

ANNUAL REPORT

2021 - 2022



ELIZABETH FRY
SOCIETY OF OTTAWA

Leadership Message



Nancy Richard,
President, Board of Directors



Cathy Robinson,
Executive Director

Reflecting on our work in 2021-22 to support a diverse range of clients and their varied needs, a few things stand out with respect to how we continued to deliver on the six strategic directions, renewed annually by our Board of Directors. Highlights of our efforts cross our six focused directions:

Delivering and strengthening our core services to clients and the community continued to be the focus of our day-to-day work as a front-line organization. Our staff bring expertise, experience, compassion and commitment to support clients with what they need on a daily basis as they navigate their lives during and after involvement with the criminal justice system. This past year, many of our clients continued to experience mental health challenges and substance use, and were thus a focus for teams in counselling, housing support, residential services, and virtually all specialized support programs and services.

E Fry Ottawa continues to strive to be a **workplace of choice in the not-for-profit sector**. Our work is important to the individuals we serve and to the community – and we work to ensure that staff are aware of their contribution looks like in each of their roles. To support staff in their challenging work, we secured funding to better support staff mental health. We also worked with our union (OPSEU) to negotiate a new collective agreement that brings an increase in staff wages, and other adjustments that provide new flexibility and benefits for existing staff and that better support recruitment and retention into the future. We reviewed and recognized the value of managers through adjustments to our management framework and salaries.

Leadership Message

continued...

E Fry Ottawa's vision calls for **an inclusive and just world without prisons**. We continued to promote and build support for humane and safe alternatives to prisons – and to advocate for the abolition of jails and prisons. We voiced strong disagreement to the planned creation of a jail in Kemptville for men and women. We continued to partner with the Canadian Association of Elizabeth Fry Societies and the Council of Elizabeth Fry Societies of Ontario on national and provincial issues, including the housing crisis, poverty, human rights and other issues affecting criminalized women and gender-diverse people.

While our commitment to having a **purpose-built E Fry Ottawa hub** to serve our clients under one roof remains strong, we shifted gears in 2020-21 and continued to significantly improve our residential facilities to ensure a more comfortable and functional space for our residents over the short term – including by reducing the number of residents who need to share rooms – rendering them more COVID-safe and, importantly, supporting the dignity and needs for privacy of our residents. Our renovations, which will also increase accessibility for residents with mobility challenges, will wrap up in early 2022-23.

Goodbye from Nancy Richard, President, Board of Directors

In October 2022, I will complete a one-year term as President of the Board, and two additional years as the Chair of the Human Resources Committee. I will be moving out of province and will thus be unable to commit to the organization in the way that I believe is required for the important role of President. Over the course of my work on the Board, as other Board members, employees, managers, clients and most of all, our tireless Executive Director, Cathy Robinson, shared their gifts with me, I have come to realize that allies come in all shapes and sizes, and bring what they are able to bring. All of it is valuable. I am so proud of the work that has been accomplished during a very difficult time for our clients and our staff. In all of the work that I see, our clients continue to be at the heart of what we do every day. Through our strategic plan, our programs and the partnerships we build, we continue to focus on advocating for a segment of our community that is often forgotten and too easily ignored. It is imperative that we continue to raise awareness of why and how women become criminalized and to advocate to abolish prisons so that we, as a society, can support women with the help they need before they become criminalized. I will continue to be an ambassador for E Fry Ottawa, Elizabeth Fry Societies across the country, and the Canadian Association of Elizabeth Fry Societies. You have given me a gift that I intend to share.



Leadership Message

continued...

Building and maintaining partnerships enriches our capacity to meet the diverse and often complex needs of our clients. We rely on our partners in the community, the province and the country for their knowledge, advice and hands-on support to our clients. We are at our best in this community when we collaborate to support those who would otherwise fall into the cracks of the social justice, mental health and other systems. We both receive from and give to our partners, including through formal agreements and informal opportunities to support the most vulnerable in our community.

As a community not-for-profit organization, we rely on funding for our core programs and services from governments (national, provincial, local) and from other not-for-profit funders and organizations. We also rely on the individual donations we receive that often come with a connection to a family member or friend who has been supported by E Fry Ottawa. Our clients are friends, mothers, siblings, partners, neighbours and community members. One of the ways we advocate as an agency for our clients is by asking our funders and donors for what our clients need – and for what we need to do our important work in the community. We sincerely thank our funders and our donors for enabling us to do our work.

