

2021-2022

Annual Report

SUPPORT, RESPECT, CHOICES



Ongwanada

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President's Message

It has been nearly 40 years since I first took on the office of President of the Board – initially to complete the term for Gerry Pryal and then to serve one of my own. That was a time of upheaval and change – change that brought about benefit for those that we serve and learning for all of us. The intervening years saw a continuous process of change and benefit and that continues today. Change isn't always, in itself, necessarily a good thing, but if we learn from it then we can still benefit.

We recently went through the process of a review with Accreditation Canada and I am pleased to say that we received the status of Accreditation with Commendation. That level means that we achieved 98% of the standards that they look for. Hearty congratulations to the whole Ongwanada organization for its extraordinary level of excellence and a sincere thank you to the staff who facilitated the review – a job very well done. Whether you work on the front line, fix the broken faucets, ensure that the bills get paid, or contribute to the overall effort in any other way – the excellence that is Ongwanada is because of everyone's dedication.

One of the effects of the pandemic, that we are still struggling through the dying phases of (we hope!), is that it first shut down our day programs – then caused us to re-think how we deliver them. Through the process we learned a lot – as we always do – and it became clear that, even without COVID-19, there were things about the delivery of those services that could be improved and new, imaginative, techniques developed. I am pleased to say that we have now engaged “People Minded Business” to facilitate consultations on the delivery of day programs. The project – “Re-imagining Day Programs” is exploring new ways to support people with developmental disabilities during the day time. There is no shortage of ideas, and an organized process of assessing and combining them will help us to implement even more steps forward for those we serve.

Ongwanada seems to be constantly in some process of construction or another – a reflection of our ever-evolving service delivery. Another effect that COVID-19 had was to illustrate an aspect of our service delivery that needed attention – the issue of shared bedrooms. Seven homes were identified where extra bedrooms could be provided, addressing issues of health and privacy. Construction is now underway at four of those homes and we hope that funding for the other three will become available soon.

In the 2021/22 year Ongwanada purchased #3 Cassidy Street, a property that can be remodeled to provide living space for a number of young adults with DD. Working with the Ministry and various local partners, Ongwanada expects to develop a program that will support youth with DD, who aspire to live independently, to transition into that mode and achieve their dreams.



That leads me to recall another way in which staff came up with creative solutions to the restrictions imposed by the pandemic. Many trips were arranged (respecting social distancing requirements, etc.) to places like greenhouses, apple orchards, Wheelers Pancake House, etc., and special guests did visit the residences from time to time. One such special guest can be seen making his annual visit in the photo shown here. He brought joy with him wherever he went.

Just like last year, this one was full of challenges, triumphs, disappointments, tears, and joy. I look forward to much of the same as we move ever forward.

Many thanks,

Roy Smith

PRESIDENT, ONGWANADA BOARD OF GOVERNORS



CEO's Message

The past year has been one of resilience and hope. Resilience as the organization continued to manage its way through the second year of the pandemic, ensuring that the people we support and our staff were kept safe. And hope that, as restrictions under which we have been operating for the past two years are slowly eased, we can look forward to a world that comes closer to the world we left in March 2020.

In spite of the pandemic challenges, the organization has had some notable accomplishments over the past year.

Work commenced on three Operating plan objectives resulting from our strategic plan review:

•Re-imagine and redesign day programs to increase community participation, natural friendships and personal choice

•Develop an admissions, transfer, discharge/placement process for supported individuals that is inclusive of stakeholder input

•Take an active role in improving communication between stakeholders

The organization also had a successful Quality Assurance Measures (QAM) and a successful Accreditation Canada review, resulting with the award of Accreditation with Commendation from the latter.

Ongwanada purchased a property at 3 Cassidy Street in Kingston and is working with the City of Kingston, Community Living Kingston and District, One Roof and the Ministry of Children Community and Social Services to develop a program to support youth with developmental disabilities who aspire to live on their own. These Transitional Aged Youth will be accommodated at 3 Cassidy Street for up to two years, where they will learn life skills allowing them to live on their own. From there they will move into semi-independent living and eventually into an independent living environment. Funding for building renovations at 3 Cassidy Street to support this program has been provided to Ongwanada from the City through the Canada Mortgage and Housing Corporation Rapid Housing Initiative.

Supply-chain issues have hampered renovations to reduce our double bedroom occupancy, planned for seven homes, resulting in only four of the seven getting underway this year. The remaining three renovations will be completed over the current year. Once all seven are completed, we will have reduced the number of people supported living in double-occupancy bedrooms from 34 to 12.

Long-planned renovations to bathrooms at three homes were also undertaken in the past year, providing the residents with the infrastructure needed to optimally care for their bathing needs now and in to the future.

The Omicron variant of the virus, in particular, has had a significant impact on our ability to optimally staff the organization, with staff being required to isolate for various periods of time. Many agencies across the province have had similar staffing challenges. We had the good fortune and the ability to address staffing pressures in part by accommodating three of our community residences in three classrooms at the Resource Centre for a period of time, thereby reducing the number of staff required. Residents from the three homes lived at ORC for a period of 6 weeks in January/February 2022 with the on-site kitchen at ORC being used to prepare meals.

Because of the pandemic, operation of the X-Ray department had been suspended for almost two years. The board took this opportunity to evaluate the department and made the difficult decision to permanently cease its operation.

The organization has also been active in education and research pursuits; many front-line staff were offered the opportunity to participate in Autism education sessions led by Mr Neil Walker, Director of Education and Capacity Building at Kerry's Place.

