

**Provincial
Mental Health and Addictions
Advisory Council**

Annual Report

April 1, 2017 – March 31, 2018

MESSAGE FROM THE INTERIM CHAIR

In accordance with the **Transparency and Accountability Act**, I am pleased to present the 2017 - 2018 Annual Report for the Provincial Mental Health and Addictions Advisory Council (the Council). The Council is a Category Three government entity under the **Transparency and Accountability Act** and plans and reports under these requirements.

As interim Chair, my signature below acknowledges that the Provincial Mental Health and Addictions Advisory Council is accountable for the results reported.

This past year was an exciting time for the Council as we saw the launch of **Towards Recovery** with its project teams embarking on transformational work. People from all aspects of the mental health and addictions system, including individuals with lived experience, worked together and demonstrated the art of true collaboration and partnership. At the end of March, we saw a reduction in wait times for mental health and addictions services as well as a service redesign plan to replace the Waterford Hospital.

I wish to extend a sincere thank you to all members of the Council for their continued dedication to mental health and addictions issues in the province. On behalf of the Council, I also want to extend our appreciation for the efforts of staff within the Department of Health and Community Services for their support in making our work possible.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in cursive script, appearing to read "Sheldon Pollett".

Sheldon Pollett, Interim Chair
Provincial Mental Health and Addictions Advisory Council

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Overview

The Council reports to the Minister of Health and Community Services (HCS). In 2017-18, the Advisory Council adopted a new terms of reference to reflect Council's role in **Towards Recovery**, the provincial action plan for mental health and addictions. The new terms of reference also updated requirements including:

- Lived experience: Original terms of reference outlined a requirement for one-third of Council members to have 'lived experience'. The updated terms of reference removed this requirement as the newly appointed Recovery Council will exclusively represent the voice of lived experience. The chair of the Recovery Council is a member of the Advisory Council so both entities are directly connected.
- Number of Council members: Original terms of reference did not identify a maximum number of Council members, only stating a membership of no less than 15 members including the chairperson and vice-chairperson. The updated terms of reference caps the maximum number of Council members at 20, ensuring meaningful dialogue and discussion.
- Appointment process: The original terms of reference stated that Council members are appointed directly by the Minister. The updated terms of reference reflect the newly defined Public Service Commission appointments process. Section 25(a) of the **Independent Appointments Commission Act (IAC)**, states that Council member selection must go through the IAC process where appointment recommendations are made by the Public Service Commission and approved by the Minister of Health and Community Services. Future Council members will compete for membership by way of a merit-based screening process.
- Member terms: The original terms of reference stated that members shall be appointed for a three-year term. The current terms of reference state that a member shall be appointed for a term of three years and may be re-appointed to one further term of three years for a maximum of six years. Where the term of office expires and a successor has not been appointed, the member may continue to hold their position until a successor is appointed.

Mandate

The Provincial Mental Health and Addictions Advisory Council will:

1. Provide oversight for the implementation of the recommendations in **Towards Recovery** through a set of indicators that will measure process and outcome of the report's recommendations.
2. Specifically advise the Minister of HCS on matters related to:
 - the process and outcome of the recommendations of **Towards Recovery**;

- enhancing mental health and addressing/ preventing mental illness and problematic substance use;
- public awareness, education and anti-stigma efforts; and
- emerging priorities requiring immediate attention.

Membership

The Council is an 18-member group representing diversity in backgrounds, skills and experiences (see Appendix A for membership list). The Council's membership brings experience from the following sectors:

- Personal lived experience / family experience
- Regional Health Authorities
- Psychiatry and family medicine
- Education
- Health promotion and prevention
- Community organizations
- Memorial University of Newfoundland /College of the North Atlantic
- Business community
- Justice system (police/legal aid/corrections/private bar)
- National organizations
- Indigenous people

Funding

The work of the Council is supported by the Mental Health and Addictions Division, Department of Health and Community Services. Remuneration is not provided.

Meeting Frequency

Meetings are scheduled every two months or as required. Meetings are held in St. John's and teleconference is available for Council members who live outside the St. John's region.

The Council does not maintain a separate office; support and secretariat services are provided by the Mental Health and Addictions Division, 1st Floor, West Block, Confederation Building, St. John's.

Highlights and Partnerships

The Council acknowledges our strong partnership with the Department of Health and Community Services in fulfilling our mandate. Our diverse membership also reflects the many community partnerships that support the work of the Council.

