

Elizabeth Fry Society of Northwestern Ontario

2022 ANNUAL REPORT

Prepared for:

Annual General Meeting

Held on:

June 27, 2023



**705 Victoria Ave. E,
Thunder Bay, ON P7C 5X9**

Elizabeth Fry Society of Northwestern Ontario
Annual General Meeting

AGENDA

1. Welcome and all to order
2. *Land Acknowledgement (Sheila DeCorte prayer)*
3. Establish quorum
4. *Approve agenda (motion)*
5. *Approve Minutes from AGM 2022 (motion)*
6. *Auditors Report-MNP (motion)*
7. Receive reports:
 - a. **Board President: Helle Moller**
 - b. **Operations Director & Systemic Advocate: Lindsay Martin**
 - c. **Development & Communications Coordinator: Desiree Dumoulin**
 - d. **Program Coordinator: Mary Kozorys**
 - e. **Reintegration Worker: Jolaine Spanninga**
 - f. **System Navigators: Jen Baxter, Alicia Gordon, Bonnie Aggamway**
8. *Approval of Revised Vision, Mission, Values*
9. *Committee Reports*
10. *Fundraising Committee*
11. *Housing Committee*
12. *Finance Committee Jean Armstrong -Treasurer's Report/*
13. *(motion to accept all reports)*
14. Appointment of independent reviewer for 2024
15. *CAEFS Board Interest*
16. Election of Directors
17. Other Business
18. Adjournment



Elizabeth Fry Society of Northwestern Ontario

Annual General Meeting

Elevate NWO, 102-108 N Cumberland St.

June 15, 2022

Minutes

Present: Desiree Dumoulin, Ashley Walter, Emily Brooks, Gillian Whybourne, Alicia Gordon, Jen Baxter, Mary Kozorys, Ed Prinselaar, Jean Armstrong, Erin Bellavance, Kate Rookes, Lindsay Martin, Helle Moeller, Raija Warkentin, Kevin Yates, Mary Veltri, Rob Mozzon

1. Approve Agenda – Moved: Erin, Seconded: Erin, Carried

2. Minutes – Accepted , Moved :Jean, Seconded: Erin, Carried

3. Auditor's Report – Rob Mozzon of MNP reviewed the auditor's report completed by his firm with us. He explained the difference between a financial review and an audit report. The audit, which was conducted in accordance with Generally Accepted Accounting Principles, confirmed that the financial performance of the organization is in accordance with Canadian Accounting Standards for not-for-profit organizations.

- Motion to accept the auditor's report. Moved: Emily, Seconded: Jean, Carried.

4. Appoint auditor for 2022 fiscal year

- Motion to appoint MNP. Moved: Helle, Seconded: Ashley, Carried.

5. Reports - The following reports were presented: President's Report (Helle Moeller), Director of Operations (Lindsay Martin), System Navigators (Desiree Dumoulin), Program Coordinator/ Reintegration Coordinator (Mary Kozorys), Development and Communications Coordinator (Mary Veltri), Finance Committee (Lindsay), Fundraising Committee (Mary V), Housing Committee (Mary K). Written reports in Annual report.

- Motion to accept all the reports- Moved: Helle, Seconded: Gillian, Carried

6. Revised Bylaw – The Organization’s Bylaws were redrafted by Mary V to bring them in compliance with the Ontario Non- Profit Corporations Act. They were already approved by the Board.

- Motion to adopt the new Bylaw – Moved: Helle, Seconded: Raija, Carried.

7. Treasurer’s report – Board Treasurer, Jean Armstrong gave her report. She has been treasurer since 2019 and worked closely with our former bookkeeper Nicole to transfer our accounting system to Quickbooks. Our new book keeper is Andrew Wehrstedt and he is very proficient on this accounting program.

8. Election of Board Members for one year term – A slate of candidates was put forward by Helle to sit as the new Board members. They are: Helle Moeller, Jean Armstrong, Ashley Walter, Emily Brooks, Gillian Whybourne, Erin Bellavance, Marlene Gammond, Bev Picard, Raija Warkentin. All agreed to let their names stand.

- Motion to accept the slate – Moved: Kevin, Seconded: Ed, Carried.