Further, a research initiative designed to explore the interests, ambitions, and life goals of adults with developmental disabilities called "Voice and Choice" was undertaken in partnership with Queen's University. Assistive Augmentative Communication, that is communication devices, systems, strategies, and tools that replace or support natural speech, was used to understand what is meaningful to individuals with developmental disabilities, their families and service providers and to determine the preferred means of communication for adults with developmental disabilities, for many of whom natural speech is a barrier.

In addition, we embarked on an initiative to determine the utilization of the health care system resources in Eastern Ontario by individuals with developmental disabilities. These data will provide information that can be used to explore ways that developmental services and health care can work together to improve care for individuals with developmental disabilities.

An arm of the two foregoing initiatives is a scoping review being completed by a Queen's PhD student to establish current best practice regarding end-of-life supports for people with developmental disabilities including means of communicating their end-of-life decisions.

Finally, work got underway to review the organization's by-laws and governance documents, to ensure compliance with the new Ontario Not-For-Profit Corporations Act, introduced in October 2021. Work on this initiative will continue over the course of the next year.

Lastly, I want to express my thanks to the people we support and their families, to our staff and to our Board of Governors for their support, understanding and efforts as we work together to propel the organization forward in these most challenging times.

Respectfully submitted,

Alastair Lamb
CEO, ONGWANADA



Over the Past Year

DAY PROGRAMS:

In 2021, Ongwanada engaged People Minded Business (PMB) to facilitate consultation regarding service delivery with Day Program stakeholders. The stakeholder sessions culminated in co-designing a pilot project aligned with emerging successful practices regarding day programs and MCCSS Developmental Services Reform.



QUEEN'S RESEARCH STUDY: VOICE AND CHOICE:

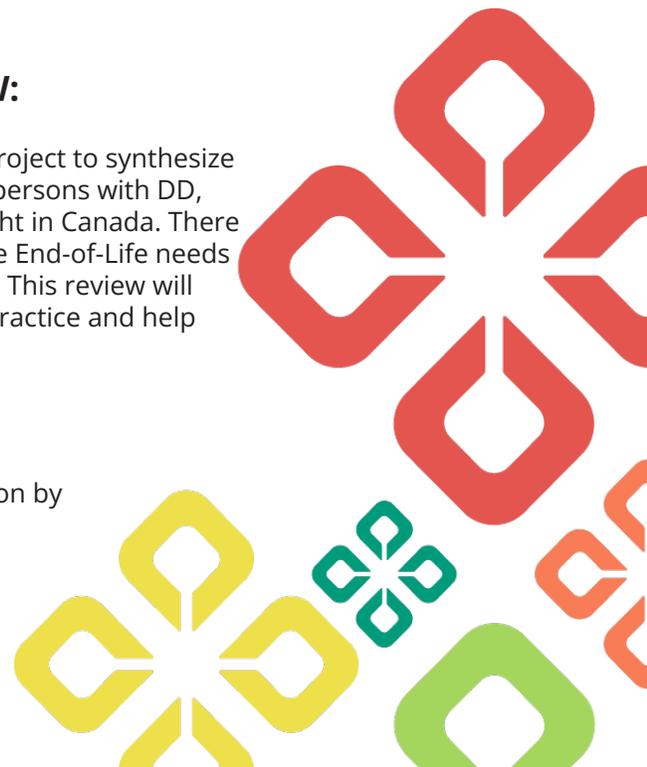
The Voice and Choice Project is a Participatory Action Research study with Queen's University designed to explore the interests, ambitions, and life goals of adults with DD and describe barriers to communication and meaningful social participation. Research objectives include identifying preferred means of communication using Assistive Augmentative Communication devices, systems, strategies, and tools that replace or support natural speech.

NEW INITIATIVE: END-OF-LIFE SCOPING REVIEW:

Ongwanada and Queen's University have initiated a research project to synthesize the nature and scope of evidence on End-of-Life strategies for persons with DD, equitable health care, including End-of-Life care, is a human right in Canada. There is a need to better understand how to facilitate and support the End-of-Life needs and preferences of adults who face barriers to communication. This review will identify concepts, theories and sources of evidence to inform practice and help preserve the wishes and dignity of adults nearing end of life.

PASSPORT PROGRAM:

People we supported came up with creative solutions to isolation by doing activities facilitated by Passport Funding.



Over the Past Year Continued

HOST FAMILY/ SUPPORTED INDEPENDENT LIVING:

Although housing continues to be a significant challenge, over 10 supported people moved into new homes during the past year. Caseworkers helped our supported people settle in to their new homes.

RESIDENTIAL SERVICES:

The first Covid -19 Outbreak in Residential Services occurred on November 19, 2021. On December 22, 2021 another Outbreak was declared; this was our longest, and perhaps most taxing Outbreak, persisting for a month. During this period, many staff, supported people, and families forfeited Christmas traditions to Covid-19. Deepest thanks to our residential and clinical home staff members who worked countless hours to ensure the health and wellbeing of our supported people.

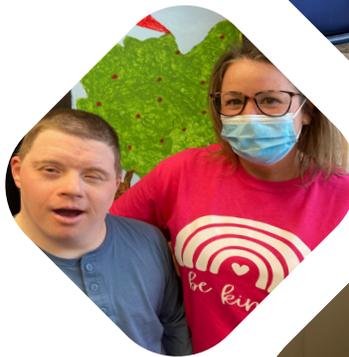
Our strength is founded in our common desire to support people with developmental disabilities. We are indebted to them and an extensive support team for continuing to step-up each day during these trying times.

OTHER HIGHLIGHTS:

Through a grant from Community Foundation Kingston we were able to provide IT support for people to use smart devices, allowing participation in virtual programming, learning how to use tablets, allowing greater communication with family and friends through the use of technology.

In April of 2021 a group of professionals presented at The Ontario Association on Developmental Disabilities highlighting our experience with virtual programming and the development of creative partnerships through the pandemic.

