

**Meeting Minutes**  
**September 14, 2023**  
**8:30 a.m. – 10:00 a.m.**  
**Virtual Microsoft Teams Meeting**

**Present:** Susan Davis (Co-chair), Gerstein Crisis Centre; Farzana Griffith (Co-chair) Toronto Bail Program; Domenica Dileo, HSJCC; Debbie Lynch, CTYS; Robin Cuff, CAMH Drug Treatment Court; Shane Rolland, Toronto Police Service (TPS); Valerie Danieli P-HSJCC Anti-Racism and PWLE Committees; Kristina Dobosz, Community Network of Specialized Care, Toronto Region; Lesley Morris, Fred Victor; Bradley Scarr, Métis Nation of Ontario (MNO); Flora Matheson, Centre for Urban Health Solutions; Arthur Mc Luhan; Centre for Urban Health Solutions; Rebecca Norlock, Habitat Services; Catherine Wiseman-Hakes, Toronto Rehab Institute: McMaster University; Tia Adams, Victim/WAP; Elina Korchagina, LAO; Tricia Dunbar, CHIRS; Charlene Crews, Toronto Housing/MOH; Jorge Zelaya, Fred Victor, Bozena Sikora, Community Network of Specialized Care, Toronto Region; Jeanine Daniel, Probation and Parole (Yonge St Office); Lindsay Jennings, Rittenhouse; Courtney Miller, Springboard Services; Stephanie Ruston, YMCA GTA; Sarah Hassan, SolGen; Cecilia De Araga, University of Montreal; Sarah James, JHST; Samantha Johnson, CTYS; Saige McMahan, 2-Spirit People of the 1st Nations; Tina Bells, Salvation Army; Shaire Thompson-Rudder, TSDC; Carol O'Neil, Circles of Support & Accountability (CoSA)

**Regrets:** Nick Harrilall, Sound Times; Everton Gordon, Margaret's Housing and Community Support Services; Barbara Domenech, Cota; Elaine Amsterdam, Gerstein Crisis Centre; Joyceline Sobers, Fred Victor; Natasha Bronfman, Mental Health Advocate; Natasha Bartlett, Fred Victor

**Land Acknowledgement**

Susan Davis provided the Land Acknowledgement, recognizing the history of the Indigenous People and their contribution to the land we stand on. She noted that there must be awareness of the past, and all of us need to listen and self-reflect on how we are situated in that history and work to understand and acknowledge the past from Indigenous perspectives, including recognizing the pain and trauma of generations of Indigenous children and families.

It was encouraged that we share the Land Acknowledgement among the members. Please email Susan or Domenica if you are interested before the next meeting.

**Welcome and Introductions**

Everyone introduced themselves. The committee members noted the intentional evaluation of our values at the end of the meeting. Members stated their name and organization in the chat box.

Susan introduced the new members:

- Elina Korchagina, Duty Counsel, LAO. She works at OCJT and the TRBC, primarily in the mental health and youth courts.

-Cecilia De Aragao Batista (On behalf of Marianne Quirouette) is a criminology master's student at the University of Montreal and a lawyer in Brazil. She is writing a paper on the drug courts and is keen to learn more about the impact of the OCJT on community workers and service providers.

Rebecca Norlock is the Director of the Housing and Support program at Habitat Services. She is replacing Chris Persaud on the committee.

-Sarah James, JHST, manager of community programs and engagement.

-Stephanie Ruston works at the YMCA's youth substance use program.

### **Review of May 4, 2023 Minutes**

The May 4, 2023, minutes were approved by Arthur and seconded by Valerie.

### **Presentation**

-Deferred to the next meeting

### **Review Action Items:**

-Domenica reported on the member's annual evaluation. She collated the feedback and circulated it. Thank you for completing it. Your feedback helps us with continued improvement. Overall, the feedback was positive; 16 members provided feedback. Members noted the benefits of participating in the HSJCC network and found the information sharing regarding the changes in the justice system helpful.

Action items were reviewed and completed.

### **Lunch N' Learns Update**

Susan reported on the upcoming Lunch and Learns. Invites will be circulated. Due to popular demand, the Anti-Racism Series will be repeated with five sessions.