9. Adjournment – Meeting was adjourned at 8:30

- Motion to adjourn meeting: Helle, Seconded: Emily, Carried

Report: Board President
Board President: Helle Møller

This year has been another one of great growth at EFSNWO. We now own a transition house on Cameron Street in addition to renting the transition unit on May Street, enabling us to house up to 12 people at a time. With additional renovation this number will increase over the next year. In addition, we have expanded accommodation in the winter months to also offer emergency bed stays to women and gender diverse people in great need. And we have just put in an offer for an additional house along with an additional invited funding application to TBDSSAB.

EFSNWO' Director of Operations and Systemic Advocacy, Lindsay, has continued to grow in their role and is also expanding in their policy work, on top of managing the existing staff and filling gaps where needed. We are thrilled to have Lindsay in this position. Being the daily leader of an organization undergoing immense growth, adding additional diverse staff members, and being governed by a Board that is still undergoing the transition from being a working to a governance Board is of course not without challenges.

When human beings work closely together, we often realise that we have differences in the way we communicate and relate, which can create friction among staff as well as among board and staff. To help bridge differences and support mutual understanding, staff and board have, among other things, been engaging in educational workshops about what board and staff work is all about and we have also engaged in strategic planning sessions discussing, among other things, our shared vision, mission and values. We were supported by Kari Chiappetta and Diane Walker in these endeavours and were grateful for their expertise through this work. In addition, Lindsay has completed the course, The Supportive Workplace Mental Health Skills For Managers through FESAP.

Our Coordinator of Programming, Mary Kozorys, has continued to work tirelessly and fearlessly this past year assisting clients both inside and outside of the Correctional Centre. Mary's commitment to our clients and her fearless advocacy allows our clients to access many resources (such as housing, food, hygiene products and transportation) they would not otherwise have fulsome access to. EFSNWO would not be as successful in our work as we are without her boundless enthusiasm and compassion.

We were very sad to see Mary Veltri leave the position as Coordinator of Development and Communications and EFSNWO in the fall of 2022. Mary contributed tremendously to EFSNWO as a past Board President and board member as well as during her time in the role of Coordinator of Development and Communication. During her time in the role, she was instrumental in increasing EFSNWOS financial resources, strengthening our operations, and supporting the development of sound policies.

We were happy to hire Desiree Dumoulin as Coordinator of Development and Communications in November 2022. She has been part of EFSNWO since December of 2020, previously in the role of Systems Navigator. Des has done a tremendous job and has also grown immensely in her new position continuing in Mary's footsteps to bring significant funding to EFSNWO through funding applications and taking the lead in fundraising events with great support from volunteers and the staff of EFry as a whole.

The Systems Navigator team of Jen, Alicia, and Bonnie, who, under Lindsay's supervision, are responsible for running the transitional housing programs we've been able to establish with the support of TBDSSAB on May Street and now also on Cameron Street, has been doing an incredible amount of work in the community, supporting and assisting to house dozens of clients. When Des left the Systems Navigator team we were lucky to be able to welcome Jolaine Spanniga in November 2022 and we've been lucky to welcome Bonnie Aggamway in January 2023. We are grateful for everything Jolaine and Bonnie have contributed, both to EFSNWO clients and to the organization as a whole. In addition to the Systems Navigators, through additional fundraising we were able to secure a harm reduction Residential Support Worker to provide assistance overnight for our transition house residents for a limited period of time. Emma Hadwen staffed the position 4 days a week from September 2022 to - March 2023. We hope that we might be successful in securing funding to staff this important role in the future.

With new funding in 2022 and 2023, we were able to expand our team to include a Reintegration Worker and a Court Support Worker; unfortunately, although there is a great need for both positions it has not been possible to maintain continuous staffing due to funding as well as personnel and organizational challenges.

Katelyn Rooke entered the position as Court Support Worker in May 2022 and left the position in October 2022 and Marshalina Reader entered the position in November 2022 and left the position in April 2023. We are grateful for both of their dedication while in the position and all the great support they offered EFSNWO clients in need of court support as well as their contribution to EFSNWO overall. Jolaine Spanniga entered the role of Reintegration Worker in November 2022 and with additional funding we have been able to continue her position till December 2023. We are grateful for Jolaine's support for EFSNWO.

