

# CHARLFORD HOUSE

SOCIETY FOR WOMEN

Annual Report 2019/20



50  
YEARS

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Looking back and creating  
a future of strength for women



**CHARLFORD  
HOUSE**  
SOCIETY FOR WOMEN

### **Mission**

Our mission is to provide women with a safe, healthy and caring environment in which to experience recovery from drug and/or alcohol addiction.

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### **Values**

We foster respect, compassion, and dignity among our clients, staff, board and volunteers.

We embrace recovery as having a profound impact on individuals and their families.

We cultivate peer relationships and mentoring in our highly structured living environment.

We support community integration through attendance at Alcoholics and Narcotics Anonymous meetings outside our facility

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### **Vision**

To stop the cycle of dependence by increasing resources available to women entering into recovery.

To provide a professionally staffed home in a non-institutional atmosphere.

To inspire hope and establish life-long relationships with the women and families we serve.

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## 50 YEARS



Thelma McPherson

Thanks to the will, courage and determination of one alcoholic woman and her friends, Charlford House has saved thousands of lives since its inception.

In her day, our Founder, Thelma McPherson noticed that 12-step meetings were not very welcoming towards women but she needed help and support and thought that others might feel the same way. Not knowing where else to turn, she drove around and found some women who were down on their luck and took them home with her.

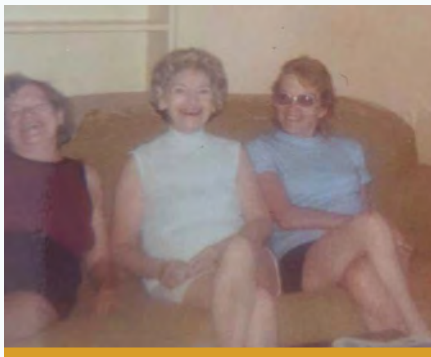
This simple concept of women helping women seemed to be working but eventually, Thelma's husband suggested that a different house for these and other women to live in, might be a good idea. Thelma dutifully found a place on Charlford Avenue (thus the organization's name) and when they outgrew that location, they moved to 6845 Kitchener St. on July 1, 1974 where Charlford House continues to rent to this day.

At the time, this house was a 4-plex, one quarter of which was rented to Thelma and her friends. Over the years, Charlford House has grown to occupy all four of the units, resulting in a 15-bed facility.

In its early times, Charlford House was simply a supportive refuge for alcoholics trying to free themselves from the bondage of alcoholism but in later years, was able to secure funding to "formalize" its purpose.

As a result, Charlford House was able to hire trained counselling staff, create a structured living environment and develop a framework for specific programming.

Eventually, Charlford House was licensed through its local Health Authority, expanded to include treatment for substance abusers and



## THE GOLDEN ANNIVERSARY



those presenting with co-occurring mental health disorders.

Nowadays, Charlford House has a full complement of trained staff and offers a continuum of care. In addition to the core program, Charlford House offers transitional housing, sober living accommodations and life-time aftercare.

When Thelma first registered the organization as a charitable society (October 26, 1970), she knew she wanted to provide an intimate, loving and home-like atmosphere within her facility. We have stayed true to this notion, as we continue to deliver the "Surrogate Family Model of Treatment" to this very day.

Miranda (the ED) keeps a photograph of Thelma and Thelma's business card on her desk, as a daily reminder of how this one woman started a grassroots movement of positive change for other women. Miranda believes we have a responsibility to protect this legacy and see that Charlford House is positioned to continue providing quality care for generations to come: "This may be our Golden Anniversary but it is important we look ahead to the next 50 years. Once we are operating from a home that we own and have increased our capacity to 24, then we'll truly be 'golden'!"



## A MESSAGE FROM THE PRESIDENT OF THE BOARD

As 2019 rang-out, three-quarters of our fiscal year past, we entered 2020 optimistic knowing that Charlford House was strong:

- Our Surrogate Family Model was helping more women and their families.
- Our new “Family Support” program had grown, and was proving to be a great success, and
- Our programming at our Transitional House had grown, enhancing our continuum of care, and giving our residents a stronger transition from Charlford House to the rest of their lives.

We were also excited, gearing up to celebrate our 50th anniversary – looking forward to sharing the joys of our successes and our plans for the next 50 years...

Then, in March, the pandemic reached our shores.

With no warning, our focus moved from celebration to keeping our residents, volunteers, and staff safe, while continuing to provide the much-needed addiction treatment programming. I watched with admiration as our staff, under the strong leadership of our Executive Director, Miranda, pivoted as they moved down the uncertain path ahead. I’m pleased and relieved to report that we have been able to keep all the residents, volunteers and staff safe from COVID-19.

