

The boards of each organization met jointly to focus on the vision, mission and values of the new organization, which were later reviewed and revised by leaders and staff. As well, significant efforts were directed to legal, financial, human resources and information system reviews, to consider the impact of integration and to plan for implementation in an organized and timely manner.

Leaders from all three organizations connected regularly to learn more about each other’s programs and explore opportunities to strengthen and enhance our services. They completed playbooks which will guide the development of coordinated and comprehensive services – in particular, in areas such as intake and access, crisis services, housing, case management, and community wellness/education programs. The synergy resulting from these collaborative sessions produced creative and achievable results.

At each stage of development, the boards, staff, and community partners as well as those we serve, were engaged to offer feedback regarding the proposed plans; and their input was used to modify and improve the models to ensure that we were meeting the needs of our communities while creating a healthy workplace. We established clear outcomes related to the impacts on those we serve, our staff, our community partners, and the system as a whole; and we will monitor our progress on a continual basis as we move forward. We have many exciting opportunities to embrace as we move forward with strengthening services and care across our region!

We are passionate about being able to integrate addiction and mental health services, while maintaining specialized expertise in each area, so that those we serve do not have to make difficult decisions about where and how to receive help. We are pleased to expand our services into communities where we have not historically had a physical presence, especially in rural areas, through extended hubs and virtual programs.
Integration: the process

Although our three organizations have been anticipating unification and managing the change process for over two years, integration is now here. The value and importance of change management has been a key driver in our work and the last phase of change management is “closure”. This phase may take some time and is not considered complete merely because the amalgamation has occurred. Understanding the “why” of change and processing the feelings related to change, will help us all navigate to a solid future with a new shared vision. Our beginnings are as good as the endings that precede them.

Despite our strong belief in the benefits of integration, change through organizational integration causes ambiguity and fear about what will be lost, long before the merits of change can be believed. Letting go of “what was” is very important to embrace what is to come.

We know that closure is an important step that helps people move on after difficult or challenging experiences. People seek closure to deal with significant events in their lives that hold value and meaning. The organization we work for, the people we work with, our occupation and role are very important aspects of who we believe we are.

Organizations need to find closure too, so that we can concentrate on the future in a healthy and realistic way and honour the past without mourning it long-term. Closure is also made possible through celebration and rituals such as formal farewells, giving thanks, and acknowledging a job well done. We must celebrate the important contributions of CMHA Oxford, CMHA Elgin, CMHA Middlesex, and Addiction Services of Thames Valley as legacy organizations that have made a significant difference in the lives of individuals, families and in the communities they have served. They have joined together from positions of passion, strength and competence, and as a unified entity, we are a very strong partner ready to serve and work together for the greater good. Each organization ended with confidence and strong, equitable services; and so, our beginning will start just as strong and our shared legacy of success will continue. We look forward to our vision of igniting hope and fostering change by providing a continuum of mental health and addiction education, supports and services.

DR. BETH MITCHELL
CEO, CMHA Elgin-Middlesex

LINDA SIBLEY
Executive Director
Addiction Services of Thames Valley

LYNN WARDELL
Executive Director
CMHA Oxford
Thanks to our supporters

DONOR IMPACT

• Housing start-up funds to purchase furniture, housewares, and rental arrears for participants experiencing chronic homelessness

• In Exeter and Goderich, dedicated funds purchased a washer and dryer to implement teaching laundry skills and a new chest freezer to aid food support and alleviate the repercussions of the limitations on current food bank hours

• Two hospital beds for use at Long Stay for individuals who have comorbidities; this will improve the health of participants and allow staff to provide better support

• Four recliners to replace living room chairs at the Long Stay programs to facilitate physical distancing, allow for proper disinfecting and allow for individual seating that is comfortable and safe

• Youth Transition booklet developed by Mind Your Mind and part of the Transitional Age Project, a group of youth involved in the Youth Mental Health and Addictions Council, to support youth transitioning from child and youth system to the adult system

