



WOOD BUFFALO WELLNESS SOCIETY

ANNUAL REPORT

2024-2025

EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR MESSAGE

Tansi,

This year has been a big year for our Society, undoubtedly, our biggest year yet! We had a hugely successful year in all three of our primary programs. The Mark Amy Treatment Centre experienced high utilization rates, a very stable staff compliment and high demand for private beds which has afforded us a more robust clinical and cultural program. Tawâw has had it's first full year of operations and the program is thriving. We are on track to fully complete the renovations by mid fall which will allow us to move into full occupancy. We were able to secure all government funding to bring the full Tawâw capital project to fruition. Tawâw has exceeded expectations on programming results, and we have yet to hit our stride. Sâkhitowin has moved into a new phase, with a smaller, more focused program allowing for more intense supports and case management which has translated into better results.

For our smaller programs, we've seen significant changes. We endeavoured into a new partnership with Ihkaspaskwa Collective to redevelop and roll out our traditional parenting program which we are excited to launch this fall. Our Human trafficking position was not renewed for year two which affords us the opportunity to re-evaluate and assess need and program fit for our agency. Changes in funding roll out provincially, impacted our Community Services department with the loss of the Outreach program. We very much recognize and support the community's approach to invest into Permanent Supportive Housing which means more stable funding for Tawâw.

As we relish in our successes, I want to acknowledge the challenges and lessons learned this year. In the fall, we learned the importance of government relations, community engagement and social media after facing on going rumours about the Tawâw program. We also learned that our organization and the residents and clients we serve, are very supported within the community as a whole. The Indigenous community in particular rallied around us during this dark time, advocating on our behalf. We invested heavily into marketing and communications and we weathered the storm. Today we can arguably say we came through it better and stronger than ever.

As the seasons change and we move into winter, we are excited to conclude the capital project portion of Tawâw. Shawn Chaulk from Stratford Construction has been such an asset to us. His construction knowledge has kept the



JO-ANNE PACKHAM

project on budget and on time, moving smoothly and ironing out all issues as they arose. Shawn's become a strong ally and friend to our agency and he has protected our interests at each turn. Our contractors, SMG Builders have been remarkable to work with, going above and beyond to assist our team on many occasions as we navigate the tribulations of adapting a building three decades old. We are excited to finish the construction and unveil our beautiful mural wall, which holds special deep meaning to us.

We are looking forward to strategic planning in the fall which will set the direction of where our agency will go over the next five years. We are launching new programs to compliment our already existing programs in the year ahead.

I want to highlight the real stars of Wood Buffalo Wellness Society, our staff. With so much change and growth, we have managed to recruit and retain an incredibly dedicated group of individuals who lead with their hearts and are committed to contributing positively and significantly to the lives of the individuals we serve. There are days in all of our programs where it can be hard to stay positive but day after day, I watch them invest into the lives of our residents and clients. I see them become renewed and optimistic from seeing our people thrive. It's a beautiful thing.

I would also like to extend my gratitude to the Elders we work with, whose support has been invaluable in our daily programming, program development, and community and government relations. Their mentorship and guidance over the past year has been deeply meaningful to me, and I am truly grateful for their help in leading through challenging times.

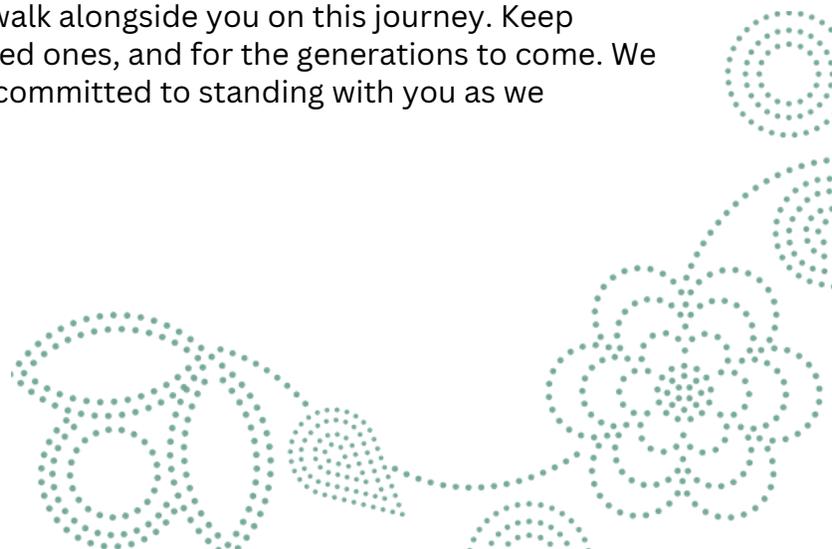
I would like to acknowledge the many community leaders who stepped forward in support this year—your phone calls and words of encouragement truly made a difference. I extend my gratitude to our Board of Directors for your governance, guidance, and steadfast belief in our shared vision. I also wish to thank our many funders, both private and government; we are honoured by your trust and investment, and we remain committed to delivering the most impactful service possible to our community. Finally, I offer sincere thanks to Niginan Housing Ventures for their continued support and mentorship.

