



Strategic Plan 2019-2024



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OUR MANDATE

Thrive Counselling is multi-faceted family service agency serving the Halton community for well over 50 years. Formed by the 2015 merger of Halton Family Services and Access Counselling & Family Services, we have maintained the best aspects of these organizations while redefining and positioning ourselves to take on the challenges of our current environment.

Thrive is committed to providing the residents of Halton services to address the challenges they face and optimize their health and wellness . Through the delivery of therapy, counselling, groups and services for families, Thrive commits to strengthening our community and its members.

Vision, Mission & Values

Our Vision:

Strong People
Strong families
Strong communities

Our Mission:

We partner with you to manage life's challenges.

Our Values:

Care and Compassion
Respect and Dignity
Professionalism & Quality
Inclusion & Safe

STRATEGIC PLANNING PROCESS

As our prior plan approached conclusion, the Board of Thrive Counselling reviewed the substantive progress which occurred during 2016-2019. The primary goals of that plan arose from the merger and the need to develop, market and nurture a new agency identity and vision. Feedback across the organization and community provides strong support for the success of these objectives. The strength of this success provides Thrive with the ability to define bold new visions for the agency.

With this in mind, Thrive worked with a consultant with experience and expertise in strategic planning for the Family Service sector, as well as conducting discussions at the Board and Management level and a visioning day, to develop a new five year plan. Agency staff have provided their support for the agency objectives and are engaged in the operationalization of the goals.

The Environment

An on-going environmental scan has provided essential context for agency planning and decision making.

Political Environment – Thrive and the family service sector face a changed political environment requiring the development of new relationships, a need to highlight our value to new bureaucratic and political players, and an increased focus on the value proposition associated with our work. We can expect the likelihood of significant changes as the provincial health sector re-aligns and re-organizes with an eye to cost-savings across the public sector. Thrive is aligning closely with our family service sector to maximize the benefits of Family Service Ontario’s government relations expertise.

Economic Environment - While the economy continues to post modest growth, employment salaries have not kept pace with inflation and financial instability, risks and the income gap continue to rise.

While we are fortunate in Halton to have a higher average provincial income, significant areas of poverty exist creating stressors for our community. In particular, the high cost of housing in Halton creates upward pressures on salaries. Flat funding revenues require non-profits to innovate to maintain service levels and be able to offer competitive salaries for a highly-skilled workforce.

Demographic Environment – Challenges exist in providing service in four communities, particularly distinct in terms of age distribution,, cultural backgrounds and growth rates. The agency will need to continue to calibrate the changing needs for services and types of services

across the region. Increasing the agency's capacity to serve a diverse population is considered in all decision-making. The Milton community continues to be one of the fastest growing Ontario communities, attracting a young, diverse population. Burlington has a higher than average population of seniors. Oakville, one of the province's most affluent communities, has considerable pockets of poverty.

Technological Environment – This area continues to change rapidly. Increased technological skills are required across all staff groups. There is an increased need and opportunity to automate processes where possible, particularly across data collection and outcome measures. The ability to effectively utilize technology to engage Thrive's stakeholders, to optimize our efficiency and to demonstrate our effectiveness is essential to our ability to move forward. Thrive has enhanced our on-line presence and our technological platforms to capitalize on technological possibilities.

Thrive conducted a SWOT analysis to assist in better identifying the strengths of the agency that can be brought to address various challenges.

Strengths

- ◆ Website, social media, community outreach, new programming have increased local relevance and demand for service.
- ◆ Highly qualified staff who reflect upon population diversity. Dedicated, engaged and adaptive staff who welcome innovative programming.
- ◆ New, refreshed and accessible space provides opportunity and continuity across organization.
- ◆ Successful accreditation of merged agency, strong parent organization Family Service Ontario, committed and high-functioning Board.
- ◆ High demand for services including new offerings including DBT Skills groups, Walk-In Clinics and language-specific groups.

Challenges

- ◆ Lean administrative structure presents risks for adequate role back-up and succession considerations.
- ◆ Unpredictable changes to political landscape. Potential impact on funding.
- ◆ Clinical and administrative time constraints.
- ◆ Lack of dedicated resources to manage technological issues and decision support.
- ◆ Capacity to respond to increased demand and higher need clients.

LOOKING AHEAD

The Board reflected that a longer interval might be required to enact the next stage of planning in moving the agency forward as the intent to move forward and determined a five year strategic plan would best serve the current purpose. Thrive Counselling has developed its culture and identity and has a vision to expand and grow in a manner which is sustainable, demonstrates quality and effectiveness and increases the capacity to meet the needs of the Halton community.

5-Year Strategic Plan



Increase agency capacity for clients served.

50% more ICF clients



Demonstrate strong outcomes.

80% improve symptoms/functioning



Increase funding to support growth.

Increase budget by 20%



Strengthen organizational capacity.