Our last two additions to the EFSNWO team are RaeAnn O'Flaherty, who entered the position of Harm Reduction Support Worker in May 2023 and Robyn Saxberg who entered the position of Administrative Assistant and Fundraiser in May 2023. We are lucky to have them both.

The Board has seen additions and resignations over the past year. Marlene Gammond, Emily Brooks and Gillian Whybourne all joined the board in March 2022. Marlene stepped down in December 2022, Gillian stepped down in January 2023 and Emily stepped down in March 2023. We are grateful for their contributions to the organization during their time as board members. Lastly, Bev Picard who joined the board in 2019 is stepping down after 4 and ½ years. Bev has been supporting me as Vice President and has been invaluable in that role providing experience and guidance in relation to human resource questions, governance and policy. I have very much enjoyed our collaboration. Bev is unfortunately not able to be here today but wanted me to relay to you her appreciation of EFSNWO and its contributions to the community and that she has been honoured to be a small part of the changes over the last few years. Ashley Walters has graciously agreed to step into the role as Vice president and has already provided support to the role over the past 6 months for which I have been very grateful.

We have been fortunate to be able to welcome Jamie Sereda as director in February 2023 and Stacey Hare Hodgins and Jamie Grenier in June 2023. I sadly will not be working with Stacey and Jamie.

This is my last term on the Board. I am stepping down as both President and Board Member as of August 31, 2023. I have enjoyed these past three years with EFSNWO and have very much enjoyed working with both staff and the Board. At times, I have also found the work challenging and I have learned a huge amount. I am incredibly proud of all the work EFSNWO's team has

accomplished over the past 3 years and am excited to learn what comes out of the latest application for support of an additional owned transition house. I know EFSNWO will continue to do amazing work and have an immense impact in our community.

Report: Operations Director & Systemic Advocacy

Operations Director & Systemic Advocate: Lindsay Martin

This year has been filled with numerous achievements, growth and milestones as we continue our commitment to support and advocate for justice-involved women and gender diverse individuals in Northwestern Ontario.

Programs and Services:

Our organization has continued to provide a wide range of essential services to address the unique needs and challenges faced by justice-involved women and gender diverse individuals. We have focused on expanding our housing program and our outreach and enhancing the quality of our services and support to the district from Fort Frances, Kenora and Monteith.

Our outreach programs have reached out to marginalized and vulnerable women and girls, offering support, guidance, and resources to empower them and help them navigate the justice system. We have collaborated with local agencies, prisons, and community partners to expand our outreach efforts and create a stronger support network.



Recognizing the importance of stable housing for successful reintegration, we have worked tirelessly to provide affordable and safer housing options for women and Gender Diverse people leaving incarceration or experiencing homelessness. Our housing program has expanded this year from 7 to 12 units as we opened our own Transitional/Supportive housing space at 213 Cameron St with support received from the TBDSSAB and the Municipal Affairs and Housing Minister.

EFSNWO has been at the forefront of advocating for policy changes and reforms that address the systemic barriers faced by justice-involved women and gender diverse people. We have actively engaged with government bodies, stakeholders, and the broader community to raise awareness and share resources.

Highlights and Achievements:

This year, our organization has achieved several significant milestones that deserve recognition:

- EFSNWO has opened their newly owned Transitional House at 213 Cameron St. The opportunity was made possible by Thunder Bay District Social Services Administration Board and the Minister of Municipal Housing and Affairs, and private donors. This house is in addition to our Harm Reduction housing units that we are currently renting at 100 May St. and has increased our capacity from 7-12 units for women and gender diverse people.
- We have forged strategic partnerships with local organizations, justice sector stakeholders, and academic institutions to strengthen our programs and services. These collaborations have allowed us to expand our reach, improve service delivery, and create new opportunities for those we serve.
- Our dedicated team has organized successful fundraising events, securing vital resources to sustain and enhance our programs. The generosity of our donors and supporters has enabled us to continue providing essential services and explore new initiatives.

