



BRIDGEPOINT
CENTER FOR EATING DISORDERS



www.bridgepointcenter.ca

2017-18 ANNUAL REPORT

ABOUT US

For the past two decades, BridgePoint has continued to evolve and grow as it provides:

- Residential eating disorder programming as part of the continuum of care to Saskatchewan residents.
- Support to individuals through a multidisciplinary team approach.
- Safe, comfortable, nurturing environment for individuals to heal that is separate from the stress of daily life.
- Ongoing individualized services.
- Continuing interdependent planning between BridgePoint, the Saskatchewan Health Authority and the Ministry of Health.



BRIDGEPOINT
CENTER FOR EATING DISORDERS



VISION

All persons affected by disordered eating experience discovery, recovery and healing.

MISSION

BridgePoint Center for Eating Disorders, is a provincial resource providing recovery based programming for people who are experiencing disordered eating.

CORE VALUES

We Value:

Safety – a place where all are respected without judgement and experience physical, spiritual, emotional wellbeing

A participant centred focus – the participant is the expert in their experience and free to be their authentic self and the voice of their healing journey

Compassion – embracing the uniqueness of each person with empathy, caring and kindness to build a sense of trust and belonging

Expertise – excelling through competence in our specialty, knowledge, continuous learning, and a multidisciplinary holistic approach

Collaboration – the best outcomes result from working together and empowering our strengths through partnerships with others



It's hard to believe that 20 years ago, a group of volunteers with a unique community vision united to advocate and create BridgePoint Center for Eating Disorders. Today, we are excited about the opportunity to establish continued growth as we work with the newly formed Saskatchewan Health Authority. Our program framework continues to be an inspiration and one to be envied by programs across Canada, the United States and around the world.

Our new strategic plan will give us the roadmap and position us to excel in the years ahead. As we look forward, BridgePoint's philosophy, multi-disciplinary team, cost-effective programming, and holistic approach line up nicely to complement many of the recommendations in the "Working Together for Change: A 10-Year Mental Health and Addictions Action Plan for Saskatchewan". We are grateful that the Government of Saskatchewan has reaffirmed its commitment to supporting health community-based organizations (CBOs) funded by the Saskatchewan Health Authority.

In review of the Ministry of Health Plan for 2018-19, our program aligns with the following goals and strategies in the plan.

- BridgePoint's programming is fundamental as a resource to reduce hospital admissions through prevention, early treatment accessibility and post hospitalization resources and programming. While it is difficult to measure at this point, our program is integral in reducing unnecessary hospital care days, unnecessary hospital admissions and/or readmissions rates.
- We will be implementing new measures to track our participants' journeys in the health system through voluntary information captured on program intake.
- We are committed to creating as few barriers as possible for those seeking treatment and accessing our program.
- Programming is scheduled throughout the year with wait times that are currently manageable at this point and dependent on participant availability to attend a scheduled program.
- We are focusing on providing resources and programming for youth and their families (prevention programs, resources, outreach, etc).

This next year will be another year of growth, reflection, development and quality improvement initiatives as we turn our newly developed strategic plan into action. We would not be able to continue the work that we do without our generous donors, corporate funders and the continued support from the Ministry of Health and Saskatchewan Health Authority.

The past 20 years have seen amazing changes in the field of eating disorders and we are deeply grateful for your support. Together, we will blaze new trails, save more lives, and provide hope and healing for those affected by disordered eating.

CARLA CHABOT
EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR





**YOU CAN
CHOOSE
COURAGE OR
COMFORT
BUT YOU
CANNOT
CHOOSE BOTH**

DR. BRENÉ BROWN



Courage.

Courage is a heart word. The root of the word courage is cur - the Latin word for heart. In one of its earliest forms, the word courage meant "To speak one's mind with your heart to tell your story" (Dr. Brené Brown). It has become an organizing principle in my life and led me to this amazing adventure in Saskatchewan with BridgePoint!

