

Maintaining the Course During Challenging Times

2021-2022 Annual Report



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Our Vision

The Distress Centre of Ottawa and Region plays a key role in establishing a community where individuals in need are supported and empowered to meet life's challenges.

Our Mission Statement

Working within the continuum of mental health services, the Distress Centre of Ottawa and Region contributes to a healthier and safer community by providing suicide prevention, crisis intervention, psychological stabilization, emotional support, information, referral and education services, without judgement, to individuals in need.

Our Guiding Principles

The Distress Centre of Ottawa and Region (DCOR) is committed to:

- **Recognizing the outstanding volunteer workforce that delivers the core of its services.**
- **Protecting the confidentiality of all clients.**
- **Ensuring access to its services 24 hours per day, 7 days a week.**
- **Access to its services being free-of-charge for individuals residing in the geographic areas covered by DCOR.**
- **Evolving its services to meet the changing needs of the community.**
- **Being accountable to the community it serves and reporting regularly on current needs, gaps in services and emerging trends.**
- **Transparency, accountability and diversity throughout the organization.**
- **Leadership and excellence.**

2021-2022 Board of Directors

Susan Padmos, President

Nitika Rewari, Vice President

Frank Cestnik, Treasurer & Chair/Finance Committee

Marija Cemna, Secretary

Peter Donnelly, Past President

David de Launay

Fatymah Dido

Gordon Hill

Elie C. Labaky

Juliet McMurren

Jaime Morse

César Ndéma-Moussa

HIGHLIGHTS!

This was a particularly busy year for our Board of Directors. In addition to working on developing a new strategic plan for the next three years, following a virtual retreat, our Directors were involved in the development of several policies related to the collection, storage, usage and deletion of personal information. The Privacy Statement, Service Terms and Conditions Statement, and Complaints Policy have now been implemented. ♦ Terms of Reference were developed for the Equity, Diversity and Inclusivity Committee to guide its focus. An ambitious project to review all Distress Centre policies with an equity, diversity and inclusivity lens started at year end. We expect this task to continue well into the next fiscal year. ♦ In an effort to gain a better understanding of our volunteers, the Board of Directors commissioned a volunteer survey to be repeated annually. Information obtained through this survey will allow the Distress Centre to better focus its future recruitment and training efforts.

President's Message



Looking back over the last year, the resilience and flexibility demonstrated by the staff and volunteers of the Distress Centre of Ottawa and Region is a great source of pride. In addition to Covid-19, as a community we faced the occupation of downtown Ottawa, a huge windstorm that knocked out power for thousands of people and have reflected on the legacy of residential schools after the discoveries of graves last summer. Despite vaccinations and public health measures, new variants and rising case numbers meant that COVID-19 has been very slow to loosen its grip. As I write this in June, there is more optimism that we will soon be back to some kind of normality but the consequences for mental health are far from over. Earlier this year, the Canadian Mental Health Association (CMHA) reported that 80% of Ontarians expected a mental health crisis when the pandemic is over. And mental health services will have challenges in keeping pace with the demand, making the role played by the Distress Centre in supporting community mental health even more important.

Our Responders were there to answer just under 60,000 calls supporting communities over a geographic area that includes not only Ottawa and the surrounding region but other parts of Ontario, parts of Québec, Nunavut, and the Northwest Territories. Our online crisis response provided text and chat from 10 am to 11 pm every day. Leaders on our Crisis Intervention Team were there on call 24/7 to intervene and support our Responders as needed. We also continued to provide other services such as the Wellness Check Service and Counselling Connect.

We are at an all time high in terms of our roster of volunteers – a testament to the willingness of members of our community to give of their time and energy but also to the work of our staff who have recruited and trained 113 new Crisis Line Responders in 2021-2022.

Behind the scenes, we have made progress on our Equity, Diversity and Inclusivity strategy through a review of key policies with an EDI lens. New Strategic Priorities have been developed to take us from 2022 to 2025, focussing on our volunteers, our technology and expanding our outreach into the communities we serve. Through strong partnerships with our funders, we have made it through the pandemic with a strong financial situation. Even though COVID-19 limited our capacity for fundraising events, the community supported us with donations providing additional flexibility in managing our operations.

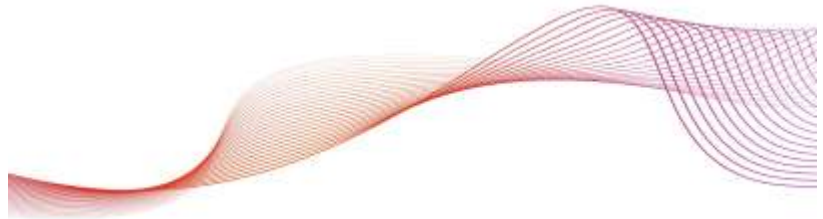
We were sorry to lose Shannel Rajan as a Director in June 2021 as she moved to the Greater Toronto Area and took on other personal responsibilities. Shannel led the work to improve our policy framework on protecting privacy and redeveloped our Police Record Check policy to make it more inclusive. Jaime Morse resigned from the Board in October – we will miss the important Indigenous perspective she brought to our discussions. We are happy to welcome Juliet McMurren and Marija Cemna to the Board – in their first year, they have each made important contributions. And Peter Donnelly took on a different role in 2021, ending his term as President after 4 years but continuing his contribution as Past President.

President's Message (cont.)

One of the lessons from the pandemic is that looking ahead can be a risky endeavour, but we can say with confidence that we will continue to be here to listen and to support mental health in the community.



Susan Padmos
President, Board of Directors
Distress Centre of Ottawa and Region



Community Builder Award

On the morning of October 5, United Way East Ontario honoured outstanding individuals across the region for their contributions during times of crisis.

Included in the celebrations was a special Community Builder Award (CBA) presented to more than 100 different people and organizations, including the Distress Centre. The surprise CBA was given to a group of social service organizations, government officials, businesses and volunteers for their collaborative response and support of our region's most vulnerable people during the pandemic.

