

ADMINISTRATIVE REPORT

TO: Robert Nicolay, City Manager	DATE: January 17, 2023
FROM: Angela Sutherland, Director, Community Social Development	MEETING: Public & Protective Services Committee
SUBJECT: Addiction and Mental Health Supports Inventory & Cross-Municipality Comparison	

RECOMMENDATIONS

That Committee accept this report for information.

PREVIOUS COUNCIL / COMMITTEE DIRECTIONS

At the August 16th, 2022, Protective Services Committee meeting, the following motion was passed:

“Administration report back with a comparative inventory of treatment, recovery, addictions and mental health services in Grande Prairie and other Alberta urban areas.”

BACKGROUND

For the purposes of the inventory, Administration collected data regarding the available **outpatient treatment, inpatient treatment, residential treatment, withdrawal management centres, continuing care supports** (in particular, **transitional and supportive housing**), and **harm reduction programs** for both adult and youth across five Alberta municipalities.

The five municipalities selected for comparison are **Grande Prairie, Lethbridge, Medicine Hat, Red Deer, and Wood Buffalo (Fort McMurray)**. These five “mid-sized” cities were selected due to similar population sizes and that they are experiencing similar challenges. Furthermore, they do not border Calgary or Edmonton, as both large cities have significantly more addiction and mental health programs and services available for residents (and those living nearby) due to their large population sizes.

The methodology involved collecting information on programs and supports from a variety of databases and search engines including: Helpseeker, Alberta 211, informalberta.ca, Alberta Health Services’ “Find Healthcare”, and Recovery Access Alberta. To fill in gaps in information and data, AHS or other organizations were contacted directly, provincial or municipal publications and reports were scanned, and applicable websites were accessed. This inventory and comparison are limited to the information that is readily available and accessible in each of these categories, and predominantly focuses on publicly funded programs and supports.

ANALYSIS

A summary table showing a cross-municipality comparison of the available outpatient programs, inpatient (hospital) treatment, residential withdrawal management, residential treatment, continuing care supports in the forms of transitional/temporary and permanent supportive housing, and intoxication shelter spaces for both adults and youth is provided below. Further details can be found in the attached report.

Table 1: Alberta Cross-Municipality Comparison of Addiction & Mental Health Supports

Addiction & Mental Health Programs, Treatment, and Supports	Grande Prairie	Lethbridge	Medicine Hat	Red Deer	Wood Buffalo
Population (2021 Census)	64,141	98,406	63,271	100,844	72,326
Outpatient Programs AHS Addiction & Mental Health - Adult	15	10	11	9	9
Outpatient Programs AHS Addiction & Mental Health - Youth	7	5	6	6	6
Inpatient Treatment # of Acute Psychiatry Beds	28	41	31	40	10
Residential Withdrawal Management Centres (Adult) # of Facilities	1	2	1	1	1
Residential Withdrawal Management Centres (Adult) Total # of Beds	20	35	6	20	11
Residential Treatment Facilities (Adult) # of Facilities	2	2	1	1	2
Residential Treatment Facilities (Adult) # of Long-Term Beds (30+ days)	33	48	0	40	14
Residential Treatment Facilities (Adults) # of Short-Term Beds (<30 days)	40	0	12	0	16
NEW Recovery Community Beds (These facilities are not open yet).	N/A	50	N/A	75	N/A
Residential Treatment Facilities (Youth) # of Facilities	1	1	0	1	0
Residential Treatment Facilities (Youth) # of Long Term (30+ days) Beds	0	8	0	0	0
Withdrawal & Stabilization (Youth) # of Short Term (<15 days) Beds	4	0	0	8	0
Transitional or Temporary Supportive Housing (Adults) # of Units	33	66	58	12	10
Permanent Supportive Housing (Adults)	84	52	30	62	47

Addiction & Mental Health Programs, Treatment, and Supports	Grande Prairie	Lethbridge	Medicine Hat	Red Deer	Wood Buffalo
# of Units					
Emergency/Transitional/Temporary Supportive Housing (Youth)	24	15+	10	12+	7
# of Beds					
Adult Shelters	55	0	0	46	32
# of Cots					
Adult Shelters	42	88	30	100	35
# of Intox Mats					

1. Many outpatient addiction and mental health supports are available but navigating the AHS directories and finding detailed information about programs and supports can be complicated.
2. Some outpatient services and programs predominantly for children and youth are available in other centres, but not Grande Prairie; such as infant and preschool mental health services.
3. There is a noticeable gap in transitional housing opportunities for individuals that have completed withdrawal and stabilization programs and/or short-term recovery in Grande Prairie.
4. In Grande Prairie, there is only one long-term residential treatment centre. This limits the programming options available to individuals.
5. Withdrawal supports are available for youth in Grande Prairie, but at this point, there is no residential treatment facility. Youth needing residential treatment programs typically travel to Edmonton.
6. There is a lack of residential treatment options that integrate traditional First Nations cultural and spiritual practices. For example, In January, the Alpha House in Lethbridge will be transferred over to an Indigenous Organization (the Blood Tribe) to assume operations, in recognition of the importance of Indigenous-led programming.
7. There is a need to ensure adequate Continuing Care supports are available including permanent supportive housing and sober living facilities.
8. Ideally, Grande Prairie would have a Recovery Community Treatment Centre that meets the holistic needs of the individual and provides care from detox to treatment through to recovery management, like one of the new facilities that are being constructed in Medicine Hat or Red Deer, or like the Thorpe Recovery Centre in Lloydminster ([Thorpe Recovery Centre – Real Life. Real Recovery.](#)).

Relationship to City Council's Areas of Focus / Strategic Priorities

Ensuring adequate addiction and mental health supports are available in Grande Prairie aligns with Council's Strategic Priorities of Quality of Life and Inclusive and Caring Community.

Environmental Impact

There are no environmental impacts associated with this report.

Economic Impact

There are no economic impacts associated with this report.

Social Impact

Ensuring that residents have access to a full range of addictions and mental health services that meets their needs is vital for the health and safety of residents. An inventory is the first step in identifying areas for future research and/or advocacy.

Relevant Statutes / Master Plans / City Documents

There are no additional documents, at this time.

Risk

There are no risks associated with this report.

Alternatives (Optional)

N/A

STAKEHOLDER ENGAGEMENT

The City of Grande Prairie contacted numerous organizations and agencies that work in the field of addiction, mental health, and homelessness across the province to find out the necessary information and data to complete this inventory, including Alberta Health Services.

The City of Grande Prairie consulted with Helpseeker to assist in building the inventory of available addiction and mental health supports.

BUDGET / FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

There are no budget/financial implications associated with this report.

SUMMARY / CONCLUSION

Ongoing advocacy is needed to ensure that Grande Prairie has a broad spectrum of holistic approaches available to those needing addiction and mental health supports. This includes mental health supports for all ages and stages, as well as choice when it comes to the type of treatment and recovery program (including length/duration). It is also important to ensure that appropriate continuing care programs are available that support people both in-between withdrawal and treatment, and beyond initial treatment and recovery.

ATTACHMENTS

Attachment 1: Addiction & Mental Health Services Inventory Report