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Pathways Clubhouse Analysis

Mental illness is a condition that affects a person's thoughts, feelings or behaviours, sometimes makes social integration problematic, and it can result in significant personal suffering. There are various types of mental illness. Mood disorders, such as bipolar disorder and depression, affect one's mood. Common feelings associated with mood disorders are exhaustion, hopelessness, helplessness and uselessness. Anxiety disorders, such as obsessive compulsive disorder and post-traumatic stress disorder, often result in feelings of apprehension, worry, fear and rumination. Additional mental illnesses include schizophrenia, where a person commonly has distorted perceptions, thoughts and hallucinations, as well as personality disorders and dissociative disorders.

Mental illness has no name, no gender, no age. It does not prey on the elderly, nor does it seek out the uneducated. It does not favour a particular culture or socio-economic status. Without discrimination and without selection, mental illness will affect one in five persons¹. Despite this common prevalence, those suffering from mental illness are often discriminated against and shamed. If society is not stigmatizing those with mental illness, many believe it to be a crutch, with 46% of the population believing mental illness is used as an excuse for poor behavior (Mental Health Commission of Canada, 2012). Experiencing such stigma is "a barrier than can affect nearly every aspect of life, limiting opportunities for employment, housing and education. It can also cause the loss of family and friends" thereby exacerbating feelings of loneliness and isolation (Mental Health Commission of Canada – Stigma Discussion Report).

Quantitatively, mental illness is reported to impact 1 out of every 5 persons with an impact to the economy of over \$50 billion annually². The Canadian Mental Health Commission reports that of the 4,000 Canadians who die as a result of suicide each year, most were facing a mental health condition or illness³.

Mental illness is responsible for more than \$6 billion in lost productivity in workplaces⁴, with approximately 30 per cent of short- and long-term disability claims listing mental health as a causal factor⁵.

Despite the stigma around mental health suggesting otherwise, people living with mental health conditions are not generally involved in criminal activity, and are more often the victims of violence than the perpetrators⁶.

Sadly, adults with severe mental health conditions have a mortality rate of up to 25 years earlier than adults in the general population⁷.

To make a difference in the lives of those affected by mental illness, our organization operates Pathways Clubhouse, a program model that is accredited by Clubhouse International. Our Clubhouse offers hope, support, encouragement and opportunities to people whose lives have been shattered by mental illness. Pathways Clubhouse helps members recover from mental illness and rebuild their lives through a supportive environment that focuses on each person's strengths and talents, rather than illness. We work together as a group and create opportunities for members to return to school or university, gain employment, and have a place to live, connect with their families, make new friends, and create multiple successes. The psychiatric rehabilitation and peer support at Pathways Clubhouse can help members to reduce hospitalization and symptoms, offers social support, and improves overall quality of life⁸. We also provide mental health public education in our community to increase awareness and understanding of issues and concerns about mental illness and mental health.

Clubhouse Model

A Clubhouse is first and foremost a local community center that offers people who have mental illness hope and opportunities to achieve their full potential. Much more than simply a program or a social service, a Clubhouse is most importantly a community of people who are working together to achieve a common goal.

A Clubhouse is organized to support people living with mental illness. During the course of their participation in a Clubhouse, members gain access to opportunities to rejoin the worlds of friendships, family, employment and education, and to the services and support they may individually need to continue their recovery. A Clubhouse provides a restorative environment for people whose lives have been severely disrupted because of their mental illness, and who need the support of others who are in recovery and who believe that mental illness is treatable (Clubhouse International).

This report contains the various services, reasons for the services, and statistics for the past 3 years.

Work-Ordered Day

The daily activity of a Clubhouse is organized around a structured system known as the work-ordered day. The work-ordered day is an eight-hour period, typically Monday through Friday, which parallels the typical business hours of the working community where the Clubhouse is located. Members and staff work side by side as colleagues, to perform the work that is important to their community. All of the work in the Clubhouse is *for* the Clubhouse and not for any outside agency or business. There are no clinical therapies or treatment-oriented programs in the Clubhouse. Members volunteer to participate as they feel ready and according to their individual interests (Clubhouse International).

Pathways Clubhouse is divided into 3 work units with the following major responsibilities:

- COST Unit – publications, reception, website, orientation, outreach, social program, thrift store;
- Food Services Unit – daily meal program, snack bar; and
- Upstairs Unit – Employment, volunteer, supported education, physical wellness, housing, public education, young adult, administration.

