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**Meeting:** Community Safety and Well-Being Integration Table  
**Date:** May 22, 2024  
**Time:** 9:00 am  
**Location:** STPS Headquarters – 45 CASO Crossing, St. Thomas

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**Attendees:** Warden Ed Ketchabaw, County of Elgin  
Mayor Joe Preston, City of St. Thomas (Chair)  
Danielle Neilson, Housing and Homelessness Action Table  
Chief Marc Roskamp, St. Thomas Police Service  
Deb Mountenay, Elgin St. Thomas Workforce Development Network  
Marcia Van Wylie, Elgin Community Drug and Alcohol Strategy Steering Committee  
Michael Bradley, City Manager, City of St. Thomas  
Jennifer Neamtz, Elgin County OPP  
Deanna Huggett, Elgin Ontario Health Team (OHT)  
Meagan Lichti, Age-Friendly Strategy for Elgin and St. Thomas Natasha Newby, Elgin-St. Thomas Community Foundation  
Blaine Parkin, CAO, County of Elgin  
Carolyn Krahn, Manager of Economic Development & Strategic Initiatives, County of Elgin

**Regrets:** Sandra McCabe, Elgin Mental Health and Addiction Network

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## Minutes

### 1. Approval of Agenda

The agenda was approved as presented.

### 2. Approval of Minutes from February 14, 2024

The minutes were approved as presented.

### 3. Draft Report – Community Safety and Well-Being Plan Review

C. Krahn provided an update on the requirements for community safety and well-being planning in Ontario. According to the Community Safety and Policing Act and its regulations,

local community safety and well-being plans must be updated by July 1, 2025. Staff recommends reviewing the data to determine whether the risk factors identified in the original plan are still relevant, measuring progress, and adjusting risk factors and priority areas as required. They also recommend reviewing the Integration Table structure to better address the risk factors and set measurable outcomes. The review process could include three phases: Research and Data Review, Integration Table Workshop and Goal Setting, and Plan Revision and Dissemination.

The Integration Table discussed two options for the review: an in-house review and a consultant-led review. The Table agreed to begin with a self-analysis at the next meeting and to expand the membership for the review, including representatives from Aylmer and the Director of St. Thomas-Elgin Social Services. The Table also agreed to share a final report following the review, highlighting where the participating municipalities are with respect to community safety and well-being and what they have accomplished over the past four (4) years. The report would be shared with the province and residents.

#### 4. Roundtable – Action Tables

##### i. **Education and Skills Development – Deb Mountenay**

- D. Mountenay provided an update on the activities of the Elgin Workforce Development Network. The Table has switched focus because of significant new employers moving into the region, including PowerCo. The Table will focus on training and following how PowerCo recruits employees. They are considering what the recruitment process will mean for existing employers. New companies get a lot of publicity, which helps them recruit staff. The danger is that existing employers will lose people. The Table will look at how to support these companies and how to match people looking to enter the job market with the vacancies. There are currently over 5,000 jobs available in the London economic region.
- There have been some changes to employment services. The funding structure is going in a new direction. Employment services now get funding when they move their clients directly into employment, with the client staying employed for at least one (1) year. The new funding model is changing how these organizations deliver their services, and the focus is now on serving individuals ready to enter the workforce. Individuals who are not employment-ready will seek out other services before going to employment services.
- D. Huggett noted that the Ontario Health Team (OHT) discussed the health side of the new plants. Health services were previously offered at the Ford plant, and they would be interested in talking to PowerCo about offering a similar service on site. Mayor Preston volunteered to make the connection between the OHT and PowerCo.

