

CMHA Cowichan Valley Branch

Annual Report 2022-2023

Vision: Mentally Healthy People in a Healthy Society

Our Mission: As a locally-based champion for mental health, CMHA-CVB facilitates access to the resources people require to maintain and improve mental health and community integration, build resilience, and support recovery from mental illness and addiction.

Canadian Mental Health Association-Cowichan Valley Branch is honoured to provide care and services in the unceded traditional and ancestral territories of the Qu'wutsun, Meluxuh (Malahat), Halalt, Lyackson, Pneluxutth'(Penelukut), Ts'uubaa-asatx, Ditidaht, Stz'uminus people.

Board President's Report

Looking back on this year, the word that comes to mind is "change." We've seen changes in our office space, our team members, and even our employment structure with the introduction of unions. The new office space has been a welcome change, providing our staff and personnel with a safer environment. Of course, it's always hard to lose team members and managers who have been with us for a long time, but these departures also bring new opportunities for fresh faces and innovative ideas to join our organization. I'm grateful for every new addition to the management team that Lise has brought on board.

One of the most significant changes that has affected CMHA-CVB is the implementation of a union for select employees. As a board, we need to acknowledge the extensive effort and dedication put forth by the management team to ensure compliance with union standards. We want to express our gratitude to Lise and her team for their exceptional work.

During our recent activities, one of the most significant moments was our full-day board meeting, where we deliberated on the future of CMHA-CVB. We set aside a Saturday and enlisted the guidance of a consultant, who helped us lay down a foundation for our organization's next phase by revamping our strategic plan.

As the president of CMHA-CVB, it has been a pleasure to serve. I am excited about the organization's future in the upcoming year.

Kind regards,

Scott Hemenway

Executive Director's Report

When I reflect on the past year, the keyword that comes to mind is gratitude. It has been an honour to provide services and supports to many in the Cowichan Valley. I am especially grateful to our board of Directors, management, and staff for helping us navigate challenging and stressful times.

I am grateful that we are developing a stronger organization, based on a foundation of caring, compassion, and kindness. These are important personal and practical values that support CMHA-CVB's vision, mission, and mandate. It is these values that drive CMHA-CVB in our relationships with those we serve and our community partners. There is much work to do and I truly believe that "We are Better Standing Together."

As the Executive Director of an amazing organization, this year has brought much uncertainty and change. Because of a caring and committed team, we have been able to navigate through many of these challenges. The world of the non-profit is not for the faint of heart, and I am humbled to work with a Board and staff driven by compassion, resiliency, and a commitment to "what's right" and "what's good." It is reflective of their strength and wisdom.

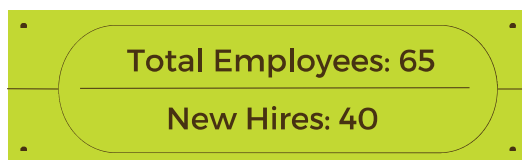
Together we have created new spaces, built bridges, and created new growth opportunities. It is my honour to share our AGM report with you, to showcase our successes, and to demonstrate that in doing the challenging work that we collectively do, we continue to do this together. To each person we serve through our programs, know that you are a valued citizen deserving of respect, dignity, and rights.

Thank you to everyone in our CMHA Cowichan Valley Team, for all you do and for being there for each other. Thank you to all those partners in the Cowichan community for working collaboratively with us. We see your kindness and you matter.

Much Respect,

Lise Haddock

Human Resources Report



We had a challenging yet exciting year in Human Resources as we implemented two Collective Agreements. The HR team is dedicated to supporting the growth and well-being of our employees. We remain committed to fostering a positive work environment and contributing

to the success of CMHA-CVB. We appreciate the continued support of our leadership team and all employees in making HR initiatives successful.

TRAINING • Conducted 10 training programs

MOVING FORWARD

- Continued implementation of Collective Agreements
- Training and development opportunities
- Developing policies and procedures for employee engagement, onboarding, and recognition

Submitted by Savneet Shoker, Manager - Human Resources

Operations Report

CMHA-CVB operates four facilities: The Administration and Child, Youth & Family Connections Offices, Warmland House Shelter, Sobering and Assessment Centre, and Cowichan Youth Centre.