A word from Cathy Robinson, Executive Director

The past year presented E Fry Ottawa with some amazing opportunities and supports that enabled us to better serve our clients as we look to the future. With some generous funding, we progressed with some renovations to our residential spaces that will support our residential clients. We secured funding to establish some new and exciting programs for the coming year, including a pilot project to support residential and community clients working to prepare for substance use treatment, as well as for an open hub to meet varied needs of clients for social connection and skill-building. These and other additions reflect evolving client needs, including after two years in a pandemic.

Our staff are both the heart and engine of our work. They listen to clients, support them to find solutions to very challenging situations, and bring both compassion and expertise each and every day to our clients. Students and volunteers contribute enormously to what we can offer clients. Our dedicated Board of Directors continued to provide the expert guidance that we rely on to remain a thriving organization. I thank our entire staff, our students and volunteers, and our Board members. I am deeply grateful to Nancy Richard, our Board President, for her leadership and skill this past year.

Our Team

Abigail White
Alma Galicia
Amanda Dookie
Ariane Dupuis
Ashley McCullough
Baveeta Kumar
Becca Bouchey
Breanna Patrick
Cassidy Howse
Catherine Kasande
Catherine Ssozi
Cathy Robinson
Diane Serre
Jacqueline Brusse
Jamie Richard

Kai Seymour
Kayla Crowe
Kierra Maika
Leanne Peterkin
Lillianne Kho
Madeline Kilby
Marina Guadagnin
Meika Clarke
Michelle Lawrence
Nashita Ahmed
Nasteha Mohamed
Natasha Olarte
Natasha Reitano
Ogasso Abdillahi
Olena Logvynovych

Rachelle Hawthorn
Rebecca Rynard
Rebeccah McKinnon
Rosalyn Martin
Sarah Al-Anezi
Sarah Callaghan
Shannon Petruk
Shelley McManus
Stephanie Mar
Suzy Racine
Symonne Gordon
Tania Hasbani
Tan Bokhari
Taylor Ward
Violeta Chitgian

*Active as of March 31, 2022





Board of Directors

Our 2021-2022 Board of Directors is comprised of community members who volunteer their time and bring their expertise to govern and provide strategic direction to EFry Ottawa. Their unmeasurable contributions are appreciated by all who touch, or are touched by the Elizabeth Fry Society of Ottawa.

Nancy Richard | President, Executive Committee, and Chair, Relocation Committee

Shawna Holmes | Vice President, Executive Committee, and Chair, Community Engagement Committee

Chirag Gehani | Treasurer, Executive Committee, and Chair, Finance Committee

Chloe Halpenny | Secretary, Executive Committee, and Community Engagement Committee

Emma Tibbo | Chair, Human Resources Committee, and Building & Relocation Committee*

Genevieve Malette | Human Resources Committee (Interim Chair from February 2022)

Laura Crich | Human Resources Committee

Alexandria Bonney | Community Engagement Committee

Adrienne Fanjoy | Human Resources Committee

Feliciano Goncalves-Sebastiao | Community Engagement Committee

Deroux Jones | Finance Committee

Tanya Ironstone | Building & Relocation Committee

*Resigned in February 2022

Volunteers and Students

E Fry Ottawa Volunteers

Our robust Volunteer Program was hard hit by COVID-19 and continued to be impacted significantly throughout 2021-22. Many of our volunteers support our Court Support Program, volunteer at the Ottawa-Carleton Detention Centre (OCDC), provide important support to our residents, group programming, Drop-In, Gateway and Indigenous Peer Support, and assist with administrative tasks and client holiday events. Due to COVID-19, many of the volunteer opportunities remained on pause due to public health restrictions at the Court House, OCDC and because much of our programming continued to be virtual or reduced to very small groups. Those who could volunteer from afar continued to support us. By March 2021, we were in discussions with funders to reinstate some key volunteer support and we expect to welcome back more of our volunteers in 2022-23. You are a vital component of our service delivery!

Placement Students

Students are vital assets to our residential programs at JF Norwood House and Lotus House, as well as in. Collaborating with various university and college programs in Ottawa, we typically host one placement student per semester at each of our houses. Students work along side residential support staff to learn the tasks, challenges, and rewards of these programs and to work with vulnerable clients that we serve at EFry Ottawa. Many of our students become EFry employees once their placement is complete. Thank you to our students of 2021-2022!

Financial Supporters

We thank and acknowledge our funders, financial supporters, and in-kind donors.