We are particularly grateful for the commitment and dedication of our volunteers, who have played a crucial role in supporting our programs and services. Their contributions have been invaluable in ensuring the success of our organization and making a difference in the lives of those we serve.

Looking Ahead:

As we reflect on our achievements, we recognize that there is still much work to be done. The Elizabeth Fry Society NWO remains committed to:

- Continuously improving the quality and accessibility of our programs and services.
- Strengthening our partnerships and collaborations to maximize our impact.
- Advocating for gender-responsive and trauma-informed justice practices.
- Expanding the housing program and outreach efforts in the Northwest.
- Investing in the professional development of staff and volunteers.





We extend our gratitude to our dedicated staff, board members, volunteers, donors, and partners for their unwavering support. Together, we will continue to make a positive difference in the lives of justice-involved women and gender diverse people and build stronger communities in Northwestern Ontario.

Lindsay Martin

Report: Development & Communications

Development & Communications Coordinator: Desiree Dumoulin

Fundraising & Administrative Assistant: Robyn Saxberg

Funding Proposals

We have developed and submitted 20 new funding proposals, totalling \$5,178,854, which is 4 times the number of dollars that the organization has applied for to date. We have received approval for 11 funding proposals and 6 proposals are presently awaiting a decision. We have increased the amount received from the United Way of Thunder Bay, SOLGEN, and the Thunder Bay District Social Services Administration Board (TBDSSAB).

- **Grants approved:**

- Thunder Bay Community Foundation grant: \$10,000, emergency client fund.
- SOLGEN Community Services Division funding: \$31,698, Reintegration Program.
- Ontario Trillium Foundation (OTF) Resilient Communities Fund: \$155,500, Development & Communications.
- United Way of Thunder Bay Community Investment: \$46,768, Correctional Centre Services.
- Canadian Women's Foundation (CWF) Shock Proofing Communities Grant: \$20,000, staff extended health benefits for one year.
- Walmart Community Grant: \$1,000, prison release kits.
- Fort William Rotary Club grant: \$8,067, hygiene kits.
- TBPS Project Prevent Program funding: \$18,400, Emergency Bed Program, overnight harm-reduction support worker.
- TBDSSAB Community Homelessness Prevention Initiative funding: \$50,000, overnight harm-reduction support worker.
- TBDSSAB Capital Grant: \$219,500, Purchase of 213 Cameron St. transitional home.
- Women and Gender Equality Canada (WAGE) Capacity Building extension grant: \$50,000, Fundraising & Administrative Assistant for one year.

- **Grants awaiting decision:**

- Ontario Government Inclusive Communities grant: \$60,000, capital funding to improve the accessibility of the Cameron St. house and increase housing capacity.

- Law Foundation of Ontario Responsive Program grant: \$126,226, Court Support Program funding for two years.
- OTF Capital Grant: \$150,000, capital funding to improve the accessibility of the Cameron St. house and increase housing capacity.
- CWF Rebuilding Lives 2024 grant: \$180,000, which would provide \$45,000 annually for 4 years to fund the organization’s systemic advocacy work.
- EOI 001 “Operation of Transitional Housing Facilities and Services” to TBDSSAB: \$1,441,974, a proposal to enter a 3-year agreement to operate an 8-unit transitional home at 277 Pearl St. and wages to provide 24-7 staffing support to EFSNWO residents.
- EOI 002 “Development of Transitional and Supported Housing” to TBDSSAB: \$2,491,370, capital funding to purchase a 2nd transitional home and operational funding such as wages to provide 24-7 support.
- **Grants developed but not approved:**
 - Community Foundations of Canada Community Services Recovery Fund: \$95,226, to fund the Court Support Program and Reintegration Program for one year.
 - TBDSSAB CHPI Food Security Fund 2023: \$13,125, funding for our food bag program.
 - Tbaytel For Good Community Fund: \$10,000, Cameron St. home “Landscape Revitalization Project”.

Donations and Fundraising

In 2022, we conducted two direct mail/email campaigns to solicit donations and sent charitable receipts and thank you letters in January 2023. We also reactivated the fundraising committee with representation from the board and staff; we are still working to recruit volunteers from the community. We raised \$30,461 from private donations.