• Laptops for participant use to benefit multiple program areas including community wellness

• An autoclave to sterilize foot care instruments and clinical equipment, allowing us to increase foot care capacity, manage infection control and surpass regular standards of sterilization

• Scholarship awarded to a student volunteer who met the minimum of 80 hours of services on our Crisis Support Line between Sept 1 - April 30

• A small marker placed at the cemetery for the plot of a long-time participant who had no family or funds which allowed staff, friends, and residents to visit his site

• Women of Holly’s House received gift cards enabling them to purchase basic needs as well as learn to navigate and understand personal finance

DEAR DONORS,

2020-2021 was an extraordinary year for CMHA Elgin-Middlesex, with $1.4M in donations received. We share with great pride that there were many investments made to our programs and direct support to the community.

These donations provided key funding in many areas and enabled us to provide continual, uninterrupted service to those in need at all our locations, kept the “windows” open at My Sisters’ Place and the phone lines answered (open) at our Crisis Centre.

This generous community support provided the funds that allowed us to fulfill our mission of promoting mental wellness through responsive, innovative services and empower individuals on their recovery journey.

We hope you will feel a sense of joy knowing that donations have made a significant impact and we encourage you to visit us online at cmhamiddlesex.ca to learn more about how we are working and planning towards a gradual restoration of our services. We extend our deepest thanks for your very generous and continued support.
Recognizing our employees

The CMHA Elgin-Middlesex Employee Recognition Awards program is an initiative designed to formally recognize and celebrate staff for the incredible work they do for our organization and in the community.

The CMHA Elgin-Middlesex Heart Award is awarded to an employee who demonstrates the values of compassion and integrity by providing above and beyond service to participants, their families and the community and serves as a champion of respect, empathy and mental health for all.

**This year’s recipient is Heather Rankine, Registered Practical Nurse (RPN), Housing First.**

Heather is described as someone who is often out in the community with participants, assisting them with their physical health needs. She advocates for our participants and keeps in touch regularly with psychiatrists, doctors and nurses on their behalf. She is innovative in her approaches to working with participants and is always a supportive and compassionate member of her team. Her consistently positive, friendly, welcoming, and inclusive perspective and outstanding contributions to the Housing First program make her a very deserving recipient of this award.

The CMHA Elgin-Middlesex Open Arms Award recognizes an employee who demonstrates the values of being welcoming and inclusive by taking positive action every day as well as embracing, respecting and celebrating the diversity of both the CMHA Elgin-Middlesex team and the communities we serve.

**This year’s recipient is Aisha Husseini, Mental Health Worker, Crisis Centre – First Contact.**

Aisha is described as being dedicated to the agency’s values, upholding a positive outlook and always maintaining a non-discriminatory approach to any interaction with a participant. She demonstrates a high-level of approachability and eagerness to go above and beyond for her peers and for participants, which leaves those on her team feeling appreciated, supported and thankful to have such a colleague to work alongside. Beyond her role at CMHA, Aisha’s recent advocacy efforts for equality and inclusivity within and outside of the organization was inspiring.

The CMHA Elgin-Middlesex Innovation Award recognizes a group of CMHA Elgin-Middlesex employees who introduce new ideas, services or practices to improve the quality of service, advocacy, administration (including Human Resources, Information and Technology, and Finance), or overall functioning of the organization.

