

REACH Niagara Provider Meeting Minutes

May 31, 2022

here are some highlights from our recent in-person meeting, which took place on Tues May 31 from 1-4pm:

1. We said thank you and goodbye to Greg Shupe, our social worker. Greg is retiring after providing excellent care and support to people staying at Booth Centre and Southridge Shelter.

2. We welcomed Raoul Masseur as our new social worker. He's been oriented by Greg, and will be working at Booth Centre and Southridge.

3. Claire Laurie from Positive Living Niagara showed us how injection drug users prep and use substances, and how we can help them be safer. We'll start by distributing safe injection supplies from the mobile clinic.

4. We had a brief discussion about vacation and illness - please let David and/or I know so sites can be notified. I also introduced the notion of 'on-call'. This would be daytime from 9am to 9pm; I get called on average 1-3 times a week, and deal with med renewals approx 2 per week. If anyone is interested in helping particularly when I'm away, please let me know.

5. I briefly updated the team about ongoing and emerging projects:

- treating skin/soft tissue infections at the Safe Injection Site via virtual care
- developing "recuperative beds" in Niagara: plans for a 10-bed unit for people too healthy for hospital and too sick for shelter.
- Safer Supply: a Niagara consortium which includes REACH received a \$1.2 million Health Canada grant to launch a 'safer supply' program. This entails providing Fentanyl users a safer alternative prescription opioid to reduce their risk of overdose and death.
- our current clinics supporting migrant agricultural workers, and our planned pilot (fall 2022) clinic for immigrants and refugees.

6. Meeting frequency:

- We agreed that meeting in person twice weekly was desirable, with a mix of education and business.
- Providers wanted to continue with the Zoom meetings but reduce the frequency to one per month. I'll be sending a new meeting schedule.

7. Teaching: we currently accept medical students and family medicine residents. The team agreed that learners from other health professions would be welcome.

8. The MD's stayed to discuss AFP business (this will change how REACH physicians are paid from fee-for-service to hourly)

- We looked at the finances: both the hourly and max rates are the same as Shelter Health in Hamilton. We will be submitting hours via email to the billing organization and doing shadow billing via the EMR. Instructions to follow once I get them.
- Leadership: this is another 'pot' of funding that any MD who provides leadership time to REACH use to get paid for their time.
- Administrative: this is an annual amount to pay our medical secretary.

If you have ideas or suggestions please share them with me.

If your site is short of supplies, or we don't stock something you need, let me know.

Thank you all for your good work!