In January 2023, the Administration and Child Youth and Family Connections offices moved to 554 Trunk Road. This building offers office space and board rooms, which are ideal for counselling, meetings, and training.



Administration and Child, Youth, and Family Connections Offices, 552/554 Trunk Road, Duncan, BC

Warmland House Shelter, which opened in 2010, continues to offer 24-hour services, 7 days a week including holidays. The three-story residential facility with shelter beds, transitional apartments, a common room, a kitchen, a dining room, and offices supports over 400 individuals annually. The shelter is on the same property as the Cowichan Sobering and Assessment Centre; however, each operates independently. We face the challenge of an aging building that needs upgrades including windows, plumbing, heating/cooling systems, and appliances.



Warmland House Shelter, 2579 Lewis Street, Duncan, BC

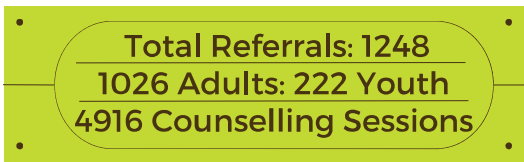
The Cowichan Youth Centre is open Monday to Friday from 11 am - 5:30 pm for youth aged 12 - 19. This safe and inclusive space supports individuals to connect with youth, mentors, and resources. On-site activities include an art space, youth-appropriate activity stations, and workshops. There is a free clothing store, a small kitchen, a washroom, and a private mentoring room.



Cowichan Youth Centre, 360 Festubert Street, Duncan, BC

Program Reports

Bounce Back®



Bounce Back® is a free self-directed program for individuals to learn tools and strategies to help overcome and manage symptoms of mild to moderate depression and/or anxiety and improve overall mental health. Supported by a telephone coach, participants learn cognitive behavioural based strategies to incorporate into their everyday lives. The Cowichan Valley branch is one of the busiest branches in BC, with coaches carrying a higher caseload than any other CMHA branch.

Bounce Back® participants showed an average decrease of 41% in their depressive symptoms and 43% in their anxiety symptoms at the end of the program. March 2023 marked one year

of successfully having participants able to self-refer to Bounce Back® - removing additional barriers to service. In 2022 – 2023, the Cowichan Valley branch received 1248 referrals (1026 adults and 222 youth). On average, participants were contacted within 2 days of receiving their referral, and received their first appointment within 12 days.

"I have been to numerous health/mental health programs. This is the most concise and done by one step at a time. I will keep these books for issues I still need to work on. As to the coaching, I haven't got the words to say how thankful I am. Their skills as a coach are beyond anything I've experienced."

-Vancouver Island Bounce Back Participant

"Without Bounce Back there is a huge gap for patients needing mental health help. Bounce Back meets a critical part of that gap"

-local referring physician

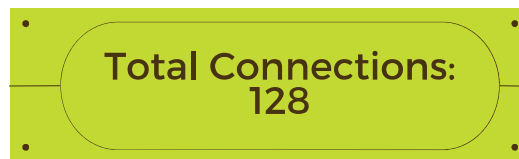
Submitted by Kate Bradford, Team Lead & Coach - Bounce Back

Child, Youth, and Family Connections

CMHA-CVB had a full year of bringing health and human services to Cowichan's vulnerable youth. We have a very committed team that continues to work with youth every day. The Manager and Team Lead continue to engage with community partners to foster collaborative support.

During the 2022-23 fiscal year, reporting was not effectively in place for all Child, Youth, and Family Connections programs. As a result, the below numbers may under-represent our current capacity. A new data management system was implemented to capture the important work of our team.

Family Capacity Outreach (FC)



In the past year there have been changes in the FC Program. CMHA-CVB employs a clinical counsellor and an outreach worker, both of whom bring passion and zest to their roles. Our clinical counsellor provides clinical supervision and the outreach worker provides individualized care for the children and youth. FC has a collaborative relationship with Child and Youth Mental Health (CYMH), which operates under the Ministry of Child and Family Development. All referrals come from CYMH. This program has consistently seen full caseloads with waitlists.