**This year’s recipients are the staff at Holly’s House.**

The last year provided extremely difficult challenges for many of our staff, programs and how we served our participants, especially those of vulnerable populations. Last year, at an emergency meeting of all services offering housing to women in the London region, it was determined that there were not enough spaces for this population to be safely housed. To help cover gaps in service, the team of employees for Holly’s House was established. Through funding from the City of London, Holly’s House has been able to support many vulnerable women this year through a transitional housing program. Plus, more than 30 women have been able to secure permanent housing through the care and efforts of staff. This program is truly innovative and responsive to unprecedented challenges, thanks to the team’s extraordinary work!
Recognizing our employees

New this year, the CMHA Elgin-Middlesex Beth Patterson Leadership Award recognizes a leader who has shown exceptional dedication, advocacy and compassion for participants of CMHA Elgin-Middlesex. The recipient will demonstrate inclusiveness, collaboration and teamwork. They will be the voice of calm and reason in difficult situations while being passionate and outspoken for those who cannot advocate for themselves. While ensuring accountability from all staff, this leader will command respect through example by leading with steadfastness, humour, and kindness and by welcoming all without judgement.

The first recipient of the Beth Patterson Leadership Award is Christina MacEvoy, Manager, Community Homes for Opportunity (Elgin).

Christina is described as having brought together the CMHA CHO and Elgin ACT teams through workshops and team-building exercises to find ways for everyone to work together effectively and agreeably. This has led to a wonderful working relationship between the two teams. Beyond her managerial success, she has helped changed the quality of life of 166 people living in the Elgin CHO homes. To accomplish this, she engaged in hundreds of uncomfortable and difficult conversations where she challenged historical assumptions and practices while maintaining a positive working relationship with everyone involved. Even on her hardest days, Christina makes the employees on her team feel like they are the most important people in the room and is described as a Care Bear riding a dragon.

2020/2021 YEARS OF SERVICE

20 Years:
- Afsaneh Azari
- Melanie Holmes
- Curt Schnarr
- Christine Wilson

15 Years:
- Dean Astolfi
- Jenna Courtemanche
- Lindsay Easton
- Leanne Hawn
- Jen James
- Robert Landry
- Robyn Mackeigan
- Sandra McCabe
- Leanne Oke

10 Years:
- Laurie Cummings
- Ange Heinonen
- Anila Jani
- Kara Kelly
- Nedrita Shemshedini
- Sonya Spohr

5 Years:
- Kyle Banh
- Alison Burns
- Wafa Dawoud
- Colleen DiPietro
- Lori Hassall
- Torrie Henderson
- Lisa Jaques
- Erica Jovichevich
- Jessica Kenny
- Mary Khzam
- Andrea Lajdecki
- Stephanie LeBlanc
- Ashley Lehman
- Sarah Rockwood
- Dave Rosehart
- Mike Shannon
- Josie Swan
- Ted Town
- Shannon U’Ren
- Rob Vail
- Mardina Verboom
- Barb Williams
- Jordan Wilson
Better together: partnerships with local police services

Individuals living in our community with serious mental health issues or experiencing acute crises frequently come into contact with the police, which can result in police intervention, hospitalization or incarceration. In a number of cases, these interactions have resulted in individuals missing out on opportunities for recovery or proper support from trained mental health experts. This has led the police and mental health care providers to collaborate on the development of alternative response models that better support individuals living with serious mental illness or experiencing crisis.

Over the past year and a half, CMHA Elgin-Middlesex has been ingrained in several partnerships with local police. These partnerships include the London Community Outreach and Support Team (COAST), the Middlesex Crisis Rapid Response Team (MCRRT), the Mobile Crisis Response Team (MCRT), the Mobile Outreach Support Team (MOST), and the Crisis Call Diversion (CCD) pilot program.

COAST

COAST is a partnership between London Police Services (LPS), St. Joseph’s Health Care, Middlesex London Paramedic Services (MLPS) and CMHA Elgin-Middlesex that officially launched in April 2021.

The COAST members, which include representation from each of the four partnering organizations, participated in two weeks of trainings prior to launch, with sessions on Mental Health First Aid, Applied Suicide Intervention Skills Training, Negotiation and De-escalation, and presentations from the City of London Homeless Prevention and Addiction Services of Thames Valley (ADSTV).

The goals of COAST are to build on existing services and strengths of our community; address gaps in the service system through improved collaboration between health care and police services; enhance transfers of care, including police-hospital transitions; and increase access to services for those experiencing mental health and/or addictions crises, which will foster more positive outcomes for these individuals as well as appropriately utilize available resources.