Along with all the uncertainty and challenges that the pandemic brought, it also showed us the tremendous strength in the Charlford House organization. I could go on at length listing the creativity, dedication and resilience that our team displayed. I won’t but I want to express my deep thanks to everyone who has worked so hard to keep Charlford House strong.

**Our Staff:** In March, April, and May, their focus shifted from planning for the future, to dealing with the day-to-day challenges of looking after our residents and each other. They embraced those challenges, adapting to the changes required by the situation



including adopting communications technology to allow for important therapies to continue in safety.

Due to the need to keep our residents absolutely safe from the threat of the pandemic, most of our staff had to work from home for periods of time, and they took on that difficult change with determination and creativity.

**Our Volunteers:** What had previously been routine tasks such as obtaining groceries and toilet paper became serious problems to solve, and I was heartened by the quick response of our volunteers and Charlford community, as they came together to help us solve the problem. As the staff had to work from home, we relied even more heavily on our volunteers to help and support the women in the house. Each one of them exhibited one of the core values of Charlford - that we are stronger together - and I couldn’t be more grateful

**Our Donors:** Of course, we had to cancel all of our usual fundraising events. Two large Foundation donations, and the contributions of donors to our 50 Thousand Dollar/50th Anniversary Challenge matching gift campaign have kept our finances on the level, and have given us time to plan for fundraising in the “new normal”. Many thanks are due to all of our donors for their continuing support when we’ve needed it most.

**Our Board:** Despite the disruption that the pandemic brought to their personal and professional lives, our directors came together to provide the support that the team needed to respond to this unprecedented situation.

I’m grateful for this opportunity to express my deep admiration and profound thanks to the whole team that is the heart and soul of Charlford House.

*- Nancy Matheson*

## EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR'S REPORT

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It seems that the year ended March 31, 2020 was a whirlwind. As we had changes in our staff

complement, retained a new bookkeeper, learned to use new software, moved to a new law firm and dealt with COVID-19, it felt like a year of perpetual change and adjustment.

I am truly thankful for my Administrative Assistant Vivian Gietz who competently and confidently takes care of all things website, social media and office support. We look forward to the return of Stacie Yarrow, Case Worker/Counsellor who is currently on temporary leave. We welcome Ariel Tait as our Residential Counsellor and Life Skills Coach at 2nd Stage and Sober Living. Ariel also helps out in the Main Program. Haley Roberts who is now "official" as she has completed her six-month probationary period is the junior counsellor at Charlford House. Program staff are guided by the mighty hand of Spiritual Warrior and Program Director, Kaela McCann, whose commitment to our women is enormous.

Our house doctor, an addictions specialist is Dr. Kathryn Porter, our Music Therapist is Rebecca Barr

and our Yoga Instructor is Marcia Prefontaine. All three of these women contribute greatly to the healing that takes place at Charlford House – mind, body and spirit.

Our bed capacity for the fiscal year was 4,763 out of a possible 5,461, equalling 87.2%. That is more than a 15% increase over the last fiscal year! That said however, the past few months have shown a sharp decrease, reminding us that being able to sustain throughout uncertain times requires a strong and focused team effort on an ongoing basis.

Last year, we held several fundraisers, the highlight of which was the 5th Annual Golf Tournament. It was a spectacular event with co-operating weather. As this year's event was cancelled due to COVID-19, people can instead purchase a \$150 voucher for golf at Westwood Plateau (at a date and tee-time of their choosing), which sees proceeds being sent back to Charlford House.

We continue to be blessed by the grant support we receive from various sources. They have allowed us to continue our high level of care and complementary services. We've been fortunate to secure some financial support to offset potential revenue loss due to COVID-19. Our prior event sponsors have sent in donations

equivalent to their budgeted sponsorship amounts which is also a great help.

Our social media presence has been strong on Facebook, Twitter, Instagram and LinkedIn. Our monthly e-newsletter and blog are still favourites with many of our members and supporters. We were able to build public awareness in numerous ways throughout the year: transit shelter ads were peppered throughout the lower mainland; we were featured on CTV Morning Live's "How To Help" segment; we were on the front page of the Sun Newspaper; and appeared in the editorial pages of the Burnaby Now on more than one occasion.

We have been experiencing two medical emergencies: the overdose crisis and the COVID-19 pandemic. Taken together, they place our residents and alum at a particularly high risk. I would like to praise and profusely thank all of our residents, staff and volunteers for going above and beyond. It has been a stressful, tumultuous time, but everyone has risen to the occasion and I am pleased that we have remained safe and healthy. In the community, we continue to participate (virtually) in activities that relate to overdose awareness, addiction and mental health issues, or housing for our most vulnerable citizens.

