



August 7, 2019

City Hall
222 3rd Ave North
Saskatoon, SK
S7K 0J5

Standing Policy Committee on Planning, Development & Community Services

Thank you for the opportunity to meet.

Background/ Agency Service Description-

Saskatoon Crisis Intervention Service (SCIS). The **Mobile Crisis Service** arm of the agency is part of the emergency continuum that provides an integrated response to social, emotional and psychological emergencies 24 hours a day, every day of the year. Response occurs on the phone, in the office and in the community. A crisis may involve suicide prevention, mental health and addictions, youth issues, interpersonal and family problems, child abuse and neglect, older adults in distress and natural disasters.

Additional services provided by SCIS include the **Police and Crisis team (PACT)**, and two intensive case management services for the severely emotionally and mentally impaired including **Crisis Management Service** and **Journey Home- Housing First**.

The steadily increasing demand for crisis intervention services indicates that the service is well known, effective and able to fill gaps in the service continuum. Our single entry point/ accessible service model is seen as a major support to individuals, families and other emergency service partners such as the Saskatoon Police Service, Fire, EMS, hospital emergency and emergency shelters.

Current Challenges-

- An integral aspect of crisis resolution is to reduce risk, ensure safety and social well-being at the time of the crisis and during follow up. This aligns with the **City of Saskatoon strategic goal** of helping citizens to achieve and maintain quality of life and to experience social well-being.
- SCIS is in alignment with the focus on Missing and Murdered Indigenous Women and Girls. Our agency provides high priority crisis response and follow up for women and girls who are victims of interpersonal violence and domestic violence. The goal of our intervention is to prevent further violence while building support/ safety utilizing a trauma informed, human rights perspective that is in keeping with a commitment to a Truth and Reconciliation Indigenous Framework.
- Our experience with violent, complex and unpredictable (including crystal meth and opioid use) crises is parallel to the latest Crime Severity Index Report. The volume and complexity of these crisis contacts with vulnerable families, youth, and those with mental health problems and substance use disorders has increased significantly creating logistical as well as resource challenges.



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Over 30,000 citizens each year have the expectation that we will respond during their time of critical need as part of the Public Service Emergency continuum. Specifically, Mobile Crisis Service partnered with the Saskatoon Police Service over **5000** times last year (not including PACT response). Again, it is an understatement to say that these calls have become more frequent and more complex. For example, a simple call can escalate into a disclosure of domestic abuse, children without adequate care, and a youth with a drug overdose requiring medical attention. Increasing service demand exceeds our resources. If MCS was not available, anywhere from 10,000 to 15,000 of these crisis calls could default to 911.

We sincerely appreciate the support from the City of Saskatoon. Our model of service delivery (one number to call) and the 24 hour Mobile response aspect is unique to the City and to the province of Saskatchewan. Our grant from the City has not changed in 12 years (\$125,000). We ask for consideration for an annual increase and a process that ensures timely discussion as well as the possibility of a more suitable financial resource stream that supports the vital role of SCIS in the emergency continuum.

Thank you again for this opportunity.

Sincerely,

Rita Field
Executive Director
Saskatoon Crisis Intervention Service Inc.

CC Arthur Baalim – Chairperson SCIS Board of Directors