

# Persisting Together Through a Pandemic



2020  
2021

Annual Report

Mission Services of Hamilton



The 2020-2021 fiscal year was a unique experience for Mission Services of Hamilton’s staff and clients. The entire year focused on conquering the challenges, adapting to the changes, and persisting through the COVID-19 pandemic.

Throughout this report, you will see how our programs were affected by the ever-changing health and safety guidelines and personal protective equipment (PPE) protocols. You’ll see how our programs had to evolve throughout the year to ensure the safety of our staff and community members. Most importantly, you’ll see how vital our programs are to our neighbours in need.

Although we have all been in the same storm during the pandemic, we have really all been in different boats. The neighbourhoods in our downtown core have been hit particularly hard with high rates of COVID-19, increased food and job insecurity, and barriers to vaccination.

The remarkable circumstances of the pandemic only highlighted the stress, danger, and uncertainty that many of our neighbours experience every day. Unfortunately, the number of community members accessing

our services has only increased since the beginning of the pandemic and we expect the numbers will continue to rise.

Although we have seen the increased need across all of our programs, we have also seen the undeniable compassion and support from our community. Our community partners, donors, and funders ensured that our programs not only remained available to those in need, but that we could successfully adapt to the necessary changes brought on by this virus.

Thanks to our supporters, hundreds of people were provided safe shelter and healthy meals, thousands of families received emergency food at our Good Food Centre, hundreds of individuals accessed addiction treatment, and youth in our neighbourhood were supported while they were stuck at home throughout the school year.

This year is our 65th anniversary. That is 65 years of supporting the most vulnerable in our community. This may also be one of the most exceptional years in our history, but it will certainly be remembered for the strength and resiliency of our clients, staff, and supporters.

Thank you for being a part of our story!

**Carol Cowan-Morneau**  
*Executive Director*



**Jerry Bulthuis**  
*Chair of the Board of Directors*



## Board of Directors 2020-21

Jerry Bulthuis, Chair • Janet McKenzie, Vice Chair • Sheila Lipke, Treasurer • Karen Mathewson, Secretary  
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# Food Services



*Our Good Food Centre provides nutritious food to our neighbours in need like fresh produce and milk.*

At the beginning of the pandemic, as shoppers stockpiled toilet paper and cleaning supplies, food insecure households suddenly faced additional challenges accessing food and hygiene items. Our Good Food Centre remained open five days a week so we could continue to support as many families as possible with fresh and healthy food.

With our volunteer program on hold and fewer people helping at our Good Food Centre, we streamlined our operations to provide physically-distanced registration, curbside pickup, and additional items such as reusable masks and hand sanitizer. During the first year of the pandemic, our Good Food Centre helped 1,728 new families who had not used our services before.

Kitchen staff continued to prepare daily meals for the men, women, and children at Willow's Place, Inasmuch House, and the Men's Shelter. With our Community Kitchen and the Youth Afterschool Meal Program closed, we turned our dining room first into additional space for much-needed bulk food donations and purchases. We then turned it into a vaccine clinic, where staff and clients could receive COVID-19 vaccines from the Shelter Health Network. In a year with a huge focus on health, our Food Services team has continued its tradition of creating a community of care around food in the face of social inequalities.

**15,045**  
emergency food assistance packs were distributed by the Good Food Centre.

**78,059**  
meals were served at our shelters and Willow's Place.

# Willow's Place



*Willow's Place provides daily support to women accessing the hub including meals and opportunities to build on one's creative strengths through art activities.*

Willow's Place is our daytime resource hub for all women experiencing homelessness and housing precarity. When the pandemic hit, Willow's was forced to limit the number of women who could enter our space. As public washrooms, fast food restaurants, and stores closed, unhoused women had even fewer places to meet their basic needs, so we had to prioritize our space for women who had nowhere else to go. To that end, we hired an Intensive Case Manager to provide one-on-one counselling and help unhoused women with the paperwork necessary to access community housing supports.