The highlights of 2017-18 include:

- The release of **Towards Recovery** on June 27, 2017, and subsequent implementation of its recommendations; and,

- The release of the **Premier’s Task Force on Improving Educational Outcomes** on July 25, 2017, which, among many other recommendations, outlined action to support student mental health and wellness.

Report on Performance: Objectives 2017 - 2020

The Provincial Mental Health and Addictions Advisory Council provides support to the Minister of Health and Community Services in an advisory capacity. As such, the following objective will guide the direction of the Council for the period April 1, 2017 to March 31, 2020 and will be reported on in each year covered by the plan (2017-18, 2018-19 and 2019-20).

Issue - Provide oversight for the implementation of recommendations in Towards Recovery

This year, Council’s role shifted from strictly advisory to overseeing the implementation of the **Towards Recovery** recommendations. The Council was embedded into the **Towards Recovery** governance structure ensuring an opportunity to provide meaningful oversight into the implementation of the recommendations.

Members of the Council met with the Minister on one occasion to discuss their role within the **Towards Recovery** action plan.

Annual Objective

By March 31, 2018, the Provincial Mental Health and Addictions Advisory Council will have provided advice and oversight to the Minister of Health and Community Services regarding implementation of the Mental Health and Addictions Action Plan.

Indicator	Outcome
Obtained expert and group member expertise	During 2017-18, Council provided in-house member expertise during regularly scheduled, bi-monthly meetings and by email or teleconference, outside of regularly scheduled meetings.
Invited community groups and other organizations to present information	During 2017-18, the Council focused on the implementation of Towards Recovery recommendations. Presentations were specific to Towards Recovery and informed Council’s oversight of the recommendations. Presentations included an overview by the respective team lead of wait times reduction and the service redesign plan (replacement of the Waterford hospital). Representatives from HCS and the Newfoundland and Labrador Centre for Health information presented on the evaluation plan of Towards Recovery including indicators and outcomes.
Prioritized advice provided to the Minister	Advice was provided to the Minister by face-to-face communication and reporting back through the Mental Health and Addictions Division. The Council prioritized advice to the Minister on many areas related to mental health and addictions, including the replacement of the Waterford Hospital, stigma, and health promotion and prevention. The Council also developed an oversight process to highlight their perspectives on various aspects of the implementation of Towards Recovery .

Made recommendations to government-led mental health and addictions initiatives	Council was embedded in the governance structure of Towards Recovery (Appendix B) and gave oversight to all aspects of Towards Recovery . In addition, Council members informed the Premier’s Task Force on Improving Educational Outcomes .
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Objective and Indicators for the 2018-19 Year

The Council’s work in 2018-19 will support the same objective and indicators outlined for 2017-18. For additional information, please consult the Council’s activity plan located on the Department of Health and Community Services website at:

www.health.gov.nl.ca/health/publications

Opportunities and Challenges Ahead

Council recognizes opportunities and challenges as we move into 2018-19.

There are several opportunities as we look to 2018-19. Firstly, a formal appointment process through the Public Service Commission’s Independent Appointments Commission offers an opportunity to infuse fresh perspectives and experience into our membership. The use of technology, also an opportunity, will facilitate a provincial membership offering alternate ways to participate aside from in-person discussion.