This group was known as the COVID-19 Community Response Table. They came together at the beginning of the pandemic to support individuals who were impacted by this unprecedented event. The Community Response Table looked at how to support people during their time of need. Their contribution had a significant impact on the lives of individuals and families across East Ontario.

The Distress Centre is humbled to have been a member of such a dedicated and caring group of individuals and organizations. Thank You!



Congratulations, Charles!

Congratulations on your Community Builder Award and thank you for all your efforts to make our communities a better and safer place for all. It was a great pleasure to recognize you and your fellow recipients at the "This is Community" event yesterday. We hope you enjoyed the celebration!

Thanks again for taking the time to celebrate East Ontario's community builders and local leaders in such a special way. We couldn't have done it without you!

The Distress Centre in a Nutshell



We are the people who are here, day or night, 24/7, to answer voice, chat and text interactions from those who are reaching out for help. Clients may have simple questions. Or they may be in crisis. Either way, with 216 volunteer Responders answering more than 59,000 interactions a year with support from a Crisis Intervention Team of 18 Leaders, we provide an integral, important and vital service in the community.

Who counts on us? At any given time of day or night, people out there require our help. Whether they're depressed, lonely, overwhelmed or so distraught they're contemplating suicide, they will find a supportive and caring person at our end of the line. People of all ages, races, genders and social-economic groups call our confidential service, trusting that we'll always be here. And that's a trust we will simply never betray.

Who do we count on? Our volunteer Responders and Leaders. We couldn't do what we do without them. Although they come from all walks of life, they do have some things in common - they give not only their time, but themselves. Patient, understanding and giving, Distress Centre Responders are trained to listen, talk through concerns or provide community resource information. They are supported by a team of dedicated Leaders who are ready to step in when a client is in danger, making the necessary decisions when an intervention is needed, or to provide a listening ear for debriefing following a challenging interaction. In other words, whatever is needed, our Responders and Leaders are there.

What else do we do? Considered a Leading Practice by the Health Standards Organization, our staff provide a telephone outreach service offered to patients who were recently discharged from hospital following an admission or a visit to the Emergency Department for a mental health issue to (1) ensure they are functioning well, (2) have made necessary connections with both formal community resources and informal support networks and (3) have been able to follow their discharge plan.

Transit users in Ottawa are able to speak with a Distress Centre Responder if they are in crisis or are feeling suicidal while using the transit system. A special button on pay phones located at various transit platforms and stations allows direct access to our Responders.

We also provide training, not only for our own volunteers, but for other groups as well, including colleges and universities, social service agencies, businesses, government departments and police staff. Our professional trainers, renowned for their expertise and knowledge, have trained on topics as diverse as conflict management, communication skills, stress management, suicide prevention, crisis intervention and more.



Where can you find out more? Visit www.dcottawa.on.ca

2021-2022 Distress Centre Staff

ADMINISTRATIVE STAFF

Charles Laframboise, Executive Director

Ivie Edebiri, Wellness Check Coordinator

Jessica Grunwald, Manager of Volunteer Selection & Engagement

Judy Grunwald, Director of Corporate Services

Chantal Ladouceur, Director of Client Support and Educational Services

Alyssa MacDougall, Online & Educational Support Coordinator

Leslie Scott, Manager of Media, Marketing and Communications

Emma Worrell, Volunteer and Client Support Coordinator

SERVICE SUPPORT WORKERS

Angela Accettura, Nawal Araji, Gurjeet Ashluwalia, Daphne Bailliu-Chaloux, Alexandre Belisle, Marie Josee Chabot, Angela Felker, Liam Gareau, Sarah Gostlin, Mélanie Guénette, Kendra Hawkins, Devin Lachaine, Chloé Landry, Lydie Masengo, Rebecca Nagrodski, Tessa Natale, Christine Patry, Aaron Plowman, Sarah Romeo, Natalie Triemstra, Casper Watras

ONLINE CRISIS RESPONDERS

Megan Fillier, Heather Fisher, Owen Freiheit, Lydie Masengo, Kristina Montone, Faith Mottahedi, Aaron Plowman, Valérie Quinn

WELLNESS CHECK SPECIALISTS

Angela Accettura, Marie Josee Chabot, Kendra Hawkins, Lydie Masengo, Rebecca Nagrodski, Aaron Plowman

SERVICE ASSISTANTS

Megan Fillier, Kyle Johnson, Stefanie Oppenheimer, Casper Watras



Welcome to our Team!



Hi Everyone! My name is Emma Worrell. I am so pleased to be the Distress Centre of Ottawa and Region's new Volunteer and Client Support Coordinator.

I am very passionate about mental health and non-profit work, and I believe the dedication the volunteers and staff have put into this organization over the years, and especially this past few, to be simply inspiring.

I grew up in the Simcoe County region and moved to Ottawa nine years ago for school and loved it enough to stay! I completed a Bachelor of Psychology with a minor in Neuroscience and Mental Health at Carleton University and then followed that with a post-graduate certificate in Victimology at Algonquin College. Before joining DCOR, I spent two years working on the frontline at a non-profit in supportive housing for formerly homeless individuals.

In my spare time, I enjoy playing The Sims, doing spin bike classes, and keeping my three-year old cat (Tim) entertained. I'm looking forward to continuing growing and learning in my role, and hopefully meeting many more members of our DCOR community in person!



I'm Alyssa MacDougall, and I've recently taken over the role of Online and Educational Support Coordinator here at DCOR.

I grew up on beautiful Cape Breton Island and you might hear a little East Coast in my voice when we meet in person. I moved to Ontario to do graduate work after completing my BA in New Brunswick, and eventually began working in student services here in Ottawa. Now, I live just across the river in Québec with my partner, two talkative cats and a jungle of houseplants. I like hiking, knitting and canoeing in my spare time, and I'm excited to attend stand up comedy now that the world is beginning to reopen!

I think the work we do here is meaningful and important, and I'm grateful for the opportunity to help you help our community. I'm looking forward to meeting you when we're finally back to working in person, but in the meantime, please reach out and say hello!