The FC program has seen success with engaging families in various ways by accessing full wrap-around services and support from both the clinical counsellor and the outreach worker.

Some families come to sessions together for a family-style approach to counselling, others come as couples, and some come only for individual work.

"One family successfully navigated through the process of becoming sober and adjusting family dynamics to help maintain sobriety for 2 months now."

'FC has supported several families to improve communication and establish healthy family routines such as "family time" and "sit down, screen-free dinner time". One couple has had huge success reducing screen time for their young child and setting up enforceable boundaries around daily rituals. This couple had also worked to enhance healthy communication between themselves and are currently working on grounding techniques that help them respond more thoughtfully to their child's emotional outbursts.'

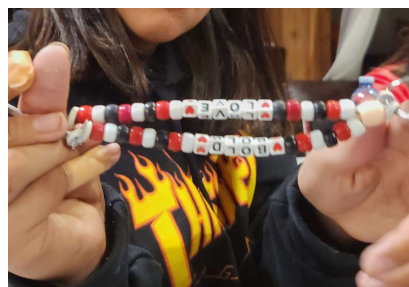
'FC also supported individual family members with various mental health concerns such as depression and anxiety. One client recently disclosed a significant reduction in suicidal ideation. For this individual, these thoughts were occurring on a daily basis when they first began therapy and they report these thoughts are now occurring only once a week. This client also reported developing several resources, both inner and outer, to help when the thoughts do occur'

Malahat First Nation Girls Club Circles of Care, Circles of Courage

Total Connections:
9

The Malahat Girls Club: Circles of Care, Circle of Courage (CCCC) program creates a safe, respectful, engaging meeting for individuals identifying as girls aged between 9 and 14. This weekly program has two intentions: to provide an environment conducive to learning and building skills that will support participants in their navigation of the critical development phase that characterizes this age and to assist participants in developing tools and providing resources that can be utilized to promote resiliency in future challenges. This past year, CCCC's focus was to continue activities and programming around resiliency, communication, critical thinking, self-confidence, and culture. Youth continued to build positive, meaningful relationships with their peers in the group. Building meaningful relationships is an important aspect of establishing their individuality, which directly connects them to who they are. Being able to develop meaningful relationships also contributes to youth being able to interact with others, which will assist them in developing positive social skills.

This program is a community partnership between CMHA-CVB, Malahat First Nation, and the Canadian Women's Foundation (who provided the funding).



Sexual Abuse Intervention Program (SAIP)

**Total Connections:
96**

SAIP is a community-based sexual abuse intervention program providing a range of appropriate, timely, and easily accessible programs for families with children and youth who have experienced sexual abuse, and children under the age of 12 with sexual behaviour problems. The SAIP counsellor works with children, youth, and their families alleviating trauma-related symptoms to help reduce the likelihood of adverse long-term consequences of child sexual abuse trauma.

SAIP offers support through differing therapeutic lenses, psycho-education, play therapy, art activities, and nature-based activities. The SAIP counsellor works from a strength-based, culturally relevant, collaborative, holistic perspective, and always strives to meet the families where they are in their healing journey. This program hopes to support and build community resilience by partnering with other community initiatives and agencies.

Youth Centre

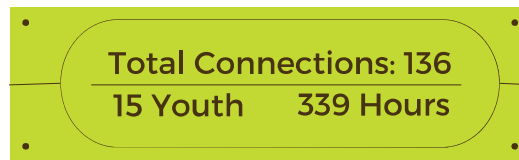
**Total Visits: 1097
Over 167 Unique Youth**

The Cowichan Youth Centre provides a safe community space, fostering a sense of belonging and acceptance for youth. Youth can seek out one-on-one support at the Centre. The employees are a significant part of the Child, Youth, and Family Connection Team that makes invaluable contributions to the youth in the Cowichan Valley.

The Cowichan Youth Centre operates a free store where all donations from community members are distributed to youth. This may include footwear, clothing, and outerwear.