This year marks Charlford House's 50th anniversary. Now, that's a milestone worth celebrating! We look forward to the next 50 years

and growing Charlford House into an organization that will welcome women through its doors and provide expanded programming for generations to come.

Although we had made good progress with our Forever Home project and were close to making an offer on a property, the COVID-19 crisis put the project on hold. Grant funds were re-directed to pandemic preparedness. We continue to press forward with the dream of securing a Forever Home and will ramp up our fundraising efforts for this cause.

While I've already thanked them once, it's worth acknowledging the staff and volunteers once again. Their stamina and resilience throughout these challenging times has been nothing short of amazing. Our dedicated Board Members have also worked hard, governing this organization behind the scenes, with duties from the truly mundane to the very exciting. It has also been heartening to hear encouraging words and receive expressions of gratitude from our Board Members. These gestures have helped sustain us during these uncertain times.

Lastly, to the women of Charlford House, thanks to you, every morning I arrive at work, I feel like I am home. It is a joy and a privilege to witness your journey, as each of you grows into the person whom God intended you to be.

- *Miranda Vecchio*

## PROGRAM DIRECTOR'S REPORT

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We have added two new staff members to our team. Haley Roberts, Junior Counsellor, comes with work experience in addictions as well as being an alumna. She is committed to Charlford House and full of passion for helping women on their journey. We welcome Ariel Tait back home after several years of gathering work experience and skills to enrich the women's experience in Second Stage. Ariel is a licensed counsellor and life

skills coach and brings fresh new ideas and love for Charlford House into her work. With great sadness, we have said goodbye to one of our staff members, Leslie Martens, as she has moved forward in her life and away from the lower mainland. Sadly, Stacie Yarrow, my right hand woman, had to step back due to unforeseen circumstances. This came as a big hit to our team. Stacie will be welcomed back whenever her circumstances allow.

The Regional Centralized Service (RCS) team for Fraser Health has been working amazingly this year, with far less hiccups than the previous year. We as a team have worked well with Fraser Health this year, supporting clients and their families navigating early recovery and the challenges that are sometimes a part of the referral process.

At Charlford House, 76 intakes were recorded for the fiscal year. 36% of those clients completed treatment with alumnae status at the time of this writing. Clients' numbers for the Fraser Health funded beds was at 43 this fiscal year. It gives me great pleasure that with the hard work from the program staff we increased the privately funded bed intakes to 14.

We in recovery have suffered great losses during this time. We are not a group of people who do well in isolation and we have lost a few women to addiction because of this pandemic. However, I would like to add that those of us who stayed close together and were able to start check-ins via Zoom, including women who do not live in the lower mainland, have grown closer in ways that would not have been possible without this pandemic. In future, we will continue these Zoom meetings for the benefit of the women who come from different areas or have work and family that prevent them from attending meetings and Charlford House in person.

Family Group has also had some positive results from meeting on Zoom. Family members who live in different regions have been able to receive the support they need by attending. We will continue to do Zoom meetings for out of town families.

Our partnership with Eating Disorder Clinic and Fraser Health services has been going well. Addictions and mental health services in Burnaby merged this year, which has been a great resource for women dealing with both addictions and other mental health issues.

Organizations such as the Soroptimists, Vancity, and numerous other resources that have been a part of Charlford House were going well. The pandemic that started in late March stopped all extra activity but we have been able to maintain some programs. Rebecca Barr, our music therapist, was able to use Zoom to continue offering support to first and second stage women.

Although life is slowly getting back to normal, I feel I don't remember much of the year prior to the pandemic. I have had to make new policies for this pandemic as well as a lot of learning curves for best practices as we move forward. We have hired new staff and have been running the house with fewer volunteers for the safety of our women and under Fraser Health direction. This has been new for all of us.

I would like to take this opportunity to thank the women at Second Stage, without whom we would have no one to cover the volunteer shifts we need as well as picking up the slack for the times that we had to self-isolate (I myself had to work from home as required by the 811 COVID-19 line for a short time). Last but not least, thanks to Miranda for the hours spent on Zoom meetings with Fraser Health to serve and protect our most vulnerable women, as well as making hard choices around visitors and family which was a huge part of our program. Thank you, Miranda and the Board for your tireless work and support during these times of uncertainty. I have felt the support from all of you while I work with the women we serve and their families for the safest outcome possible.