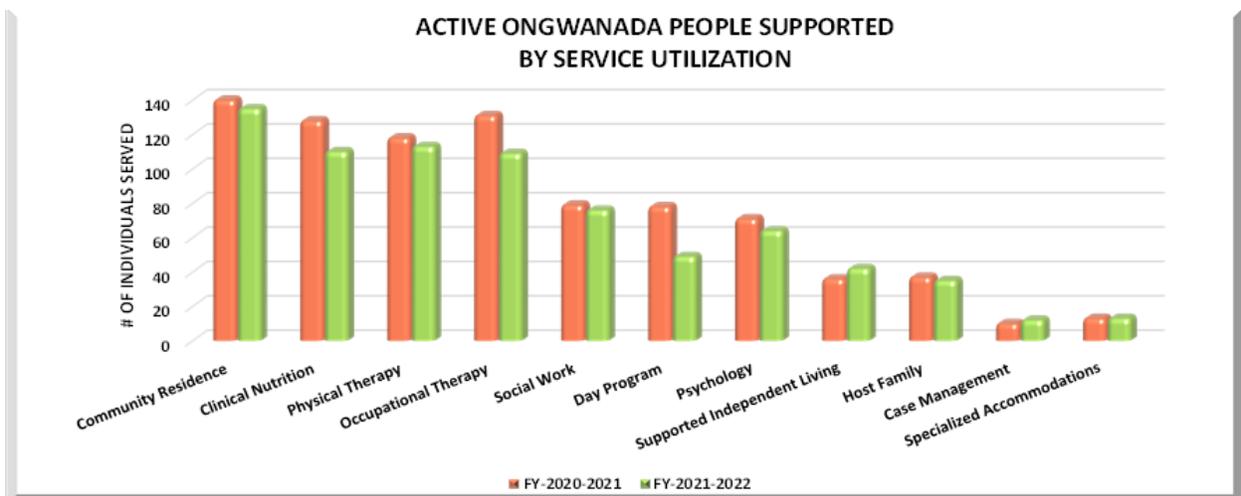
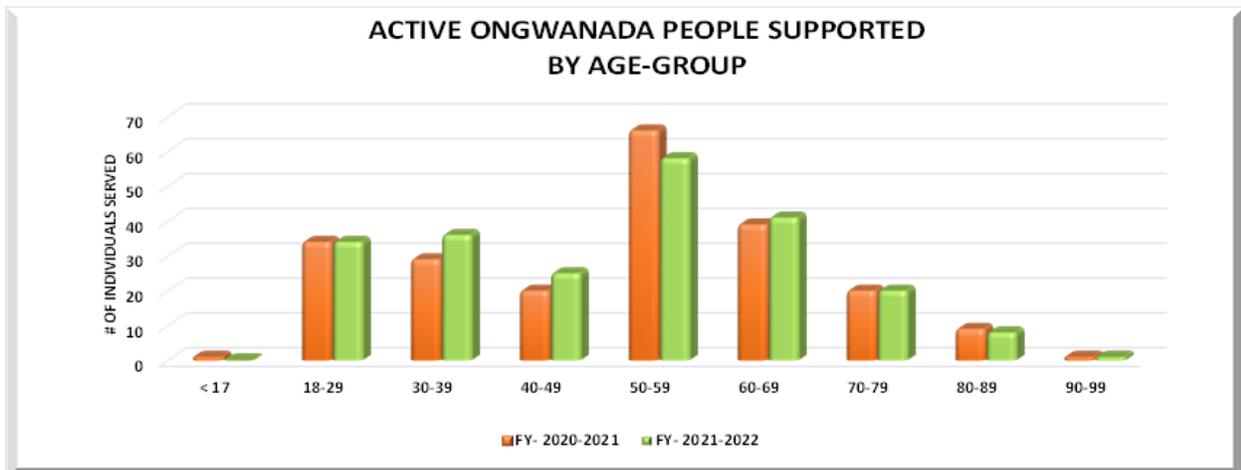
Through a partnership with EAF Kingston we were able to trial and subsequently purchase Taplts (Touch Activated Platform Interactive Technology), a wonderful resource for non-verbal people to be able to communicate.