	2013-2014	2014-2015	2015-2016
Daily Attendance	71	72	71
Average Monthly Active	183	185	180
Annual Participation	371	375	365

Pathways Clubhouse has noticed a plateauing of attendance in the past several years. While this may be attributed to meeting the needs of members in the community, it is our goal to increase outreach to members who attend sporadically, and to do so strategically and methodically. Additionally, public education outreach efforts are focusing in part on increasing awareness of Pathways Clubhouse within the Richmond community, as well as the Lower Mainland overall. Our goal is to increase daily attendance by 10% in the next 12 months. Ultimately our goal is for members not to need Pathways Clubhouse as long as their needs are being met in the community.

Employment

“Unemployment rates among people living with mental health problems are incredibly high—even among people who want to work” (www.heretohelp.bc.ca). In fact, 70% to 90% of people living with serious mental health disorders in Canada are unemployed, including 30% of people living with depression or anxiety. Being unemployed impacts many aspects of a person’s life including one’s housing situation, access to healthy food options, social connections, and educational opportunities.

As a right of membership, our Clubhouse provides members with opportunities to return to paid employment in integrated work settings through both Transitional Employment and Independent Employment programs.

Transitional Employment is a highly structured program for members returning to work in local business and industry. These placements are at the employer’s place of business, are part-time (15-20 hours per week), and include on-the-job and off-site support from Clubhouse staff and members. These placements generally last from six to nine months; at which time, members can then choose to try another placement or move on to Independent Employment.

Transitional Employment is specifically designed as a vocational rehabilitation program where a member can gain or regain the skills and confidence necessary to obtain and maintain a job in the competitive job market. The only requirement to participate in Transitional Employment is an expressed desire to work.

The Independent Employment program supports members to seek and obtain a job of their own. The Clubhouse then provides as much ongoing support and encouragement that members want and need while they remain employed. Members in the Independent Employment program are not supported at their place of employment; all support takes place at the Clubhouse or in the community (Clubhouse International).

	2013-2014	2014-2015	2015-2016
Transitional Employment	39	41	44
Independent Employment	37	36	36

Employment continues to be a major focus for the Clubhouse with 2.5 FTE staff funded to provide support to members currently, although all staff share in employment responsibilities. Our goal for Transitional Employment this year is to increase members’ employment 6%, and to increase members’ in Independent Employment by 3%. Members ready to work in transitional employment will be increased through structured outreach, as well as relevant workshops and training such as FoodSafe.

Housing

Although research is inconclusive whether or not mental illness leads to homelessness, it is clear that people with mental illness are at a greater risk of being homeless. “According to housing and support providers across BC, affordable housing is vanishing, evictions are on the rise, and waiting lists for social and supported housing continue to grow” (Canadian Alliance on Mental Illness and Mental Health). Having safe, decent, and affordable housing is an extremely important element for a person’s mental wellbeing. It is difficult for a person to manage the rest of their life without a stable home.

In addition to one’s mental well-being, housing is also tied to one’s physical well-being and social well-being. Good housing can help rebuild and maintain independence, day-to-day routines, confidence and social networks. Research shows that people living with a mental disorder who live where they want to are more likely to have a job, social supports and a higher quality of life than those whose housing doesn’t meet their needs.

Pathways Clubhouse has a supported housing program that provides affordable and safe housing to our members. Rental subsidies and supports are provided and adapted to meet the needs of our members. Pathways Clubhouse helps members reacquire living skills, whether it is budgeting, shopping, cooking or cleaning. Over the past 5 years, Pathways Clubhouse’s funders removed 15 housing subsidies to be used for individuals who require more intensive and clinical supports.

	2013-2014	2014-2015	2015-2016
Number of Tenants	122	118	117

While the current level of support for housing remains the same for the 2016 fiscal year, Pathways is working on a long-term plan that should see the number of housing units increase to 150 in the next 2 years.

Young Adult Program

Amid the pressure to forge their own identities and identify academic and career paths, youth have the added burden of accepting a diagnosis and finding proper treatment. Fear of being different and a lack of understanding from even the most well-intentioned friends and family can lead to feeling alone and hopeless.

Mental illness usually first occurs between the ages of 18 to 25, yet young adults often do not seek community-based treatment immediately. Typically, youth affected by mental illness do not know what is happening to them, or do not want to know. This can cost many years of their lives lost trying to get proper help and receive support for their recovery.