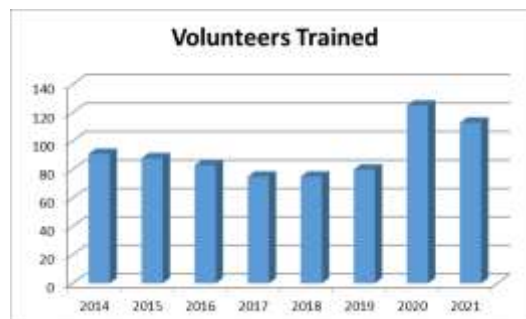


Volunteer Responders and Leaders: People from all Walks of Life

Our volunteer Responders and Leaders come from all walks of life. They share a common interest in helping others who may be in distress. Without these dedicated people, there would be no Distress Centre. Our Responders are available to the callers any time, even when other resources are closed.

Responders help callers work through their concerns. Many times, a listening ear is all that is needed. Responders use active listening skills to empower help seekers to handle their own situations. They can also provide clients with information on a variety of community resources. In times of crisis, Responders can always count on Crisis Intervention Team Leaders to provide guidance and support, and to debrief following a difficult interaction.

Potential volunteers are screened for their suitability and, if accepted, complete 60 hours of training. The most fundamental part of the training includes instruction in active listening skills, using techniques such as reflection and clarification. Since the beginning of the pandemic, the training has also included a modified curriculum on suicide intervention. Experienced volunteers who wish to become Leaders receive an additional 5 hours of training to prepare them to deal with the most challenging situations and make crucial decisions when emergency services need to be contacted.



Equity, Diversity & Inclusivity at DCOR

During the past year, the Distress Centre continued to move forward with the implementation of its strategy on Equity, Diversity and Inclusivity (EDI). DCOR's EDI committee finalized its Terms of Reference before reviewing the EDI Implementation Plan. An important aspect of this plan was the review of DCOR policies with an EDI lens. A Policy Review Working Group was struck to work with DiversiPro to 1) modify DCOR's policy writing process and 2) to begin the review of some of DCOR's policies. This latter task will extend well into the next fiscal year.

APR 2021

EDI Committee Terms of Reference adopted.

JUN 2021

EDI Committee reviews Implementation Plan for feasibility.

NOV 2021

DCOR retains the services of DiversiPro to work with DCOR's Policy Review Working Group to review some of DCOR's policies, with an EDI lens.

MAR 2022

EDI Committee proposes a strategy to address racism experienced by Responders during the provision of service.

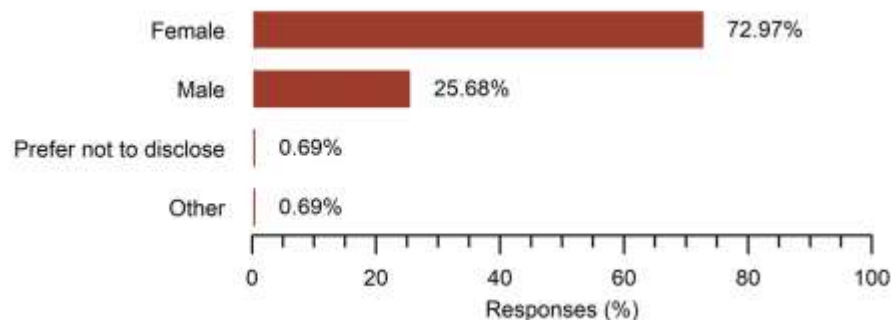
Responder Survey 2021

In May 2021, the Distress Centre surveyed its Responders (Volunteers and Staff) to learn more about the people who are answering interactions at DCOR and build on the information gathered in our Volunteer Satisfaction Survey from 2019. As our community changes, we want to understand how our Volunteer base reflects the population around us. A total of 148 Responders took part in our initiative.

Some participants took time to provide us with suggestions to open-ended questions on how we can improve what we do and we received valuable feedback on our technology, training opportunities, and more. We look forward on continuing to improve how we support our volunteers as they serve our community in need.

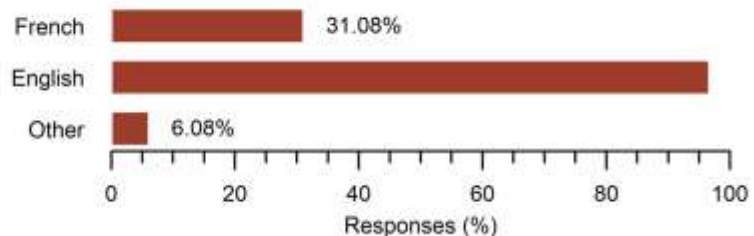
Following are some of the results of our survey:

What is your gender?

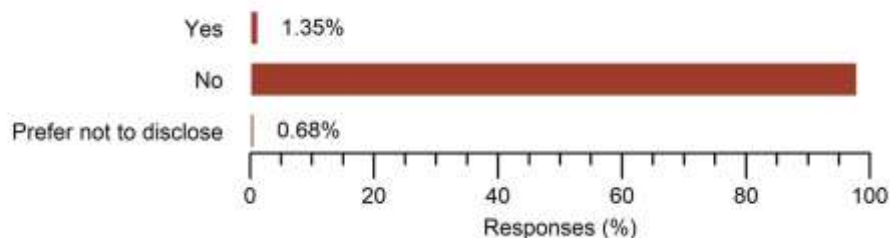


What languages do you speak?