The Breakdown

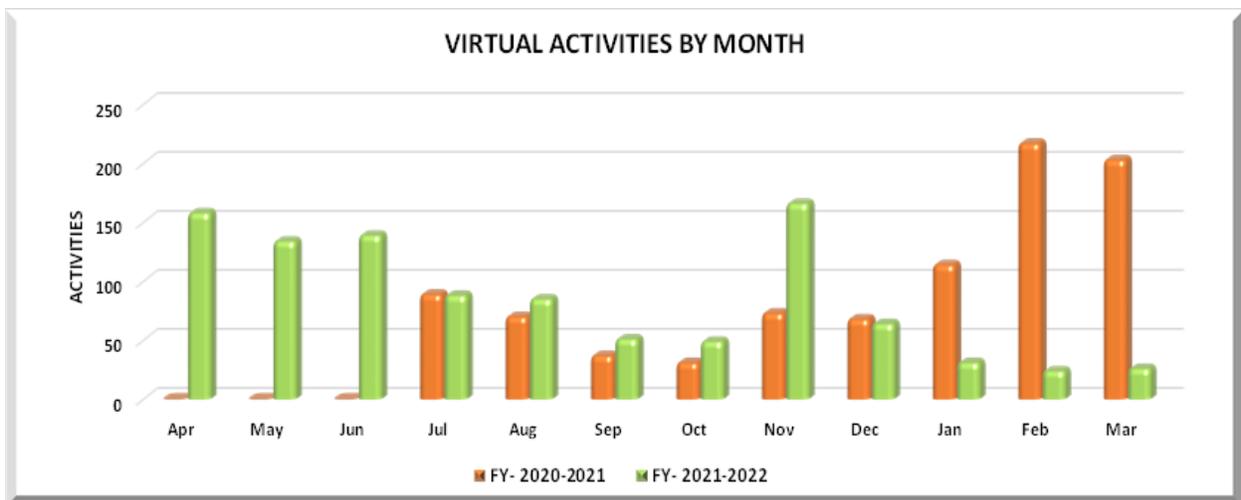
Ongwanada Supported People

Supported people who fall into this category include those who live in an Ongwanada residential or clinical home or those who are supported by Ongwanada’s Host Family and Supported Independent Living programs. Most of these people have an older age profile, with an average age of 51 years. The primary services used by this group are support-type services (clinical nutrition, Occupational Therapy, Physical Therapy, etc.). The provision of some of these services has been impacted by ongoing COVID restrictions. These restrictions also impacted the ability of people to participate in community-based activities. But, with restrictions relaxing, there has been increased opportunity for these activities to occur – this is particularly true with improving weather and opportunity for people to enjoy the outdoors. This has resulted in a decrease in virtual activities in which people participated when COVID restrictions were in place.



The Breakdown Continued

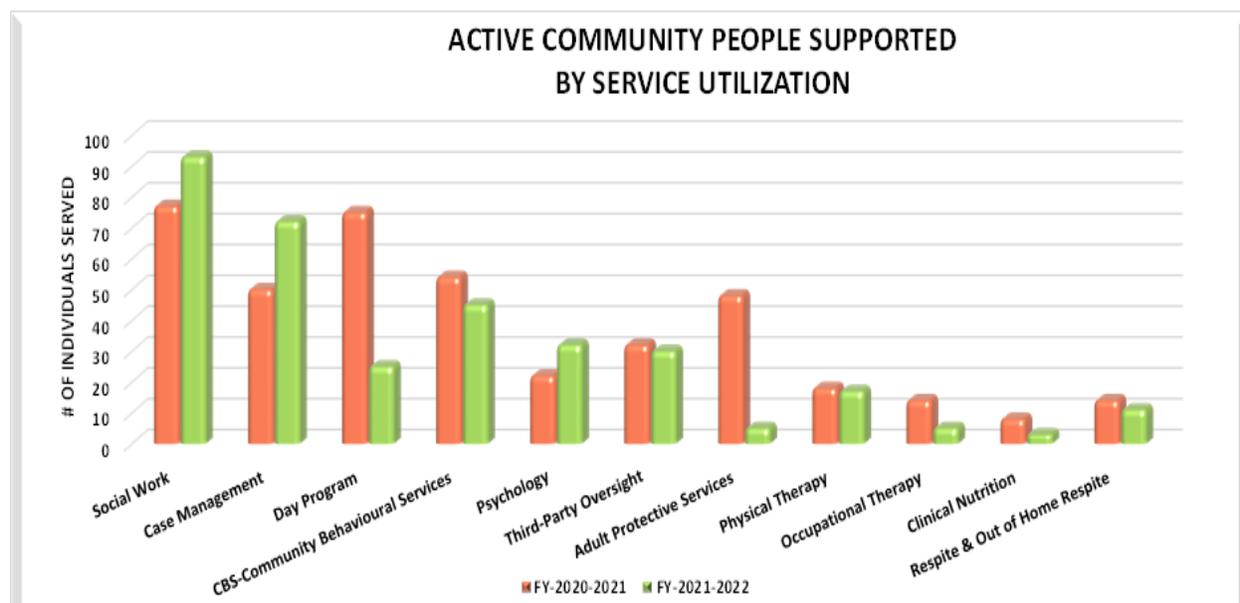
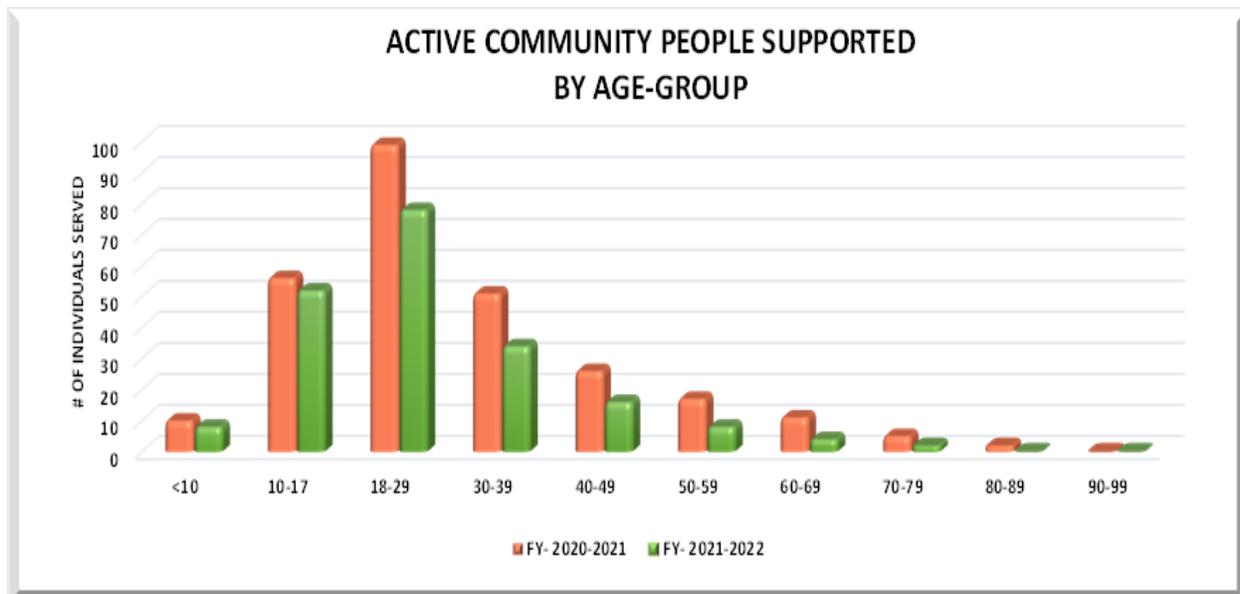
Ongwanada Supported People