Increase administrative capacity by 20%

Objective #1 - Increase agency capacity for service (Individuals, Couples & Families)

Thrive currently sees approximately 1700 clients a year in our Individual, Couple and Family program. Demand for service is constantly increasing creating inappropriate waits for service. Providing timely service to a larger portion of our community is an essential goal. Evidence-based models of service such as Walk-In Counselling, new and enhanced funding as well as improved efficiency can advance this objective.

Goal: Serve 50% more clients in ICF by 5 year mark (850 additional ICF clients)

Strategy #1	Tactics
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◆ Develop & Expand Single Session Walk-In service 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▶ Open and expand Oakville Walk-In Clinic ▶ Maximize utilization of Burlington & Oakville office
Strategy #2	Tactics
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◆ Increase staffing 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▶ Access health funding for new Psychotherapy funding
Strategy #3	Tactics
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◆ Increase staff productivity 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▶ Reduce volumes of cancellations, re-scheduling & non-attendance for appointments. ▶ Standardize and boost direct service time across agency.

Measures:

Total number of clients seen
 Number of clients seen in Walk-in
 Number of client sessions attended

Objective #2 - Increase client outcomes in therapy programs

Thrive is increasingly being asked by stakeholders and funders for information regarding outcomes and value for services. Thrive has some outcome measurements in place and has started using an on-line platform to improve this practice.

There is significant meta-analysis indicating that tracking outcomes and client feedback improves outcomes. Also, meta-analysis of research finds that the therapeutic alliance is more important than the specific intervention that is used on the client so best to focus on the factor which is the most influential for outcomes.

Goal: 80% of clients have a measurable positive outcome in functioning or symptoms

Strategy #1	Tactics
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◆ Utilize a robust outcome measurement system across the whole ICF and VAW program 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▶ Introduce and build platform across all staff (Greenspace) ▶ Invest capital into training and measurement system(s)
Strategy #2	Tactics
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◆ Track and measure therapeutic alliance 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▶ Provide training, supervision and coaching for staff on implementation and therapeutic use of these measures ▶ Introduce progress measures .i.e. Miller
Strategy #3	Tactics
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◆ Track Outcomes for Walk-in Counselling 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▶ Develop and implement process to monitor outcome information for the agency, someone or someone's role to be responsible to the metrics.

Measures:

% clients using outcome measure of symptoms experiencing improvements

% clients using a functionality measure who show improvement

% of clients where alliance is being measured by a tool

% of clients participating in measures (at least 1 pre & post)

% of therapists utilizing outcome measures in counselling

% of clients whose outcomes are being tracked

% of clients showing Walk-In Clinic specific improvements

Objective # 3 Stabilize agency funding through growth

Thrive currently has a budget of 2.2 million and would have more sustainability if costs could spread across a larger budget. This increase would allow for more clinical and administrative staff which would support our other objectives.

Goal: Increase agency budget by \$400,000 in 5 years

Strategy #1

◆ Secure Increased funding through health

Tactics

- ▶ Work with FSO Board
- ▶ Engage in Greenspace pilot project
- ▶ Outreach to political and bureaucratic decision-makers

Strategy #2

◆ Increase client revenues

Tactics

- ▶ Review fee structures
- ▶ Increase proportion of full or high fee clients
- ▶ Attract more high fee clients(i.e Victim Quick Response Program, employers, insurance clients)

Strategy #3

◆ Add new funded programs through the Ministry of Children, Community & Social Services, the Ministry of the Attorney General, or Regional providers

Tactics

- ▶ Position self for known potential program expansions – i.e. (Ensure credentialed staff with specialized training)
- ▶ Maintain vigilance about potential programs currently offered by other service providers
- ▶ Follow budget/announcements closely, for example changes to social assistance

Measures:

Agency budget increase
% Increase in client fees

Objective #4 Strengthen Organizational Infrastructure

Thrive currently has a lean administrative team with fairly centralized functions. This may pose risks in terms of flexibility to manage absences and turnover as well as variations in workload. Increased ability to stabilize workload pressures and navigate planned or unplanned absences would assist in maintaining focus on organizational goals.

Goal: Increase administrative capacity by 1.5 full time equivalent staff or equivalent capacity gain

Strategy #1

- ◆ Increase staffing levels for administrative functions

Tactics

- ▶ Secure additional funding which includes administrative dollars

Strategy #2

- ◆ Consider alternate back-end models

Tactics

- ▶ Research options available and costs

Strategy #3

- ◆ Utilize students in administration

Tactics

- ▶ Develop relationships with educational institutions which may assist with projects or special tasks

Strategy #4

- ◆ Succession planning (short & long term)

Tactics

- ▶ Increase cross-training
- ▶ Identify administrative risks and mitigations

Measures:

Number of FTEs or equivalents

Number of student placements

Report and recommendations around alternate back-end models

Redevelopment and expansion of succession plans for key positions