Youth One-to-One Support



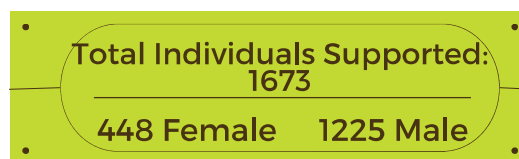
From providing rides to school and medical appointments to meeting with social workers or connecting with the food bank, youth support workers mentor, guide, and support youth. Issues youth are supported for relate to depression, social integration, isolation, body dysmorphia, self-esteem, confidence issues, moderate to heavy substance use with drugs or alcohol, and supporting youth whilst in rehabilitation. They also support physical wellness and healthy lifestyles by attending a local gym to work out with the youth. CMHA-CVB respects diversity and honours all nationalities, including and supporting those who identify as LGBTQ2S+.

Youth One-to-One Support is available out in the community and at our Youth Centre. During this past year, space was redesigned at the Youth Centre to become the One-to-One support room. It is utilized regularly. The youth team saw the importance of providing this critical “communicative space” and created it.

For Christmas 2022, the Youth Team created a Christmas Dinner initiative. They saw that during the holidays the dynamics around Christmas time can be challenging for some, and they moved on to having a Christmas dinner for those in need. We hope to continue to offer this as an annual event. As adults, we know that building social skills is an important piece to building resiliency, as it lays the foundation for the development of physical, mental, & and emotional well-being.

Submitted by Madeline Joe, Manager - Child, Youth and Family Connections

Sobering and Assessment Centre



Thanks to all who dedicated so much of their time and energy to making this program work. SAC had 2148 attempted visits, of whom 1673 were accepted and had stays at SAC. However, 253 clients were turned away because they did not fit the criteria to be accepted. Another 222 clients were turned away because we were full. On average, SAC accepted 4.5 clients per day. Of the clients that attempted to access SAC, 35% had used alcohol and 63% had used either heroin, fentanyl, meth, or some combination thereof. SAC continues to serve the needs of this community and hopes to increase its capacity in the future.

Warmland House: Shelter and Services

Warmland House

We serve the most vulnerable men and women in the Cowichan Valley and do so by making sure people have a place to be safe, warm, and dry. We serve the working poor, impoverished elderly, physically and mentally challenged, addicted, and the homeless. We provide breakfast and dinner to our clients daily, and lunch every Sunday to the community, as well as any time the local food bank is closed. Some of our other services include showers, clothing, phones, electronics charging, toiletries, short-term storage bins and lockers, outreach services, free tax service, harm reduction, and laundry.

This was a difficult year for Warmland House. The homeless population increased and the risk of death due to the opioid crisis and dangerous drugs continued, which challenged us to shelter, feed, supply, and care for many more.

We experienced a lot of deaths this past year, which took its toll on our staff and clients alike. There is not enough support available for our clients during these times, but we try to step in and offer what we can. It is a privilege to have the opportunity to support people on their journey and be part of their story. Our staff come to care for our clients like family, which makes it difficult when we lose them.

"Warmlands was a place I was able to get a second chance, a place to have the time to build a solid plan to get back to living a life we all strive to achieve. The staff were extremely helpful with advice and options. If they didn't have the answers to questions, they went the extra mile to find the answers. Thanks to Warmlands, I am stable again. "

-Boyd Von Koughnett

"One year ago found myself in a homeless situation here in the Cowichan Valley. Not knowing where to turn it was overwhelming and confusing to myself. Through time I was informed of Warmland Services in Duncan, run through the Canadian Mental Health Association by friends and soon was able to receive temporary shelter and meals (which are heaping and delicious) which eventually led to a temporary housing unit at Warmland. The management and staff at Warmland are very helpful and caring and work extremely hard for their clients. In a short period of time I now have permanent housing and without the outstanding work and assistance of the Warmland staff I doubt it would have happened as soon and successfully as it did. I am forever grateful to management and staff there. Keep up the outstanding work you all tirelessly do. Thank-you and God bless!"

-Doug M.