The Breakdown Continued

Community Supported People

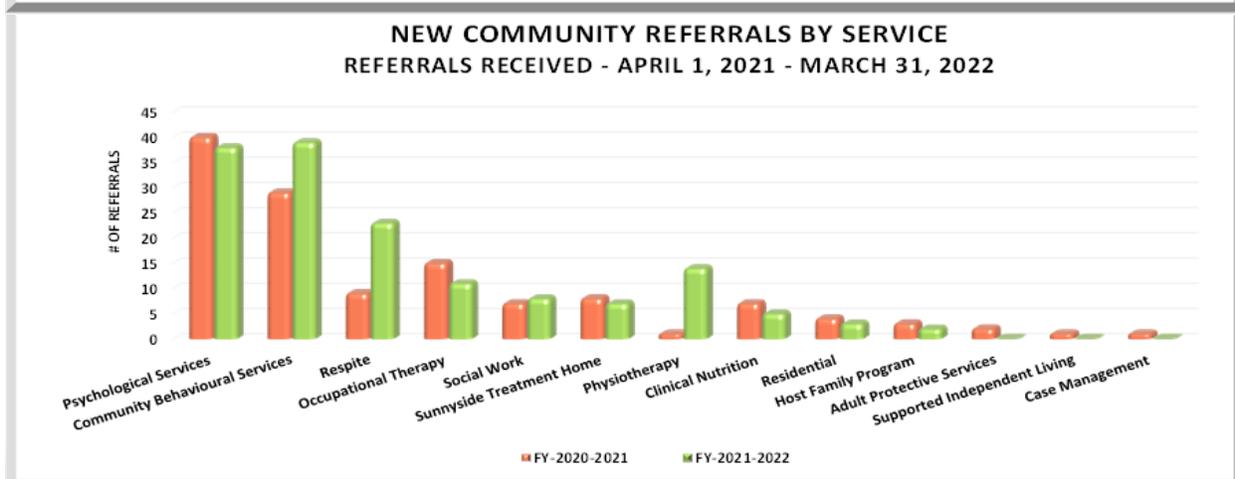
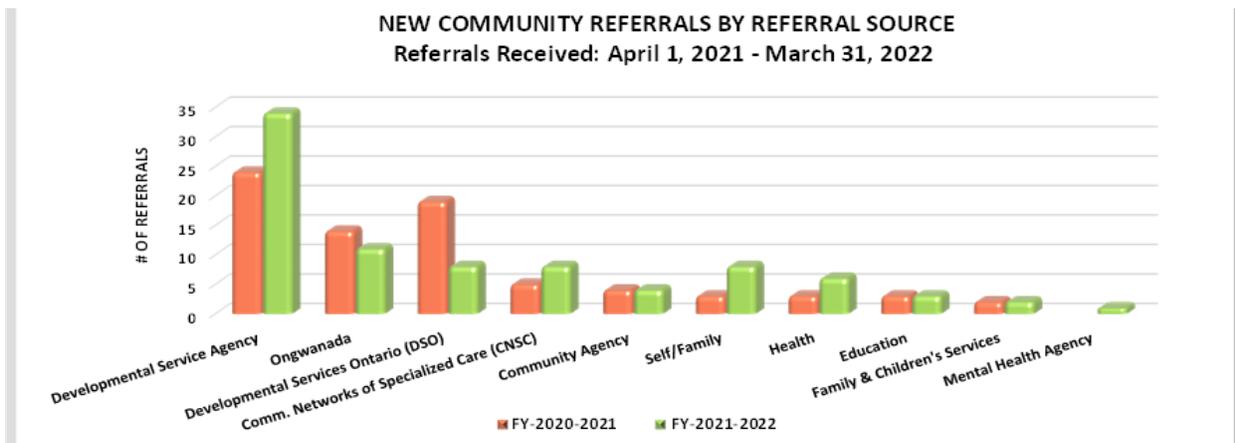
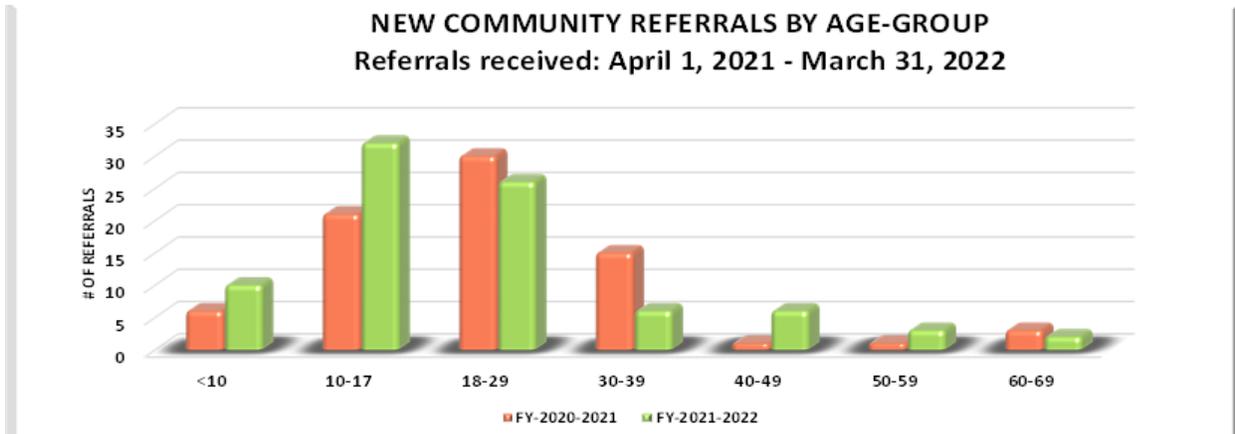
Community Supported people are individuals who live in the community, and receive some supports from Ongwanada. Many are of a younger age group, with an average age of 25 years. The primary services used by this group of people include Social Work, Case Management, Day Program and Community Behavioural Services. Some of these services, most notably, day program services, were affected by COVID restrictions and were closed for part of the year as a result. Also, responsibility for people seeking Adult Protective Services was transferred from Ongwanada to Counselling Services of Belleville and District, hence the significant decrease in numbers this year.



