



Wellness Society

ASKWELLNESS.CA

KAMLOOPS / MERRITT / PENTICTON

STRATEGIC PLAN

2022 – 2025

Relevance and Innovation in a Time of Pressing Need

Released September 2022

Streets → Homes → Health → Employment

Introduction

On behalf of the Board of Directors and the Management team of ASK Wellness Society, I am pleased to present ASK's updated Strategic Plan titled Relevance and Innovation in A Time of Pressing Need. Our last Strategic Plan, effective from 2015 to 2021, helped define our Streets to Homes to Health to Employment network of programs and services, and now as we set forth for the next three years, we lay out strategies to face new challenges and opportunities.

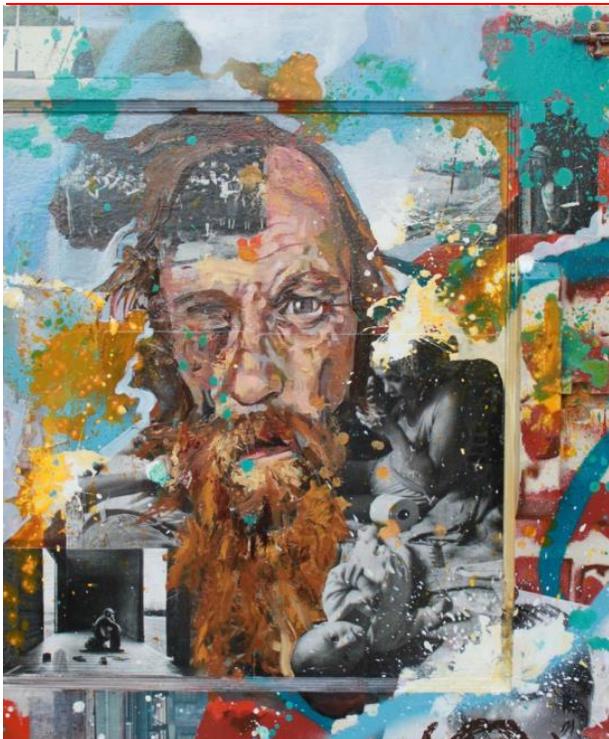
Across our Province, communities are emerging from several years facing down the COVID 19 pandemic to witness an unrelenting toxic drug and housing affordability crisis. ASK played a critical role during the pandemic in Penticton, Merritt, and Kamloops by offering COVID isolation suites and supporting our residents and program participants to have the resources and supports they needed. Our teams remained steadfast and courageous during this time ensuring all programs and housing sites remained available and accessible throughout the past three years. It was a testament to the culture within the agency in the face of adversity and now as we renew our strategic direction with the current challenges facing community, a new set of skills and approaches will be needed.

Our updated Strategic Plan highlights our commitments to providing effective and accountable programs and services. ASK will again strive to reach the highest level of service and administrative standard through the internationally recognized Council of Accreditation. In May 2023, accreditors from across North America will descend on ASK to review every facet of its operations. Accreditation is required for some service agreements, but we have committed to reach a universal standard of operation across all services. It is our hope that this level of transparency and the fulsome financial audit ASK completed each year will help tackle the continued misinformation promoted on social media about ASK's operations particularly in Kamloops.

The public sentiment towards people living homeless, often struggling with addictions and other barriers, and those individuals and organizations that work with them, have been under attack by many. While there is an understandable level of frustration within community relating to the increase in property crime, the visibility of the toxic drug crisis, and the seemingly lack of progress in tackling these issues, the frequency and depth of vitriol emerging has taken a toll on our social capital and our staff morale. Our task in the coming years is to trust in our vision and core values. We believe in people; we know we can help lead the change that is needed through advocacy at the local, provincial, and federal level. The development of the Maverick Supportive Recovery and Vocational Centre in the past year, the expansion of our prescribed safer supply programs in Kamloops, and the forthcoming opening in the Spring of 2023 in partnership with the Ooknankane Friendship Centre of the Nxastwixstn Recovery Housing facility in Penticton are but a few examples of our determination to create effective pathways from homelessness into recovery and to also create employment opportunities for the people we serve all within a culturally safe organizational framework.