We assisted with the design and advertisement of our ‘Build Communities, Not Prisons’ merchandise, which has brought in approximately \$1,500 in profit to date. We have begun development of an online store for our merchandise, launching later this year.

The Society of Beer Drinking Ladies, chose EFSNWO as the charity to sponsor at their Bevy 0001 event and their International Women’s Day event, where \$920 was donated to us through the sale of the

'Better Together' special brew. The Craft Revival Board of Directors chose EFSNWO as the nonprofit to support with a free table at the 2023 Spring Craft Revival which brought in \$920 in ticket and merchandise sales the week prior to the annual fundraising event. We also organized a Holiday pop-up and a Valentine's pop-up at Goods and Co. Market. We also secured a \$350 donation from the Rainbow Collective to create a Pride picnic table for the Cameron St. backyard.



We executed our annual fundraising event for E Fry Week 2023 at Roots to Harvest Community Food Centre with a licensed penny auction of many outstanding prizes generously donated by local businesses. The event raised approximately \$12,000 with 29 donated auction items valued at approximately \$6000, and approximately 100 people in attendance. We are grateful for the \$3000 sponsorship provided by Copperfin Credit Union.

Communications

- Attended the Pre-Budget 2023 consultation held by MP Patty Hajdu and MP Marcus Powlowski. Submitted a formal letter to Ms. Hajdu requesting advocacy support in renewing capacity-building funding for feminist and gender equity organizations in

Budget 2023.

- Circulated a press release for OTF Court Support funding and completed an interview with CBC Thunder Bay about the program.

Administration/Committees

- Chaired and attended Fundraising Committee meetings; Attended Finance Committee meetings.
- Attended monthly CHAT Steering Committee Meetings.
- Had consultations and correspondence with various funding agencies/ partners (TBDSSAB, Reaching Home, WAGE, OTF, Copperfin Credit Union)



At the beginning of May, Robyn Saxberg joined our team as the Fundraising and Administrative Assistant for one year using the WAGE extension grant that we received. She brings a wealth of experience in web design, digital marketing and has a passion for nonprofit work and serving our community. We are exploring creative approaches to fundraising and donation appeals, while planning new goals for the next year with a fresh perspective.

Board Support, Policy Development, Professional Development

- Drafted Diversity and Inclusion policies; attended the 2023 Strategic Planning session, where we drafted a statement of Mission, Vision, and Values for the organization.
- Drafted job description and job ad for the Fundraising & Administrative Assistant position, completed interviews and assisted in selecting the successful candidate.
- Attended the Ontario Nonprofit Network: “How can nonprofits change the narrative about the communities we serve?”. Attended a fundraising and donor/sponsor communication webinar by the same organizer.
- Attended United Way/OTF ‘Empower the North’ launch celebration.

Partners List

We are very grateful for the financial support we receive from our funders:

Canada



Women and Gender
Equality Canada

Femmes et Égalité
des genres Canada

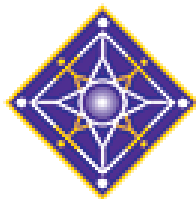
Ontario
Trillium
Foundation



Fondation
Trillium
de l'Ontario



CANADIAN
WOMEN'S
FOUNDATION



THE DISTRICT OF THUNDER BAY
SOCIAL SERVICES ADMINISTRATION BOARD

Ontario 
Ministry of the
Solicitor General



United Way
Thunder Bay
uwaytbay.ca



lakehead
social planning
council

Report: Correctional Centre Services

Programme Coordinator: Mary Kozorys

Central to the core of programming this year was the theme of growth, following the lifting of most institutional COVID-19 restrictions. In addition to the regular weekly programming consisting of arts, crafts, wellness and meditation, we were able to deliver some special programmes including two sessions of the Basic Food Handling programme offered in conjunction with the Thunder Bay District Health Unit, as well as an Emergency First Aid/CPR programme. Superior Points Harm Reduction offered three sessions of "Preventing Opioid Overdose with Naloxone" as well. Over 350 hours of programming was offered in 2022. One of the year's highlights was the facilitation of the first-ever "Community Services Fair" held Sept. 24th, 2022 at the Thunder Bay Correctional Centre. The event was designed to have participants connect with community partners who can assist them with re-integration and support. Agency participants included: Kairos (Adult Community Services), Anishnawbe Mushkiki (Mental Health and Adult Health Promotion), Northwestern Ontario Women's Centre, Nor-West Community Health Centres, Thunder Bay Indigenous Friendship Centre (Gladue Aftercare as well as Court Services), Anishinabek Employment and Training Services, as well as Matawa First Nations (Housing as well as Health and Social Meno Biimadeswin).