I am a Masters prepared clinical social worker with over 20 years of experience practicing in both Alberta and British Columbia. My clinical experience has focused on supporting people facing complex issues including addiction, depression, anxiety, and disordered eating. I have worked with numerous teams and in a variety of environments. I knew I wanted to return to working with those diagnosed with eating disorders after working for 10 years across the continuum of eating disorder treatment, including outpatient, day program, inpatient, and live-in treatment services.

Moving to Saskatchewan and coming to BridgePoint was a risk. I didn't know anyone in the province. I'd flown in for an interview in the middle of winter and driven to Milden to meet with Carla and Helen for a total of 2 hours. What I did know was that the possibility of living more in alignment with my authentic self and working in an environment that not only professed a mission and values but also wholeheartedly embraced them was worth it! I also knew immediately that BridgePoint embodied the community of courage I wanted to be a part of.

BridgePoint is the place where courage is encouraged and celebrated. I see courage in every participant that decides to come to BridgePoint and take the time to invest in themselves to create the life they want to live. BridgePoint is the place for people to become intentional in digging deep, finding their true voice, building resilience, and claiming the inner strength, courage and wisdom that is within each of them. This fits well with my passion for providing a safe place for people to have courageous conversations, own their stories of strength and struggle, and ultimately become empowered to create more healthy and wholehearted lives free of the eating disorder.

**LAURALYN BLACKBURN, MSW, CLINICAL RSW
PROGRAM DIRECTOR**

A MESSAGE FROM OUR BOARD

With the assistance and enthusiasm of our Executive Director, this fiscal year 2017-18 has been one of celebration, challenges, loss, gains and further development of our organization.

Gains were made as early as the day of our AGM, June 29, 2017, when our new accounting firm of PricewaterhouseCoopers presented their very informative and first audit of our operations. There were also losses that day, with the resignation of two members of our Board family. Berny Wiens had been a foundational presence with BridgePoint. He had served in several different capacities beginning with the inception of BridgePoint. Bryan Salte, the legal council for the College of Physicians and Surgeons, had so very capably steered the organization financially and in numerous other ways during some stressful past times. Later in the year, Marlene Weston resigned from her position of Board Member. Marlene also had direct investment with BridgePoint, serving as the Heartland Health Liaison to us for over a decade. The contributions of these board members cannot be overstated, and the knowledge and expertise they brought are remembered by the organization.

In May 2017, there was great excitement staging BridgePoint's 20th Anniversary of operations. The event was very well attended by past and present participants, team, invited guests and community members from several towns whose volunteer time and effort were much appreciated.

May also brought a challenging request from the Health Ministry communicating through the regional former Heartland Health authority, that Community Based Organizations, such as BridgePoint, to plan to achieve a 10% reduction in expenses. Through our Executive Director's strong, fact-bound defence, the need to do this never materialized.

Over the course of the year, it became evident that a formal traditional Program Evaluation would be an expensive and onerous task. The method that came to seem more achievable will be to proceed with accreditation.

Governance policies have also been reviewed and renewed. We are developing a work plan to ensure that Board obligations in this area are completed on a regular, ongoing basis.

In late November, the Board met in Regina to conduct a strategic framework review under the guidance of Laura Soparlo. We discussed trends, opportunities, threats, strengths and weaknesses. From this, we refreshed our Mission Statement, Vision, Core Values and defined areas that we wish to focus on over the next three years.

The board had the good fortune to meet with several ministry individuals during this planning day. This face to face contact with individuals of importance to our organization was enlightening.

Board goals continue to focus on increased outreach to all types of "communities." This next year will show evidence of Board recruitment and succession planning for the Board. A continuing potential challenge will be functioning under the new Saskatchewan Health Authority. We believe this also to be a time of opportunity to illustrate the many "gifts" of CBOs, including the ability to serve "patients" outside of a hospital setting.