Our Young Adult Program includes the following components:

1. Liaison relationships with schools, colleges, community centres, and youth organizations.
2. Clubhouse youth members welcome new youth members through tours, orientation, and buddy system.
3. Immediate involvement of new and prospective youth in activities and services that meet their needs and interests which may include:
 - social media and related technology
 - youth social activities
 - supported education
 - access to physical fitness activities and gyms
4. Provide individualized and group support with achievable goals

	2013-2014	2014-2015	2015-2016
Number of Young Adults	48	71	81

Since its inception the Young Adult Program has seen significant growth. In order to further this growth, Pathways Clubhouse will be incorporating purpose built space for young adults into our new location on Granville Street which is slated to be occupied in the summer of 2017. Additionally, thanks to a generous donation from Variety – The Children’s Charity, we are able to invest \$25,000 into ensuring that the space meets the technology and current needs of this group.

As Pathways currently serves members with a minimum age of 19, there is a concern that we may be losing some potential members who age out of youth programs, and have to spend a year without community support for their mental health challenges. Accordingly, Pathways has made the decision to lower the age of entrance to the clubhouse to 18 from 19, thereby capturing this vulnerable sector more fully.

Pathways is currently working on a partnership with a community centre to develop youth specific mental health programming and outreach.

Wellness

Research shows that the mortality rate of people with mental illness is significantly higher than the general population. This population has an increased risk of developing heart disease, stroke, hypertension, and diabetes. This risk is due to a tendency to eat fattening foods, get little exercise, and have limited access to health care. Furthermore, it is evident that people with mental illness are more likely to smoke, perhaps due to the self-medicating qualities intended to reduce anxiety. People with serious and persistent mental illness have a 25-year lower life expectancy than the general population⁹, and more than half of that difference is related to conditions caused or worsened by smoking. In an attempt to combat these statistics, Pathways Clubhouse encourages a healthy lifestyle by providing opportunities to be physically active and eat a balanced diet. We go for daily walks, have weekly yoga and low-impact fitness classes, do gardening work at our own plot at the Richmond Sharing Farm, run a circuit training group, have a variety of on-site gym

equipment, as well as monthly presentations from a Dietician. We are also able to provide free drop-in passes for members to access the gym and swimming pools at local community centres.

	2013-2014	2014-2015	2015-2016
Number of Members Participating	108	121	125

This year, Pathways will continue to encourage members to participate in our wellness activities. We have recently worked with a number of personal trainers in Richmond who put on a “Sweat Away the Stigma” event to encourage members of the clubhouse to exercise together, and reduce the stigma surrounding mental illness.

Social Program

“People with serious mental illness often experience difficulty in developing and maintaining social relationships. Outside of the contact they have with mental health professionals and family members, their interactions with others can be quite limited, they often have smaller social networks than people without a mental illness.” (BH McCorkle, 2008)

Pathways Clubhouse offers a social program on Monday and Wednesday evenings, Saturdays, Sundays and all public holidays. The social program provides a meal and recreation opportunities to our members – from pool tournaments to ongoing art projects. The Social Program is more than just having fun. It reflects the concern of the Clubhouse for the whole of a member’s life and relationships based on wholeness.

	2013-2014	2014-2015	2015-2016
Number of Members Participating	147	152	156

Pathways Outreach program is a key way to connect and reconnect members to the social network at Pathways. Our goal this year of restructuring and improving our outreach efforts is intended to increase Social Program participation by a further 6% in the 2016-2017 year.

Chinese Support Program

Over 60% of Richmond residents are of Asian, predominately Chinese descent. Stigma regarding mental illness hinders many Chinese speaking individuals from seeking needed mental health care. If a member of a Chinese family has a mental illness, it is viewed as bringing shame upon the entire family. Accordingly, the family often attempts to care for their relative without seeking psychiatric help, or seeking help only when a crisis occurs.

Our Chinese Support Program includes the following components:

- Integrating Chinese speaking members into the Clubhouse to provide employment, education, volunteer and social opportunities;
- Providing Public Education events;
- Providing a monthly support group to Chinese speaking family members;
- Conducting outreach to families in need; and
- Providing a resource for locally available culturally sensitive preventive services.

	2013-2014	2014-2015	2015-2016
Number of Chinese Members	64	67	74
Number of Chinese Family Members	242	284	291

Slow but steady growth in the Chinese Support Program highlights the opportunity to increase outreach to this under-represented group. A renewed focus on outreach by the Chinese Program staff will increase the number of Chinese members attending. Improved database management will serve to improve record keeping with this group.