- Kaela McCann

## BOARD OF DIRECTORS



1. **Nancy Matheson**, President  
Management Consultant
2. **Laura Johnson**, Vice President  
Greater Vancouver Community Services Society
3. **Sara Li**, Treasurer  
Whitelaw Twining
4. **Victoria Wu**, Secretary  
Miller Thompson LLP
5. **Kathryn Sainty**, Past President  
Sainty Law
6. **Jill Hendrickson** Director  
D&H Group LLP
7. **Jennette Leung**, Director  
LifeScan Inc.
8. **Rachel Mockler**, Director  
Flatiron Construction
9. **Rose Shawlee**, Director  
Harper Grey LLP
10. **Julia Tchezganova**, Director  
Campbell, Burton & McMullan LLP

## CHARLFORD HOUSE STAFF



1. **Miranda Vecchio**  
Executive Director
2. **Kaela McCann**  
Program Director / Lead Counsellor
3. **Stacie Yarrow**  
Case Worker / Counsellor
4. **Vivian Gietz**  
Administrative Assistant
5. **Haley Roberts**  
Junior Counsellor
6. **Ariel Tait**  
Residential Counsellor
7. **Bryn-Erin Ward**  
Fundraising and Events Assistant
8. **Jolene Cowles**  
Volunteer Coordinator

## THE CHARLFORD HOUSE CONTINUUM OF CARE

## CORE PROGRAMMING

### TRANSITIONAL (SECOND STAGE) HOUSING

Charlford House offers transitional housing (eight beds) to women who have graduated from our minimum 90-day program.

Because many of our women are on a fixed low income and at risk of homelessness, we provide them with an affordable, supportive housing solution with an opportunity to further strengthen their foundation of recovery to gradually re-integrate into society. This provides stability and structure, while also enabling the women to explore volunteer and educational opportunities.

The women also benefit from taking responsibility for themselves by practicing cleanliness, healthy meal preparation (with produce from their own garden), and participating in a full range of activities, while maintaining a rigorous program of recovery from addiction.

### SOBER LIVING

Charlford has four beds dedicated to sober living. These beds are for women who have completed the 12 step program; are practicing a rigorous program of recovery; and are seeking employment, gainfully employed, or exploring educational opportunities. While there are less rules and guidelines here than in transitional housing, there are still certain criteria to keep all persons living here safe.

### LIFETIME AFTERCARE

Lifetime aftercare includes ongoing support, group and individual counselling, and community support. Many women consider Charlford House their spiritual home and are welcome to come back anytime.

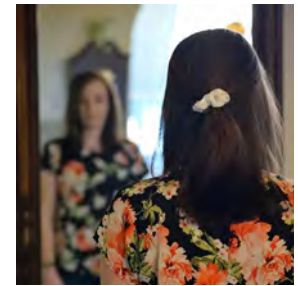
Many Charlford alumnae return to volunteer, offering peer support to the new women in the program, while keeping themselves safe and connected.



12-Step Written Work



Mother's Access Program



Body Image Workshops



Music Therapy



Yoga and Meditation



Art Therapy



First Nations Integration



Food Safe Training



First Aid, CPR, and Naloxone Training



## MUSIC THERAPY



I started music therapy work at Charlford House as a student in 2014. After graduating from Capilano with a Bachelor's in Music therapy in 2016, I became a certified music therapist through the Canadian Association of Music Therapy and now run weekly group and individual music therapy sessions at Charlford House.

I also work in complex care offering sessions for seniors with tertiary mental health issues, dementia, and Alzheimer's, and adults with acquired brain injuries. Within these populations, I use clients' preferred music to help maintain cognitive function through reminiscing, cultivating a higher quality of life for them.

My approach to music therapy is based on an understanding of the human condition. As human beings, we all seek to be seen, heard, and validated. My work aims to meet this fundamental need through relationship. Upon the foundation of the relationship she forms with clients, I then collaborate with them to create their social, emotional, physical, mental, and spiritual goals. Working to meet these goals can include songwriting, lyric analysis, improvisation, guided meditations, recovery playlists, affirmation chants, singing familiar songs, and more.

In our music therapy sessions at Charlford House, we focus on using music to help us access emotional content that needs healing. Our main goals are to cultivate emotional intelligence, improve self-esteem and identity, and expand a sense of unity and connection. We spend time singing songs that affirm resources of identity, writing songs to process grief, playing instruments to learn to listen to others, and listening to their favourite songs to learn about each other. Overall the group allows us to connect on a deeper level and process feelings.