BenefAction Foundation
Boys and Girls Club of Ottawa
Bronson Centre Inc.
Canadian Association of Elizabeth Fry Societies
City of Ottawa
Correctional Service Canada
Complete Outdoor Services
Dominion Chalmers United Church
Emond Harnden
Fabrick Collective
Holy Redeemer Catholic Women's League
IBM Employees' Charitable Fund (ECP)
Ministry of Children, Community and Social Services (Ontario)
Ministry of the Attorney General (Ontario)
Ministry of the Solicitor General (Ontario)
Ontario Trillium Foundation
Ottawa Community Foundation
Ottawa Food Bank
Rogers
SS De L'Institut Jeanne D'Arc

The Benevity Community Impact Fund
The Burton Charitable Foundation
The Prior Family Foundation
The Properties Group Management
The Toronto Dominion Bank
Tim Davis Design Inc.
United Way East Ontario
United Way Simcoe Muskoka
United Way Toronto
University of Ottawa Association of Women in Law

Thank you to our many individual donors who help increase the impact of our work! Your support in 2021-22 enabled us to meet needs of clients who are already marginalized and further marginalized by COVID-19.

Programs and Services

E Fry Ottawa offered a range of programming and services tailored to the needs of women and gender-diverse people who have been or may become criminalized. Here are some highlights.

JF Norwood House

Funded by Correctional Service Canada and the Ministry of the Solicitor General (Ontario)

JF Norwood House (JFN) is a 15-bed transition house located in downtown Ottawa. JFN offers a supportive living environment to federally and provincially sentenced adult women, transgender, non-binary and two-spirit people, including those experiencing housing and stability needs. JFN staff support clients with successful reintegration of residents into the community by offering a safe and encouraging environment where residents can focus on education and employment, while making use of other E Fry Ottawa services and wider community supports. Our staff provide in-reach services to women in federal prisons to support their reintegration to the community upon release. Operations remained fully active throughout 2021-22 in spite of COVID-19, as we welcomed residents from across the country.

Lotus House

Funded by the Ministry of the Attorney General (Ontario)

Lotus House provides a safe and supportive residence for adult women who are on bail under Ontario's Bail Verification and Supervision Program. Lotus House staff provide community-based supervision for adult women, transgender, non-binary and two-spirit people who would otherwise likely be held in custody pending the resolution of their criminal charges. Residents have access to other E Fry Ottawa services, including counselling, crisis intervention, education and employment guidance, and referrals to other community resources. We partner with the John Howard Society of Ottawa, which provides bail supervision to support residents at Lotus House. In spite of COVID-19, E Fry Ottawa continued to provide a safe and supportive bail residence, adhering to public health measures to reduce the risk of COVID-19 spread among residents.



Foodbank

Supplied by the Ottawa Foodbank

E Fry Ottawa supports residents at both Lotus House and JF Norwood House with food provided by the Ottawa Food Bank. We also provide emergency food to community clients through JF Norwood House. As was the case with all our programs and services, COVID-19 required us to add protocols and procedures to keep clients and staff safe. The need for emergency food provisions to community clients remained high throughout the year.

Programs and Services



Community Counselling

Funded by United Way East Ontario & the City of Ottawa

E Fry Ottawa provides a range of counselling services to young and adult women, transgender, non-binary and two-spirit people who are, have been, or may become in conflict with the law. Our counsellors work from a human-centered, trauma-informed approach and use models that integrate the individual needs of clients. We offer individual counselling in mental health and addictions and structured, multi-session programs that include: Emotion Regulation, Life After Trauma, Relapse Prevention, and Theft Prevention.

Direct Accountability Program

Funded by the Ministry of the Attorney General (Ontario)

The Direct Accountability Program (DAP) delivered at the Ottawa and L'Orignal Courthouses is an alternative to formal prosecution for eligible individuals 18 years of age and older who have been charged with minor criminal offences. Under the program, charges are either withdrawn or stayed for those who take responsibility and complete community-based sanctions to make amends for their wrong-doing. Our Program Facilitator delivers educational programming in the areas of Theft Prevention, Anger Management and Alcohol and Drug Awareness.

Court Support Program

Funded by United Way East Ontario

The Court Support Program, supervised by E Fry Ottawa's Court Support Worker, is typically carried out by our volunteers. Due to COVID-19, volunteers have been limited to virtual participation, and our Court Support Worker worked with people to navigate the criminal justice system through a the virtual process that continued, given the prevalence of COVID-19 in the community. We connected people to a variety of community resources, including to support those who were self-represented and/or making use of Legal Aid.

Programs and Services

Parenting Inside Out® Program

Funded by the Ontario Trillium Foundation

The Parenting Inside Out® Program (PIO) is an evidence-based, nationally recognized cognitive-behavioural parenting skills training program developed for parents involved in the criminal justice system. PIO teaches parents a way of navigating life that uses healthy, pro-social skills to interact with children, partners, co-parents, professionals, friends and family, and helps them learn and practice skills to become better parents and role models. Under COVID-19, we adapted PIO to be delivered virtually. In 2021-22, we continued to offer the virtual program, and began to return to in-person programming, in Diana's Place, our Child and Family Centre. Diana's Place is a community-based child and family centre that allows mothers to be mothers in a safe, supportive home like setting, and to reunite with their child(ren) after separation. Mothers are offered community resources and services to strengthen community reintegration. Diana's Place continued to provide a COVID-safe environment for mother-child visits.