Upcoming Lunch and Learns:

- September 28th Toronto East Reintegration Table (S-HSJCC)

- October 5th Drug Treatment Court (NY-HSJCC)

- Toronto Anti-Racism Series Session 1 on Foundation 101 with Dr. Rai Reece, on October 26,

- Toronto Anti-Racism Series Session 2 on Decentering Whiteness, White Privilege and White Supremacy in Organizational Spaces will take place on November 23

- December 7th East Focus Table (S-HSJCC)

### **Agency/Organization updates:**

*How does transitioning to the TRBC and OCJT affect service delivery in your organization, sector, and community?*

*Themes discussed:*

- Toronto Regional Bail Centre transition took place. It was a challenge, but things have slowly come together since the last meeting. We struggled with getting dispositions, but now it's resolved.
- Is there a Mental Health Program at the TRBC? In conversation, recognize that is a need. The enhanced coordinators are providing that service for now.
- Transfer prisoners' belongings when released at various points, such as bail, police station, or TSDC. Often, they do not have their house keys, wallets, medication or phone to get back home.

- Red Bag Program? Who should be at the table to solve the problem? Late release from bail and individuals do not have their belongings with them. Duty Counsel notes where their belongings are, and then they have to go back to TSDC or where they come from to pick them up. Often, clients don't know how to go to the TSDC late at night.
- The Red Bag program has been discussed at the Provincial HSJCC Transition from Custody Network, and they are frustrated that they can't get it organized.
- There needs to be more Lunch and Learn addressing MH issues to address stigmatization.
- Challenges with paperwork are not always at the place that is needed.
- It is essential to advocate for the prisoners belonging to the Provincial HSJCC. What are the potential solutions that we can put in place?
- Prisoners' belongings are a significant challenge for prisoners with cognitive impairment.
- No consistent or trauma-informed approaches are used by the legal staff who make decisions on individuals, impacting their continuity of treatment at the Drug Treatment Court. Need a collective voice; bring concerns to the P-HSJCC and MAG?
- It is important to use a psychoeducational approach for the legal sector and emphasize the benefits of trauma-informed practices and consistent staff who understand MH and substance use.
- Many cases are not being heard because there are not enough staff.
- I feel that with the virtual court, so many people who qualify for mental health court diversion are not being noticed or heard.
- Members discussed letter-writing advocacy regarding the identified concerns and needs.
- Lindsay shared the following regarding a project in which she is involved. They will be releasing more information in a few months! See the link below: <https://trackinginjustice.ca/tracking-injustice-launches-memorial-of-people-who-have-died-in-custody-since-the-year-2000-across-canada/>

-Lindsay provides information on a new Prisoner Legal Support Hotline: Starting September 18, 2023, our phone lines will open for calls to prisoners across Ontario **every Monday!** Our caseworkers will be available to answer questions and provide legal information on:

- human rights
- Charter rights
- healthcare
- internal and external complaints

Tel: 613-948-4537 (HELP) The caseworkers are current lawyers and their law students.

-Lindsay provided the following: This is the background of the Red Bag program, and it was supposed to be expanded across Ontario! I know there are issues across the province, but it's not happening. <https://hsjcc.on.ca/discharge-from-court-protocol-why-the-need-and-what-was-the-gap-in-services-2015-11-16/>

-Catherine stated that she was unable to contact the accessibility coordinator at the courthouse. There is no message on the phone. She is wondering if anyone has access to them. Discussion ensued, and we agreed to invite them to present at our meeting to find out how to access their service and what type of services they provide. Catherine noted that accessibility is a human rights issue.

-Domenica will follow up to invite the OCJT Accessibility Coordinator to our next meeting. Brad reported that the MNO justice programs are expanding across the province.

### **Service Coordination/ Resolution Issues**

Does anyone have any issues to resolve? Are there any issues to bring forth to the Toronto Regional HSJCC?

See above.

#### **Updates from T-HSJCC and Provincial HSJCC**

- a. Provincial Conference - November 15-16, 2023
- b. Next T-HSJCC meeting taking place on September 21, 2023
- c. Anti-Racism Ad Hoc Group Updates – see above.
- d. PWLE Honorarium Policy - it was circulated, no comment.
- e. Provincial HSJCC members structure diagram - it was circulated, no comment.

**Discussion regarding intentional values** – Susan acknowledged that we should remind ourselves to improve things by staying intentional with our inclusive values/space.

#### **Action Items:**

- Contact Domenica or Susan if you can provide the Land Acknowledgement at the September meeting.
- Domenica will invite the OCJT Accessibility Coordinator to present at our meeting.

**The November meeting will be a MEGA meeting with all 4 Local HSJCCs** on Thursday, November 2, 2023, from 8:30 to 10:30 am at the OCJT. It will be a hybrid model, and a light breakfast will be provided.

**Presenter for the January 11, 2024 meeting** – TBD.