

Living Hope: A Community Plan to Prevent Suicide in Edmonton

Annual Report

Recommendation

That the May 14, 2021, Citizen Services report CS00329, be received for information.

Previous Council/Committee Action

At the May 4/5/11/14, 2021, City Council Public Hearing, the following motion was passed:

That the May 14, 2021, Community and Public Services Committee meeting be cancelled and the items on the agenda be rescheduled to the May 28, 2021, Community and Public Services Committee meeting.

Executive Summary

The findings of the annual evaluation indicate that the implementation of Living Hope: A Community Plan to Prevent Suicide in Edmonton is proceeding well. Of particular note has been the success of the reach of the public awareness campaign and the ongoing strength of community collaboration. Due to the impacts of the COVID-19 pandemic, the steering committee extended the implementation of the plan to 2022.

The City provides funding, project management support and convened community partners who made significant in-kind contributions. Some of the actions taken in 2020 include the continued evaluation of the 11 of Us public awareness campaign, training and capacity building, expansion of support services and providing funding for committee support.

Report

Living Hope: A Community Plan to Prevent Suicide in Edmonton continues to make significant progress in the second year of implementation. Over the past year, the Community Based Implementation Team, tasked with the implementation of the plan, has advanced a number of actions including collaboration with pharmacists, LRT operators, and media professionals through shared initiatives and training. The

Community Based Implementation Team provided financial and planning support for the launch of a dedicated 211 Support Line for LGBTQ2S+ people and expanded communications to include a quarterly newsletter, which has a subscriber base of over 1,300 people.

Throughout 2020, the City of Edmonton provided funding, project management support and convened community partners who made significant in-kind contributions. These partners include the Canadian Mental Health Association - Edmonton Region, the Government of Alberta, the United Way of the Alberta Capital Region, Edmonton Police Service, educational institutions and a variety of community organizations. A key partner is Alberta Health Services who funds the project coordinator position. There continued to be strong representation from those serving higher-risk populations, including first responders, and agencies serving Indigenous peoples and LGBTQ2S+ communities.

As a result of the COVID-19 pandemic, in-person training and events were postponed and the capacity of community partners was diverted for much of the second year of implementation of the plan. Though the implementation of the plan was impacted by COVID-19, the activities remain timely and contribute to a community-wide response to address the increased mental health needs of Edmontonians. The steering committee extended the implementation of the plan to March 2022 to better achieve the objectives and to respond to the increased need for suicide prevention efforts.

The following progress was made in 2020 on the activities funded by the City:

- The continued promotion of the public awareness campaign, 11 of Us, intended to improve recognition and support for those considering suicide. The website had more than 60,000 visits and an evaluation indicates an increase in those who have seen suicide prevention messages and who are able to identify the campaign's messaging.
- Training and capacity building through the implementation of a sponsored training framework. Between October 2019 and October 2020, a total of 1,471 people have registered in the virtual and in-person training sessions and the evaluation results have been consistently positive. The Community Based Implementation Team also co-sponsored events including Mysterious Barricades and An Evening to Remember: Honouring Lives Lost to Suicide.
- The expansion of men's support services including a second men's drop-in group, a coping with depression and anxiety group, and Men's Sheds. All of these supports were offered virtually and were well attended.
- Evaluation of year two progress to determine the extent to which implementation is proceeding as intended and the degree to which outcomes are achieved.
- Administrative support and funding to convene five committees with broad representation consisting of 45 community agencies, organizations and

individuals with lived experience, including activities such as hosting, graphic design, promotional materials, etc.

Budget/Financial Implications

The approved 2020 budget for implementation of the plan was \$422,900 and was fully used. Grant funding provided by the Government of Alberta in 2020 remains in place and will be used to extend the implementation period to March 2022.

Corporate Outcomes and Performance Management

Corporate Outcome: Edmonton is a safe city			
Outcomes	Measures	Result(s)	Target(s)
Emergency department visits and deaths related to suicide are minimized in Edmonton	Number of suicide deaths in the Edmonton Zone according to Alberta Health's Interactive Health Data Application	2018: 178 2017: 196 2016: 183	Downward trend
	Number of attempted suicide-related emergency department visits in the Edmonton Zone according to Alberta Health Services' Provincial Injury Program	2019: 2,529 2018: 2,530 2017: 2,747 2016: 2,365	Downward trend
Actions initiate change toward training and awareness, availability and integration of services, specific support for higher-risk populations, and data collection and surveillance	Percent of the actions identified that have been implemented	70%	2022: 100%

Attachment

1. Living Hope: A Community Plan to Prevent Suicide – Year 2 Evaluation Summary Report

Others Reviewing this Report

- M. Persson, Chief Financial Officer and Deputy City Manager, Financial and Corporate Services
- C. Owen, Deputy City Manager, Communications and Engagement
- K. Armstrong, Deputy City Manager, Employee Services
- G. Cebryk, Deputy City Manager, City Operations
- K. Fallis-Howell, Acting City Solicitor