Client and Tenant Support Services

The main goal of Client and Tenant Support Services at Warmland House is to provide support to the community of individuals using the services at Warmland House. Support is primarily in the areas of client safety and harm reduction, mental health, financial and legal aid, acquisition of identification documents, housing, life skills, physical health and hygiene, social or cultural connections, training, and employment. Tenant Support has the additional task of helping tenants transition out of Warmland House's transitional apartments and becoming landlord-friendly. Support services are available to homeless individuals within the Cowichan Valley, who can access the services on a drop-in basis.

Cold Weather Shelter (EWS)

Warmland House is sanctioned by BC Housing to initiate the cold weather shelter during periods of winter weather that threaten the health and safety of homeless individuals. When merited, established provincial protocols are initiated and up to an additional 15 shelter spaces are made available. The 2022-2023 program ran from October 2022 to March 28, 2023. We have returned to pre-Covid levels, now that our restrictions are reduced.

EWS Stats	<u>Post-COVID</u> <u>2022-23</u>	<u>COVID</u> <u>2021-22</u>	<u>COVID</u> <u>2020-21</u>	<u>pre-COVID</u> <u>2019-20</u>
Nights Activated	127	79	115	121
Bed Usage	1453	488	626	1590
Male Guests	852	375	554	969
Female Guests	601	113	72	621

Emergency Shelter Occupancy

Persons seeking night-to-night shelter report to the office beginning at 6:00 a.m. to be placed on the Warmland Shelter List. This provides a chance to secure a bed at the 5 p.m. sign-in time. Individuals are waitlisted after the 30 beds are allocated. If an individual doesn't show up at the 5 p.m. sign-in, they forfeit their bed and those waitlisted take the space. Night Shelter clients are given dinner, access to showers, and a bed to sleep in safely.

The capacity for the shelter bed for 1 year based on 30 beds a night for 365 days is 10,950.

<u>Shelter Stats</u>	<u>2022-23</u>	<u>2021-22</u>	<u>2020-21</u>	<u>2019-20</u>
Shelter Bed Usage	10,835	9,595	8,022	10,949
Male Guests	8,976	8,450	6,542	8,846
Unique Male Guests	200	236	188	247
Female Guests	1,858	1,125	1,480	2,103
Unique Female Guests	99	97	70	121
LGBTQ2S+	1	20	0	0
Unique LGBTQS+ Guests	1	4	0	0

Moving Forward Program



Our Moving Forward program supports clients to move from a nightly shelter bed to becoming a tenant in our Bunkhouse or studio apartments and/or to one of our leased apartments within the community. This program utilizes a strengths-based approach, is flexible and fluid, and responds to each person’s unique circumstances and needs.

This program is not free. Working with BC Housing, tenants sign a ‘lease’ with CMHA-CVB and pay subsidized rent. In addition, tenants are responsible for their food costs. Some choose to volunteer in the kitchen to gain food vouchers for the month, as per the Peer Support program.

Working collaboratively with outside community agencies, health services, housing, educational programs, and in-house client support services, the plan is modified and adapted to support individuals in their personal goal achievement.

“Warmland has helped me in the following ways. They have got me off the streets. Helped with job security, supported with healthy food options and supports are here for my personal goals’

-John

“After walking the streets for 4 days with a graveyard job, I showed up with nothing.... I booked in as a shelter client at Warmland House. I talked to the support staff and expressed that I worked graveyards and the night to night shelter didn't work for me. Carey the Tenant Support Coordinator offered me a spot in the bunkhouse where I could lay my head down to sleep in the day. I now live in a transitional subsidized apartment, working 2 jobs and saving money to get back on my own two feet”

-Dennis

Peer Support Program

Three areas of Warmland House Shelter where tenants, from the Moving Forward program, can engage and support the facility and clients include:

Kitchen – Some of our tenants assist kitchen staff with food preparation, service, dishwashing, and cleaning. This program allows tenants to gain experience and confidence in the kitchen, develop time management skills, and become team players. Each volunteer is rewarded with a monthly meal card allowing them to eat breakfast and dinner at the shelter at no additional cost.

Laundry – Tenants assist with facility laundry services (blankets, towels, scrubs, etc.) most days. This allows shelter staff more time to meet the needs of other clients. This program allows tenants to fill their days with meaningful tasks and give back, in addition to providing experience, accountability, and responsibility.