- M. Lichti inquired about training for adults 50 and older who have lost a job. D. Mountenay noted that there is funding and would be happy to connect offline for a discussion.

ii. **Mental Health and Well-Being – Sandra McCabe**

- C. Krahn provided an update on behalf of S. McCabe.
- The West Elgin Community Health Centre is now fully staffed again, with three (3) therapists, two (2) adult therapists, and one (1) child and youth therapist, all providing psychotherapy to clients in our area.
- As of April 1 of this year, the wait list for adults was 57, and for children and youth, it was 17.
- The West Elgin Community Health Centre is celebrating its 30th anniversary. They have extended an invitation and hope to see everyone on July 10, 2024, from 4 to 7 pm.
- Canadian Mental Health Association (CMHA) has and continues to have a lot of programming and staffing changes.
- Their new strategic plan is being worked on to support the organization's operations for the next three (3) to five (5) years.
- Elgin's crisis team has moved from the 110 Centre (they are selling this property) to operating walk-in crisis support at 10 Mondamin Street from 8 am-9 pm, Monday to Friday.
- Crisis staff continue to be embedded into the St. Thomas Elgin General Hospital (STEGH) – ER for mental health crises that present at hospital.
- The Withdrawal Management Program in Elgin sees roughly 50-60 individuals monthly.
- The Average length of stay is four (4) to five (5) days, with support for the next steps provided for clients.
- The primary drug of choice remains alcohol, followed by crystal meth and opiates.
- Stats are showing about 40% of the folks coming into the program are unsheltered.
- Indwell continues to partner closely with Central Community Health Centre (CCHC) to ensure all residents in St. Thomas have access to primary healthcare and addiction medicine. This has resulted in an increase in mental health stabilization and a faster response time to mental health decompensation, which in turn has resulted in increased housing stability.
- They also continued their partnership with the St. Thomas Police to build relationships and accountability within their buildings. Specifically, the Special Constables program has bridged the connection between their residents and the justice system in a way that builds trust and is reducing the rates of incarceration and re-offences.

- Programming continues to increase and is specialized to the needs of their residents. Their staff have created partnerships with the Food Bank and Harvest Hands to increase food security/access and have been partnering with probation to support individuals in completing community service hours.
- Additionally, recreational programming continues at both programs to prioritize their residents' need for structure, fun, and community building.
- Overall, many communities are interested in the work happening in St. Thomas. Indwell continues to share the value and impact of collective shared visions from all community partners within this sector on addressing homelessness and health care services.
- The Elgin Mental Health and Addiction Network has reached a positive consensus on integrating the Elgin Community Drug and Alcohol Strategy (ECDAS) committee with the Network and creating a combined structure for Elgin committee work. As Marcia shared, they are looking to establish membership for this integrated steering committee that will receive information from the working pillar groups. More to come on this work. We hope to convene before the summer to establish Chairs.

iii. **Housing Security – Danielle Neilson**

- D. Neilson provided an update on housing and homelessness in the region. There is a growing need in the community for affordable housing. There are currently 1,400 households on the wait list for social housing. The wait time is presently anywhere from three (3) to ten (10) years. However, the wait list also includes people from different municipalities. Citizens can apply for social housing in any municipality and are not limited to where they live. Approximately 30% of applicants are not from Elgin-St. Thomas.
- Social Services continues to offer rent supplements to offset affordability challenges. They are working on several new affordable housing projects in Elgin and St. Thomas at different readiness stages. One of the projects is with Eastwood. They are working on a new development with 82 units of mixed affordability. Eastwood is working with Social Services to ensure 48 units are filled with households with the greatest need, including individuals on the by-name list. Social Services is also working on a couple of builds in Elgin that focus on affordable housing for seniors.
- There are currently 117 individuals in the community actively experiencing homelessness. However, St. Thomas has seen a significant reduction in homelessness. Last fall, the Built for Zero initiative announced that St. Thomas has reduced homelessness by 30%. This success is a testament to the invaluable contributions of our community partners, including the rural homelessness navigator based out of the West Elgin Community Health Centre and the Special Constables, whose work has been instrumental in this achievement.