- *Rebecca Barr, Music Therapist*

## YOGA AND MEDITATION



I'm a 200-hour Registered Yoga Teacher. I am also a recovering addict. After getting clean and sober in 2015, I reignited my interest in yoga and discovered a passion for healing through movement. I'm trained in classical Ashtanga Yoga, which is a style of yoga that connects movement to breath.

In the Charlford House classes, we practice using the breath as a tool to flow from one posture to the next, while holding poses and gently stretching muscles. As a result, clients develop a deeper connection to the body and mind while also improving strength and flexibility.

There are numerous physical, mental, and spiritual benefits to yoga. Some benefits include flexibility, strength, balance, improved posture, digestion, and circulation. Yoga also improves bone and cartilage health, increases mental concentration and focus, and helps regulate metabolism. It can even help ease chronic pain and ailments in the body, reduce overall stress and anxiety, and help open energy systems within the body.

Each class is different. Depending on the energy within the room and the weather, I will either choose to practice slower, more relaxing postures held for a longer period of time, or a more energetic class with flowing movements between postures. Classes also involve restorative postures to calm down the mind and body. I often invite students to set an intention for their practice or use gratitude exercises, which sets a positive tone for the rest of the day.

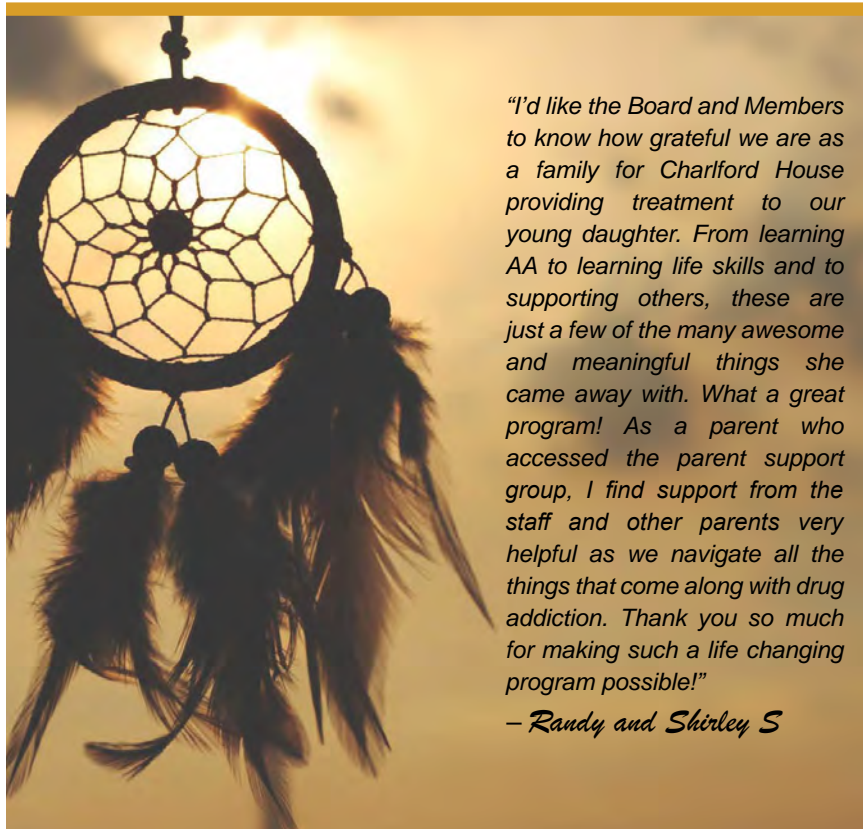
Overall, my yoga classes help clients learn to connect to their bodies, become aware of their thoughts and emotions, and cultivate compassion towards themselves. Through my own experience, I believe yoga is an incredibly beneficial catalyst to those suffering from addiction. I love being able to pass on that experience to the women of Charlford House.

- *Marcia Prefontaine, Yoga Instructor*

## FAMILY GROUP

Charlford House's Family Group offers ongoing weekly support to family members of the women of Charlford House, both past and present. This group provides members with much needed insight, education, resource information and camaraderie. Recently, we began offering this service via Zoom due to COVID-19. The online format has allowed us to connect with family members from out of town who would not otherwise have access to Family Group.

Our Family Group follows the same philosophy that we do for our main program: women supporting women, people supporting each other. Family members are always welcome to attend, even if the woman relapses. The positive outcomes are reflected in feelings of hope and solidarity with other family members in the group. They are reminded that they are never alone.