And again, we are encouraged by the ongoing training and expanded education of all our team members. Their extensive knowledge and continued passion are propelling the organization to an even greater scope of programming, and hence, increasingly excellent experiences and learning opportunities for our participants.

ANNE RANKIN
BOARD CHAIRPERSON

2017-18 BOARD OF DIRECTORS

BridgePoint continues to have a reliable and experienced board with members bringing backgrounds from mental health, healthcare, and education. The Board continues to use a policy based governance approach to provide oversight and direction for this program.

ANNE RANKIN, CHAIRPERSON

KAREN GIBBONS, VICE-CHAIR

MARIE KLEVEN, SECRETARY/TREASURER

SHARON LYONS

DAVE NELSON

STRATEGIC FRAMEWORK

OUR STRATEGIC PRIORITIES 2018 – 2021



IMPROVE PROGRAM CONTINUITY

- Enhanced clinical expertise to support defined program areas
- Strong collaborative interdisciplinary team approach
- Greater functional linkages between BridgePoint programming and other parts of the health system (referrals, transition programming)



ADVANCE STAKEHOLDER AWARENESS & RELATIONSHIPS

- Improved relationships and involvement with Saskatchewan Health Authority and Ministry of Health
- Increased awareness by potential clients, other care providers, and organizations



DEMONSTRATE OUTCOMES & VALUE

- Strong defined measurement model with outcome measures and data to demonstrate BP effectiveness
- Defined organizational processes (systems) to best deliver programs



STRENGTHEN ORGANIZATION STABILITY

- People
- Enhanced team capacity, skill, expertise
- Succession plan in place, staff, ED, Board
- Enhanced salary and benefits plan
- Funding
- Defined funding model for agreed services
- Diversified funding sources
- Infrastructure
- Capital asset plan to support defined services
- Ongoing infrastructure maintenance plan
- Technology investments to support services

OUR TEAM

STARTS WITH WHY



I am passionate about providing a safe place for people to have courageous conversations, own their stories of strength and struggle, and ultimately create more healthy, meaningful and wholehearted lives.

**Lauralyn Blackburn, MSW, Clinical RSW
Program Director**

Through the lens of accountability and integrity, I hope to provide leadership, connection and guidance to our participants, team and stakeholders.

**Carla Chabot, B. Admin
Executive Director**



My why is to become a better version of who I am and closer to my own truth.

**Barb Sanderson, M. Ed., RP, CCC
Facilitator**



I am passionate about being part of the community of BridgePoint as it creates hope, healing and possibilities of recovery.

**Helen Uhrich
Program Manager**



I work at BridgePoint because there is no other place like it. Caring, safe, respectful and serene.

**Linda Bahr
Office Manager**



It's freaking awesome to see people being real, unearthing who they really are... connecting with hope and connecting with their spirits.

**Sky Pryor, BA
Facilitator**



To help people find out who they are and make a difference.

**Janelle Kapeller
Facilitator**



Because these women need the support and to know that someone believes in them. Because without BridgePoint, these women may otherwise feel helpless.

**Evannah Marshall, RN
Facilitator**



Simon Senek says, "Everyone has a Why" Why do you get up in the morning? Why does your organization exist? Your Why is the purpose, cause or belief that inspires you to do what you do. When you think, act and communicate starting with Why, you can inspire others.

We asked our team "why" they work at BridgePoint...

Missing: Janine Wagar, RD, CDE & Kara Carlson, BA

I want to connect with participants through conversation, compassion and hope. For me (and BridgePoint), it's not just about the food.



Sandra Hellings
Kitchen Coordinator/Night Support

I am a believer in gifting ourselves with the opportunity to live our lives with compassion and generosity to shine our brightest light. Each of us has a spirit within that we so readily share with others. Where is that spirit when we need it for ourselves? The gift is finding your light in a community of supporting, encouraging people who are also on their journey. I have not walked that journey alone.



Louiese Kemp
Facilitator

To care for and connect with others and to help them rediscover their own self worth.