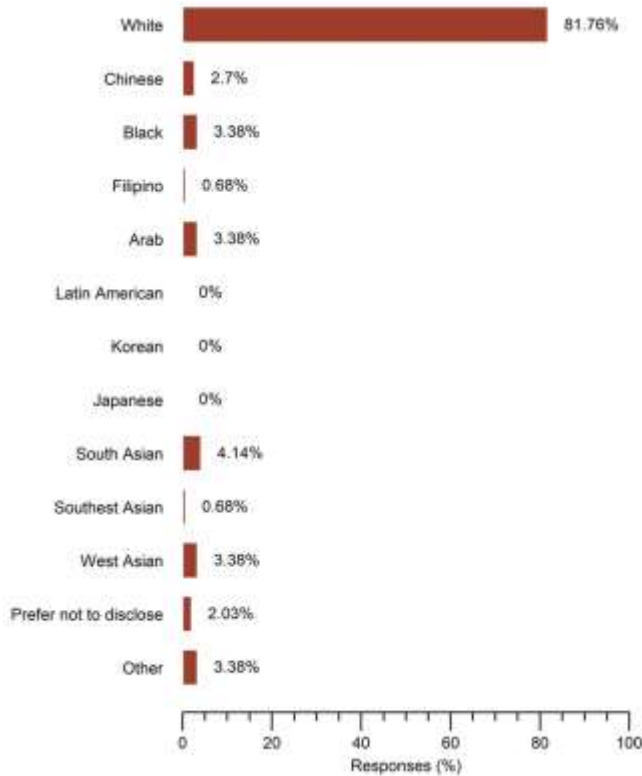
*Other languages include Afrikaans, Arabic, Aramaic, Cantonese, Farsi, German, Russian, Slovenian and Somali



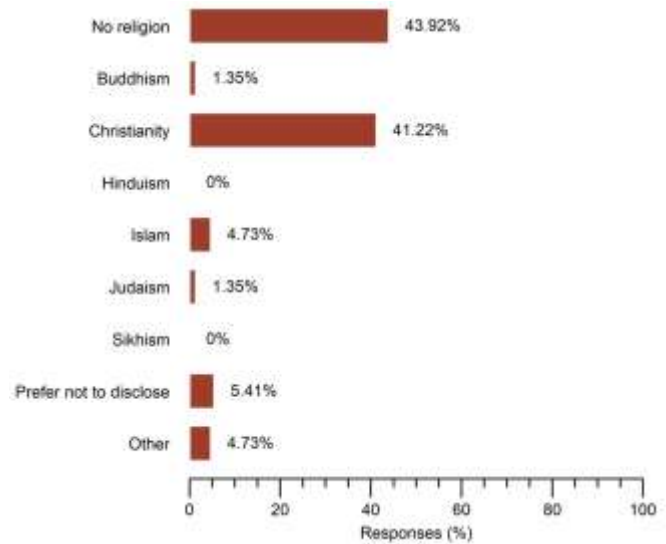
Are you a newcomer in Canada?



What is your ethnic background?

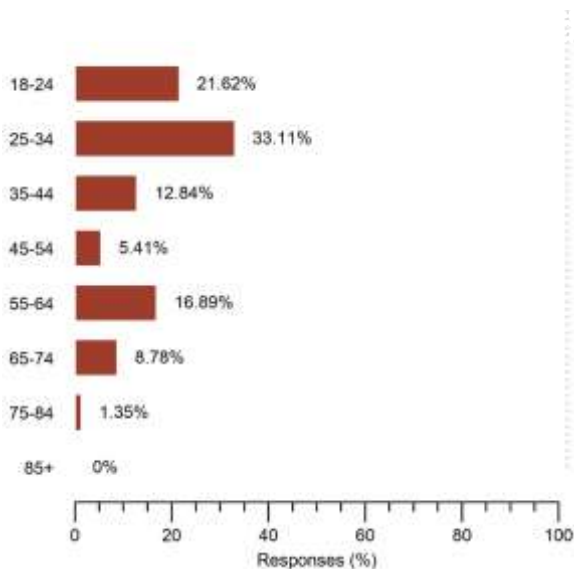


What is your religion?

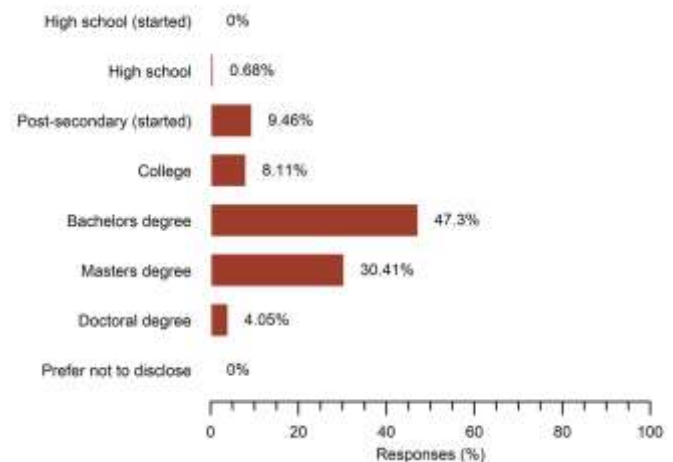


The Distress Centre's Responder Survey is a new initiative intended to be conducted on an annual basis to gather information about the people who volunteer and work for our organization.

What is your age?



How much schooling have you completed?



"The strength of the team is each individual member. The strength of each member is the team." – Phil Jackson

2021-2022 : Service Highlights

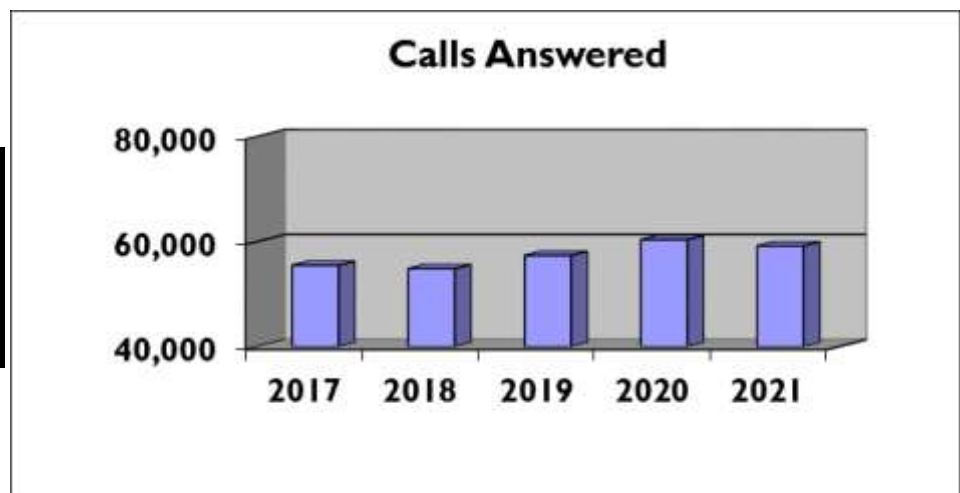
The Ottawa Distress Centre has answered nearly 1.5 million calls for help in its fifty-three years of service to the community. The Centre provides a variety of community services to the residents of Ottawa, the Renfrew County, the United Counties of Prescott and Russell, the United Counties of Stormont, Dundas and Glengarry and Akwesasne Territory, the Counties of Grey and Bruce, the Nishnawbe Aski Nation, West Québec, the Northwest Territories and the Nunavut Territory.