ASK has shown courage and determination in the face of adversity since its inception 30 years ago. We have faced the HIV epidemic, tackled stigma and discrimination against marginalized populations, and grown in relevance and impact without fear. With a strong and diverse Board of Directors, a committed and talented management team, and a passionate and dedicated staff across three communities, we will continue to support our communities to be inclusive, compassionate, and beacons of hope and opportunity.

Bob Hughes, MA, MSM
Chief Executive Officer
ASK Wellness Society



Cody Lusby

Vision

A society that recognizes the value and potential of each and every individual.

Mission

To provide outreach, housing, health, education, employment and emotional support services for the marginalized and persons at risk.

Core Values

Adaptation is necessary in the face of complexity and uncertainty.

Inclusivity is a defining feature of a healthy community.

Trust is at the heart of community both in ASK Wellness and in the communities we serve.

Compassion ensures no one gets left behind.

Hope is the key to helping people to become self-sufficient.

Guiding Principles

Housing First

The Society believes all individuals have the right to safe and affordable housing. We are charged with the task of assisting those who are homeless or at risk of becoming homeless in finding, securing, and maintaining suitable housing in the service area.

Client Centered

The Society recognizes the value and dignity of each individual. We encourage and support our clients to make healthy choices and we respect the choices that they make. We advocate with and on behalf of our clients to improve their quality of life.

Social Justice

The Society believes all individuals deserve equity in accessibility. We collaborate with community partners and actively participate in community efforts to ensure that basic human rights are protected. We promote shared, private, and public responsibility in the delivery of education and awareness activities in the community.

Harm Reduction

The Society believes harm reduction promotes and supports the health and well-being of both individuals and communities. We believe that all humans have the right to comprehensive, non-judgmental services based on individual need. Through education and prevention efforts we work to reduce the risk of harm for individuals engaged in or affected by risky behaviours.

Innovation

The Society responds to emerging community needs in innovative ways. We embrace new approaches to complex issues and strive to be a learning organization in order to remain relevant in our communities.

Decolonization and Reconciliation

The Society recognizes the devastating impacts of colonial and postcolonial policies on individual, community, and intergenerational levels. We are committed to reducing systemic inequities, to Truth and Reconciliation, and to serving Indigenous people with humility, safety, and respect.

Strategic Priorities and Objectives

ASK Wellness has four strategic priorities with several key objectives within each. These objectives will be achieved through different strategies in each ASK community.



Housing

- > Strive to develop a full continuum of appropriate housing to match community needs.
- > Ensure effective facility management and property services to minimize risk to residents and service users and to provide the best possible living environment.
- > Maintain consistently low vacancy loss rates across our housing inventory to ensure financial stability.



Supports

- > Continually seek to understand the ASK client population to ensure relevance.
- > Support positive client outcomes through performance and quality improvement.
- > Ensure robust supports for clients moving into employment.
- > Enhance our recovery services to enable clients to reach their potential.
- > Ensure strategic focus in existing and new programs and services.



People

- > Recruit and retain passionate and qualified staff across all program areas.
- > Achieve wage parity across all programs and services to create an equitable work environment where people feel valued and respected.
- > Further enhance the Board of Directors, ensuring diversity, development, and good governance.
- > Enhance capacity through strategic leadership and management.
- > Ensure effective succession planning at all levels of the organization.
- > Actively promote cultural safety throughout the organization.



Engagement

- > Enhance public awareness and understanding of pressing community issues.
- > Enhance ASK Wellness's public profile and recognition of our impact.
- > Continue deep strategic collaboration with community partners and funders.

