



DALHOUSIE CENTRE FOR PSYCHOLOGICAL HEALTH

REPORT TO COMMUNITY 2023-2024

APRIL 2025



**DALHOUSIE
UNIVERSITY**



A MESSAGE FROM OUR CO-DIRECTORS

Dear Community Members, Partners, and Friends,

As we reflect on our first year, we are filled with gratitude for the opportunities and experiences that have come with the creation of the Centre for Psychological Health (CPH). None of the work at the CPH would be possible without you—our community partners, students, clients, and supporters. We thank you all for your trust, your collaboration, and your belief in what we can achieve together. We remain firmly committed to increasing access to psychological care and training the next generation of mental health professionals.

We are excited to share some of our initial accomplishments and feedback we've received. The numbers show that the CPH is expanding access to psychological services for underserved Nova Scotians. We are proud that these services are rooted in compassion, cultural understanding, and community wisdom, as reflected in feedback from clients and community partners. Our focus on community collaboration has led to partnerships with many local organizations and service providers, and we continue to work closely with the Nova Scotia Office of Addictions and Mental Health and Greenshield Cares.

As we continue our journey, we are inspired by and committed to supporting the amazing work of everyone involved with the CPH. We will continue to grow and learn with all of you and look forward to new and exciting initiatives in the year ahead.

With gratitude and hope,

Shannon and Alissa



STATUS OF MENTAL HEALTH IN NOVA SCOTIA

NOVA SCOTIA REPORTS ONE OF THE HIGHEST LIFETIME PREVALENCE RATES OF MENTAL HEALTH DISORDERS IN CANADA AT 47%, COMPARED TO THE NATIONAL AVERAGE OF 33.1%

In the past year, 40% of Atlantic Canadians have experienced mental health concerns.

Of that 40%:

- 14% of Atlantic Canadians did not seek help because it was too expensive.
- 59% did not know where to find help.

BARRIERS TO ACCESSING MENTAL HEALTH CARE



Limited Resources



Socioeconomic inequities



Lack of transportation



Social and cultural factors

WHO ARE WE?

- Nova Scotia is the first province in Canada to establish universal mental health and addictions care to all Nova Scotians.
- The Dalhousie Centre for Psychological Health (CPH) is a community based clinic, as part of the Dalhousie Clinical Psychology PhD program, providing free psychological services to Nova Scotians who face barriers to accessing mental health care.
- Supervised by registered psychologists, CPH trains PhD Psychology students and residents in culturally informed, evidence-based practice through coursework, continuing education, and clinical experience.

Our Mission?

To provide exceptional, culturally humble mental health and addictions care that celebrates the complexity of our unique Nova Scotian communities. The CPH provides students with experience, exposure, and competence in working with diverse populations while fostering a sense of civic responsibility and community engagement.

Who is eligible?

All individuals who come to CPH are low income, however we prioritize historically marginalized populations, specifically people who are African Nova Scotian, Indigenous, 2SLGBTQIA+, Newcomers/Refugees, and/or children and former children in care.



OUR GROWTH

2023*

2024

WE SAW

116

TOTAL CLIENTS

WE SAW

465

TOTAL CLIENTS

275

SESSIONS

1,751

SESSIONS

2.4 FTE

REGISTERED SUPERVISING
PSYCHOLOGISTS

3.5 FTE

REGISTERED SUPERVISING
PSYCHOLOGISTS

26

STUDENT THERAPISTS

29

STUDENT THERAPISTS

18

COMMUNITY PARTNERS

30

COMMUNITY PARTNERS

55.93%

WERE PRIORITY
POPULATION

37.72%

WERE PRIORITY
POPULATION



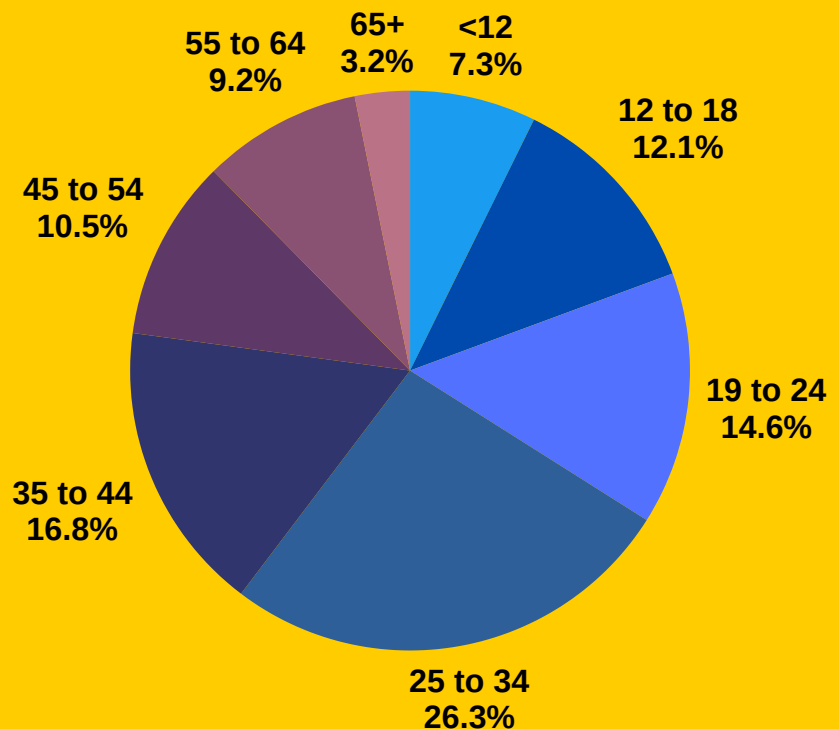
* IMPORTANT: THE 2023 DATA COVERS JUNE TO DECEMBER, REFLECTING OUR FIRST YEAR SINCE OPENING.

