

# Envision AGM reveals organization's growth

Sam Macdonald / Estevan Mercury

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Envision Counselling and Support Centre is in a phase of significant growth; a fact that was indicated at their AGM on June 15. With demand increasing for the services the organization, is working to keep up with the needs which it serves.

“We continue to have growth as an agency. In 2008-2009, we saw 701 clients, and in 2015-2016, we saw 3,204. That’s astronomical,” said program coordinator Christa Daku. “With the expansion of our programs and the additional funding we received, and the success of our grants, we’re definitely in a really good place as an organization.”

This past year, Envision has been seeing so much expansion, that the organization has experienced some growing pains. Because of its fast rate of expansion, particularly a significant increase in its staff, the organization is running a deficit.

The deficit is on account of an increase in spending that was used to expand the organization’s staff.

“We’re hoping for some additional funding from the government, and community support, to make up the difference over the next year, in the way of donations and such,” said Daku. “It’s a challenge with organizations such as ourselves. Because non-profits have to stretch to the limits and have numbers to support additional funding.”

Daku noted the deficit is something that would have been difficult to avoid, since the decision to hire more staff was done to ensure the wellness of the community Envision serves, and the wellness of the staff members themselves, who are seeing an increasing workload.

“We did have some surplus dollars last year that have gone directly into additional staffing” said Daku. “We’re very strategic. Our board is conscientious in the way the funds are used, and I’m pleased to say we’re accountable for all of our financial statements.”

In the coming year, Daku said the goal is for Envision to stay sustainable, as an organization, so that it can accommodate its recent expansion. She noted that the organization is also looking to implement a new strategic plan, possibly this coming fall.

“That’s depending on budgetary restrictions, as well, so we’ll be looking at what we’re going to be doing in additional programming and partnerships through the communities, in that way.”

Daku said another positive to come out of the AGM was a presentation by the executive assistant on the results of a client evaluation survey given to clients, anonymously, over the last year.

“A lot of positives came out of that,” said Daku, noting that, according to the survey, Envision employees were rated as doing a fantastic job at providing services.

Daku said the feedback from the survey indicated there is a need for Envision to expand its Children Exposed to Violence program. She said that getting a full-time counsellor in Estevan, to help children who have been exposed to domestic violence, is another important goal, going forward.

“Really, one of the biggest highlights of the AGM was pulling our stats together and seeing them come to fruition on all the hard work that we’ve done,” said Daku. “We acknowledge the staff and volunteers on the board, on the hard work and dedication and compassion that’s put into what we offer.”

- See more at: <http://www.estevanmercury.ca/news/local-news/envision-agm-reveals-organization-s-growth-1.2283718#sthash.DieDsv7Y.dpuf>