*"I'd like the Board and Members to know how grateful we are as a family for Charlford House providing treatment to our young daughter. From learning AA to learning life skills and to supporting others, these are just a few of the many awesome and meaningful things she came away with. What a great program! As a parent who accessed the parent support group, I find support from the staff and other parents very helpful as we navigate all the things that come along with drug addiction. Thank you so much for making such a life changing program possible!"*

*– Randy and Shirley S*



*Thanks to my stay at the house I got my family back. I tuck my son in at night with that blanket every night and it reminds me that without it I would not have my son.*

When a woman graduates from the Charlford House Main Program, she is given a blanket. For many years, these blankets were knitted by retired Girl Guides. Today, they're made by the mother of an alumna, Jennifer S.

A close friend of the graduating Peach chooses a blanket she knows her sister will love. The blanket is passed around the circle of women to hug and fill with their spirit and energy. It represents the love and compassion of sisterhood, and the care of the woman who made it, giving the women a sense of belonging to carry with them as they leave their safe place.

When far away from her sister Peaches, comforting herself by wrapping up in her blanket reminds her of the comforting love of her friends and surrogate family. Women still keep their blanket after many years away from Charlford House.

While the blanket is passed around the circle, the graduating Peach pulls a card from the Wise Woman's\* spiritual card deck. Often this card is very relevant to the woman's spiritual journey.

As the blanket is passed around the circle, the well-worn cards are passed to a chosen sister to shuffle, another cuts and one more kneels and fans the cards in front of the soon to be alumna. The graduate chooses a card from the deck and hands it back to the Program Director. A corresponding message from the accompanying booklet is read aloud. The cards are spiritual, and whichever message one picks describes her as a strong and capable woman with a message of power and love to take with her. It is uncanny that from the 72 cards, it seems the same five or six are selected most of the time. The women carry the words of the Wise Woman's card and the soft blanket with them as they go out into the world to face the challenges that come with being new to recovery. No matter what, they know that their sisters at Charlford House are always there for them, surrounding them with love.

*Retired Program Director Linda Shaw found the cards years ago at a conference, and believes they were made just for Charlford House.*

## PANDEMIC PANDEMONIUM PREPAREDNESS

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It feels like a lifetime ago now, but it was a mere five months or so ago that COVID-19 came knocking at our door. We had no choice but to answer.

The early days were a whirlwind of endless directives and updates from Fraser Health and a scramble to secure personal protective equipment (PPE) for our residents, staff, and volunteers. Relevant signage was posted both inside and outside our facility and new safety protocols communicated both internally and externally and put into practice.

Supply chain shortages on groceries, toilet paper, disinfecting supplies, loose leaf lined writing paper, and PPE were an ongoing challenge.

There were also issues electronically, as stakeholder websites crashed and teleconference lines were jammed, preventing access to either.

In the interest of safety, no visitors were allowed to enter the premises at any of our facilities, our staff

were prohibited from taking public transit, volunteers had to either be living in our 2nd Stage housing or our Sober Living, and staff and volunteer activities were both limited and monitored.

12-step meetings were all delivered in-house so women's community interactions effectively ceased. Particularly difficult was the inability for any of the women to visit with their children.

Some staff worked from home, "Zooming in" for one-to-one counselling, morning group, Music Therapy and Family Group. Doctor, lawyer, and social worker appointments were conducted by phone.

Except for urgent and essential business, residents were not permitted to venture out into public places. When the need did arise however, the women in 2nd Stage and Sober Living became glorified taxi drivers.

Because of our new staff and volunteer arrangements, there was an increased burden on those who were physically present in the

house, there were learning curves for everyone as new technologies were used to conduct meetings and other face-to-face events.

Staff and volunteers (wearing gloves, masks, and social distancing) mustered much patience and went to great measures to shop for groceries, toilet paper and other items that were not able to be purchased online or delivered as per usual.

Fortunately, we have been able to maintain a positive morale, engaging the women in activities such as making handmade soaps and dropping them off in local mail boxes with a COVID-19 related message. The women in 2nd Stage decorated small bottles and made scented sanitizer with essential oils. They also made lavender sachets, using lavender picked from their very own garden. In an effort to ease the heartache and longing, local businesses donated tablets, laptops and cell phones so the women could connect with their children virtually.