A BREAKDOWN OF OUR IMPACT IN 2024

Types of Services Provided

Individual Intervention	61%
Group Intervention	7%
Couples Intervention	4%
Psychoeducational Assessments	12%
Psychodiagnostic & Neuropsychological Assessments	8%
Case Management	8%

AGE OF OUR CLIENTS



80% Attendance rate for services



184 Psychoeducational Assessment Appointments



120 Psychodiagnostic Assessment Appointments



1075 Individual Therapy Appointments

KEY IMPROVEMENTS

Last July, we reached out to our community partners to discuss what is working well, what we can improve, and what they would like to see during our continued partnership. Based on those interviews we have made some changes

Enhanced Communication



We now notify community partners about all referral outcomes, not just ineligible cases, ensuring transparency.

Waitlist Follow-ups



Every 2–3 months, we check in with waitlisted individuals, confirm therapist preferences, and notify them when they're near the top of the list.

Service Navigator Hired

A service navigator now works with our case manager to reduce intake delays and improve the referral process.



Targeted Referral Requests

When we need specific referrals, we proactively inform community partners, making the process more effective.





ONGOING INITIATIVES

To ensure our commitment to our community relationships is ongoing, we have a few initiatives currently underway



Website Development

Instead of an e-newsletter, we are creating a website to improve transparency, communication, and access to FAQs for community partners.



Research Initiatives

Using a learning health system model, we conduct research that supports the work of the CPH and programming to meet community need, e.g., Mi'kmaw adapted CBT.



Allyship Training Development

We are designing allyship training to ensure staff and students understand meaningful allyship and how to take action.



Anti-Oppressive Practice (AOP) Course

A dedicated AOP course has been developed to train clinicians and students in providing equitable, culturally responsive care.

HIGHLIGHTS FROM OUR COMMUNITY PARTNERS

* "...I think that umm Dal is reaching a population that, umm, otherwise would not have access to the to the service. So I actually do appreciate that it is focused on equity groups because they typically do not have access and they are the most marginalized."

* "we make the referral and within a couple of months or assessment is done and they're in treatment, like that's unheard of;"

* "when I do reach out for the answers like you're very prompt and there's no sorts of like animosity there or anything in terms of reaching out like it's been really friendly and it's like easy to get the information;"

* "just being able to kind of promptly get a kid Psyched is life changing like it's it's huge. Like I was literally the school hero that day. So it's pretty cool."

* "So there's just this open door policy where we can just go back and forth."

* "It's such an asset and we're just super grateful to be partners and um yeah, it's incredible what you've managed to accomplish in one year"

* "Like the fact that even you guys are doing interviews and like actually asking what clients have got feedback for and what practitioners have feedback for. It's like that."

COMMUNITY PARTNER CONCERNS & AREAS FOR IMPROVEMENT

- * “I think you guys are pretty already pretty low barrier. I just feel like maybe it's just like that's some folks like don't have a phone or don't have like things like that.”

- * “Like I remember both of us being really confused about what's happening and like, I don't know, we haven't heard from anybody.”

- * “I find that's like often the thing I'm bugging you guys about the most is just like hey, have they had a call and if not, like when should they be expecting one?”

- * “So that was my only worry is like ohh, is [the waitlist] gonna stay like this? or is it gonna become - the taps are turned on and then all of a sudden there's a lot of referrals and people are waiting.”

- * “Transparency and communication is really important, especially like with the history of like Dalhousie and like not being as like open to partnerships and like open partnerships with people and just kind of like it's good to see that least things are changing and that things are going and moving differently and moving better.”

- * “But sometimes in order to like continue on with partnership, sometimes it's good to even have like quarterly meetings just to see like is there been any changes like how can we better like because we could assist you as well as you guys assist us.”

- * “I think I'd be interested to hear more about and I don't know if this is like on you guys necessarily, but like how people are selected and what are some of the conversations that happen that determine that”

FUTURE AREAS OF IMPROVEMENT

Through our conversations with community partners, we gained valuable insights into ongoing challenges and areas for growth. As a result, we are actively working toward the following improvements to better serve our clients and strengthen our partnerships.

Provincial Expansion

We have applied to the Government of Canada Youth Mental Health Fund with 11 community partners to work on expanding our services across Nova Scotia

Research Development

We are building a learning health system, integrating knowledge from our research partners in the Clinical Psychology Program, with our students and clients to address questions that improve the quality of care at the CPH.

Retention of Students within Nova Scotia

We are tracking student retention and contributions to Nova Scotia's workforce, ensuring long-term impact and sustainability.

Expanding Access to Key Information

We are creating a comprehensive information package that will outline services, eligibility, referral steps, and FAQs for easy reference (This will also be available on the website).

Equity in Therapist Recruitment

Increasing diversity among therapists is a long-term goal. We are exploring ways to enhance outreach and recruitment in collaboration with Dalhousie.

THANK YOU!

WE LOOK FORWARD TO 2025 WITH YOU!

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