The ongoing pandemic also revealed the ongoing need for both individual and systemic advocacy. Through systemic advocacy, the Ministry of the Solicitor General (SOLGEN) extended its phone use policy for prisoners, making available prepaid calling cards in the amount of \$20.00 at the beginning of the month. The amount continues to be inadequate as most prisoners do not have access to 'canteen' funds to top-up phone cards, which remain the only means of



contacting service providers who use mobile phones. Another advocacy issue centered around access to vision care. In 2022 SOLGEN revoked its provision of 'cheater' eyeglasses to prisoners, resorting to having them purchase eyeglasses through canteen funds—Meaning only individuals who have access to funds may obtain the glasses. Our organization has mitigated access issues by providing the

institution with a supply of glasses in a variety of prescriptions while we await a decision from the Ministry to change their policy. The number of calls from other institutions (Monteith, Kenora, and Fort Frances) where Thunder Bay prisoners have been transferred continued to increase, as prisoners were frustrated with the austere conditions of confinement that are often imposed in the name of staffing shortages. While post-pandemic continued to present challenges in delivering programmes and services, the opportunities far outweighed these challenges, helping to foster creative, collaborative approaches.



Through the support, talent and dedication of our program volunteers, board members, donors and our funding partners, the United Way of Thunder Bay, as well as the Ministry of Community Safety and Correctional Services, we continue to provide a broad spectrum of programs at the Thunder Bay Correctional Centre during the week. These programs include yoga, arts and crafts, life skills, as well as mindfulness and meditation. After a brief hiatus, our Sunday book club has returned, thanks to the energies of several new volunteers. These group programs provide opportunities for the inmates to interact as well as to share and develop new skills for healthy living. More importantly, for our volunteers and for the organization, the ability to deliver programming provides insight into the operations of the institution and an opportunity to highlight and address inmate concerns.

Through the funding support of the Ministry of Community Safety and Correctional Services, we continue to enhance weekly programming with individual visits. The goal of the weekly visitation program has been to assist women+ with a range of individual questions and concerns, as well as with the process of release planning. The Ministry has also contributed to the cost of providing items for a 'discharge' bag offered to inmates upon release. The bags contain essential hygiene items as well transit tickets to enable women+ to attend necessary appointments upon release, such as probation. Another highlight of the Ministry's financial contribution has resulted in our ability to partner with the New Directions Speakers School to offer a unique Speakers School at the Thunder Bay Correctional Centre. The program has been modified to reflect the interest of women+ in developing positive communications skills. Two such programs were offered in 2018, with another two scheduled for early 2019.

Through our participation we are not only able to share and discuss issues of common concern, but to work collectively to support individuals whose voices are not always heard. It is also a reminder that successful reintegration into the community is dependent on a number of social determinants that can only be addressed through community collaboration. Going forward, it is our hope that we can build our relationship with our national organization, the Canadian Association of Elizabeth Fry Societies, by contributing to the organization's positions on corrections policy initiatives. This has been another remarkable year



for the Elizabeth Fry Society of Northwestern Ontario as we continue to build capacity. Thank you to our Presidents, current and past, for your guidance, as well as to all of the Board members for your selfless caring and commitment to our work. There is incredible energy when we focus it collectively!

Report: Reintegration Services

Reintegration Worker: Jolaine Spanninga

Jolaine's primary focus as the Reintegration Worker is to work with clients that are incarcerated, working on release planning and continuing to work with them after discharge. As the Reintegration Worker at Elizabeth Fry, she facilitates visits at the Thunder Bay Correctional Centre (TBCC) to work with inmates preparing for transitioning from prison back to the community. Jolaine provides weekly one-to-one visits at the TBCC to plan for release, however, individuals are able to request her assistance to visit them in-person at any time.