Lastly, I wish to acknowledge and honour our most important relatives—the clients and residents we serve. Change is never easy; it calls for courage to take bold steps in new directions, to place trust in people you may not yet know, and at times to let go of things or relationships that once offered protection or comfort. Your strength and resilience inspire us, and we are deeply honoured to walk alongside you on this journey. Keep envisioning more—for yourself, for your loved ones, and for the generations to come. We believe in you, we care for you, and we are committed to standing with you as we navigate these changes together.

Miigwetch/ Kinanâskomitin



Jo-Anne Packham
Executive Director





ABOUT US

At Wood Buffalo Wellness Society, we support people facing addiction and homelessness through culturally rooted, inclusive programs. Guided by Indigenous knowledge and our core values, we provide healing, recovery, housing, and hope for individuals and families in our community.



OUR COMMITMENT

For over 15 years, Wood Buffalo Wellness Society has been supporting the community by creating an environment of respect, warmth and inclusiveness. At the core of our organization are seven traditional values:

- Love
- Respect
- Humility
- Honesty
- Courage
- Wisdom
- Truth

We believe in recovery honouring the individual, respecting tradition, and healing that restores dignity, strengthens families, and builds a safer, healthier community for everyone.

ROOTED IN CULTURE

Our programming blends traditional knowledge and ceremonies with best practices and evidence based addiction treatment. Not only do our clients gain the opportunity to explore culture, they are also offered treatment from leading modalities. and research.



WOOD BUFFALO WELLNESS SOCIETY

PROGRAMS



MARK AMY TREATMENT CENTRE

RESIDENTIAL TREATMENT

is a 14-bed residential program located just outside Fort McMurray that provides a 56-day, intensive healing journey. It combines trauma-informed care, evidence-based therapy, and traditional Indigenous cultural practices, offering individuals a safe, supportive place to recover from substance use and process addictions.



COMMUNITY SERVICES

HOUSING WITH SUPPORTS, OVERDOSE PREVENTION AND OUTREACH

Provides a wide range of supports to individuals and families experiencing homelessness or housing instability. Alongside housing programs like Centralized Intake and Housing with Supports, the Society also delivers STBBI prevention and testing, as well as harm reduction outreach, ensuring people have access to safe supplies, education, and resources to reduce health risks while building trust and pathways to long-term stability.



TAWÂW

PERMANENT SUPPORTIVE HOUSING

Tawâw, meaning “you are welcome, there is room for you,” provides long-term housing for people experiencing chronic homelessness. With 30 units and wrap-around supports, it is culturally grounded, recovery-oriented, and designed to help residents live with dignity while moving toward greater independence.



SÂKIHWITWIN

RECOVERY HOMES

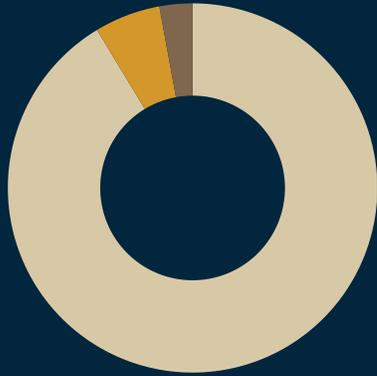
A supportive residential living program for men and women at different stages of addiction recovery. Homes are shared (3-7 people), semi-structured, with peer / house accountability, ceremonies, cultural practices, mentoring, and assistance to rebuild independence.



