

# 405 Alexander Report to the Community

Welcome to the third edition of our 405 Alexander Report to the Community! It's hard to imagine that a year has already gone by since we first assumed operation of the program back in October of 2022. We're proud of what our service users, staff team, and community partners have been able to accomplish in that time, even as we also know there is much more to be done.

## SINCE OUR TRANSITION, CONNECTIVE STAFF HAVE

Served  
**111,256**  
Meals

On-site and  
takeaway dinners

Hosted  
**15,944**  
Stays

In our 54  
emergency beds

Distributed  
**11,490**  
Harm Reduction Items

From condoms  
to naloxone kits

Averted  
**40**  
Overdoses

Through naloxone  
administration

The challenges facing our community are incredibly complex. Daily, our staff see the impacts of everything from homelessness, to substance use, and intergenerational trauma.

Connective is proud to respond to these and other challenges through our work at 405 Alexander and beyond, but we also know that these services are just **one piece of a much larger community puzzle**.

It's why we have been so eager to collaborate with all levels of government; First Nations; and a range of partners across the health, justice, and social sectors – to improve outcomes for both our service users and the wider community.

This has always been true, but especially so in recent months, as significant local attention has been focused on 405 Alexander and the wider state of community well-being in Whitehorse.

Those who access 405 Alexander experience multiple, intersecting barriers. Ideally, there would be multiple sites and types of programming to respond to their unique needs. While there are a great many organizations operating in the community, the reality is that the diversity of challenges continues to outstrip the diversity of services available in response.

We are optimistic that recent attention and conversations have helped generate the kind of momentum needed to produce lasting change.



Bingo Night



Thanksgiving Dinner

# HERE FOR EVERYONE

## 405 Alexander's Role in the Community

The primary purpose of 405 Alexander is to provide temporary emergency shelter for up to 54 individuals experiencing homelessness. The shelter's focus is to bring people indoors and provide them with access to food, warmth, and wrap-around supports.

Separately, the program offers permanent supportive housing to 20 residents. Thanks to collaboration from a number of government and community partners, the space also offers a broad range of programming and health services to anyone in need.

### SERVICES AVAILABLE

**Bagged Meal Program:** Pilot launched in May to distribute bagged dinners to community members in need (5,780 meals have been distributed, to date).

**Blood Ties:** Offers regularly scheduled wellness and harm reduction programming.

**Cultural Support Worker:** Through partnership with CYFN, works directly with Indigenous residents and service users to provide culturally appropriate and trauma-informed supports and services, including individual counselling and cultural activities.

**Emergency Medical Services:** Fully trained staff on site daily to meet primary care needs and offer access to drug checking and take-home Fentanyl testing kits.

**Kwanlin Dün First Nation Health Centre Outreach:** Weekly clinic that provides referrals to other agencies, sexually transmitted infection testing, foot care, and adult immunizations.

**Mental Wellness & Substance Use Services:** Provides weekly access to counselling and other mental health and addiction supports.

**Referred Care Clinic:** Twice weekly clinic providing service user access to a physician, outreach nurse, and social worker.

## DONATION DRIVE

### Seeking: Winter Gear

As temperatures drop and snow begins to fall, there are many in the community who lack the winter gear required to keep warm. This can cause severe discomfort and can lead to more serious health problems.

To support individuals accessing 405 Alexander, we are asking anyone with new or gently used, warm winter gear to consider donating!



#### We are looking for:



- Base Layers
- Boots
- Fleece Items
- Gloves
- Jackets
- Outer Pants
- Scarves
- Toques
- Warm Socks



Donations can be dropped off at  
405 Alexander, between 7AM - 4PM



# BEADS AND BANNOCK

## Cultural Programming at 405 Alexander

Recognizing the role culture plays in healing, growth, and resilience for our Indigenous residents and service users, we are honoured to partner with the **Council of Yukon First Nations (CYFN)** to provide cultural support and programming at 405 Alexander.

Support encompasses everything from traditional meal preparation to drum making, smudging, prayer circles, and individual counselling.

We spoke with **Darlene Jim (Cultural Support Worker)** and **Chantal Genier (Senior Analyst at CYFN)** to learn more about this important work.



## THE VALUE OF EMBEDDED SUPPORT

**CG:** There is a legacy of mistrust in government provided services that often acts as a barrier for First Nations and Indigenous people in accessing supports, and other service providers – although well intentioned – don't often offer services that truly meet the needs of First Nations and Indigenous people. Cultural Support Workers...increase client comfortability approaching the worker for assistance. Once a bond is established, they can then make referrals for other supports, if needed.

## THE IMPACT AT 405 ALEXANDER

**CG:** Darlene has helped residents and shelter users participate in public awareness raising activities that they weren't comfortable participating in before, like the Red Dress Day march...Inclusion in these activities has increased connection and belonging amongst First Nations and Indigenous residents and shelter users.

**DJ:** Participants enjoy coming to visit with me, cooking breakfast, or whatever they like – they are more than welcome to come visit to rest and relax, or to take part in programming. It's a safe space for the residents. They are very proud of their accomplishments – very proud and happy.

## CULTURE AS A SOURCE OF STRENGTH

**CG:** The loss of culture is a reality for all First Nations and Indigenous people due to the impacts of colonialism and current systemic and structural inequity. Culture is an important protective factor in everyone's lives, helping people deal more effectively with stressors and helping build resiliency.

**DJ:** It gives them a sense of inclusion and gives them back their identity. Even if it is a slow process, by attending workshops they develop a connection with themselves, and a sense of ownership.

# WHO TO CALL, WHEN TO CALL

Supporting Community Wellbeing



Call **911** if you see a crime or safety risk in progress or about to be committed

Call non-emergency at **867-667-5555** if the event has already happened



Call **911** if you see a fire in progress

Call non-emergency at **867-668-2462** if you have any fire safety concerns



Call **911** if you see someone who is nonresponsive or having a medical emergency

Wait for an ambulance and do not move the person



Contact about property conditions, graffiti, excessive noise, street obstructions, or litter / dumping in public spaces

☎ **867-667-2111**    ✉ [bylaw.services@whitehorse.ca](mailto:bylaw.services@whitehorse.ca)



Contact if you have concerns about an individual's behaviour or safety; about the state of the property or excessive noise; or for anything else immediate

☎ **867-455-2820**    ✉ [wes@connective.ca](mailto:wes@connective.ca)

## COMMUNITY SHOUT OUTS!

We wanted to give a special shout out to our friends and partners at the **Blood Ties Four Directions Centre**.

In September, Blood Ties celebrated the two-year anniversary of their supervised consumption site. When it opened in 2021, Yukon became only the 6<sup>th</sup> jurisdiction in Canada to open such a facility, and it signified an important step in response to the opioid crisis.

Now, two years later, staff have **successfully responded to 51 overdoses**. They've offered a tremendous service to the community, and we couldn't be happier to have them as collaborators at 405 Alexander.



We also want to extend our thanks and appreciation to both the **Yukon Food Network** and **The Chocolate Claim Café!**

The Chocolate Claim donated a proofer which, thanks to the work of the Food Network, made its way to our 405 Alexander kitchen staff. It has gone to good use, and the delicious scent of fresh baked bread and other goodies have been welcomed by all.