Public Education

The Public Education sector at Pathways is dedicated to breaking preconceived stigmas and stereotypes by bringing awareness and understanding to the realities of mental illness through partnerships, resources and several community workshops, events and initiatives. Pathways Clubhouse partners with over a dozen local agencies and communities. Our partnerships allow us to share knowledge and spread information on a larger scale in order to bring mental illness and mental health awareness and education to the public arena. The purpose of Pathways’ involvements and affiliations is to work collectively to fill gaps in service, educate colleagues and the general public and reach a broader audience in hopes to eradicate the misunderstandings and fears that surround mental illness.

Through an assortment of resources, Pathways Clubhouse provides mental health education to the community. The library at Pathways Clubhouse contains over 700 books and 175 videos available to the public. Brochures on various mental illnesses and local services are in abundance at Pathways and our website contributes to further educate the public and encourage well-being and recovery.

A vital aspect of Public Education is to play a role in community events and initiatives including, but not limited to, Mental Health Week, Mental Illness Awareness Week, Mental Health Training Events and several Mental Health Film Events. Through these events, Pathways is able to educate the public on the realities of mental illness, bring awareness to the prevalence of those struggling with mental health issues, offer support and resources and ultimately take steps towards the destruction of social stigmas and stereotypes that surround mental illness.

	2013-2014	2014-2015	2015-2016
Number of Contacts	1,536	1,790	1,823

Pathways Clubhouse is currently operating at capacity with the current 1.5 FTE staff working in the Public Education area. To address the increasing demands from the public for mental health education, additional staff and members are assisting with presentations, and we are working together with several community organizations to develop packaged mental health and substance use curriculum that will be simple enough for generalist staff and members to present. Together these steps will allow us to achieve a goal of increasing our contacts to over 2000 in the next year.

Supported Education

People with mental illness are most likely to receive a diagnosis as young adults, while in high school or university. This often impacts their ability to complete their educational pursuits and in turn, delays their vocational goals. “There is evidence to suggest that individuals with psychiatric disabilities, when compared to the general population, have a lower of post-secondary degree completion” (Café TAC). Many adults with a mental illness still have a strong desire to complete their educational goals.

We support all of our members’ educational goals, including obtaining a GED, attending post-secondary institutions, learning job-related skills, applying for scholarships and bursaries, and connecting with one-on-one tutors. We also run in-house budgeting, ESL, and basic Mandarin classes twice per year, which are taught jointly by a member and staff.

	2013-2014	2014-2015	2015-2016
Number of Members Participating	39	44	48

Connecting with post-secondary institutions to provide classes to members is a goal for the upcoming year. More variety

in the classes offered to members will increase the utilization of members and staff in providing supported education. An increase of 10% in the members participating in Supported Education is our target for the upcoming year.

Volunteer Program

People affected by mental illness have the same desire as the rest of the population to be involved in and contribute to their community. Due to a potential lack of confidence, anxiety, and a willingness to develop skills, they may need additional support.

Our Volunteer Program has been designed to provide opportunities for our members to contribute to and feel part of their community through volunteering. At the same time, the program provides local agencies and organizations trained and supported volunteers. Clubhouse staff help members find a placement and support them throughout their volunteer experience. If necessary, we also provide support to participating agencies. Volunteering provides members with an opportunity to gain skills, build confidence, and connect with their community. For some, volunteering is a stepping stone toward achieving vocational goals.

	2013-2014	2014-2015	2015-2016
Number of Members Participating	53	45	40

In the past 3 years, we have seen a decrease in the amount of members volunteering. This is due to several of those members now being employed. This year the volunteer program plans to see growth this year by increasing the amount of structured outreach to members and by increasing the number of volunteer sites available to members for volunteering.

Financial Allocation

	2013-2014	2014-2015	2015-2016
Work-Ordered Day/Operations	789,504	868,421	864,791
Employment	99,160	92,114	94,916
Housing	1,304,212	1,335,852	1,359,372
Young Adult/Youth	10,000	19,284	10,000
Wellness	5,700	5,600	2,000
Social	130,242	121,271	125,584
Chinese Support	20,102	20,172	20,404
Public Education	125,009	133,159	127,871
Supported Education	21,300	22,200	21,800
Volunteer	63,520	63,809	64,485
Total	2,568,479	2,681,882	2,691,223

Looking Forward

Pathways Clubhouse strives to continue to meet the needs of our members through our world class programming, and staff that continue to learn and grow from our past experiences. Currently we are addressing pressure in our Employment and Public Education areas through strategic focus and possible reallocation of resources. This reallocation was brought upon by the anecdotal reporting of over capacity by both programs' staff members as well as observable data which shows the growth in these areas plateauing. In the next year as we move into new space, further adjustments to staffing will likely be needed.

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