PROGRAM HIGHLIGHTS

MARK AMY TREATMENT CENTRE

- First Nation Status
- First Nation Non-Status
- Non-Indigenous



ON THE LAND TEACHINGS
18

131
ELDER INTERACTIONS

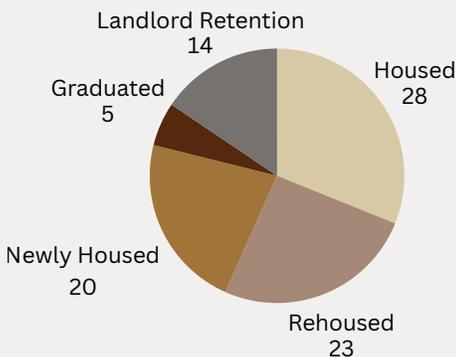
ADMISSIONS **63**
41

GRADUATED **33**
25



COMMUNITY SERVICES

93%
HOUSING RATE



SAFER SUPPLY PRODUCTS

Provided safer supplies to Pharmacies and Agencies throughout Fort McMurray

PHARMACIES
425 INJECTION
10 NALOXONE

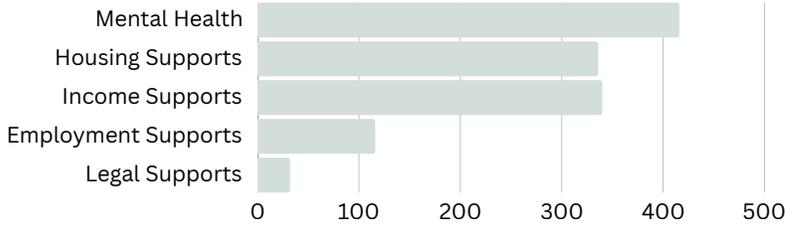
ORGANIZATIONS
45 INJECTION
560 NARCAN
1051 INHALATION

7 GROUP TRAINING SESSION
68 Individuals

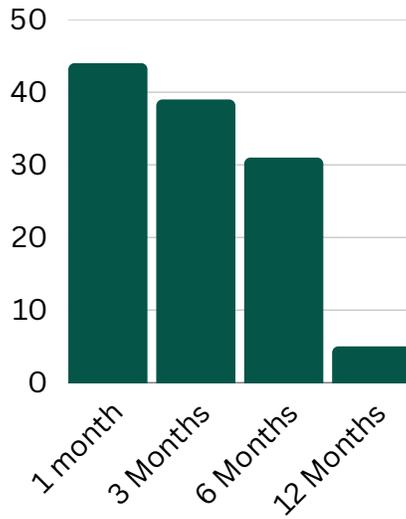


SÂKI HITOWIN

REFERRALS



SOBRIETY

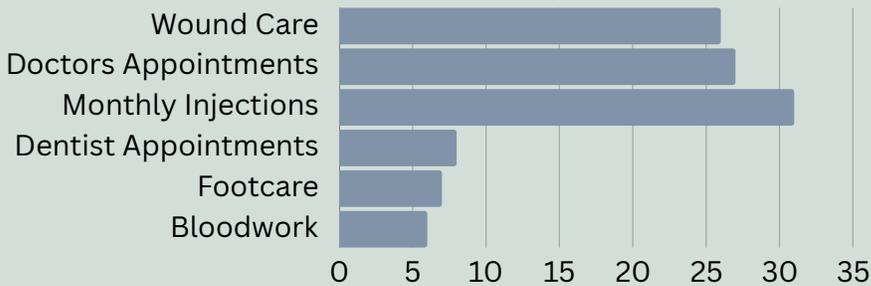


10 PARENTS GOT THEIR CHILDREN BACK

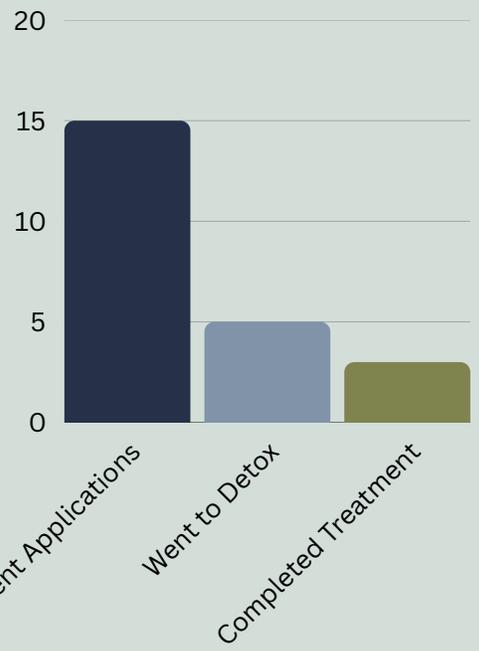
31 IN PROCESS OF GETTING THEIR CHILDREN BACK