In the meantime, we continued to provide take-out meals and phone support to housed women. Nearly a year into the pandemic, thanks to funding from the Canadian Women's Foundation and Hamilton Community Foundation's Women4Change Fund, we hired a Pandemic Support Coordinator to provide support and resources to the precariously-housed women. This allowed housed individuals to not only re-enter the hub, but rebuild their sense of community.

Willow's Place has been vital to helping marginalized women during the pandemic, and our team has been strong, compassionate advocates for additional resources for unhoused women in Hamilton.

**11,985**

meals were served at Willow's, while another **4,106** take-out meals were supplied to women.

**295 new women**

accessed Willow's Place services for the first time.

# Youth Programs



*Staff did regular porch drop-offs during the first year of the pandemic but we were happy to welcome youth back into The 196 space in the summer of 2021.*

The 196 Afterschool Program supports youth in grades six to eight in pursuing postsecondary education. When students transitioned to at-home learning in March 2020, we shifted our focus to promoting and developing new skills in a physically-distant manner. We started making rounds in the neighbourhood to drop off activities and food for the youth and their families. We connected through The 196 Facebook page, provided homework help over the phone, and used video calls/webinars to teach recipes and lead youth in at-home activities.

Because youth were at home with their families, we were able to include parents, guardians, and siblings in our activities in new ways—an exciting opportunity for families to bond and learn together. We are grateful for the many volunteers who set up virtual games, read stories online, created virtual tours of McMaster University, and ran activities for the kids.

The pandemic has been challenging for young people and we are deeply thankful for how staff, families, and the community came together to support youth at home.

**344**  
porch drop-offs of food and activities were delivered to families in our neighbourhood.

**35**  
children were supported at home during the lockdowns.

# Addiction Services



*Bill (left) celebrated 7 years of recovery during the pandemic, while Donnie (top right) graduated from Drug Treatment Court despite the challenges of COVID-19.*

When the pandemic began, Addiction Services pivoted to virtual platforms to continue to serve clients in their recovery journeys. While working from home, Suntrac staff provided one-to-one phone services and online groups for the Taking Steps, Partners in Recovery, and Aftercare programming. We also recognized a gap in addictions programming for women in Hamilton, and made our recovery support options for women permanent. Although our Alternative Justice programs were temporarily paused, they also resumed in an adapted, virtual format.

Despite challenges brought on by COVID-19, many program participants have thrived in a virtual format. The Suntrac team is now looking at ways to offer blended programming. By providing clients with virtual and in-person treatment options, we can eliminate many barriers to accessing support. Pivoting our programs to a virtual format actually empowered those with transportation barriers and scheduling conflicts, where in-person programming is better for those who can't access computers and other technology needed to participate virtually.

We are proud to offer flexible options and help clients rebuild their lives with the aim of finding a path to recovery with confidence.

**771**

clients participated in addiction treatment.

**3,314**

client calls were made while **96** virtual group sessions were hosted between September 2020 and March 2021.

# Inasmuch House



*Inasmuch House staff plan fun activities for the families staying with them like drive-in style movies.*

At Inasmuch House, one of our biggest concerns in the first few months of the pandemic was the sharp decrease in calls to our 24-hour crisis line. With stay-at-home orders in place, we knew women and children were being forced to isolate with their abusers and were unable to find safe ways to call us for help. We quickly rallied to launch Text Inasmuch, a texting and web-based crisis line that women can use to discreetly contact us for advice, referrals, and information. Text Inasmuch is free, confidential, and secure. It is the first service of its kind in Hamilton and other community partners have started to follow our lead.

COVID-19 also changed the way families and women lived together at the shelter. Families had to isolate from one another, meals couldn't be served in congregate settings, and we underwent several renovations to ensure physical distancing could be maintained. Case management services, like the Learning Effective Anti-Violence in Families program and the Legal Advocate program, shifted to phone or virtual appointments.

