

Uniquely Brantford:

DOWNTOWN OUTREACH TEAM PILOT



1. WHAT IS STREET OUTREACH AND BDOT?

Street outreach teams are a way to engage and support street-involved people without police enforcement.

Street outreach teams often focus on providing client-driven and client-focused services.

Brantford Downtown Outreach Team (BDOT) Pilot operated from July 2019 to June 2020. They reached out to people experiencing:

- housing instability
- mental health challenges
- substance use issues
- those in need of support navigating resources and sources

The BDOT supported people in downtown Brantford by:

- **Providing resources and supplies** like water, snacks, and hygiene products
- **Offering warm introductions** between service users and service providers
- **Helping coordinate** appointments and transportation
- **Responding to community** referrals and concerns
- **Advocating** for a more accessible and welcoming service system

WHAT DID BDOT ACCOMPLISH?



2066 REFERRALS

were made to community mental health, housing and shelter support, and addictions services

The BDOT's activities diverted over

\$1 MILLION IN COST FROM THE HEALTH SYSTEM

THE TEAM INTERACTED WITH SERVICE USERS **1871** TIMES IN ONE YEAR.

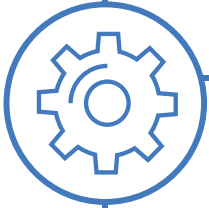
DISTRIBUTED OVER **1280** RESOURCES PACKAGES,

which included items like food and water, personal hygiene goods, and transportation passes



2. WHO COMPRISED THE BDOT TEAM?

- Coordinator & Crisis Worker
- Concurrent Disorders Clinician
- Peer Support Worker
- Nurse Practitioner



3. HOW DID BDOT WORK?

- **Building rapport** with service users to understand how to connect needs with services
- **Leveraging existing** relationships with different services in Downtown Brantford to build a stronger service system
- **Making decisions** based on data and experience
- **Responding flexibly** to service users' needs and emerging community issues to be at the right place and at the right time
- **Providing frontline assistance** to service users during the initial months of COVID-19 pandemic



4. WHERE IS BDOT NOW?

BDOT is thriving again and providing outreach beyond the borders of Downtown Brantford. The growing need for services and the successful Pilot project helped leverage over \$1 million dollars from Health Canada's Substance Use and Abuse Program (SUAP) from

April 2021 to March 2023. The Team expanded and continues providing high quality, best practice-informed services to those who want help with substance use issues, homelessness, and mental health challenges.

SOME IMPORTANT IMPACTS OF COVID-19:

The initial BDOT pilot was disrupted by the global COVID-19 pandemic. Despite experiencing a dramatic shift in the way the team delivered its services, the BDOT continued to support those in need. During the first wave of the virus, the BDOT saw a 25% increase in the number of high-risk interactions, and 39% growth in physical health issues.