The Breakdown Continued

New Community Referrals

The majority of new community referrals for service were received from other developmental service agencies, located primarily in Frontenac, Lennox and Addington counties. Referrals are made mainly to Ongwanada Psychological Services, Community Behavioural Services and Respite Services.

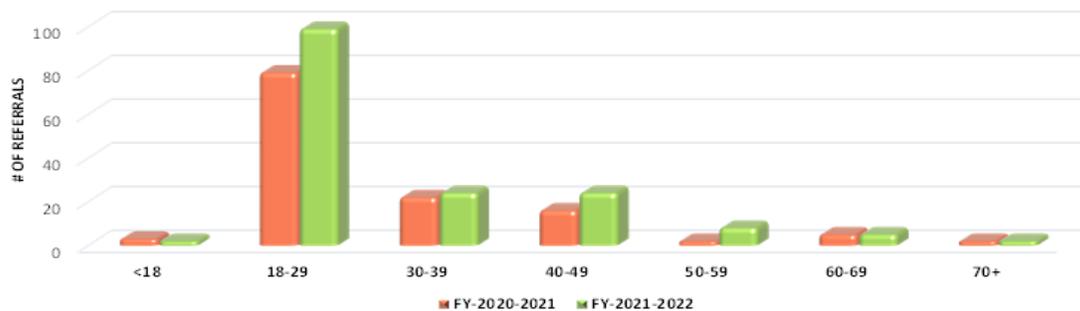


The Breakdown Continued

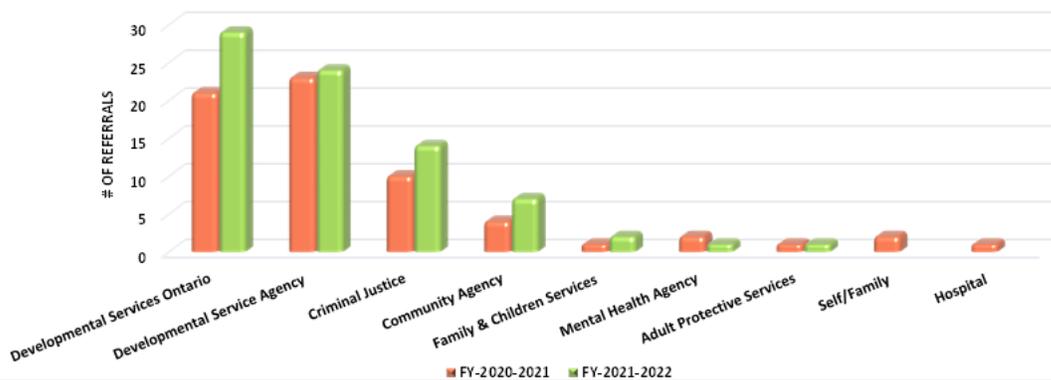
Community Network of Specialized Care

People supported through CNSC for the most part live independently supported in the community. They are of a younger age group with an average age of 27 years. Referrals to CNSC for Complex Case Management, Dual Diagnosis and/or Justice Case Management come from across the Eastern Ontario region from various agencies including Developmental Services Ontario (DSO), other developmental service agencies, criminal justice system, etc.. Referrals to CNSC have continued to increase significantly, despite the pandemic, with an increase of 27% or 35 cases, between 2020/21 and 2021/22.

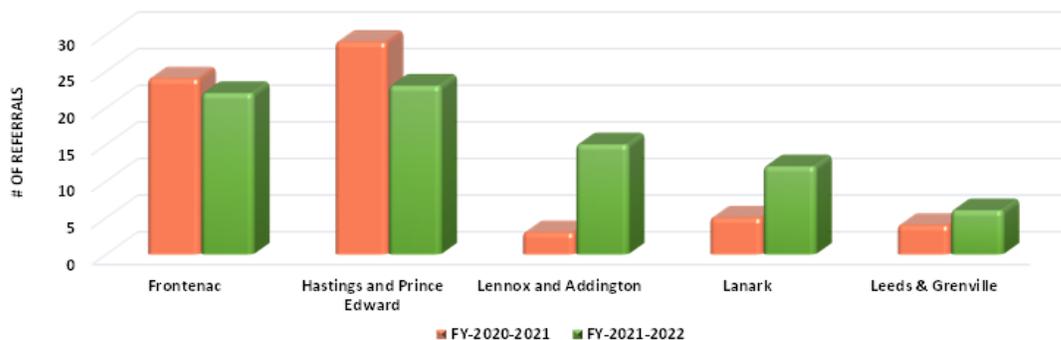
ACTIVE CNSC PEOPLE SUPPORTED BY AGE GROUP



NEW CNSC REFERRALS BY REFERRAL SOURCE
Referrals received: April 1, 2021 - March 31, 2022