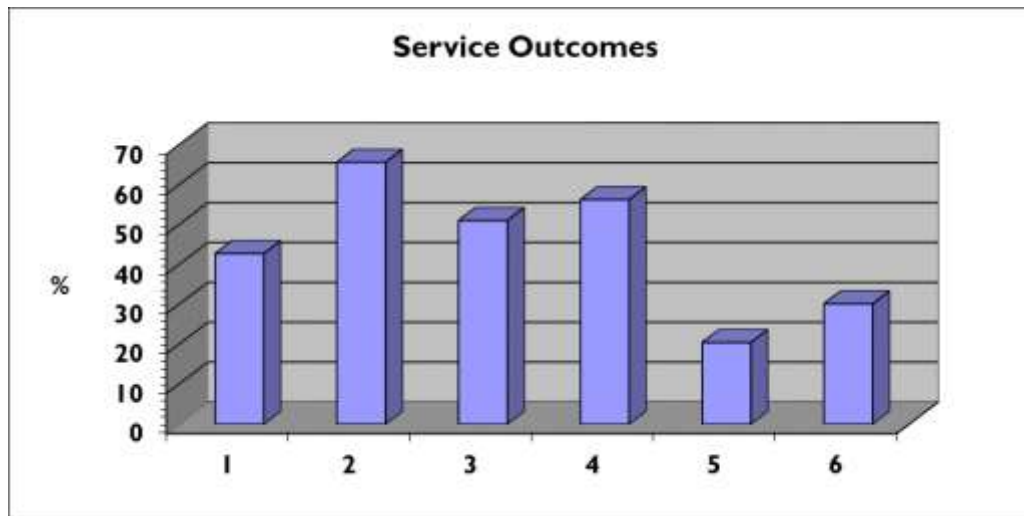
During 2021-2022, the Centre's Responders answered 59,186 calls. Even though the pandemic had impacted our lives for more than a year already, there were still 8 percent of calls which were related to COVID-19. Forty-six percent of callers were either in distress or in crisis. Thirty-five percent of people using our services had done so for the first time. More than 53% of callers were women. More than 72% of callers were between the ages of 25 and 54. Nearly 5% percent of callers were Indigenous, Métis or Inuit while nearly 6% were from multicultural communities.

59,186 CALLS FOR HELP

90% of clients who contacted the Distress Centre appreciated the service they received from our Responders.



The Distress Centre consistently offers a high-quality service to its clients through its various distress/crisis lines. During the past fiscal year, 90% of clients told us they appreciated the service they received from our Responders. As shown in the graph below, the Centre has a tremendous impact on the lives of the people it serves.

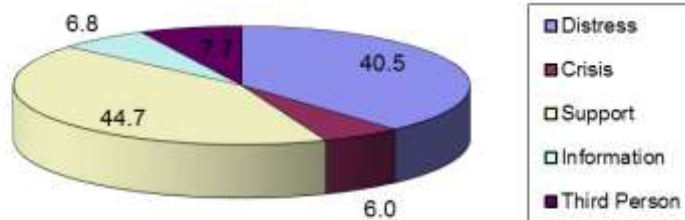


65.7% of clients experienced a decrease in isolation and loneliness following their call to the Distress Centre.

- 1 Action Plan Explored
- 2 Decrease in Isolation and Loneliness
- 3 Decrease in Distress/Anxiety Level
- 4 Increase in Ability to Cope
- 5 Increase in Knowledge of Resources
- 6 Increase in Self Care Coping Strategies



Major Types of Calls



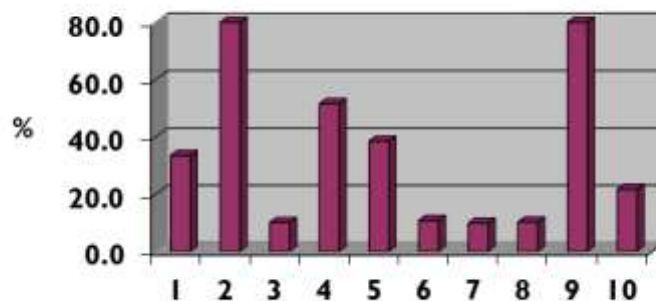
During the past year, **46%** of clients who contacted the Distress Centre were either in distress or in crisis.

Service for All

From April 1 to March 31, services were provided to 4,554 youths between the ages of 16 and 24, as well as 12,189 adults between the ages of 55 and 74.

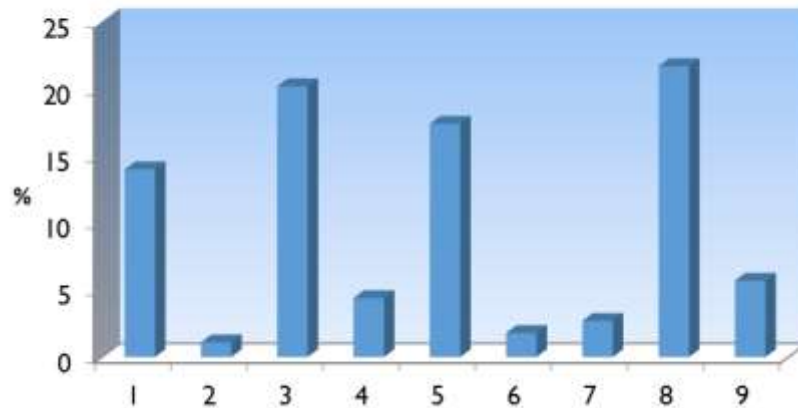
82% of clients who contacted the Distress Centre in the last 12 months were dealing with relationship issues.