- The Inn has been actively addressing concerns about why individuals do not use their services. This proactive approach has resulted in a positive change, with more people now using the shelter.
- Social Services receives calls daily from regions that want to learn what St. Thomas is doing to address housing and homelessness and to learn from their successes.

iv. **Public Safety – Chief Marc Roskamp**

- The St. Thomas Police Service (STPS) has seen some positive trends with decreased violent and non-violent crimes. This decrease reflects the success of local strategies, including the community safety and well-being plan.
- Fraud is becoming a bigger concern with new cyber fraud incidents. There has also been an increase in impaired driving and motor vehicle collisions. With the change in weather and more vehicles on the road, the police service is focusing on road safety.
- The STPS did a lot of advocacy last year at AMO regarding public safety, which resulted in receiving five (5) grants.
- Due to the end of the MCRT grant, the MOST team is down to three (3) clinicians. STPS is reapplying to the grant with the purpose of including one (1) nurse from the St. Thomas Elgin General Hospital. The hospital is excited about this partnership and eager to divert calls away from the ER.
- The special constables are out in the community. Under the CSPA, the role of the special constable needs to be clearly defined. Some jurisdictions have not found the right formula, but it works well in St. Thomas. Police officers are responsible for providing the five core functions, and special constables focus on providing non-core policing functions. In St. Thomas, they support individuals in crisis and connect them to healthy pathways. For example, special constables can connect with an individual under a blanket or a doorstep and connect them to healthy pathways. If an individual becomes violent and pulls out a knife, the special constable needs to back away and call a police officer to the scene because the interaction has now become a core policing function.
- STPS remains committed to safe schools and advocates for getting officers back into schools. There were two (2) violent assaults in area schools last week, highlighting the need for positive interactions between students and police officers. Chief Roskamp indicated that the tide is changing and that there is now more support for officers in schools and remains optimistic that they will be invited back to schools in the future.
- Encampments are picking up with the warmer weather. They have developed a protocol to address the issue compassionately. It went to Council last night. Special constables will be involved in the process. They will also work with Social Services, CCHA, and other community organizations.
- The STPS has developed a diversity plan in alignment with the CSPA. It promotes diversity in the community, and the police service reflects that diversity.
- Inspector Neamtz provided an update on behalf of the OPP. Elgin has seen an increase in property damage collisions. They have opened a collision reporting

centre at the OPP Detachment Office. There have been 215 collisions since January, many involving deer.

- With the warm weather, the number of people coming to the area, especially the waterfront, has increased, resulting in an increase in calls for service. OPP officers are increasing their visibility in waterfront communities, with officers on foot, bicycle, and ATV.
- Elgin OPP is also applying for the Mobile Crisis Response Teams (MCRT) grant.
- Inspector Neamtz is meeting with the school superintendent regarding police officers in schools. Outside of schools, OPP has been engaging with youth, including employing a youth officer and hosting a citizens' police academy. The inaugural program had 30 participants, and there will be another one this summer for youth.
- Frauds and romance scams are on the rise. Recently, there was a two-million-dollar scam in Malahide. The OPP is engaging the media and crime unit to educate residents. Not just seniors but also middle-aged, educated individuals are being targeted.
- OPP is also working on a diversity plan so that the service represents the increasing number of people coming to the community.

v. **Substance Use and Addiction – Marcia Van Wylie**

- M. Van Wylie presented an update on Planet Youth. The initiative is focused on upstream prevention and addressing the root causes of substance use. The goal is to address substance use before it starts. The model was developed in Iceland. They looked at research to enhance known protective factors in local communities.
- The program collects data from grade 10 students. The data is local and collected within 8-10 weeks from each school and community. There is a cost, but the approach has been proven to be successful.
- There is a grassroots community action network championing this program in the region. The network applied for funding but was denied because it was already too far into the process. However, it may be more successful in future funding rounds aimed at implementing programs.
- The funding would support local data collection. Data collection requires parental consent, and the program emphasizes parent engagement.
- M. Van Wylie also updated the Elgin Community Drug and Alcohol Strategy. The presentation is attached to the minutes.