Strategies

Priority	All Communities	Kamloops	Merritt	Penticton
Housing	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Continue to develop our property and asset management of facilities and housing Improve suite turnover times to support housing placement Maintain the highest standards of safe, supportive, and affordable housing Recovery focused housing 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Create wider continuum of housing options, from Supportive to Recovery to long-term affordable housing Develop an 80-unit seniors and family housing facility in 2023/24 Further develop the Maverick Supportive Recovery Centre 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Open Cedar Terrace (Fall 2022), 46-unit seniors housing facility Ensure a responsive and sustainable maintenance team (140 housing units) Maintain a high-quality commercial office building owned by ASK through effective occupancy and application of replacement reserves 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Open 54-unit Recovery Focused Supportive Housing Facility Spring 2023 Refine current housing inventory to create effective pathways from streets to homes to recovery through collaboration with community partners
Supports	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Enhance focus on recovery-oriented housing and programs Develop Sustainable Supportive Employment Program Complete the Council of Accreditation Process (May 2023) to ensure programs are relevant and effective 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Continue to develop and refine pathways from streets to our supportive housing into recovery and employment options Deepen the capacity and effectiveness of the Maverick Supportive Recovery and Vocational Centre 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Expand current recovery program operated by ASK in the community including shift from scattered address to congregate setting Enhance service options within the harm reduction, health, and employment network in community 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Expand programs or collaborate with others to create more effective pathways for individuals experiencing homelessness to access recovery, health, and employment opportunities
People	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Expand Cultural Safety Efforts within Department of People Experience Enact Affirmative Employment strategies to 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Recruit and retain qualified staff and leadership reflecting community demographics of Kamloops 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Recruit and retain qualified staff and leadership reflecting community demographics of Merritt 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Partner with Ooknakane Friendship Centre in the development and operation of Nxastwilxtn (54-unit recovery focused housing)

	<p>ensure qualified committed and culturally diverse workforce</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Achieve wage parity across all programs and administration ▪ Ensure professional development opportunities are accessible and universal 			<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Recruit and retain qualified and diverse workforce reflecting community demographics of Penticton ▪ Ensure effective leadership for programs and housing in the community
Engagement	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Increase support for Society through diverse community partners promoting our vision and mission and outcomes ▪ Continue to implement communication plan to promote factual information about what services ASK provides and achieves ▪ Influence at a local, provincial, and federal level towards policies successfully tackling the current toxic drug and housing crisis 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Tackle misinformation about ASK within community relating to bringing homeless people into the community ▪ Expand partnerships with other organizations working in the field 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Forge deeper partnerships with Indigenous organizations to share learning and mutual objectives 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Deepen partnerships and relationships with other non-profit organizations and with neighbourhood and business associations ▪ Highlight the effective housing and employment services offered by ASK in the community
	All Communities	Kamloops	Merritt	Penticton

Strategic Plan Development

For the past eight years, ASK Wellness has been guided by a strategic plan that has helped to articulate its core purpose and values, focus its work, guide strategic decision-making, and establish key priorities in organizational development. In early 2022, the organization decided that it was time for a new strategic plan. Given the overall effectiveness of the previous strategic plan and considering that organizational capacity was a recurring theme of conversations, the society took a slightly different approach to planning.

The process began with a Non-Profit Lifecycles Capacity Self-Assessment. Board and the Leadership team assembled for facilitated discussions about the evolution of the organization and its current stage of development in five areas: programs, management, governance, finances, and administrative systems. With this self-assessment in hand, the Leadership Team identified a set of short- and long-term enhancements to capacity. These capacity enhancements, and the renewed understanding of how organizational capacity constrains or enables mission impact, will set the organization up for greater success with its refreshed strategic plan.

The process of refreshing the strategic plan included input from several key stakeholder groups. We conducted a robust staff survey, focus groups for ASK service users, and a survey of community partners. This engagement was critical to ensure a relevant plan that accounts for shifts in our landscape and the perspectives of our people. After stakeholder engagement, came a series of meetings with the Board of Directors and the Leadership Team. Grounded in the ASK mission and vision, these meetings focused on the organization's situation, the complex and ever-changing environment, definitions of future success, organizational values, guiding principles, and strategic directions.

The result of the entire process is a refreshed strategic plan that affirms the vision and mission, refines the values and principles, combines priorities, and identifies key objectives for the next three years. Building on past success, the organization is moving into the future with renewed purpose, attention to capacity, commitment to cultural humility and safety, strategic focus, acknowledgment of the individual needs of our different communities, and an ongoing passion for innovative programs and supports across the continuum of care.



Cody Lusby

Our Organization

History

Our roots go back to a basement couch where HIV/AIDS activists sought out to support those in their community who were living with and affected by the HIV/AIDS epidemic facing community. Originally founded in 1992, as the AIDS Society of Kamloops, the organization was formed to promote health and wellness and to provide education to strengthen the Kamloops community. The Society soon recognized the need to house individuals before they could focus on their health. From there, Housing First initiatives began. Others soon called on the Society to help all who were seeking assistance to find HOPE, shelter, and support. In 2016, the Society changed its name to the ASK Wellness Society to reflect the initiatives to serve all in the community who struggle with their housing, health, or employment. Our work is now based on supporting people through a continuum of care, from streets to homes to health to employment.