Mandy Cragg, RN

I strive to provide individuals with the tools and resources to heal, live and maintain their healthiest lives.



Fleurette Gallais, B.Sc. Kin., C.E.P, C.C.F., P.F.L.C
Facilitator

In my view...People healing people... in a safe environment...can change lives... including mine.



Marilyn Erickson
Facilitator

To be a genuine and compassionate ally for participants, team and myself in our journeys of self discovery. To inspire trust in inner wisdom and self acceptance while encouraging healthier relationships with food and body.



I want to support and inspire people. I enjoy watching myself and others grow.

Susan Clark
Night Support

Amy Pickering, RD
Facilitator



Because I'm compassionate and love to help people.

Carole Evacheski
Night Support



To inspire, support and ignite the process of empowerment with heartfelt compassion from a place of acceptance and understanding.

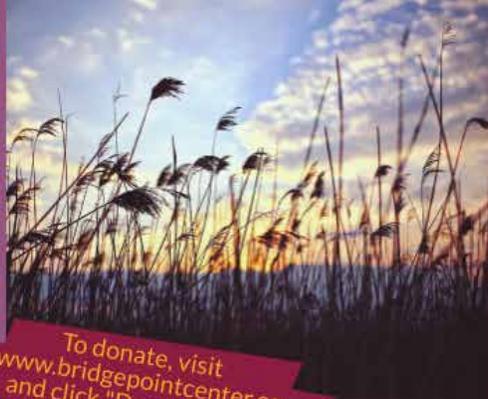


Lindsay Crowley, LPN
Facilitator





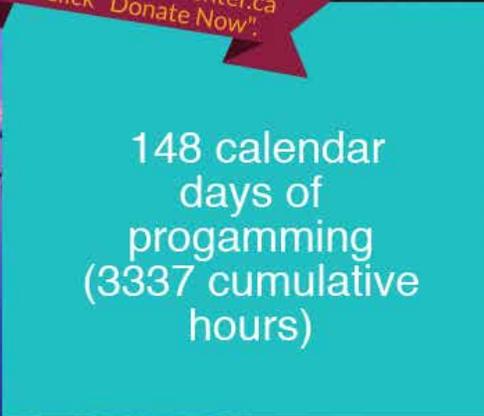
101 discrete participants attended programming



38 family members and supports during the Friends and Family portions



To donate, visit www.bridgepointcenter.ca and click "Donate Now".



148 calendar days of programming (3337 cumulative hours)



1500 program support calls and over 1100 emails (not including general administration)



10 retreats annually



3 days/week Pre & Post Program Support to current and potential participants



Expanded Co-Ed Programming



Three Module 1 Programs. One Module 2 Program.



Provincial Champion for Eating Disorder Awareness Week



Most referrals are from internet searches (20%), Friends or Family (15%), Counsellors (14%) or Doctors (9%)



Growing presence on social media platforms (Facebook, Twitter, Instagram)