Jolaine provides individuals with appropriate clothing for court appearances, as well as for when they are released. She assists clients with navigating housing systems, with searching for and securing housing, applying for financial assistance, as well as making referrals to wellbeing supports, such as mental health and addiction programs. She also assists with obtaining essential ID's for clients; such as health cards, birth certificates and status cards. In the community, Jolaine assists the Systems Navigators with their outreach work by cooking and providing hot meals to individuals in need.

This year, Jolaine completed SPDAT training; an assessment tool for frontline workers at agencies that work with homeless clients to prioritize housing needs. Jolaine also meets biweekly with service providers from 4 other organizations for a group presentation at the TBCC on how to thrive after release. She speaks about the services and programs that our organization offers, how we can assist with release planning efforts, and the continued support we provide to individuals after their release from custody. She also attended the Reintegration Meeting at The Health Unit, where a presentation was given on planning and preparing individuals for release and successful reintegration back into the community.

Since beginning her role with EFSNWO, Jolaine has helped many individuals, including:

- 16 EFry client intakes at the TBCC.
- Placed 2 people in our transitional housing directly out of incarceration.
- Assisted 4 clients with applying for addictions treatment programs; and 2 referrals for counseling services.
- Assisted with 15 TBDSSAB Rent-Geared-to-Income (RGI) housing applications; 1 of

which has been offered a housing unit.

- The waitlist to get into an RGI unit can be very lengthy, and by getting clients onto the High Needs Homelessness list we are able to expedite the wait times and get clients housed sooner.
- Assisted 3 clients with replacement birth certificates and completed income tax returns with 16 clients. Having taxes completed is mandatory to be able to apply for RGI housing; and it provides clients with regular benefits such as GST and Trillium.

Many clients are incarcerated for longer than necessary due to lack of housing. Recently, Jolaine met with a client at the TBCC about their needs after release and was able to secure a room for them in our transitional housing; ensuring the client's release from incarceration. Jolaine also assists clients with creating an individual action plan with clients that is based on their needs and strengths. She then supports them in working towards their goals.

Jolaine also assists clients with transportation to appointments such as probation meetings, to help individuals meet their mandated obligations, which helps to prevent recidivism. Jolaine also regularly assists clients who are incarcerated with communication to their lawyers. Another important service that Jolaine provides is writing letters of support on behalf of clients, for example to assist with the reunification process with their children. These letters are integral to clients' recovery of their personal lives by highlighting active participation in their healing journey through outlining the services they have accessed through EFSNWO.

Report: Systems Navigation Services

Systems Navigators: Jen Baxter , Alicia Gordon , Bonnie Aggamway



EFSNWO has grown to a total of 448 clients on the Master List, who Systems Navigators provide ongoing support and case management to. This year they welcomed a third Systems Navigator to the Circle of Care; Bonnie Aggamway, who has been instrumental in delivering client services at EFSNWO. The Navigator's dedication has supported running the community drop-in hub, providing support to the residents, running an emergency bed program throughout the winter months, and adding a second transitional home on Cameron St.

The System Navigators coordinate and host the community drop-in space, which includes programming and events on Tuesday and Thursday. On Wednesdays and Fridays they provide community outreach services. With food assistance from the Thunder Bay RFDA, the Navigators host a biweekly community food cupboard on Thursdays; distributing close to 140 food bags a month. They provide clients with clothing assistance, harm reduction supplies and assist with basic needs. System Navigators provide ID replacement, housing navigation, referrals for mental health / addictions / health services / legal and social services, transportation to treatment and home communities. They attend the Coordinated Housing Access Table (CHAT) meetings weekly, as well as a monthly service provider outreach gathering.