Community Liaison Services – Ottawa-Carleton Detention Centre

Funded by the Ministry of the Solicitor General (Ontario)

E Fry Ottawa provides one-to-one support and advocacy to adult women, transgender, non-binary and two-spirit people imprisoned at the Ottawa-Carleton Detention Centre (OCDC). Our Community Liaison Worker provides information and referrals to E Fry Ottawa programs and services and connects clients to other community resources and services to assist with reintegration. Our Addictions Counsellor provides relapse prevention programming and individual counselling at OCDC to those seeking supports with substance use and/or who wish to attend treatment programming on release. Towards the end of the year, we began planning for the return of volunteers to the jail in 2022-23, as OCDC guidelines allow.

Youth Reintegration and Diversion Services

Funded by the Ministry of Children, Community and Social Services (Ontario)

E Fry Ottawa helps young women, men, transgender, non-binary and two-spirit people aged 12 to 17 years who are in conflict with the law by providing holistic, gender-specific and client-centered programming. Our youth programs include: Theft Prevention, Understanding Anger, Decision Making and Love Yourself. Our youth services are designed to increase pro-social behaviour among participants. Our Youth Reintegration and Diversion Worker also offers supports to justice-impacted youth who are reintegrating into the Ottawa Community after being in custody.

Programs and Services

Housing Support to Women in Rural Eastern Ontario

Funded by the Government of Canada's Reaching Home: Homelessness Partnering Strategy (Rural and Remote Communities Initiative), through United Way Simcoe Muskoka

Through this program, E Fry Ottawa's Housing Support Worker provides housing-related services to adult women, transgender, non-binary and two-spirit people in rural eastern Ontario to reduce the risk of homelessness and/or help women achieve housing stability. We serve communities in the Champlain District (including Renfrew County), Lanark, Leeds and Grenville, Stormont Dundas, Glengarry and Prescott-Russell. Through a case management approach, staff support clients to find and retain safe and affordable housing. Staff also accompany/provide transportation to view potential residences, provide advocacy in dealing with landlords/tribunals, and offer information on tenant rights and responsibilities.



Housing Support: Reducing Homelessness, Achieving Housing Stability for Women

Funded by the City of Ottawa, under the Home for Good Initiative and the Community Homelessness Prevention Initiative

Our Housing Support Worker and Housing-Based Case Manager provide housing services in Ottawa to reduce the risk of homelessness and/or help clients achieve housing stability. Under separate, overlapping initiatives, we support women, transgender, non-binary and two-spirit people exiting jail or prison into the Ottawa area, as well as those who are criminalized in our community who are homeless. We collaborate with other community agencies to share information and resources that support stable housing arrangements. COVID-19 continued to strain the ability of many community members to find safe and permanent, increasing the importance of this program.

Programs and Services

Indigenous Peer Support

Funded by the Ontario Trillium Foundation

Our Indigenous Peer Support program is designed to support our criminalized Indigenous residents and community clients with culturally appropriate supports. Making use of Indigenous resources in the community, the program provides a safe space for participants to discuss issues specific to Indigenous communities, learn and share information on justice issues, and includes guest Indigenous facilitators to provide activities and ceremonies designed to re-engage clients with their culture. Changes to public health guidelines in 2021-22 allowed us to hold in-person groups and we also continued to support Indigenous clients on a one-to-one basis and connect them to community resources.

Gateway

Funded by the Ottawa Community Foundation

Gateway is a peer support program for gender-diverse people who are currently/have been working in the sex trade. Recognizing each participant as an expert in their own life, Gateway provides a safe and non-judgemental space for discussion and emotional support. The facilitator links participants to other supports and resources they need, including counselling, food and clothing, and harm reduction support. Program launch was impacted by COVID-19, and supports and services were provided on an individual basis over the year.

Women's Drop-In Centre

Funded by the Ontario Trillium Foundation

Our vibrant Drop-In welcomes all young and adult women, transgender, non-binary and two-spirit people – including those who are marginalized and traditionally underserved in our community. Relaxation of some COVID-19 public health guidelines allowed us to return to regular small group discussion and activities in our Drop-In Centre. Outside of group sessions, our Coordinator provides clients access to basic needs, including clothing, snacks, toiletries, bus tickets, food bank, and external and internal referrals for additional support and advocacy.





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