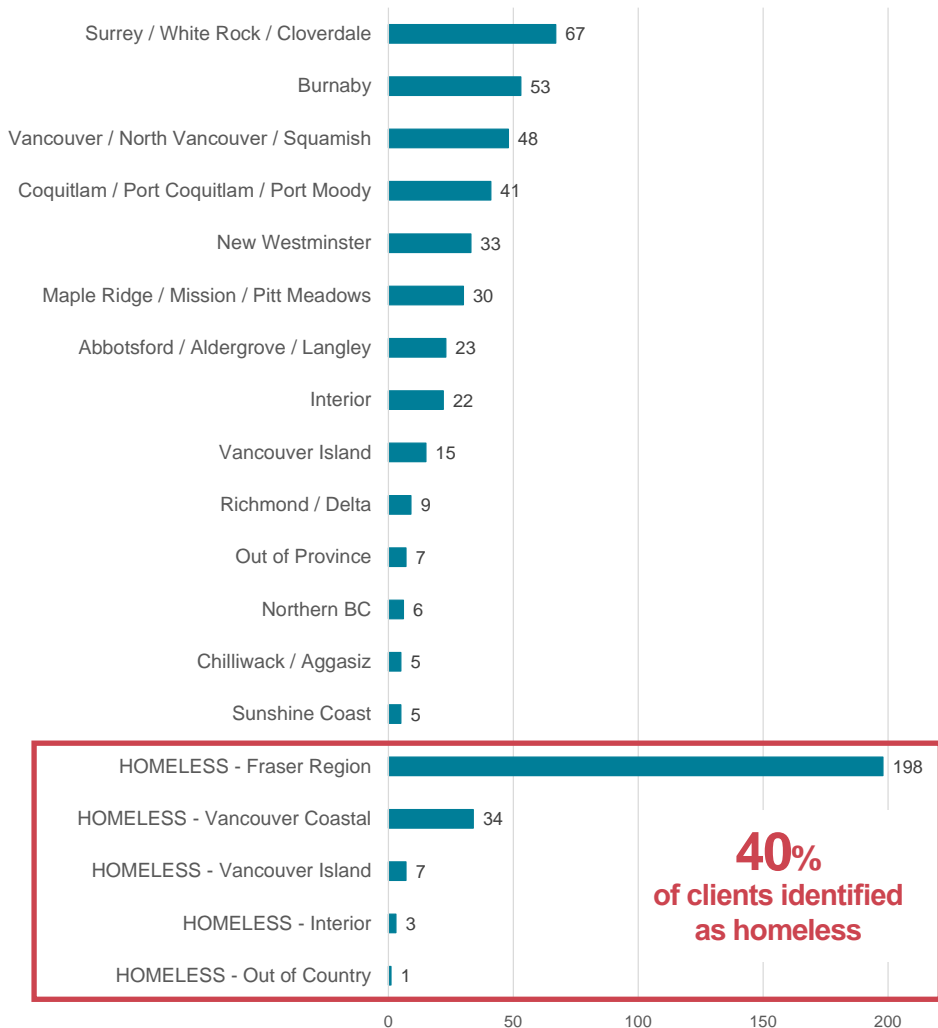
The plethora of emails being sent from Fraser Health calmed after a few months, giving way to weekly Town Halls via Skype and document updates supporting these meetings. Gradually, we settled into this new rhythm and new reality.

Fraser Health regulations require us to keep a certain number of beds open for quarantine purposes. Bed vacancy rates are fluctuating more than usual – one has to wonder if it's in response to the pandemic – and all fundraising events, at one point postponed, have now had to be cancelled. The staff at Charlford House are doing everything they can to mitigate the negative financial impact and manage this aspect of risk along with everything else.