Presenting Issues Addressed



- 1 - Suicidality
- 2 - Mental Health Issues
- 3 - Abuse / Violence
- 4 - Isolation / Loneliness
- 5 - Physical Health Issues
- 6 - Housing / Shelter / Food / Clothing
- 7 - Financial
- 8 - Legal
- 9 - Family / Relationships / Spouse / Partner
- 10 - Substance Abuse / Addictions

Diagnostics



- 1 - Anxiety / Panic Disorder / Phobias
- 2 - Eating Disorders
- 3 - Mood Disorder
- 4 - Personality Disorder
- 5 - Schizophrenia / Psychotic Disorder
- 6 - Sexuality
- 7 - Sleep Disorder
- 8 - Substance Addictions
- 9 - Developmental Disability

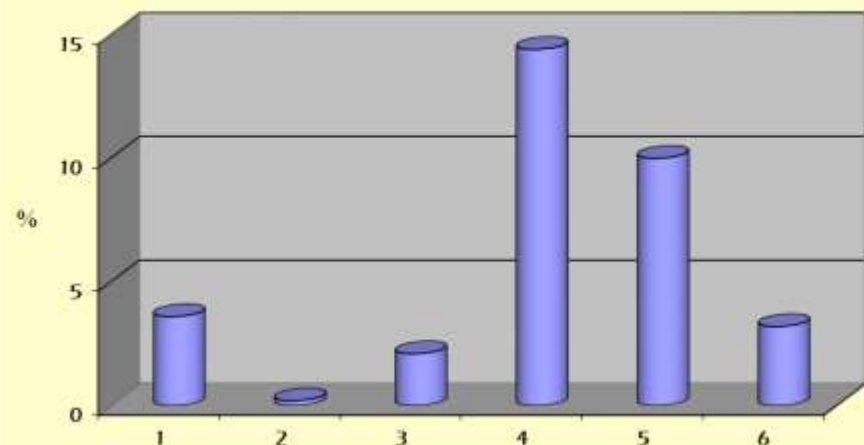
Community Referrals

In the past year, 11,743 referrals to our community partners were provided by our Responders to clients who were in need of additional assistance and support.

Transfers to Crisis Teams

In 2021-2022, our Responders transferred 3,323 clients directly to the appropriate local Mental Health Crisis Team where more help was provided to them.

Suicide Prevention/Intervention



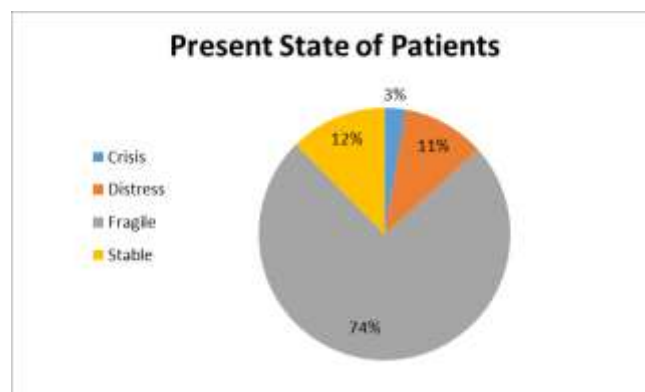
- 1 - Self Abuse / Harm
- 2 - Attempt Commenced
- 3 - Moderate to High Risk
- 4 - Ideation
- 5 - Prior Suicidal Behaviour
- 6 - Survivor of Suicide

Suicide remained an important source of concern during the pandemic. A total of 9,818 calls were answered by our Responders from clients who experienced suicidal thoughts and / or behaviour during this difficult time.

Wellness Check Service: One Call at a Time

The Wellness Check Service is a telephone outreach service offered to patients who were recently discharged from hospital following an admission or a visit to the Emergency Department for a mental health issue to (1) ensure they are functioning well, (2) have made necessary connections with both formal community resources and informal support networks and (3) have been able to follow their discharge plan. It is the only service of its kind in Canada. Considered a Leading Practice by the Health Standards Organization, the Wellness Check Service has been identified by Accreditation Canada as a standard for hospitals to implement. The service is available in the City of Ottawa, the County of Renfrew, and the United Counties of Stormont-Dundas-Glengarry, for patients from the Cornwall Community Hospital, Hôpital Montfort, the Ottawa Hospital (Civic and General campuses), the Pembroke Regional Hospital and the Queensway Carleton Hospital.

**2,019 PATIENTS CONTACTED IN THE PAST YEAR FOLLOWING
A VISIT TO THE HOSPITAL FOR A MENTAL HEALTH ISSUE**



18% of patients expressed
current suicidal ideation

30% of patients were in treat-
ment for a mental health issue

Specialists explored an action
plan with 48% of patients

75% expressed appreciation
for their Wellness Check Call



Chat & Text Service: Online Support

On November 2nd, 2020, the Distress Centre of Ottawa and Region introduced its new Online Crisis Services (Chat and Text options) to the general public. These services allow us to support members of our community through the means of chats or texts, in addition to voice interactions. Individuals of all ages residing in the Ottawa Region are now able to chat/text with trained Online Crisis Responders. The services are available everyday from 10:00 a.m. to 11:00 p.m., and can be found on our website: www.dcottawa.on.ca

- For Chat services: Click on the icon found at the bottom right of our website
- For Text services: Contact 343-306-5550



**From November 2, 2020 to March 31, 2022,
2,892 Ottawa residents reached out for help from
DCOR Responders via chat or text**

Age		Gender		Client Status		Content	
0-17	2.6%	Women	51.8%	New	61.4%	Support	19.7%
18-34	40.1%	Men	16.5%	Occasional	26.9%	Distress	68.5%
35-54	17.1%	Other	1.2%	Repeat	9.6%	Crisis	3.7%
55+	1.5%	Unknown	29.0%			Third Party	6.8%
Unknown	36.4%					Other	7.6%

Counselling Connect: By Phone/Video

Counselling Connect provides quick access to a free phone or video counselling session, available in English and French. An individual chooses a convenient date and time. This service is for everyone: children, youth, adults and families in Ottawa and the surrounding area. There is no waiting list.