5. **New and Other Business**

- D. Huggett provided an update from the OHT. They will offer mental health first aid training this summer, including two (2) sessions for volunteer firefighters. D. Huggett asked for members' support in promoting the sessions.
- The OHT is actively exploring the stepped care model, with the Planet Youth model serving as a complementary component. They are also reimagining their services. A primary care and mental health navigator has been hired, scheduled to start on June 13th. This role is

crucial in ensuring all the great work done by different community partners is effectively connected, potentially leading to significant improvements in our services.

- The OHT received funding to expand team-based primary care. This funding will be instrumental in expanding mobile outreach services, particularly in areas like East Elgin where the attachment rates to primary care are low. The potential benefits of this expansion are significant, as it can address many downstream issues that arise when primary care is not readily available. Additionally, exploration is underway on how to further enhance local primary care, including discussions with The Inn.
- The OHT is addressing barriers to receiving care, including interpretation services and transportation. There is a push to offer interpretation services on-demand in healthcare settings. It is as simple as connecting to a call, and an interpreter is there. D. Huggett had an opportunity to watch the service in action in an emergency department, and they immediately had access to an interpreter in Arabic.
- They are exploring access for the person on a mobile device in addition to organizational-level access. One challenge is that Low German is not always available on demand. They are training more Low German volunteers in formal interpretation services. The Low German population prefers in-person to virtual settings.
- Some exciting developments are taking place in indigenous health, focusing on training specific to the Oneida Nation of the Thames, Chippewa of the Thames First Nation, and Munsee Delaware Nation communities. They have secured a grant for work in this area, and the hiring process is underway.
- The Integration Table discussed information sharing, including posters for campaigns like road safety, so that members can share with their networks. The Table also discussed how to share the information from these meetings and the progress made. It discussed publishing minutes and making a bulletin with highlights available on social media.

## 6. Next Meeting Date

- The meeting on September 25, 2024, beginning at 9:00 a.m. will include a session to review community safety and well-being data and discuss how the action tables support the five priority areas.

## 7. Adjournment

The meeting was adjourned at 10:23 am.



ELGIN COMMUNITY  
**DRUG & ALCOHOL STRATEGY**

Merger with the Elgin Mental Health and  
Addictions Network

**May 22, 2024**





# Elgin Community Drug and Alcohol Strategy

## **VISION:**

A safe and healthy community in Elgin without the negative impacts of drugs and alcohol.

## **MISSION:**

Create, implement and evaluate a comprehensive drug and alcohol strategy that meets the needs of our community based on the pillars of prevention, treatment, harm reduction and justice.



# Elgin Mental Health and Addiction Network

## **VISION:**

An Elgin community where every person has the opportunity to enjoy good mental health and well-being throughout their lifetime, in a welcoming, supportive community.