NEW CNSC REFERRALS BY REGION
Referrals received: April 1, 2021 - March 31, 2022

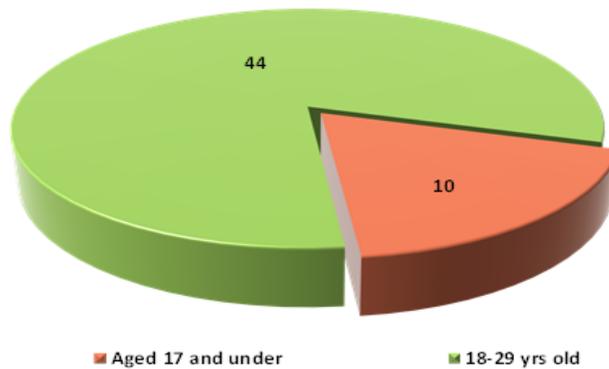


The Breakdown Continued

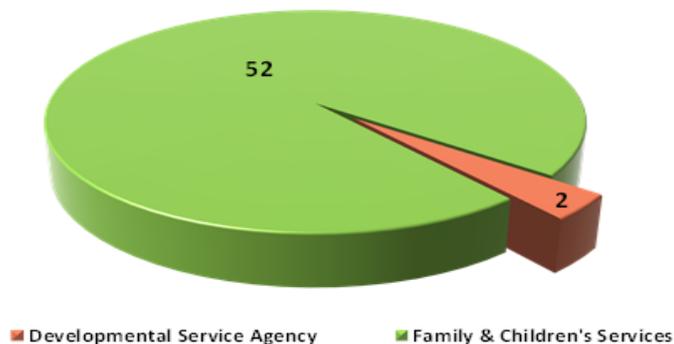
Transitional Aged Youth

Since 2019, Ongwanada has served as lead agency for the Transitional Aged Youth (TAY) program in the Southeast region. In this role, Ongwanada has overall responsibility planning for youth with developmental disabilities leaving child welfare services and entering adult developmental services. This includes working with child welfare and developmental service agencies to best align transitioning youth and planning partners. In 2021, this role expanded with Ongwanada managing TAY funding on behalf of the ministry and recruiting a Transitional Aged Youth Coordinator to support youth during the transition, working with child welfare and developmental service agencies.

NEW TAY REFERRALS BY AGE-GROUP
Referrals Received: April 1, 2021 - March 31, 2022



NEW TAY REFERRALS BY REFERRAL SOURCE
Referrals Received: April 1, 2021 - March 31, 2022



3 Cassidy Street

New Transitional Model

In the fall of 2020 MCCSS approached Ongwanada regarding the purchase of 3 Cassidy Street from St. Lawrence Youth Association. The purchase was finalized in May of 2021 and Ongwanada in dialogue with MCCSS and Community Living Kingston and District (CLKD) determined that the property would be utilized for a TAY program that would see the development of a new transitional model to better prepare youth for independent living.

A three-phase model for youth transitioning from children's services was developed, with a focus on those with complex special needs or who are leaving the care of child welfare into adult developmental services.

The model is geared towards youth who aspire to independent living but require additional support in order to acquire the necessary life skills and prepare them to live independently in the community.

Based on their need and skill-level, youth may enter the program at any phase and will transition between phases based on an assessment of their readiness to move to another level of support. The model for the program is detailed below:

Phase 1- Ongwanada

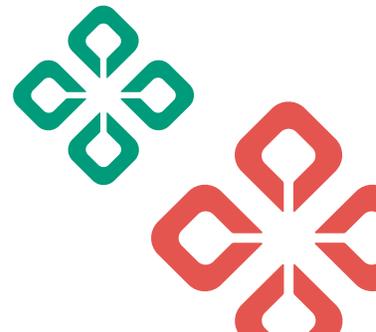
- Transitional (up to two years with exceptions based on individual needs) placement at a four-bed group home located on Cassidy Street for youth who aspire to independent living but whose level of complexity indicates a need for additional support to ensure their future success.
- Support includes 24-hour staffing to provide supervision and education of life skills
- Individuals will also have access to specialized clinical services

Phase 2- Community Living Kingston and District (CLKD)

- Through an expansion of CLKD's existing Compass program, transition-age youth will be supported to live in their own apartment secured by CLKD
- Currently exploring a partnership with Home Base Housing's Youth Services Hub
- In addition to life-skills, youth would receive support in using and accessing community services and planning to transition to more independent living.

Phase 3- Developmental Service (DS) Agencies- Ontario

- In collaboration with DS agencies across the region, youth will be assisted to a traditional supported independent living model as they transition to the community of their choice.



3 Cassidy Street Continued

Stabilization Beds – In addition to the four TAY beds located at Cassidy Street. Two short-term emergency beds (3 months) will also be available at this location to support individuals with Intellectual Disabilities at risk of homelessness ie.) due to placement break-down, etc.

With respect to funding for the project, Cassidy St. has been approved as one of four projects the City of Kingston has proposed to fund through the CMHC Rapid Housing Initiative (RHI). This funding will pay for all construction renovations required for the site. MCCSS is extremely supportive of this project and has committed to working with Ongwanada to assist with operating funds.

The initial phase of construction is to be completed by July 31/22- with 25% occupancy.

The final phase of construction is targeted for Oct 31/22 with the program in full operation.