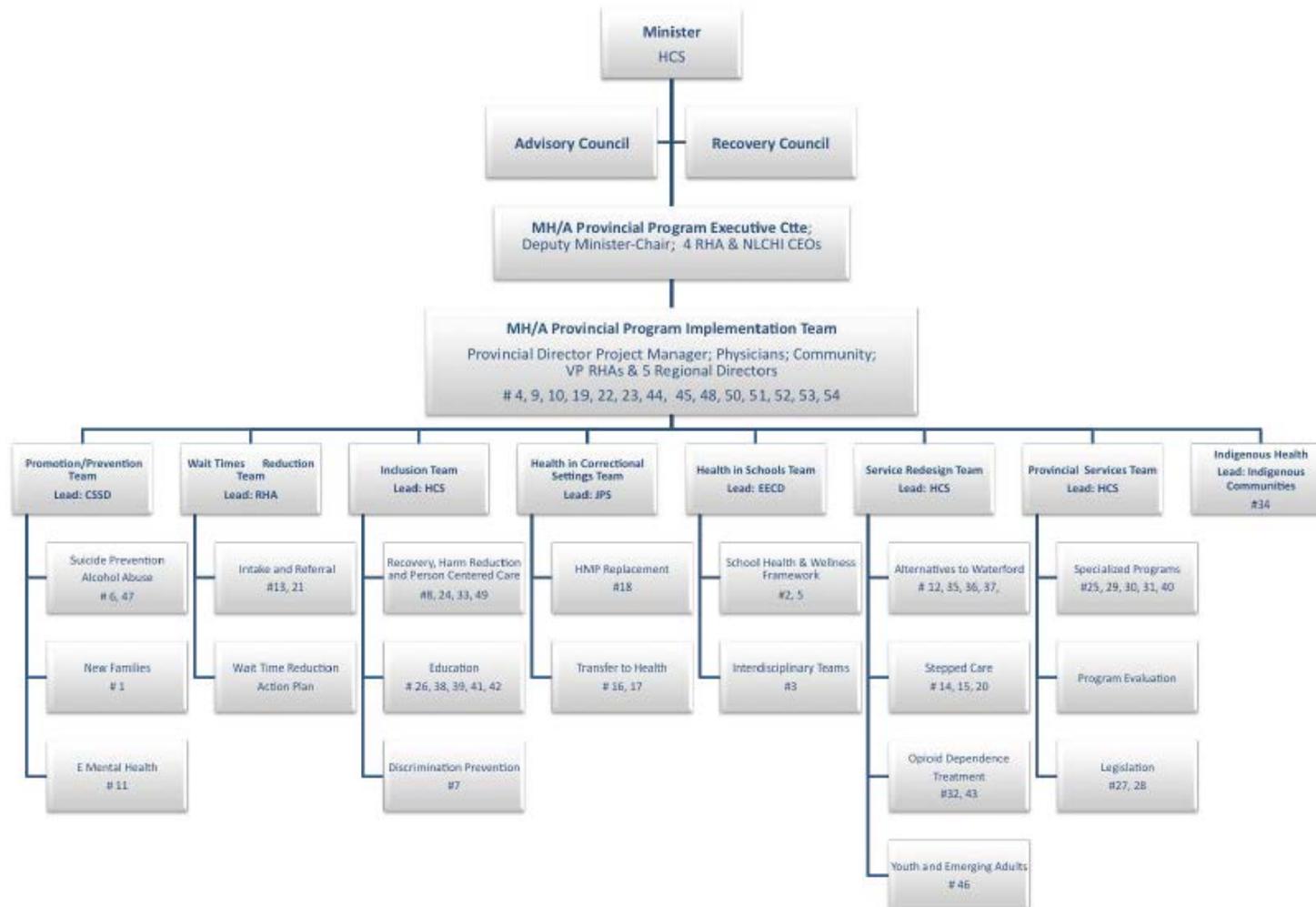
Informing the evaluation of **Towards Recovery** represents a significant opportunity. By the end of the year, Council will have informed indicators and a public, client, and provider survey. Taken altogether, the evaluation tools offer a significant opportunity to evaluate the mental health system to best meet the needs for those who use it.

The appointments process through the Public Service Commission’s IAC represents a potential challenge as the natural learning curve of new members may temporarily slow momentum. With that being said, Council members will work together and ensure new members are orientated and the mandate of providing oversight to **Towards Recovery** and informing the Minister are accomplished.

Appendix A: Provincial Mental Health and Addictions Advisory Membership

Name	Current Experience
Sheldon Pollett	Interim Chair, Community Service Provider - Youth
Angela Crockwell	Community Service Provider - Youth
Angie Wilmott	Schools Guidance Counsellor/Psychologist
Dave Banko	Community Service Provider
Des Coombs	Psychologist
Dr. Greg Radu	Psychiatrist, Eastern Health
Dr. Ted Callanan	Professor, Psychiatrist, Eastern Health
George Skinner	Social worker, Community Advocate
Lisa Browne	Community Service Provider
Mark Gruchy	Lived Experience, Community Coalition
Mary Walsh	Actor/ Social Activist
Michelle Kinney	Nunatsiavut Government; Northern Region
Patrick Hickey	Youth Advocate
Paula Corcoran-Jacobs	Lived Experience, Community Service Provider
Peter Cornish	University Professor/Researcher
Peter Ralph	Lived Experience
Rita Notarandrea	National Organization, Canadian Centre on Substance Use and Addiction
Thelma Whelan	Education Consultant; Western Region

Appendix B: Governance Structure of Towards Recovery



Provincial Mental Health and Addictions Advisory Council

Secretariat Support and General Inquiries: Mental Health and Addictions Division

Department of Health and Community Services

P.O. Box 8700, 1st Floor, West Block

Confederation Building, St. John's, NL A1B 4J6

Tel: (709) 729-3658