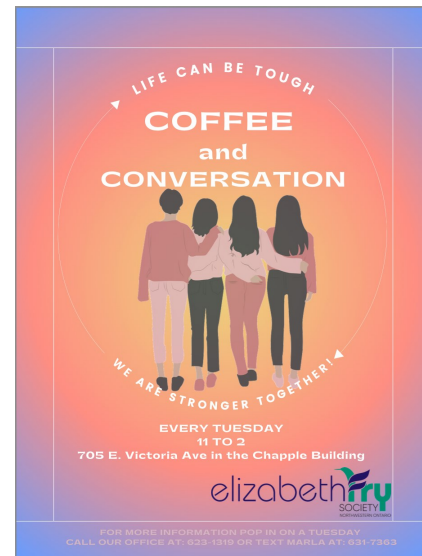


There have been challenges that are inherent in housing the demographic we serve without 24/7 staffing. We currently have overnight harm-reduction support staff on site 4 evenings a week in the transitional units, and residents may contact staff after hours in the event of an urgent issue. We hope to increase this support in the future.

The Navigators are present in the units during weekdays and they administer wellness checks to ensure that the units are in good condition. Intakes, admissions, responses to breaches of the rules of residency, and discharging is completed by the Navigators under the supervision of the Operations Director, Lindsay Martin. They also arrange rent payment agreements through TBDSSAB and ensure they are arriving monthly. Individual service plans are completed with residents, which they are then supported with and held accountable to. Residents are required to meet with the Navigators weekly to work on their goals.

System Navigators have provided numerous opportunities for training, personal development and growth for both clients and staff, including:

- The TBDHU Street Nursing Outreach team attended our office for training.
- A midwife from Nor West Community Health Centres joined us on a monthly basis for our Tuesday open house 'Coffee & Conversation' gatherings.
- We have had Thunder Bay Counseling at our space to provide a wayfinder presentation, which assists our clients in getting the maximum income support and benefits that they may be entitled to.
- The John Howard Society has attended our office to explain their Pardon Suspension Program with staff and clients.
- Nokiiwin Tribal Council has been in to present their Pre-Charge Diversion Program.
- We had the opportunity to facilitate 2 student placements this past year.
- We comprise a Circle of Care team and run the 2 Efry transitional housing units.



Client Success Story - #1

We have an ongoing waitlist with upwards of 15 individuals, and continue to see an increase of referrals from other agencies leading to residency in our unit.

In the past month, we have had the opportunity to support a vulnerable trans woman who was experiencing many levels of discrimination in the community. Due to her significant mental health issues she was unable to maintain productive healthy relationships with community service providers. She has been banned from nearly every service provider in the community and was not able to seek support for her needs. The client reached out to EFry after a police wellness check had resulted in an assault charge; caused by a deeply rooted fear of the police and hospitalization from previous trauma of forcible confinement in the AMH forensic unit at the TBRHSC. Since connecting with this client, we have seen a positive change in her communication skills and her personal progress has been dramatic. Although there is still much work to be done, and she faces many limitations, she has made significant improvement. With our support, she has successfully completed her fingerprinting for the Thunder Bay Police, attended court, and has agreed to work with the CMHA diversion program, which she previously refused to participate with. She is developing new coping skills to manage the stigma she continually faces in the community as a trans woman with mental health issues, and she has found the unconditional support she greatly needs with our Systems Navigator Circle of Care. However, even with so much progress, this client is soon to be evicted from her unit and is at high risk for homelessness, forcible confinement in an institution, and incarceration. The Navigators recognize that they are the last line of support for this individual and are committed to finding working solutions for all parties involved, so that the client can move forward in a healthy way.

Client Success Story - #2

In November of 2022, the Navigators were introduced to an at-risk youth who was living in a tent behind Thunder Bay Counseling. They immediately provided housing to this individual in our May St harm reduction unit. Very soon after moving in, the client began to emerge from living in a state of survival due to homelessness and quickly began thriving with support. We are grateful to have opened the new transitional home on Cameron St. and have been able to offer this client a place to call home where she continued to thrive. She completed a 7-week

cooking course at Roots to Harvest, subsequently gained employment and most recently, independent housing!

A message from the client:

“I want to thank you and all your staff for everything you have done for me. You guys saved my life and got me off the streets and into a better headspace and atmosphere. I couldn't be more thankful for what you guys have done for me because without you and your staff, I couldn't imagine where I'd be today. So once again, thank you so much.”

