



**Meeting Minutes  
November 5, 2020  
12:00 pm to 1:00 pm  
Virtual Microsoft Teams Meeting**

**Present:** Tammy Tinney (Co-chair); Riun Shandler, Judiciary; Scott Skinner, Community Network of Specialized Care Toronto Region; Andrew Graham, Cota; Alison Mastenbroek, Toronto Bail Program; Carol Walker, Toronto Bail Program; Andrew Maclellan, COTA; Christi Patterson, Probation and Parole; Wayne Willis, CHIRS.

**Regrets:** Dina Zalkind (Co-chair), Duty Counsel; NYGH; Domenica Dileo, HSJCC; Anna Stanford, Crown Attorney's Office; Sheine Mankovsky, Judiciary; Rose Gan, NYGH; Chantal Huard, Probation and Parole; Greg McInnes, Salvation Army.

**Welcome and Introductions**

Everyone introduced themselves.

**Review of September 10, 2020 minutes**

The minutes of September 10, 2020 were approved. Minutes were approved by Scott Skinner and seconded by Tammy Tinney.

**Review Action Items:**

Reviewed and completed.

**Lunch and Learns**

Tammy Tinney reported that Lunch and Learn for December 3, 2020 with Michael French on immigration law and mental health has been cancelled due to the speaker being unavailable. This lunch and learn is hoped to be scheduled for January or February 2021.

Other possible topics of interest for future lunch and learns included: CAMH's sexual behaviours clinic (how is the operating with COVID and what changes have been made); modifications and policing; street gangs/street violence and ptsd;

**Presentation:**

No presentation this week. Time was reserved for member discussion/organization updates.

## How is COVID-19 affecting service delivery in your organization, sector and/or community? /Agency and Organization Updates

- Christi Patterson, Probation and Parole
  - Services have never stopped. Staffing has somewhat changed. Currently 40% off staff in office. Working one week in office, one week out of office.
  - Now have laptops and cellphones which has been helpful. With cellphones they can now text clients reporting instructions and clients have been receptive to this. Has increased accessibility of probation officers. When they are seen they are seen in the secure interview room for COVID-19 safety purposes, which changes the dynamic because it feels more institutional.
  - Seeing intensive, high-risk clients in person. Seeing them once per month instead of biweekly. Low to medium risk clients are reporting by telephone.
  - Struggles with disengagement when clients are reporting over the phone after a period of time. However, some clients find reporting by phone better and easier. Problems with contacting some clients improved when they reported by phone or could text. (this was also reported by other committee members).
  - Working a lot more on program development. Program delivery officer completes all the programming in topics such as anger management, substance use. Available in one-to-one sessions by phone.
  - A big problem is trying to work with clients who have no fixed address and no consistent means to contact them. They don't have access to phones, computers etc. (this was also reported by other committee members).
  - Problems with literacy (i.e. online or phone programming giving clients pamphlets or booklets to read assuming clients can read them). (this was also reported by other committee members).
  - Increase in domestic violence incidents since COVID-19.
- Andrew Graham, COTA
  - All court support staff are working remotely from home. In touch with clients by phone and on rare occurrences they may have a direct visit with a client.
  - Working with duty counsel and still getting referrals from duty counsel interviews. Will connect with clients through custody station/booker.
  - Continue to link clients with community services.
  - Mental health diversion is still ongoing and court support staff are in touch with Deputy Crown Attorneys on a regular basis.
  - Andrew Maclellan (Peer Support Worker) offering programming/services virtually as well.
  - More program development. Recently completed a virtual six-week anger management program in partnership with the John Howard Society.
- Alison Mastenbroek, Toronto Bail Program
  - Challenging time for both staff and clients. Office is staffed with two staff three days per week. 95% of reporting is by phone. Not seeing clients in person except for on occasion when they appear in court.
  - Changes in the way referrals are being made to different community agencies has been difficult. Not knowing how to access all services or what services are available because of COVID-19 (this was also reported by other committee members).

- A significant increase in domestic violence cases since COVID-19. Looking at possibly implementing more IVP staff because of this increase.
- Retention has been good. Most clients find it easier to report by phone and to keep updated on their court appearances.
- Video bail will be hopefully starting in the new year. Currently bail is only set up for audio. This is not set up in North York court yet.
- Carol Walker and Alison reported that Carol works at the Toronto South Detention Centre and has been a great bridge for the Toronto Bail Program and individuals remaining in custody. Carol can connect clients with community agencies and help with discharge planning.
- Tammy Tinney reported ongoing concerns with Toronto South Detention Centre. TSDC not sending health records when requesting, discharging clients from custody without medication or prescriptions, not providing medications to clients when called/sent info requesting they continue current medications while in custody. Carol Walker suggested speaking with social workers and pharmacy at TSDC and also that she could possibly assist in finding who to contact if having difficulties.
- Justice Riun Shandler reported that the courts are doing the best they can to keep up. There are currently a limited number of trials. They hope to increase number of trials by making modifications to courtrooms. Challenges with providing information and direction with new way things are operating. Time consuming. Trying to take this offline to address issues through operations meeting.

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

Tammy reminded that Provincial HSJCC 2021 conference will take place virtually. Advised that previous T-HSJCC was cancelled and next meeting would be in new year.

**Legal Aid Barriers or Challenges**

No one present to report. To be discussed at next meeting. Tammy reported that duty counsel had recently provided her with a Toronto DC out of custody telephone number 416-646-1276 that clients can phone to request assistance. Andrew Graham reported he had another number and would clarify with duty counsel which number was the best.

**Service Co-ordination Issues**

None

**Actions:**

- Tammy will follow-up with logistics for the next Lunch and Learn

**Presenter for the next meeting:** TBD

**Next Meeting:** Virtual Microsoft Teams Meeting taking place on Thursday January 7, 2020 from 12 pm to -1:00 pm.