So far, the impact of this pilot program has been amazing. There were 53 referrals in the month of April from LPS front-line officers. The team engaged with 42 individuals, including five "take-overs" at the London Health Sciences Centre (LHSC) emergency department from LPS front-line officers. During these early stages, there have been many positive stories that indicate how this program is addressing gaps and meeting the needs of individuals in London. One example is a story of how COAST helped a woman in London by proactively connecting with her, assessing her situation with compassion and free of judgement, and maintaining frequent, regular contact via phone. COAST’s support helped the woman incorporate healthy habits into her lifestyle again and find a solution to resume community-based services and support to her in her home. Following COAST’s support, she reduced her drinking substantially and identifies that she is proud of this change. This is one example among many that showcase how COAST is supporting CMHA’s goal to meet the needs of individuals who are struggling with mental health and addiction in our community.
Better together: partnerships with local police services

MIDDLESEX CRISIS RAPID RESPONSE TEAM

The Middlesex Crisis Rapid Response Team (MCRRT) is a partnership involving the Strathroy Caradoc Police Service, the Middlesex OPP and the CMHA Elgin-Middlesex that launched in November 2020 amidst the pandemic. This team was developed to address a gap in mental health, addictions and crisis support in the rural communities of Middlesex County, including the three Indigenous communities of Oneida, Chippewa, and Muncy First Nations. MCRRT provides proactive and effective follow-ups with high-risk individuals in the community and their families as well as helps to avoid hospitalizations for individuals experiencing a crisis by connecting them with appropriate care and specially trained mental health workers at authorized agencies in the community.

Since November, the team has been providing effective and appropriate responses to mental health and addictions-related crisis calls in rural areas. Thanks to the two full-time employees – positions secured through funding from the Southwest London Health Integration Network (SW LHIN) in December 2020 – the partnership between CMHA, the OPP and Strathroy Caradoc Police has been able to strengthen and build trust and credibility in the community.

Results of this program are positive across Middlesex County, Indigenous communities and within the OPP. The team has reduced crisis calls and diverted individuals who would have gone to the local hospital for mental health and addictions needs to more appropriate support. As of March 2021, MCRRT had established 450 connections with individuals living in the county.

AS OF MARCH 2021:
MCRRT had established 450 connections with individuals living in the county.

Left: MCRRT
Better together: partnerships with local police services

MCRT AND MOST

Mobile Crisis Response Team (MCRT) and Mobile Outreach & Support Team (MOST), two collaborative programs in Elgin County, continue to expand and are supporting more individuals in need than ever before.

MOST, a partnership with the St. Thomas Police Service (STPS), is now in its second year and continues to serve the community through regular outreach in the downtown core. In the past fiscal year (Apr 2019 – March 2020), the team had established 1,008 contacts. The team now also liaisons with the STPS Peer to Peer Support Team to identify matters that adversely affect the mental wellbeing of front-line officers, including helping coordinate responses to incidents that could contribute to the onset of PTSD.

In March 2021, CMHA Elgin-Middlesex, Elgin County OPP and the Aylmer Police Service (APS) were pleased to build on the success of MOST and announced a new collaborative initiative to provide support to residents in Elgin County who are experiencing a mental health crisis. The program, MCRT, has a Crisis Worker working Monday to Friday, 8:00 a.m. - 4:00 p.m., and responds to live calls and follow-ups in Elgin County and the town of Aylmer alongside the OPP and APS.

In its first week, the team supported 21 individuals, received six live calls, provided 12 follow-ups and diverted the majority of calls to more appropriate support, resulting in only one apprehension. In its first month, the team connected with 85 individuals, demonstrating the need for increased mental health support in the Elgin region.
Better together: partnerships with local police services

CRISIS CALL DIVERSION

Inspired by the success and established processes with the Mobile Crisis Response Teams, the OPP in collaboration with CMHA Elgin-Middlesex and CMHA Oxford developed and implement a Crisis Call Diversion (CCD) pilot program, which operated from November 1, 2020 to March 31, 2021 at the Provincial Communications Centre in London (PCCL). Funding for this pilot program provided by the Ministry of the Solicitor General.

