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May 2021 PQI Report

The areas of focus for the PQI Committee this month were reviewing the Community Partner Survey results and reviewing the Merritt Program Participant Files Audits.

Community Partner Survey Results

This year marks the third year that the Society has circulated the Community Partner Collaboration Survey. This allowed for the PQI Committee to look not only at the 2021 findings, but also the overall trends that have occurred throughout the past three years.

Decline in Participation

The PQI Committee noted that since 2019, the participation rate has continuously declined each year. It was believed that hearing from an individual within an organization who is removed from the program with which a partner organization is involved would result in an increased likelihood of participation. The thought was that it allows community partners to feel less pressure. Additionally, it makes sense for the PQI Chair to circulate, as it allows for control of timely distribution and follow-up. However, the PQI Committee believes that the lack of connection between our PQI Chair and the community partners may not land in our favour. The PQI Committee is putting forward the recommendation that while PQI will continue to create the survey, Senior Leadership, whether that be Directors or the CEO, circulate to collaborative partners. In addition, the Committee recognizes that some discussion of the survey with the collaborative partners prior to the actual circulation of the survey would be beneficial.

The Committee noted that in the past, the results of the survey have not been shared with the collaborative partners. The Committee agreed this should be our practice moving forward, beginning with the most recent 2021 results. The Committee Chair will circulate the results to all stakeholders who received the original survey link email, while thanking them for their participation.

Review of Results

The two lowest scores within the agency were in the topics of “Knowledge” and “Cultural Safety”. The scores for “Knowledge” have steadily declined by 12% from an average of 4.3/5 in 2019 to 4/5 in 2020, and currently 3.8/5 in 2021. The question surrounding “Cultural Safety” was introduced into last year’s 2020 survey. It saw a 19% decline from 4.3/5 down to 3.5/5.

The declining score of Cultural Safety is alarming but is something that does not come as a surprise to the Committee. The Agency has received feedback in previous years from Collaborative Partners about areas of inadequacy within Cultural Safety. The Society has recognized this gap and, in the Spring of 2020, a Cultural Advisory Committee was formed. The Cultural Advisory Committee has implanted many initiatives to improve our cultural sensitivity and inclusiveness amongst the esthetics of our buildings, throughout our online presence, within our provided services, and amongst staff. The most recent initiative has been adding an Indigenous History and Education Course as an employment requirement. We recognize that these changes do not occur over night and that there are many necessary changes that remain to be implemented.

With regards to the decreasing trend of Knowledge, this mirrored findings from last year’s results. As a result of the previous findings, the Committee had recommended a Training and Education Committee.



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This was discussed, but unfortunately never came to fruition. The PQI Committee is once again recommending the development of a Training and Education Group; however, the updated recommendation is that the group be formed as a PQI Sub-Committee. There are six committee members, including the Chair, who have agreed to join the sub-committee. There is a consensus that a consistent, detailed training manual is to be developed for staff in all programs, with each program specifying information from the training manual blueprint, to make it specific to residence or program. This training manual should include more broad information on the agency layout, specifically the Continuum of Services.

When reviewing the open-ended comments section, there were multiple comments that reference ASK Wellness Society not living up to our promise of “no person left behind” and that we are not willing to work with people who have been labeled “too difficult”. This is concerning to come from our Collaborative Partners; however, we also note that there are some individuals who we are not able to support and whose needs are too complex. New types of housing models, such as the recovery-based model that we will be opening in Penticton, will help support specific complex individuals, while also addressing the cultural safety component. The new three-tiered Maverick program will also be pivotal in this.

An additional concerning comment referenced staff not being respectful to program participants. This is taken seriously, as Collaborative Partners would be well-versed on what respectful dialogue, even in difficult situations, look like. One solution the PQI Committee has suggested is to ensure alternative access for people to provide feedback outside of the annual surveys. A dialogue box will be added to our website that is accessible 24/7 for community members, collaborative partners, and other advocates to provide feedback in real time.

Merritt Program File Audits

The program participant file audits in Merritt went very well. Across all programs, the files were extremely organized and kept up-to-date. One area noted was the Goal Planning/Wellness Planning section, in finding that goals were set upon intake, but never updated. Juniper House is currently adjusting the Wellness/Goal Planning document, as it does not work for the residents. Additionally, it was noted that signing/initialling was missing throughout consent boxes.

Overdose Crisis

With the provincial overdose crisis at an all-time high, the PQI Committee is suggesting that drop boxes be added to each program site, for individuals to drop off samples for drug checking. Some residents feel stigmatized and may be more comfortable dropping off their drug samples into the drop box rather than dropping them off to staff. One issue with this is timeliness of the drug checking. Additionally, Amy and Andrina will be working together to review the tracking of overdoses and necessary changes to how this information is recorded.

Educational Information & Frequently Asked Questions

Communications will be reaching out to Directors and Coordinators to post educational information and resources onto our website. This will include frequent Q&As of the programs and agency, as well as visual statistics for community members to wrap their heads around. For example, the cost of having someone in jail, hospitalized, or being housed; how harm reduction impacts community, etc.