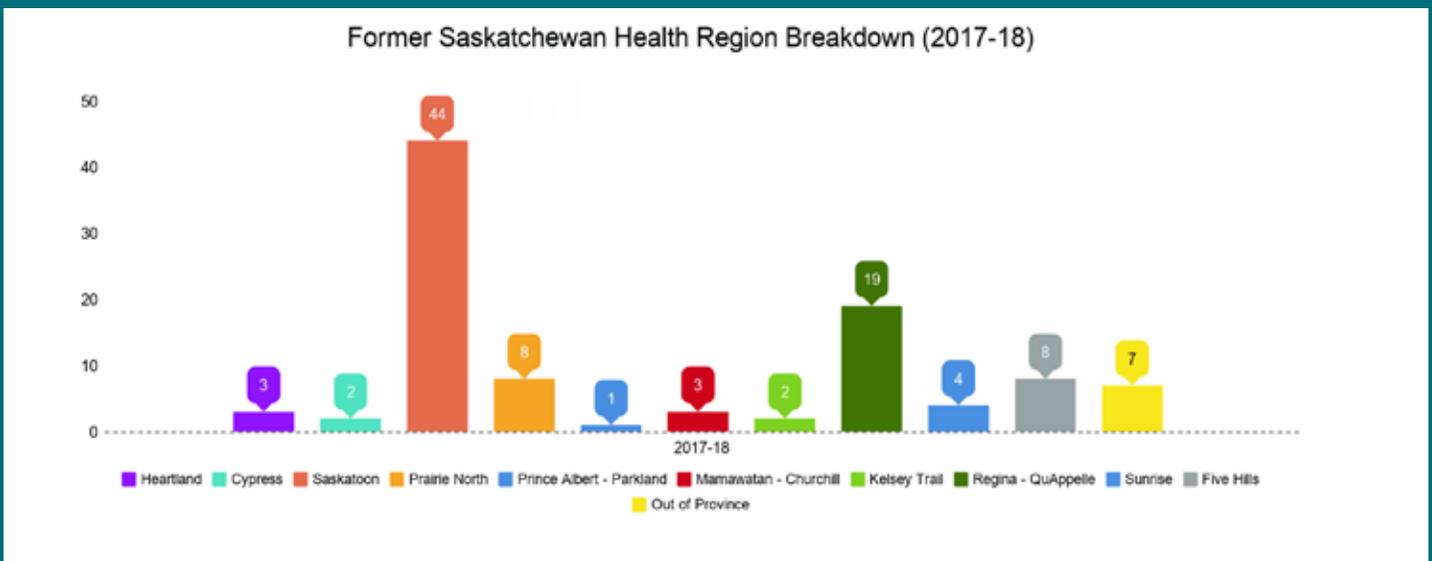
All core programs remain free for Saskatchewan Residents with valid health card



DEMOGRAPHICS

GEOGRAPHICAL BREAKDOWN

Participants continue to be referred to BridgePoint from all over Saskatchewan, or more specifically from 10 of the former health regions. We field many calls from mental health professionals, counsellors and doctors in the referral process. There is continued interest from out of province individuals who are trying to secure funding for treatment. We continue to see participants from all over Saskatchewan, with the majority of participants from Saskatoon and Regina areas. The breakdown of our participants across the different regions is relatively representative of the population base of each former region.



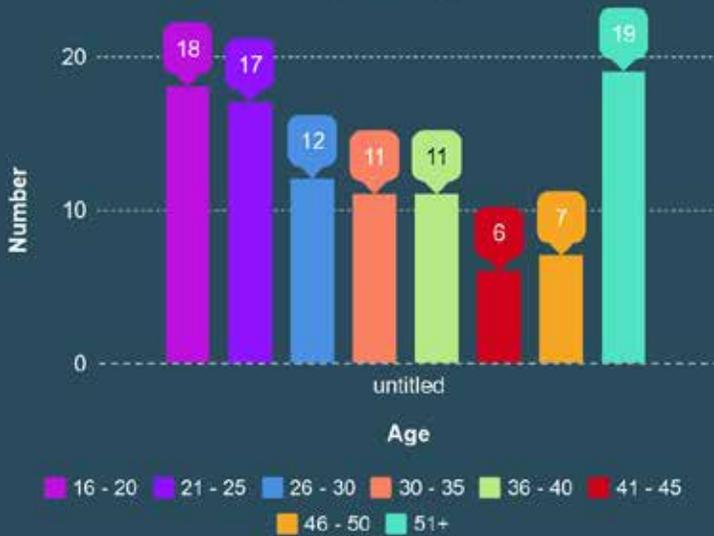
DEMOGRAPHIC OF CLIENTS SERVED

BridgePoint served 101 discrete participants in residential programming, as well as an additional 38 family members and supports during the Friends and Family portions of modules. These totals do not include the hundreds of individuals that were supported by phone, in person tours or email during the business day or during the pre/post support component of our program. We continue to see new demand for our programming.