The program has mental health crisis workers embedded at the PCCL, providing immediate crisis intervention to callers in need. Crisis workers at PCCL can provide immediate de-escalating, risk assessment, safety planning and therapeutic support to those experiencing a mental health or situational crisis, which can be vital to the health and safety of someone experiencing a mental health crisis. The goal of this program was to help individuals experiencing a crisis by offering more appropriate pathways that can meet their needs, refer them to local community resources, supporting de-stigmatization of mental health issues, divert non-emergent police mental health-related calls for service, and decrease the volume of non-emergent mental health-related calls for service to the OPP. In addition to supporting callers, the team offers follow-up call support and support to the provincial communications staff.

During the pilot period, the team received 316 calls and diverted 45 calls (14% of calls) from a frontline police interaction, with 83% of callers sought support for themselves and 15% of callers seeking supporting for their family members or dependents. The team has provided 254 community referrals and 27 follow-up calls.

The benefit to providing integrated mental health and addiction response to individuals in crisis not only supports those in need but it also allows first responder partners to focus on community requests requiring a justice response. Similar to other mobile crisis response programs that see officers partnering with mental health crisis workers, CCD provides an opportunity for effective collaborative intervention and support for individuals in need.
Supportive housing snapshots: adapting to the pandemic

EATING DISORDER RESIDENCE:

The team at our Eating Disorders (ED) Residence was able to reopen the ED program during the pandemic through the development and implementation of a new approach that utilizes a combination of virtual and in-person care. This includes a virtual day treatment component and a residential in-person component.

HOUSING SERVICES:

For the entire year of the pandemic, we were able to keep all Housing programs fully open and operational. This was a huge accomplishment for our supportive housing teams and was possible through the incredible work and dedication of staff. We recorded little to no change in the total number of individuals served through supportive housing. There was also an improvement from past years in the number of individuals who obtained safe, secure housing after discharge from our programs.

HOUSING ALWAYS:

We’re excited that Housing Always has celebrated its one-year anniversary! In its inaugural year, the program has successfully housed 18 individuals from the City of London’s prioritization criteria for urgent housing. In total, it has provided outreach supports to 80 unique individuals.
Expanding support for Londoners affected by homelessness: Holly’s House and Henry’s House

Early in the pandemic, it became clear that women with mental health and/or addiction challenges who were experiencing homelessness and at risk of violence did not have safe places to stay in our community. Because of this situation, the City of London brought together organizations in the city that work with vulnerable women to see how we could work together and address this issue. Four of these organizations – Street Level Women at Risk, Anova, LondonCares and ourselves, CMHA Elgin-Middlesex – collaborated with the City to find a solution that would temporarily house and support women in a local hotel. Kristy Bell, Manager of Outreach Programs and My Sisters’ Place at CMHA, stepped up to operationalize the program. Shortly after that, fourteen staff from My Sisters’ Place eagerly put up their hands to mobilize the program and five days later, we opened Holly’s House.

Holly’s House offers supported, safe hotel suite space to women who are actively working with a primary worker towards permanent housing. Women staying at Holly’s House are supported during the day by a two-person staff team who work with the participant’s primary worker to help them achieve their goals. This wrap-around, collaborative support has proved to be a winning combination. The hotel space also allows pets which eliminates yet another barrier for potential participants. An unplanned but positive aspect of Holly’s House is that the suites are on one floor, creating a neighbourhood and supportive community where participants help each other and form friendships.

In the fall of 2020, there was an opportunity with funding to create a parallel program like Holly’s House for men. With this one-time funding from the SW LHIN, we were able to open Henry’s House and like Holly’s House, it has filled a gap in the housing continuum for vulnerable men in our community.

