



# Rural Community Services Centre

May 1, 2018



# Summary

## Background

According to the World Health Organization, around 450 million people currently struggle with mental illness, making it the leading cause of disability worldwide. Mental illness affects people of all ages, education, income levels and cultures. The economic burden of mental illness in Canada is an estimated \$51 billion per year but the human cost is even greater. 75% of children with mental or emotional disorders do not have access to specialized treatment services. 70% of mental health problems have their onset during childhood or adolescence. Serious emotional disturbance affects 1 in 5 young people at any given time and it can severely disrupt their long term ability to function socially, academically and emotionally. Almost one half (49%) of those who feel they have suffered from depression anxiety have never gone to see a doctor or any service about this problem.

The Bashaw community has a notable history of developing relationships and structures that work to serve community needs. Many initiatives have been created to meet community needs. They were often developed by multiple partners with shared goals who were committed to a coordinated effort. Individuals and families are being referred to our community as a place to live affordably and to receive these wraparound community services. The needs of many of those families are complex and so we are left to continually adapt and create resources in an attempt to serve them. As a result, many of our community services have recently identified that mental health concerns and challenges are becoming prevalent and widespread for senior, adults, youth, and families. The current patchwork of services for mental health and addictions is not adequately meeting these complex needs. All sectors confirm the need including education, social services, justice, and health.

The community of Bashaw also experiences a unique geographical area. The town and rural area are bordered by four different counties: Camrose, Stettler, Ponoka and Lacombe. As a result, community members are challenged to determine where to find the services they need IF they are able to overcome the issue of transportation and timely access. For the purposes of this project, we will serve the same geographical area as the RCMP - Bashaw Detachment which will be the communities of Bashaw, Buffalo Lake Estates, Pelican Point, Ferintosh, Edberg, Meeting Creek, Donald, Mirror, Alix and R.R. 1 Ponoka.



## **Model of Service**

While there are several social organizations serving the Bashaw community, we note that it is the services offered in the community that people seek - not the name or composition of the organization. As a result, Bashaw District Support Services, Bashaw Adult Learning Council, Bashaw School and the Bashaw RCMP detachment have come together to collaboratively develop the Rural Community Services Centre. The intent is to collaboratively promote the services and programs offered in the community rather than the individual organizations that deliver them. This will provide seamless delivery to every individual who needs support. A common referral will be used for the four organizations and any door is open!

There are two program components that will be added to what already exists in Bashaw and area. There is an immense need for a position that provides supportive listening, initial action planning and informed referral to appropriate services for individuals and families. There is often a need to explore the current situation and then begin planning steps to take and services to access in an effort to move forward. This would include shared ideas on preparing for referral, what to anticipate, etc. Follow-up sessions as needed will be critical to maintaining a connection to ensure community members are supported.

Additionally, a program will be developed that serves children, youth and families who are at high risk of school failure, behavioural and mental health problems, family violence and involvement with the juvenile justice system. The program will target those children, youth and families who are “falling through the cracks” of our community service systems. It will help families improve family functioning, increase parenting skills, improve children’s behaviour at home and in school, and increase family social support and social connections.

With the exception of the two new programs, the rest of the model is already in existence in Bashaw. However there are other communities in our geographical area that do not have a collaborative model in place. It is our intention to look for ways to serve the other communities. It is also our intention to ask for partnership from all levels of government as we move forward.

## **Additional Supporting Organizations**

Other services and organizations that have been included and are willing to participate in conversations and engage around serving Bashaw and rural area are the Bashaw & District Food Bank, Town of Bashaw, Primary Care Network, Alberta Mental Health Services, Bashaw & District Regional Health & Wellness Foundation, Bashaw & District Victim Services and the Bashaw Municipal Library.



## Appendix I - Existing Community Services

### Children Youth and Families

Family Supports  
Early Intervention  
Accredited Child Care  
Early Learning Programs  
Children's Programs  
Youth Programs  
Food Bank  
Tools for School

### Senior

Senior Supports  
Meals on Wheels  
Home Support  
Transportation Services

### Connections and Referrals

Fetal Alcohol Spectrum Disorder Network  
Healthy Families  
Addictions  
Mental Health  
Family Law Centre  
Primary Care Network

### Learning, Training and Careers

Adult Literacy  
Foundational Learning  
Education and Training  
Learning Supports  
Career Planning  
Technology Supports

### Community and Health

Community Information  
Rural Development  
Facilitation  
Victim Services

### Visiting Referral Office Space

## Appendix II- Community Social Profile

### Population

The combined Bashaw and rural area population is estimated to be about 1600 people. The population demographic for the combined area is fairly balanced with 36% being children, youth and young adults/families, 38% middle aged and 26% seniors.

### Families

Family demographics in the Town of Bashaw indicate that 74% of couples are married, 13% common-law and 13% are single parents. The rural area demographics are only slightly different with 81% of couples married. These statistics may have an impact on family stability.

Family income is a major challenge to our community. The average rural family is 10% below the provincial average however, within the Town of Bashaw, 35% of families are below the provincial average – 1/3 of all families. This has far reaching implications for the community's businesses and social programs.

### Mobility

The rural area for Bashaw is very stable with over 74% of families living in the area for 5 or more years. The Town population reports that only 60% of families have lived in the area for 5 years or more.

### Education

30% of the 15 and over population in the Town of Bashaw does not have a high school certificate, diploma or degree. 13% higher than the provincial average. The rural area is closer to the provincial average at 20%.

### Social Statistics and Issues

The annual statistics of the Bashaw Food Bank reported serving 405 individuals including 99 children with food hampers in 2017. There were 1066 inquiries for social supports in 2017. Single parent families, family household income and high rates of transiency are major factors with respect to the social and economic challenges of the community. A significant number of individuals and families in the Bashaw area are on supported incomes (AISH, Income Support, WCB, etc.) and are seeking a reduced cost of living. There is also a significant increase in families with complex needs such as development delays, mental illness, addictions, violence, and those who have never had to depend on outside help. However, for many of those families there is not a lot of professional supports available and transportation to other communities is often a major challenge leaving these families with a better cost of living but significantly reduced access to specialized or professional support.

