

For Immediate Release

Seven new agencies added to Community Connect YYC, diversifying the affordable counselling services available through the online portal.

As of April 2022, Community Connect YYC (www.CommunityConnectYYC.ca) welcomes 7 new participating agencies, increasing mental health services in the network to more than 30.

Calgary, Alberta, April 4, 2022: Community Connect YYC (CCYYC) is excited to announce a third expansion. The one-stop shop website, launched in August 2020, for Calgarians seeking affordable counselling, welcomes seven new agencies to its network this month. Designed to provide barrier-free access to mental health supports, the expansion of the network is timely, given the persistent pandemic challenges impacting the mental health of Calgarians. The addition of seven new partners agencies expands the network of Calgary-based agencies to 16 with more than 30 services offered through the online portal.

Agencies new to the network in April 2022 include:

- Calgary Immigrant Women's Association
- Canadian Centre for Men and Families
- The Immigrant Education Society
- Hull Services
- Lionheart Foundation
- Trellis
- Vecova

These additional partners bring with them new youth services, additional first language services, expanded services for people with disabilities, services for Indigenous people and mental health services for men.

Added to the existing network, (Catholic Family Service, Canadian Mental Health Association – Calgary Region, YW Calgary, carya, Centre for Sexuality, CUPS Calgary, Sagesse, The Alex, Centre for Newcomers) these 16 Calgary-based agencies provide addictions supports, counselling for children, youth, adults, and families, domestic violence supports, grief supports, rapid access counselling and sexual health counselling among many other services.

Accessible Mental Health Support is Essential

During the fall of 2020, almost one in five Canadians (18.1%) aged 12 and older reported that they needed some help with their mental health in the past year. Among those who perceived a need (45.0%) felt that their needs were either unmet or only partially met. (Source: [Statistics Canada Self-perceived mental health and mental health care needs during the COVID-19 pandemic](#), September 8, 2021) The gap of unmet need is where the collaborative network model of CCYYC is essential.

Co-CEO Jessica Cope Williams of Catholic Family Service, the spearheading agency, says, “CCYYC’s initial phases have put access to affordable counselling in the hands of Calgarians where it belongs. With stressors in the community always evolving, the need to continue to push the envelope and expand what we make available to community members is essential. Calgarians are facing so many complex issues—how to access the right counselling service shouldn’t be one of them.” This latest expansion is a crucial next step for the network, aimed at filling in more gaps and emphasizing the diversity of services available.

Partner agencies agree. “At Trellis Society we strive to ensure that youth and families across Calgary can quickly and easily access mental health supports when they need them most. Partnering with CCYYC creates another avenue for us to remove barriers and provide therapy services to people in an accessible way,” says Amelia Larson, Clinical Director at Trellis Society, one of the newly added partners in this latest CCYYC expansion.

Since its inception, Community Connect YYC’s network has booked more than 6,000 appointments. Client testimonials praise the ease of access, “This was the easiest way I have EVER received services of this nature. This website is AMAZING!”, and, “I appreciate how simple the online booking was to navigate, and being able to see a counselor on the same day was a huge bonus...” (Source: [Community Connect YYC, Annual Report 2020-2021](#))

The timely addition of new partners to the CCYYC virtual network will strategically address the persistent gap; connecting Calgary’s social support organizations with the Calgarians that need them. This project would not be possible without the generous support of The City of Calgary through:

- Change Can’t Wait!
- the Home Program
- Emergency Resiliency Fund
- Connect the Dots

As well as contributions from the Calgary Homeless Foundation

About Community Connect YYC:

Asking for help may be hard, finding the right kind of help shouldn't be. Community Connect YYC is a group of innovative Calgary-based agencies dedicated to supporting community members in accessing mental health supports. Partner agencies put easy access to their services in the community's hands through a shared, simple 24/7 direct online booking portal. Calgarians find and can book the right kind of support, and access the ideal partner provider, simply and quickly. A variety of virtual/in-person appointments are available. Learn more: www.communityconnectyyc.ca/#AboutUs

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