Garden – Some clients enjoy spending their time outdoors in the garden at Warmland House. In addition to growing vegetables in their garden plot, some of our tenants volunteer to cut the lawn, weed, and water.

Transitional Market Housing

Support services are a part of Warmland’s commitment to client transition and moving forward. CMHA-CVB has several sub-leased apartments in the community. Clients are placed in these units as they become available, usually after a successful progression through the Moving Forward Plan. In many cases, men and women have moved through the various housing options and programs at Warmland Shelter including shelter space, the bunk-house, an apartment, and eventually market housing.

Housing and outreach staff work diligently during the initial months of tenancy to ensure a smooth transition for both landlord and tenant. Many of our clients would struggle to maintain housing without this additional support. Over time, we are often able to gently pull back as clients settle in and develop routines. This program allows clients the opportunity to develop a reference, and the opportunity to take over the lease themselves. Landlords often provide Warmland with a new suite to rent to start the process with an additional individual.

Submitted by Melissa Middlemiss, Manager - Warmland Services

Volunteers: Strengthen Impact

Other than the Coldest Night of the Year event held in February, the primary volunteer activity was taking care of the Warmland Gardens.

Myself, Butch, Krista, and Currie were the four non-resident volunteers in the Warmland garden. Steve was a part-time, non-resident volunteer. Peter, Chris, and Stuart were resident volunteers. We also had residents Deana and Dylan take on a vegetable plot each.

Peter was a great help. He planted and maintained the circular planting in the courtyard, kept the vegetable garden watered, and harvested the vegetables for the residents and kitchen. Chris was a big help with the cleanup of the old greenhouse area. Steve dropped in only occasionally, but when he did volunteer, he worked hard. Stuart took on the design and landscape of the flower beds and containers. Deana started out planting several vegetable plots, and when she left, we all carried on with her plantings. Dylan had a plot that he planted and maintained for the full season.

As non-resident volunteers, Butch, Krista, Currie and I spent 2 hours in the garden every Tuesday morning. Butch kept up all the weed-whacking, Currie organized and maintained the compost, and Krista planted, weeded, and harvested (and drove from Ladysmith to volunteer with us!) This was my 4th year in the garden, Butch's 3rd year, Krista's 2nd year, and Currie's 1st year in the garden.

The new chef in the Warmland kitchen seems to want to be more involved and we are looking forward to a list of the vegetables he would like grown to use in the kitchen.

Collectively, the non-resident volunteers put in about 50 hours each for a total of 200 hours.

Submitted by Christine Pollard, Volunteer Coordinator

Coldest Night of the Year 2023



On February 25th, folks in Duncan joined thousands of others in 180+ cities across Canada in the Coldest Night of the Year (CNOY), a family-friendly, winter walk in support of people

experiencing hunger, hurt, and homelessness. The event is organized in partnership with the Blue Sea Foundation (another charity). Two walks - a 2km and a 5 km walk led participants through the streets of Duncan and North Cowichan; the walks ended at the Cowichan Community Centre with speakers, treats, and photo opportunities. With over 58 Teams, 255 walkers, 56 volunteers, and 25 Sponsors, the event was a success.

Our goal is to raise funds to create a safe space and programs for homeless youth in the Cowichan Valley. This is a multi-year fundraising campaign. This event added \$68, 776.29 to our total.



coldest*night
OFTHEYEAR.ORG

Thank You #CNOY23 Sponsors



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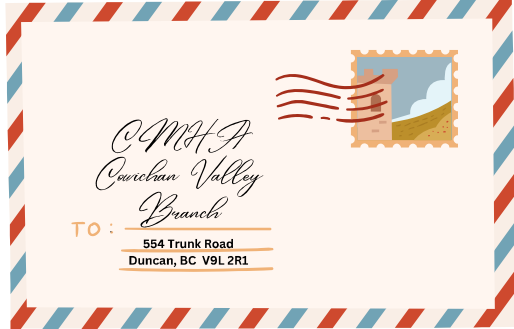
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