This year, 56% of the participants who attended programming were new participants.

Who are our participants?

Participant Ages



Eating Disorder Diagnosis



Co-Morbidity

Common eating co-morbidities that we see in our participants are: Depression, Anxiety, Mood Disorder, Bipolar Disorder, Borderline Disorder, Trauma/PTSD, Obsessive-Compulsive Disorder and Self-harm, among others.

74%

Depression

96%

Other co-morbidity

68%

Anxiety

25%

Addiction/Substance

16

Average years with disordered eating.

19

Average age of diagnosis

82%

Current or previous suicidal ideation

We take a recovery based approach through a combination of evidence based and practice informed programming to nourish the mind, body & soul.

According to National Eating Disorder Information Centre one million people in Canada are diagnosed with an eating disorder at any given time.

Why do I crave to be sick, to see the space between my thighs, to feel the bones in my body? Why do I feel the need to silence the thoughts in whatever way I can, even if it means causing damage to myself? Why do I love others with a love I cannot show myself? I want to destroy my body for a peace of mind I know I'll never get.

Thoughts intrude my mind, consuming my existence, beating me down, leaving bruises that will never heal, leaving cuts that are deepened, bleeding out I feel like I am being ruined. Destroyed.

A heaviness in my chest consumes me, dictating decisions and demanding obedience, my thoughts are far from clear.

I have lost who I am, I do not know who I even want to be. There is a battle that I cannot win. I think I want to win but being defeated seems easier. It feels like less of a battle even if it is the exact same battle.

Why would I fight when it exhausts me, destroying me and breaking me down. Maybe I deserve to be defeated, to destroy my body even if there isn't peace. What if that destruction elicits my joy, happiness, and freedom? What if people see me the same way I see me and not only am I not good enough for me but maybe I am not good enough for others. What does it look like to win, or will I always fail?

I know I'm falling apart, or maybe I'm ripping myself apart. - LS

PARTICIPANT CORNER

“

By no means was this easy. Emotionally and physically I feel torn apart and tired, but I realize that this is necessary to begin the process of chipping away at the core of my reasons to utilize my eating disorder as a primary form of coping.

”

A perfect start to not feel as alone and start my journey.

The connections are the kind you need for your ED. Having this environment for the weekend saved me from myself.

I gained a lot of knowledge about myself and a new awareness of my disorder as well as new tools to begin to start to deal with things vs escaping and coping with food.

There is something about the group setting that is a good way of learning.

So much powerful information that inspired me to make a change in my life.

Powerful. Enlightening. Connected. Feel very grounded and like I am in touch "with me" again. Renewed sense of strength.

It was an amazing, insightful experience. I was anxious about coming, but felt welcomed and completely understood. I feel exhausted and exhilarated at the same time. I am excited to come again sometime in the future to another retreat or eventually the modules.

I loved coming back although I feel like I've outgrown BridgePoint (in a good way). Coming here showed me how far I've come and I feel powerful, like the disordered eating doesn't control me anymore. Thank you.

Having such a diverse team really results in a community that can have all needs met.

I needed to connect with people who understand what I'm going through and this was definitely accomplished. I no longer feel completely isolated. I also learned so much about the WHY behind my eating disorder.

I hesitated about going in. I almost changed my mind. I'm so glad I walked through those doors.

I found some forgiveness for myself for the pain I was harbouring still, I am starting to see that restricting my food is part of the problem and not the solution.

“

I cried, I hugged and I feel a little healed. I needed some time in a "safe place", so thank you.

”

DONATIONS & FUNDERS

You make an impact. A special thank you goes out to all our funders and donors whose contributions have directly been injected into our program. As a charitable organization, we sincerely appreciate all donations, memorial gifts and bequests.