Although we couldn't take the children and youth on our usual annual field trip, in the summer of 2020 we hosted a physically-distanced, outdoor carnival in our own backyard. Music, games, a clown, and an ice cream truck provided some much-needed excitement at Inasmuch House!

**92 women & 95 children**  
were sheltered from abuse.

**271**  
conversations were started through our  
web/text-based crisis line.

# Men's Services



*Men's Services staff.*

As a response to the pandemic, and in cooperation with the City of Hamilton, our Men's Services team introduced a temporary overflow shelter at a local hotel in Hamilton, while continuing to operate our Men's Shelter on James Street North. This project required Mission Services to hire more than four dozen new staff so we could support up to 150 people at a time.

With an overwhelming number of individuals looking to access shelter, reduced capacities due to health and safety guidelines, and COVID-19 outbreaks, our Men's Services team faced many challenges during the first year of the pandemic. Despite the circumstances, we successfully launched a brand new housing program in April 2020, Housing UP!, to help individuals experiencing homelessness secure and maintain safe, stable housing. Since the launch of Housing UP!, staff have helped 125 individuals find housing.

We were pleased that our Director of Men's Services, Shawn MacKeigan, was selected to speak at the Canadian Transformed Shelters Network, regarding Mission Services' expertise on the topic of transforming emergency shelters into "housing focused" shelters.

***"We know we can end homelessness...every individual we've served has been housed before, and they can be housed again."***

***- Shawn MacKeigan, Director of Men's Services***

**483**

men received emergency shelter on James St N.

**578**

individuals accessed our temporary hotel shelter.

# Operations Department



*Mission Services of Hamilton Operations Department staff.*

The Mission Services (MSH) Operations Department works behind the scenes maintaining and cleaning the MSH properties. Their job has always been an integral part of our programs running smoothly, but no one could have imagined just how vital they would be to ensuring the safety of our staff and clients in 2020/21.

Like all of our programs, the Operations Team had to revamp the way they operated day-to-day. Cleaning increased at all sites with high touch surfaces being disinfected at least twice per shift. The operations staff stopped rotating through the different MSH buildings to eliminate cross-site contamination.

Throughout the year, as we learned more about the COVID-19 virus, the Operations Department had to keep up with safety and cleaning standards and continuously adapt their practices. Plexiglas was installed throughout MSH programs to offer additional barriers for safety. New PPE was distributed each time recommendations changed. Air filtration was top of mind, switching to high efficiency air filters that remove small particles in the air, like the droplets that COVID-19 attaches to. Operations took on many renovation projects to comply with Public Health guidelines, like renovating dorm rooms at the shelters, and replacing hard-to-clean flooring in different buildings.

The success of our programs relied heavily on the success of the Operations Department. Without their hard work and support throughout the year we could not have continued to offer safe and quality care to our community.



# Community Partners



*Our Community Partners helped to protect staff and clients from COVID-19 with vaccination clinics and mask donations. They also went above and beyond providing financial support and food and hygiene necessities.*

Many individuals and organizations came together to support our neighbours in need during the first year of the pandemic. We want to thank every single donor, business, community group, church, funder, and community partner who provided financial support, collected donations, and donated food, hygiene items, face masks, cleaning supplies and hand sanitizers. Your unwavering commitment to our community is truly amazing.

The Men's Shelter and Inasmuch House received funding from many different avenues to accommodate all the changes and renovations necessary to continue sheltering residents safely during the pandemic. The 196 funders accommodated the new 'at-home' programming for youth in our neighbourhood, while Food Services worked with many partners in the community to ensure that healthy food was available to those in need in Hamilton.

The **Shelter Health Network** has been an outstanding partner to Mission Services throughout the pandemic. Dr. Kerry Beal and her team have been an extraordinary resource to the staff and clients, providing preventative, on-site COVID-19 testing, as well as swabbing when there are suspected cases, running vaccination clinics, and offering advice and support at all times of the day. The Shelter Health Network also started sending a doctor to Willow's Place once per week to work with the unhoused and precariously housed women who access the hub. Their contribution to staff and client safety during the pandemic has been unprecedented.