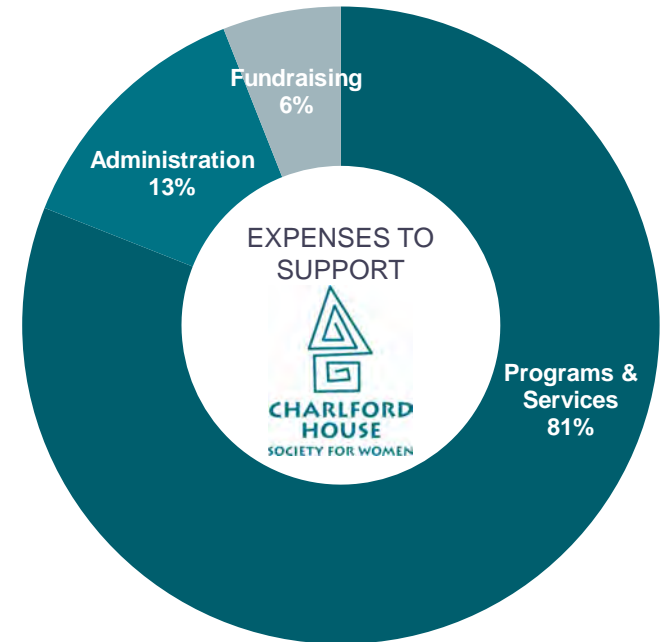
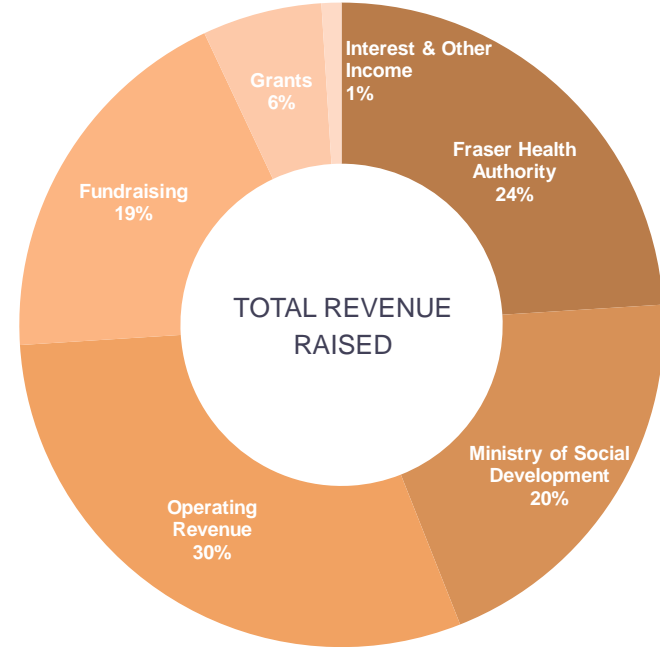
These may be uncertain times but we at Charlford House are resourceful, resilient and ready to rise above whatever comes our way. Rest assured, we will emerge better and stronger for the experience.



## CLIENTS BY REGION 2010-20 PROFILE



## FINANCIAL HIGHLIGHTS



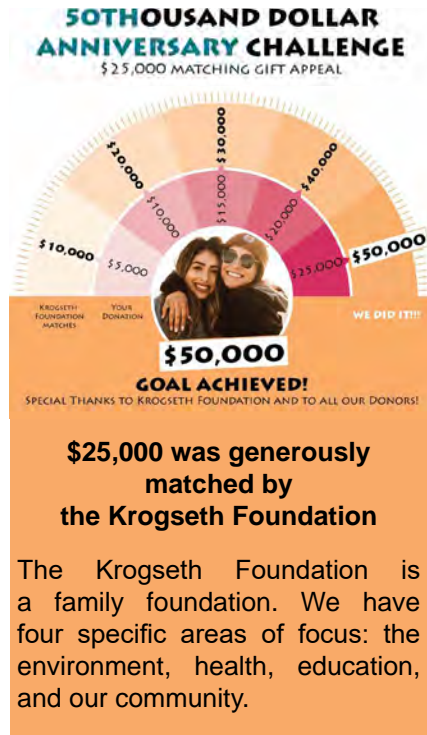
## MAJOR DONOR SPOTLIGHT



The Stewart Family Foundation is a private Foundation with the intent of making a positive impact on people, animal welfare and the environment.



Flaman Fitness is owned and operated by Frank Flaman Foundation. Our goal every year is to donate \$1 million to local charities. Frank prefers we choose charities based around women and children. His goal is to expand our reach to new non-profits every year.



The Krogseth Foundation is a family foundation. We have four specific areas of focus: the environment, health, education, and our community.



Shoppers Drug Mart continues to support Charlford House.

## BUILDING FOR A FUTURE

Alcohol consumption has risen in recent months as people struggle to deal with stress, anxiety and depression due to the pandemic. Since COVID-19 began, the impact has resulted in a marked increase in overdose deaths. In July 2020, there were 175 suspected illicit drug toxicity deaths in BC. This represents a 136% increase over the number of deaths seen in July 2019 (74) and represents the third consecutive month where the number of illicit drug toxicity deaths in BC has surpassed 170. The overdose crisis is worsening.

For those women who are fortunate enough to survive an overdose, it is imperative that our doors remain open, providing help when it's needed. For those who develop an alcohol dependency as a result of its use, we also need to be available.

### Forever Home

At the beginning of the year, we were very excited and we made strides:

- Identifying 3 side-by-side vacant lots
- Obtaining City support to proceed with a re-zoning application
- Eligibility for grants through BC Housing and CMHC

When COVID-19 turned the world upside down, previously available grant funds were re-directed toward COVID-19 relief and put our mortgage eligibility in question. Our re-location and expansion plan has not changed however.

With your help and support, we will make our dream a reality starting with the launch of the Down Payment Drive.

As we near the end of our 50th anniversary year, let's get at least another 50 donations to support our Forever Home.

## THANK YOU DONORS AND SUPPORTERS

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