To date, 84 women have stayed at Holly’s House and 24 men have spent time at Henry’s House. In total, 59 individuals have been connected to permanent housing following their stay at Holly’s House or Henry’s House.

We will continue to look for opportunities to keep programs like Holly’s House and Henry’s House available to our community.

“I know what it is like to live on the street, in a tent and worse. Had it not been for Holly’s House that is exactly what I faced... The greatest and most vital aspect of Holly’s House (to me) is that I know that whenever I have fears, doubts or am simply feeling lonely, the staff here won’t forget about me or just walk on by. I am a person here.”

- Testimonial from a Holly’s House participant

TO DATE:
84 WOMEN have stayed at Holly’s House
24 MEN have spent time at Henry’s House.

IN TOTAL, 59 INDIVIDUALS have been connected to permanent housing following their stay at Holly’s House or Henry’s House.
Transition points in our health care system can be complicated and confusing for individuals and are often the result of siloed care providers. For those needing mental health and addictions support, providing effective care is significantly challenged by the high rates of fragmentation and lack of good communication with other care providers. Because of these barriers, care providers are anticipating – and facilitating – a significant step in the evolution of our care system through collaboration. Collaborative care models are the best way to successfully ensure individuals receive superior care. With the inception of the Ontario Health Teams (OHT), it’s important now more than ever to pursue opportunities for integrated care.

In an effort to adopt a collaborative care model, CMHA Elgin-Middlesex formally partnered with Parkwood Institute Ambulatory Care (Flex 1 team) to successfully transition participants from hospital-based care into community services. This model integrates and enhances the existing community resources within the hospital setting by seconding a CMHA transitional case manager (TCM) to the Flex 1 team. In this partnership, Jessica Nesbit, TCM at CMHA, works closely with the Flex 1 team by attending rounds, meetings, intakes and discharges while building capacity within the hospital teams to promote community resources. This model is providing participants with a seamless care pathway back to community-based services while still upholding the recovery and/or treatment plans developed by the hospital team. Jessica now also has the opportunity to promote and champion new programs and groups, assist with referral processes, improve communication to and from other CMHA programs, and build capacity and trust within the hospital team.

This new partnership has already improved transitions from hospital-based care to community-based services for stable participants. By determining a streamlined process for transitions, transferring participants out of hospital care is increasing access for new referrals from LHSC services as well as from the community for those needed supports. This best practice model is an example of excellence in service delivery working collaboratively and is keeping the participant and their journey at the core of mental health and addictions care.
CMHA Elgin-Middlesex in statistics

7,272 UNIQUE CLIENTS
- 5,896 Middlesex
- 1,376 Elgin

1,262 CLIENTS ENGAGED IN HOUSING SUPPORTS
- 592 Middlesex
- 670 Elgin

1,894 CASE MANAGEMENT CLIENTS
- 1,452 Middlesex
- 442 Elgin

10,274 crisis assessment and response contacts
584 admissions to crisis stabilization space
59,076 calls received by the Support Line, Reach Out, Friendly Callers
54,527 meals served at My Sisters Place & London Coffee House
13,954 meals/snacks served at rural sites

1,144 INDIVIDUALS SERVED IN RURAL COMMUNITIES
- 963 Strathroy, Exeter, Goderich
- 181 Elgin

- 249 clients supported by counselling
- 1,059 counselling visits

479 FULL TIME, PART TIME, CASUAL STAFF
- 400 Middlesex
- 79 Elgin

Redeployment: 68 staff worked
12,659 hours in eight programs
354 volunteers
Community fundraising highlights 2020-2021

IRONSTONE BUILDING COMPANY

In honour of its 10-year anniversary, Ironstone Building Company launched its “Ironstone Impact” campaign, where the company donated $10,000 each week for 10 weeks to local organizations and charities that create impact in the City of London. To determine the week-10 recipient, Ironstone let the community vote on which organization they wanted to see receive the final donation. Following this vote, My Sisters’ Place was elected the winner and received the final $10,000 donation.