## **MISSION:**

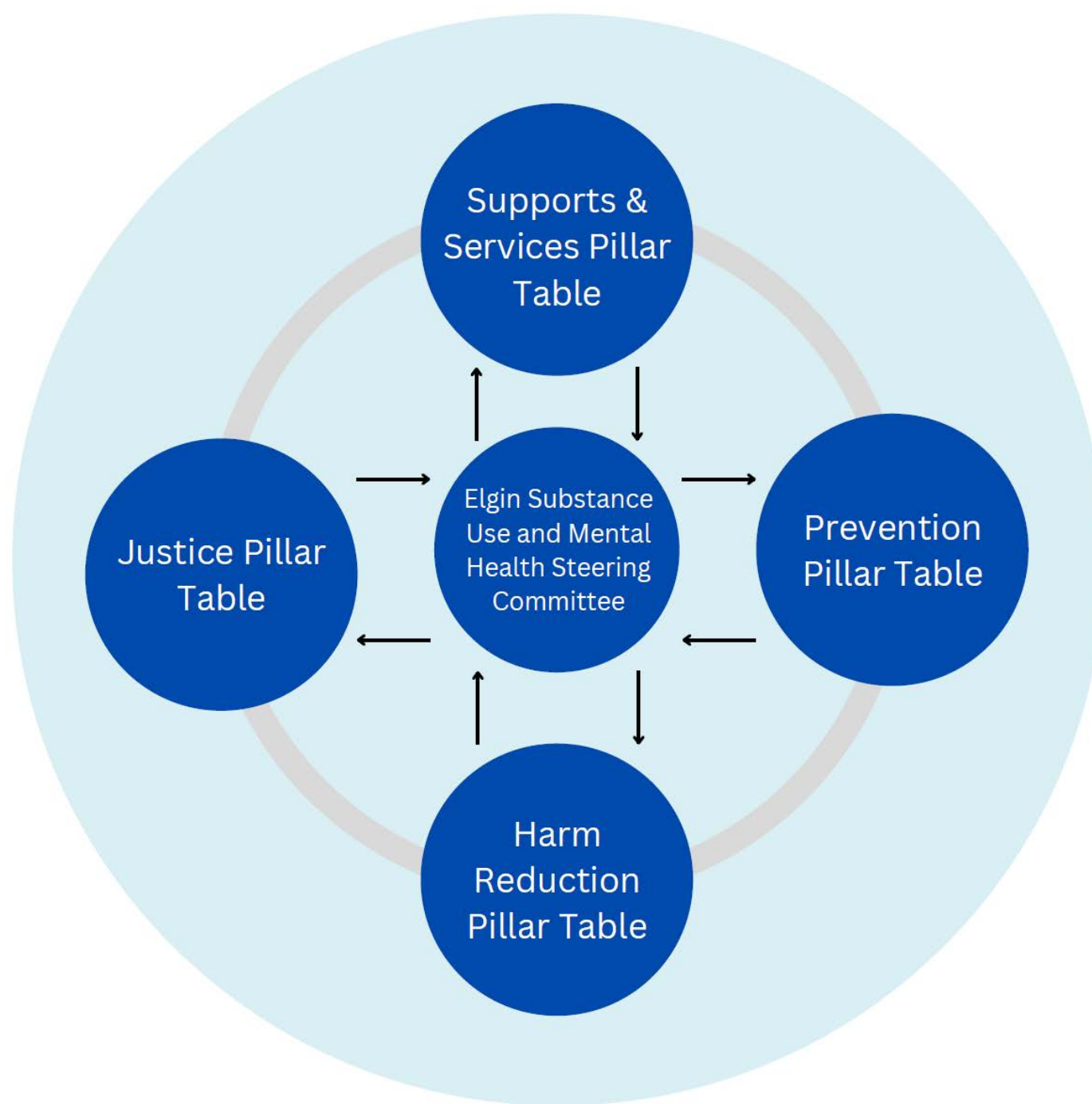
To provide leadership, stewardship and a unified voice regarding policy and planning to reduce the impact of mental illness and addictions in our community. The EMHAN will endorse and guide specific initiatives related to establishing and enabling efficient access to appropriate MH&A services across Elgin County. Annually, the EMHAN will prioritize, monitor, and/or report on the status of these initiatives.



# Elgin Substance Use and Mental Health Committee

## **PURPOSE STATEMENT:**

Elgin Substance Use and Mental Health Steering Committee members will meet quarterly to provide leadership and a unified voice regarding initiatives and interventions to reduce the negative impact of mental illness and substance use in our communities. Through collective impact and collaboration, the Elgin Substance Use and Mental Health Steering Committee will support, share, and advance the work and initiatives of the pillar tables.





# What are the next steps?

- Continue exploration of possible connections
- Connect with the partners who have expressed interest in participating
- Planning and preparation for first Steering Committee meeting