Counselling Connect services are provided by more than a hundred counsellors of diverse backgrounds and experience including Indigenous communities, African, Caribbean and Black communities, other racialized communities, and LGBT2SQ+ communities. Their perspectives and approaches bring a lot of value to individuals in need.

**During the past year, DCOR Responders
referred 2,434 individuals for Counselling
Connect sessions**

Lasting Impact of COVID-19

One year into the pandemic, our Responders are seeing important changes in the interactions they're having with clients. At this point in time, we're starting to see the long term effect that COVID-19 is having on the people we serve.

COVID-19 continued to be an important source of anxiety for individuals with 8 percent of clients reporting issues related to the pandemic. The number of people who contacted the Distress Centre with mental health issues increased by 9 percent from 2020-2021 to 2021-2022, with more than 20,000 being in treatment while more than 5,000 reported undiagnosed symptoms of mental health.

Nearly 32,000 clients reported living with heightened stress and anxiety levels, a 20 percent increase over the previous year. The number of individuals reporting living with post traumatic stress disorder increased by more than 57 percent while the number of people reporting issues of self abuse or self harm increased by more than 50 percent. More than 3,700 clients were referred for counselling by our Responders, with 2,434 people scheduled for Counselling Connect's virtual sessions.

More than 32,000 clients lived with heightened stress and anxiety levels. 2,148 individuals reported issues of self abuse or self harm. 2,803 people reported living with PTSD.

During the past year, 8,492 DCOR clients reported living with suicidal ideation.

With regard to suicidality, DCOR Responders experienced an increase of nearly 11 percent in clients considered to be at moderate to high risk of suicide, an increase of more than 17 percent in people reporting suicidal ideation, and an increase of nearly 30% in interactions from survivors of suicide.

Addictions were also on the rise over the previous year, with a 17 percent increase in drug addictions, a nearly 200 percent increase in gambling addictions, and a more than 76 percent increase in sex addictions.

Addictions were on the rise over the previous year of 2020-2021.

DCOR clients reported struggling with financial, housing and relationship issues.

Distress Centre clients have struggled with the fallout from the pandemic. The number of individuals reporting living with financial issues increased by more than 17 percent with an equal increase in percentage for people reporting issues with their housing or shelter situation. The number of homeless clients contacting the Distress Centre increased by more than 45%. DCOR Responders reported

an increase of nearly 47 percent in referrals related to housing or shelters. Nearly 21,000 clients reported having relationship issues when contacting DCOR Responders and nearly 6,000 individuals struggled with loss (e.g. job, purpose, etc.).

The long-term impact of the pandemic on the population was much more evident during the past year. DCOR Responders and Leaders often experienced more complex situations during their interactions with clients. The Distress Centre will continue to work with its community partners to ensure that its clients receive the support that they need during these difficult times.

Nunavut Kamatsiaqtut Help Line

Since 1990, the Nunavut Kamatsiaqtut Help Line has been the first point of public access for confidential telephone support for Inuit and other Northerners who are in crisis or simply need a listening ear to talk about personal problems. It provides quick and efficient toll free telephone access 24 hours / 7 days per week in English, French and Inuktitut for screening, assessment, information, emotional support, crisis intervention, suicide prevention and transfer/referral to emergency services when necessary.



During the past fiscal year, the Nunavut Kamatsiaqtut Help Line and the Distress Centre came together once again to build on the success of the multi-year initiative, funded by Health Canada First Nations and Inuit Health Branch, which was implemented from 2016 to 2019. This initiative allowed the partners to increase awareness of the Helpline amongst the Inuit population by upgrading its website, translating promotional materials in French and Inuktitut, expanding the capacity of the Kamatsiaqtut Helpline by hiring part-time staff at the Iqaluit and Ottawa sites, upgrading aging technology and call centre equipment at the Iqaluit site, conducting a volunteer recruitment campaign in Iqaluit, offering appropriate training opportunities for volunteer Responders, and continuing to implement a culturally appropriate promotional campaign for the Helpline in all Inuit regions. The impact of this initiative helped increase the number of calls to the Helpline from 250 calls per year in 2016 to nearly 1,000 calls in 2020.

With funding from Indigenous Services Canada, this new initiative aimed, in part, at enhancing the Nunavut Kamatsiaqtut Help Line's capacity by continuing to upgrade technology and equipment so that their volunteer Responders can continue to answer calls for help from all Inuit and Northerners living in the region of Nunatsiavut, the region of Nunavik, the Nunavut Territory and the Inuvialuit Settlement Region. By working together, we were able to develop a recruitment package and conduct a volunteer recruitment campaign in Iqaluit, to train more Iqaluit volunteer Responders in the *Applied Suicide Intervention Skills Training*, to update the Kamatsiaqtut Helpline website and Facebook page as well as translate the website into French and Inuktitut which will greatly improve accessibility, to implement a promotional campaign to continue raising awareness of the Helpline, and to conduct a visioning exercise which brought Nunavut Kamatsiaqtut Helpline Directors and volunteer Responders together in Iqaluit to initiate a new strategic planning exercise which will provide direction to the organization and its stakeholders as it enters the next phase of its development.

With funding from Indigenous Services Canada, this new initiative aimed, in part, at enhancing the Nunavut Kamatsiaqtut Help Line's capacity by continuing to upgrade technology and equipment so that their volunteer Responders can continue to answer calls for help from all Inuit and Northerners living in the region of Nunatsiavut, the region of Nunavik, the Nunavut Territory and the Inuvialuit Settlement Region. By working together, we were able to develop a recruitment package and conduct a volunteer recruitment campaign in Iqaluit, to train more Iqaluit volunteer Responders in the *Applied Suicide Intervention Skills Training*, to update the Kamatsiaqtut Helpline website and Facebook page as well as translate the website into French and Inuktitut which will greatly improve accessibility, to implement a promotional campaign to continue raising awareness of the Helpline, and to conduct a visioning exercise which brought Nunavut Kamatsiaqtut Helpline Directors and volunteer Responders together in Iqaluit to initiate a new strategic planning exercise which will provide direction to the organization and its stakeholders as it enters the next phase of its development.



