



Media Release

JULY 24, 2023

Regional Stakeholders Gather to Discuss Community Safety and Well-being

On Monday, July 17th, 2023, the municipalities of Bonnechere Valley, Brudenell, Lyndoch and Raglan; Killaloe, Hagarty and Richards; Madawaska Valley; and South Algonquin hosted a regional stakeholders meeting on community safety and well-being (CSWB). Advisors from across Renfrew County and the District of Nipissing gathered in person at the Madawaska Valley Township office in Barry's Bay, and via Zoom to discuss the implementation of CSWB initiatives.

Three years ago, Brudenell, Lyndoch and Raglan; Killaloe, Hagarty and Richards; Madawaska Valley; and South Algonquin chose to work together on CSWB and create a regional plan. The initiative aimed to enhance the provision of services, and quality of life across the area. The CSWB plan was completed in the summer of 2021 and approved by each council. In the spring of 2023, Bonnechere Valley was welcomed into the collective. Now, the newly expanded group has begun working together on implementation.

New Implementation Teams

During the planning stages, multiple areas of risk and concern were identified. The group chose to concentrate on four central areas to ensure that priority risk factors were given significant attention, considered comprehensively and that goals were clear and measurable. Addictions and mental health, employment, health care, and housing were prioritized based on their prevalence in local data and consultations, and their level of community impact.

For each priority area, a new implementation team will be created. The teams will contain local experts, advocates, and individuals with lived experience who provide input and guidance. Each team will produce a small plan with goals related to the priority area. These goals may include initiatives to reduce identified risk, lessen elevated risk situations, identify immediate responses to urgent incidents, and promote and maintain CSWB. The recent meeting introduced these strategies to stakeholders and elicited their feedback.

Dr. Meara Sullivan has worked as the CSWB Coordinator since its inception and is leading the implementation. Dr. Sullivan stated, "The feedback we have received is overwhelmingly positive. Stakeholders are pleased the regional initiative is moving forward." She added, "Significantly, multiple advisors have already signed up to participate on implementation teams. These teams will be finalised over the coming weeks and will begin meeting in the fall."

Further updates will be provided to the community as they are available. If you have any questions, please contact Dr. Meara Sullivan at mearasullivan@hotmail.com.