

**Northwest Regional Centre of Responsibility (COR)  
FASD/Justice System Working Group Minutes**

Wed, Apr 13, 2022

9:00 – 10:30 am CST/10:00 am – 11:30 am EST

1. Welcome & Introductions – Derek West (Thunder Bay Police Service), Alice Bellavance (BISNO) -Chair, Jennifer Eistereicher (Youth Probation – Sioux Lookout), Terri-Lynn Dimini (Youth Probation- Thunder Bay), Chandralal Majuwana (CMHA Kenora), Andrea Degagne (Sioux Lookout OPP), Jenny Leadbeater (CMHA Thunder Bay)
2. Approval of Agenda and Previous Minutes - Approved
3. Review and discuss recommendations from Leadership Thunder Bay CAP Report

**Awareness and education:**

- a. HSJCC FASD/justice system webinars – information provided about a series of webinars on the HSJCC website
- b. Local and regional training opportunities – Norwest Community Health Centre offers annual training. No other known upcoming FASD education sessions occurring in the region. Alice has reached out to the NW FASD network co-chaired by Norwest CHC and Firefly and sent them a copy of the Leadership TBay CAP Report to highlight any areas they might be addressing. Their last meeting was held Feb 2021 and no response thus far.

**HR policy and procedures:**

- a. Alice highlighted some of the HR policy recommendations contained in the CAP report. Employers must adhere to AODA and employees must disclose where they require accommodations but may be reluctant to do so.

**Legislative changes and funding discussion questions:**

- 1) What is currently being done within the province to implement the Truth and Reconciliation Committee calls for action #34 which calls for changes to the criminal justice system to improve outcomes for offenders with Fetal Alcohol Spectrum Disorder (FASD)?
  - i. Jenny highlighted some the 12 sub-actions from this action item.
  - ii. Release from custody planning tables have been formed and Community Reintegration Officers have been created within custody facilities to help facilitate assessments and discharge planning
  - iii. The ministry has set up Mental Health Diversion programs and FASD fall under this category.
  - iv. Conditions in youth ministry are standard and easy to follow. FASD easier to identify within youth populations. There is more concern with adults with FASD in custody who

have nowhere to go upon release and therefore may be kept in custody longer due to lack of housing.

- v. Adult probation services lacks knowledge about where people with FASD can be referred and have been working with Maureen Parkes (Norwest CHC) and Firefly for consultation and assessment. This is becoming more prevalent with more access to virtual bail court. There still remains a lack of services for adults living with FASD. Also, high functioning youth with FAS do not qualify for DSO services.
- vi. We need to ensure community partners are extending their mandates to provide required services to people with FASD. A letter of advocacy to Ministries is crucial. FASD is a spectrum – those with IQ above 70 cannot access DSO services. BISNO has been lobbying Ministry to redefine brain injury to include FASD. The current Mental Health system is stretched to the limit. People with FASD have needs that spans across multiple sectors. A suggestion made to bring this issue to PHSJCC to raise with Ministries about broadening definitions.
- vii. Time limited programs can hamper progress. FASD is for life. High risk individuals with FASD need case by case, coordinated, long term services. Wraparound services are needed. (Example provided about daily calls to police for two individuals with high risk behaviours. Eight agencies were gathered to provide various supports and calls were reduced as a result.)
- viii. People with FASD can hide it well, especially as they get older. (Coping skills)
- ix. Justice system becomes a 'gateway' for needed supports and services
- x. Early intervention and prevention strategies are crucial and require rigid structures. Obtaining an FASD assessment is a long process – up to one year. OT, neuropsych etc. if there's no confirmation of use during pregnancy they won't qualify.
- xi. How can the justice system play a role in identifying those with FASD? Are there screening tools or questionnaires which can be utilized? (ask Maureen)

2) Does the development services sector currently receive funding for Court Support programming?

- xii. item deferred

3) What specific recommendations would this group wish to bring forward to the PHSJCC?

- xiii. A briefing note will need to be developed to bring forward to COR and PHSJCC and MOH. Request to expand definition and funding requirements/policies that fund organizations to broaden their mandates. Individuals require supportive housing.

4. Review and updates to COR FASD Project Charter – will be reviewed at the next meeting
5. Next Meeting Date – May 12, 2022 at 2pm EST
6. Adjournment – 11:05am