Government of Canada
Gouvernement du Canada

Freedom Convoy



On January 29th, the Freedom Convoy rolled into Ottawa. Hundreds of vehicles joined by thousands of pedestrian protesters descended on Parliament Hill, initially to protest vaccine mandates but later evolved into a protest about COVID-19 mandates in general.

Protesters occupied the downtown core (and other parts of Ottawa) and refused to leave until all COVID-19 restrictions and mandates were lifted.

As in previous situations, United Way East Ontario led a community response by bringing organizations and affected parties together to listen to concerns and discuss options to move forward. Neighbours helped each other and looked out for each other by checking in on one another, buying groceries for those who couldn't, setting up buddy systems to walk through the crowds. At the Distress Centre, Responders and Leaders were provided with the latest information to share with people reaching out for help, referring help seekers to appropriate community partners or programs when possible. In many cases, people were simply looking for someone to talk to, someone who would listen to their concerns. From January 29th to February 21st, 1 in 4 people contacting the Distress Centre spoke about the convoy.

Some Testimonials

"I have phoned the Distress Centre a good many times and I have received a lot of very positive, helpful and constructive help. I am putting my life back together after a schizophrenic break and it's been a long process but the Distress Centre has become a valuable source of support and help for me. I just wanted to phone and say thanks for all you've done for me. It's been a real help. You've done a lot more good than you know."

Distress Line Client

"Being a former volunteer and employee of the Distress Centre, I am fully convinced that, operationally and procedurally, this agency can provide the most efficient service to special populations. The volunteers who work in this setting are rigorously selected and trained to an extent that no other agency can boast. The callers who call this line are in the most qualified and competent hands this community has to offer."

Registered Social Worker

"Please pass along a word of thanks to the young woman who I spoke with last week. I am confident that I would not be here today if I had not made that phone call. Things are still difficult, but I am sure that this call saved my life."

Crisis Line Client

Fantastic! I've gone through a great deal of training in my life and this program was definitely among the best in all fields.

Responder Training Graduate

Community Support for DCOR

The Distress Centre is very fortunate to be able to count on the community at large to raise additional funds for its operations. Throughout the year, various organizations, large and small, run a variety of events during which they name DCOR as its recipient charity. During the past fiscal year, Harmonic Generation, Kake Girl and Adult Fun Superstore reached out to their supporters to raise nearly \$2,700 for the Distress Centre. We are extremely thankful for the level of effort that went into each event to raise funds on our behalf.

50/50 Cash Raffle

The Distress Centre held its first official 50/50 Cash Raffle from November 15th to December 13th. Using the platform Rafflebox, DCOR ran this online campaign which brought in \$7,570 in total ticket sales (6771 tickets were sold to 213 ticket purchasers). Our lucky winner was quite happy to know that he had won \$3,785 just before the Holidays. We look forward to hosting another 50/50 Cash Raffle in the near future.

Bingoland Gaming Centre

Bingo halls and gaming centres are bouncing back from their closures during the pandemic. The Bingoland Gaming Centre has now completed its renovations and implemented changes required by the gaming industry as it has now moved to an electronic format. The Distress Centre was very fortunate to be the recipient of \$10,965 which will help cover expenses related to DCOR's volunteer support program.

Thank You to our Donors!

On behalf of our Directors, our volunteers, our staff and our clients, we say "Thank You" to our numerous donors who have continued to support the Distress Centre time and time again since the beginning of the pandemic. As we faced uncertain times, our donors were quick to reassure us that we could count on their generosity to ensure that our services could be maintained for everyone who needed a listening ear during their time of need.

Whether our donors responded to a call for donations through Facebook, Twitter or Instagram, participated in a community event with DCOR as its recipient charity, or responded to a CanadaHelps advertisement, the kind gestures to DCOR are truly humbling. The donations provided to the Distress Centre will help our organization plan a new course of action as we emerge from this pandemic a changed hybrid entity ready to tackle the next phase of its evolution.

Enhanced technology, modified training modules, advertising to new communities, volunteer recognition efforts are all part of our future initiatives and we can thank our donors for making this possible.



THANK YOU
FOR YOUR SUPPORT!

2021-2022 Summarized Financial Statements

Financial summary for the year ended March 31, 2022

Revenue

Mental Health Crisis Lines	\$809,722
Distress/Help Lines	308,549
COVID-19 Response	125,571
Emergency Support Line for Paramedic Service	29,999
Ottawa Transit Crisis Service	78,294
Wellness Check Service	136,282
Nunavut Kamatsiaqtut Help Line Project	95,000
Individual and Corporate Donations	90,655
Professional Development Training	13,300
Fundraising Events	29,769
Interest Income	8,573
Special Grant	4,958
Bingo	<u>10,965</u>
	<u>1,741,637</u>

Expenses

Salaries, Benefits and Professional Development	\$1,188,137
Administration, Audit and Professional Fees, Dues and Memberships and One-Time Expenses	25,575
Volunteer Recruitment	64,119
Technology, Telephony	98,541
Insurance	10,614
Rent	109,844
Volunteer Program	9,049
Fundraising	498
Nunavut Kamatsiaqtut Help Line Project	95,002
Consultations (Equity, Diversity, Inclusivity and Human Resources)	<u>25,723</u>
	<u>1,627,102</u>

Excess of revenue over expenses prior to amortization **\$114,535**

Amortization (18,138)

Excess of revenue over expenses for the year **\$96,397**

(audited financial statements are available upon written request)

Thank You for Your Support!

The Board of Directors wishes to thank all our funding partners that have supported us throughout the year. Your contribution is greatly appreciated. We look forward to working with you in the future.





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