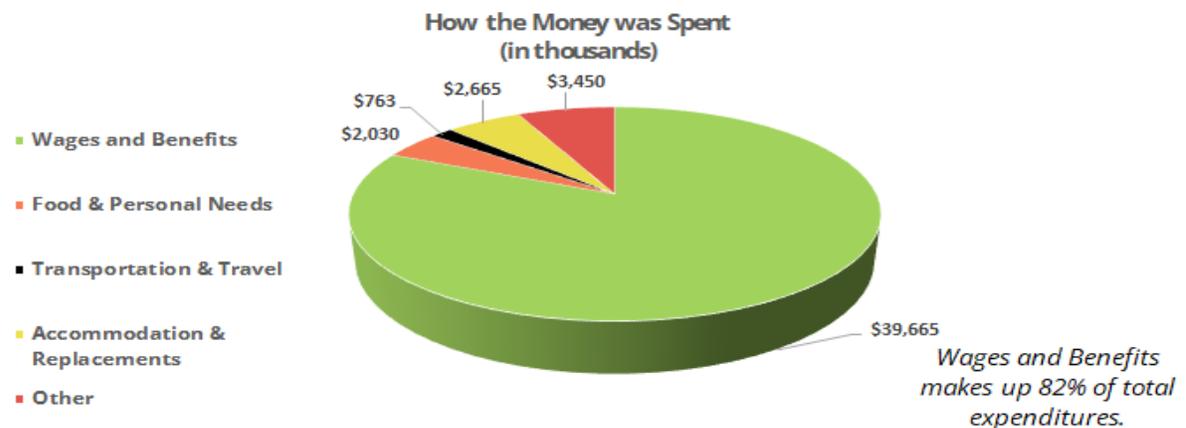
Financial Highlights

Unaudited 2021-2022

Total gross expenditure was up by 10.2% at \$48.6 million, largely due to increased salaries and benefits paid out for COVID and wage enhancement payments made to eligible staff as well as increased individualized funding payments for persons served. Fiscal funding from MCCSS increased by 12.6% to \$44.8 million. Total offset revenue was down by 11.6% at \$3.8 million, bringing total gross revenue to \$48.6 million and resulting in a balanced budget.

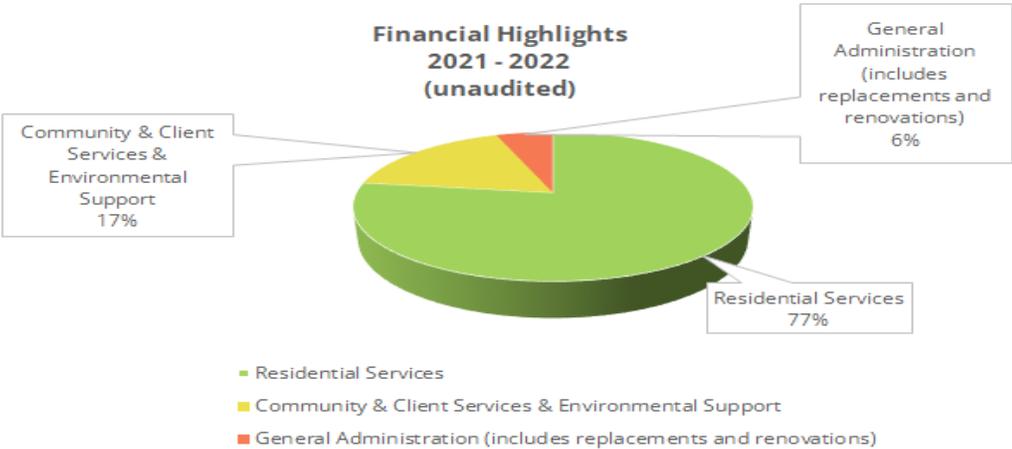
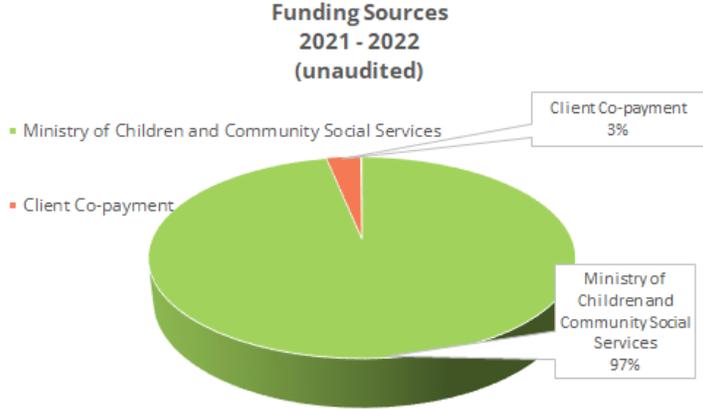
Throughout 2022, on-going input from staff at all levels on potential budget efficiencies has been received and new initiatives have been implemented. All levels of management tirelessly work on contingency plans to be able to respond rapidly to any changes in funding. Continued effective management of operating costs has ensured that Ongwanada maintains high-quality, stable services with well-maintained facilities and equipment.

In 2022/23 funding levels from MCCSS are to remain at the same funding levels as in 2021-22.



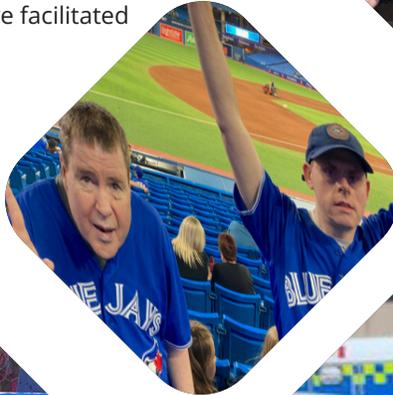
Financial Highlights Continued

Unaudited 2021-2022



Activities

At Ongwanada, we have a person-centered approach that allows staff to assist those we serve to participate in activities of their choosing. These photos show a small sample of some of the activities that our people have participated in over the past few months. There is no end to the diverse activities, and events staff have facilitated on behalf of the people we support.



Acknowledgments

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