*Dr. Kerry Beal (left) and Erin Griver, Director of Inasmuch House*

# Finances

For the year ending March 31, 2021

## Revenue

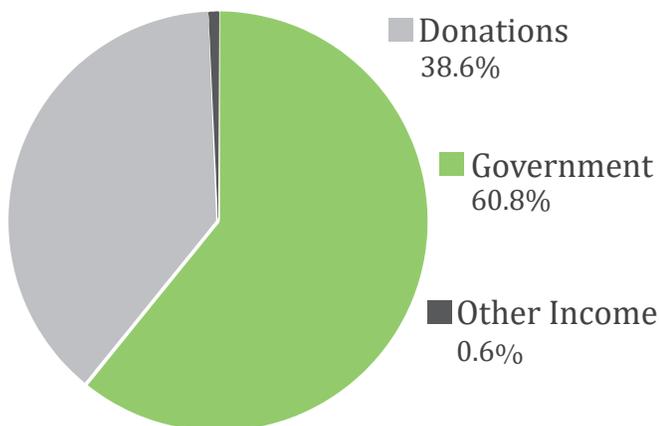
	2020-21	2019-20
Donations - operations	\$3,399,733	\$2,746,683
Donations - designated	\$652,312	\$948,417
Donations - in kind	\$173,261	\$209,654
Government Funding	\$6,667,033	\$3,592,856
Other Income	\$67,140	\$94,705
	<b>\$10,959,479</b>	<b>\$7,592,315</b>

## Expenses

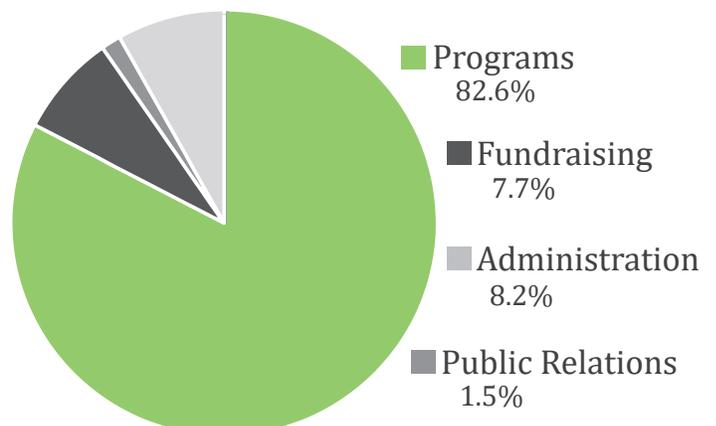
Administrative	\$324,878	\$222,546
Amortization	\$177,594	\$148,768
Occupancy	\$928,619	\$838,021
Program Costs	\$753,175	\$476,896
Personnel	\$7,537,492	\$5,161,227
Resource Development	\$340,881	\$543,766
	<b>\$10,062,640</b>	<b>\$6,838,034</b>

## At a glance:

### Where the money comes from



### Where the money goes



## A note on our financials

Copies of our full financial statements are available for Mission Services of Hamilton and Mission Services of Hamilton Foundation on our website: [mission-services.com](http://mission-services.com).



# *Thank you!*

For another year of changing lives.

To make a donation in support of Mission Services of Hamilton please visit [mission-services.com](http://mission-services.com) or call 905-528-4211 x 2222

**Connect with us on social media!**



Mission Services of Hamilton



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PO Box 368 196 Wentworth St N, Hamilton, ON L8L 7W2  
905-528-4211 [www.mission-services.com](http://www.mission-services.com) [admin@mission-services.com](mailto:admin@mission-services.com)  
Charitable No. 11904 3206 RR0001