TAWÂW



CONNECTED TO ONSITE ADDICTION COUNSELLORS



AVOIDED

47
EMERGENCY ROOM VISITS

98% OCCUPANCY RATES

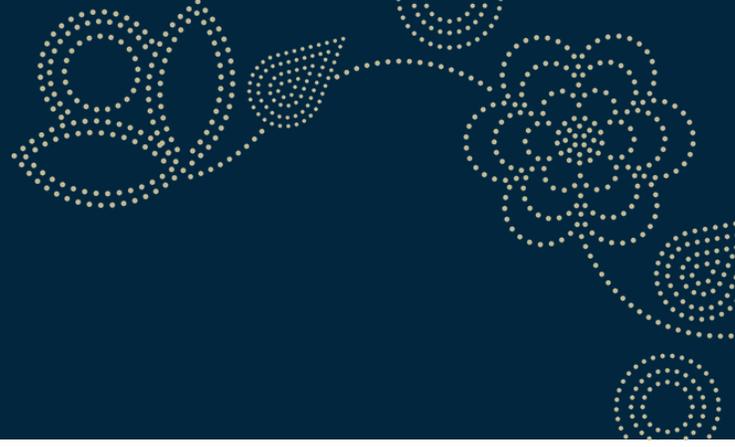


DID YOU **KNOW?**

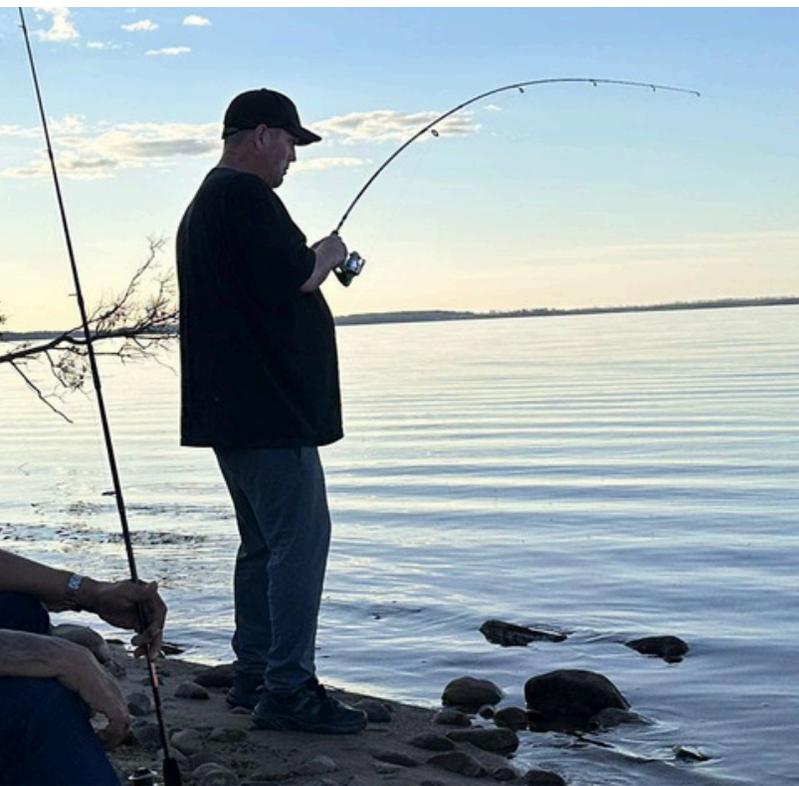
Mortality rates have escalated due to opioid poisoning. First Nations People are dying at a rate seven times higher than non-Indigenous people – 50 per cent are between the ages of 20 and 39. We are losing a generation to preventable opioid poisonings. The services we offer are essential and life saving.



IN LOVING MEMORY



This year, our community experienced the profound loss of four residents who passed away. Each of them carried struggles with addiction and homelessness, challenges that too often define how the world chooses to see people. Within our programs, however, we were given the privilege to know them beyond those struggles. We saw their humour, their warmth, and their capacity for love and connection. We shared in their stories, their resilience, and the small everyday moments that revealed their true selves. To us, they were not defined by addiction or circumstance—they were family. Their passing is felt deeply by all of us, and while we grieve their absence, we remain grateful for the time we were able to walk alongside them. Their memory strengthens our commitment to seeing the humanity in every individual and to honouring the lives of those too often overlooked. We hold their memories in our hearts and dedicate our continued work to honouring their journeys.



"Our Elders remind us that when someone leaves this world, they walk a new trail but never leave us. Their spirit returns in the land, the water, the wind, and in our dreams. Grief is heavy, but love carries us until we meet again."

THANK YOU TO OUR **FUNDERS AND DONORS**



FUNDERS

Alberta Health Services
Health Canada
Government of Alberta
Regional Municipality of Wood Buffalo
Indigenous Housing Capital Program
United Way of Wood Buffalo
National Indigenous Collaborative Housing

DONORS

Acden
C & B
Civeo
Stratford Contracting
Imperial Oil
Suncor Energy
Syncrude
Rona Foundation
FMFN Economic Development
Vanguard Roofing Services
Sand Carpet One
iPaint
Northern Drywall