FINCH AUTO GROUP: MATCHING DONATIONS

At the end of a very interesting 2020, Finch Auto Group set out to help our community grow together by matching all donations given to local charities between October and December, including CMHA Elgin-Middlesex. Not only were donations matched for My Sisters’ Place but also for its Highest Needs Program Fund. By the end of December, Finch Auto Group matched a total of $6,226 in support of My Sisters’ Place and a total of $3,255 in support of Highest Needs.

APPAREL FUNDRAISER, DORCHESTER

With the help of Above and Beyond Promotions, local Dorchester residents Brooke and Kacie created sweaters donning the phrase “Healing Isn’t Linear” in support of all young lives lost in the nearby rural communities. With two roll-outs of the sweaters, Brooke and Kacie were able to donate a grand total of $5,661.61 in support of mental health in our rural communities.
Community fundraising highlights 2020-2021

RYAN SEELEY, PREMIER BCG
Premier Business Consulting Group became a partner of CMHA Elgin-Middlesex in 2020, kicking off the partnership with a $1,000 donation in support of our Crisis Centre. Premier BCG owner Ryan Seeley continues to offer a discount on all services to staff of CMHA Elgin-Middlesex.

DYLAN MONIZ: OVERCOME 42
Local mental health advocate Dylan ran a full marathon from Port Stanley to Victoria Park in London in support of mental health. With the help of Dylan’s friends and family, he was able to raise a total of $1,835 in support of CMHA Elgin-Middlesex.

BRANDON EEDY OF WINKS EATERY: ROCK N ROLL BINGO
Before Provincial pandemic restrictions went into effect, Brandon Eedy of Winks was able to offer the restaurant’s beloved Rock N Roll Bingo virtually with a portion of proceeds going to programs at CMHA Elgin-Middlesex. Thanks to the many bingo enthusiasts, he was able to donate $2,335 in support of My Sisters’ Place and $4,755 in support of CMHA’s Highest Needs Program Fund!

Community fundraising highlights 2020-2021: a community at work

Despite the difficult year defined the COVID-19 pandemic, our third-party fundraisers were out in full force to support mental health in their communities!

**Palasad Social Bowl** held their annual fundraiser again in support of My Sisters’ Place resulting in a $480 donation from sales during a one-week period.

100% of the profits of **Grace + Rosey** t-shirts went towards supporting My Sisters’ Place. The “I Stand with My Sisters” shirts raised a total of $285 in support of My Sisters’ Place.

Local to Dorchester, **Anchored Soul Essentials** sold handmade bracelets and was able to donate $50 in support of rural mental health.

On Bell Let’s Talk Day, every time someone shared the **Ice Box St. Thomas** post on Facebook, they donated 50 cents to CMHA Elgin-Middlesex, for a final total of $401 in support of mental health.

At the beginning of April, **Jem Medical** in Strathroy donated $225 dollars along with three big boxes of basic needs items!
Financial report

**Sources of REVENUE**

TOTAL: $37,874,180.70

- South-West LHIN: $18,602,732.66 [49%]
- Ministry of Health: $9,043,904.37 [24%]
- United Way: $1,163,483.62 [3%]
- City of London: $1,433,052.35 [4%]
- Donations: $3,113,142.73 [8%]
- Rental revenue: $4,039,772.97 [11%]
- Other revenue and/or grants: $478,092.00 [1%]

**EXPENSES by category**

TOTAL: $37,461,996.73

- Salaries & benefits: $22,859,918.05 [61%]
- Programs: $3,638,801.34 [10%]
- Operating: $4,915,804.21 [13%]
- Occupancy: $5,450,223.13 [15%]
- Amortization: $597,250.00 [2%]

CMHA Elgin-Middlesex annual report 2020-2021