Continuum of Care

Streets	Homes	Health	Employment
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Street outreach (Kamloops Merritt) ▪ Overdose prevention ▪ SHOP ▪ Community Transitions Team ▪ Naloxone Training ▪ FTIR Drug Testing (Kamloops/Penticton) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Housing Outreach & Crisis Funding ▪ Supportive Housing ▪ Transitional Housing ▪ Affordable and/or 55+ Housing ▪ Tenant Development ▪ Scattered Address Rapid Rehousing ▪ Family Housing (Merritt) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Health Navigation, Bloodborne Infection Management, and Harm Reduction ▪ Adult Addictions Supportive Recovery ▪ MHASH ▪ Community Integration and Developmental Disabilities Supports ▪ TiOAT (Prescribed Safer Supply) ▪ Maverick Supportive Recovery and Career Development Program 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Overdose Prevention Peer Employment Program (Kamloops) ▪ Clean Street Initiative (Kamloops) ▪ Work Experience Opportunities (WEOG) ▪ Peer Ambassador Pre-Employment Program (Penticton)

Our People

Leadership Team

Bob Hughes (MA, MSM), CEO

Kim Galloway (MSW), Chief Operating Officer

Natascha Strauss (CA), Chief Financial Officer

Jeremy Cain, Director of Outreach and Clinical Supports

Cher Doolan, Director of People Experience and Employment Development

Kyra Matheson, Director of Accounting Services

Keri Cooke, Director of Merritt Operations

Karen Protasivich, Director of Properties and Asset Strategies

Board of Directors

Stan Fike (Chair, Kamloops)

Gary Limpricht (Treasurer, Kamloops)

Gina Dillon (Secretary, Kamloops)

Brad Alberts (Vice Chair, Kamloops)

Trudy Marsh (Member, Kamloops)

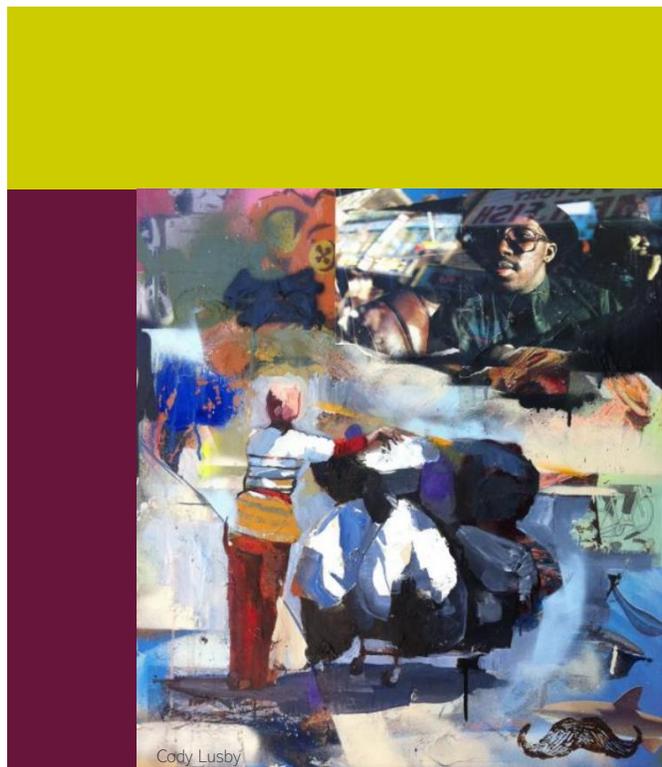
Neil Menard (Member, Merritt)

S. Paul Varga (Member, Penticton)

Michael Lamont (Member, Penticton)

Ryan Denault (Member, Kamloops)

Sandie Keetch (Member, Kamloops)



Our Funding Partners

ASK Wellness works in collaboration with federal, provincial, and community partners to advance our mission, vision, and strategic priorities.



We also wish to recognize all those who support us anonymously and thank those who have shown incredible generosity in donating to our Client Crisis Fund.