Key Highlights and Activities funded through grants and donations:

- Installation of new fire panel
- Resurrection of the old labyrinth and stage 1 development of the Recovery & Memorial Garden
- Sponsorship of 20th Anniversary
- Development and implementation of a new Youth Program
- New Co-ed Programming
- Purchase of a Smart Board
- Teaching at LPN programs in Regina and Saskatoon with the University of Saskatchewan
- Training of staff in Eating Disorder Intuitive Training, Mindful Based Stress Reduction, Mindful Based Eating Training, and Saskatchewan Institute Health Leadership
- Program promotion and conference attendance with Saskatchewan Nurse Practitioners Association, Sunwest School Division Career Day, Youth Mental Health Day, Neuroplasticity Conference, iaedp™ Symposium 2018, and Nourish YXE Conference



THANK YOU TO ALL OUR EVENT SPONSORS FOR BRIDGEPOINT'S 20TH ANNIVERSARY



HILLBERG & BERK



RAFOSS PLUMBING & HEATING
THE HAVEN

MOORE AND ASSOC.

TOWN OF MILDEN

MILDEN VENTURE COMMITTEE

ANNE RANKIN

MARIE KLEVEN

MARILYN ERICKSON

CROSSWINDS

GLEN ADAIR

GAIL STONEHOUSE & FRIENDS

TOM AGENCIES

Tim Hortons

RUST & RESTYLED

ATHLETE'S HAVEN

SANDY HELLINGS/MONAT

SANDY HELLINGS/MARY KAY

WILD OATS

AG FOODS

B&R CONSTRUCTION

BARB SANDERSON

JANINE WAGAR





What is a Labyrinth?

A labyrinth is a pathway that loops back repeatedly upon itself, reaches the center, and then winds its way back out again. It's different from a maze in that there are no barriers, false turns, or dead ends. There's only one path to the labyrinth, and you have no choice but to follow it. The labyrinth walk is a process or walking meditation that seems to suspend time as well as judgment and invites us to embody our experience in a completely new way. Participants use the labyrinth in program to set intentions, let go of those things no longer serving them, practice intuitive and mindful movement, connect with nature and get a breath of fresh air.



20 YEARS & COUNTING

CELEBRATED AS PROGRAM THAT “MAKES AN IMPACT”

It might be a program run in a facility that’s located in a small rural village, but make no mistake about it, the BridgePoint Center for Eating Disorders in Mildren has been making an impact and changing lives since it began two decades ago.



That impact was highlighted as part of the BridgePoint program’s 20th anniversary celebrations on May 18th, 2017. A large crowd was on hand to hear stories of recovery from survivors of eating disorders, guest speakers, and take in tours of the center and enjoy a BBQ meal by donation. As well, a number of silent auction items were up for grabs with proceeds going to BridgePoint’s ‘wish list’ of items, which includes increased programming, a Smart Board, benches in the facility’s labyrinth area, and an outdoor gazebo.

BridgePoint’s executive director, Carla Chabot served as emcee of the afternoon program, which was held in the basement of the Mildren Alliance Church across the street from the center. Chabot pointed out the hard work done by her team, recognizing those who work at BridgePoint. “The biggest asset is our team,” she said. “They keep the essence of BridgePoint alive.”

Dale Ternes, a care team manager with the Heartland Health Region, spoke of how the program has managed to attain an impressive reputation through the work done at the center, and the environment that staff provides people is one needed for those going through something as difficult as eating disorders.

“It impresses me that this very special group of people has so much dedication to this program,” said Ternes. “Several words come to mind when I think of how BridgePoint operates its programming and the environment they present. Peaceful, serene, safe, cheerful, colorful and bright; these are some of the key words for people dealing with mental health needs.”

After the Mildren Hospital closed in 1993, plans were discussed on how to repurpose the building, and it was after four years of meetings and dedication that BridgePoint became a reality.

Chabot says that now, 20 years later, she’s amazed that the program has established its own identity among many others in the health care field. “I feel that we have a solid identity of who we are,” she said. “It’s amazing that residents of Saskatchewan can access our program for free with a valid health card.”

The BridgePoint Center’s program is one that has been gaining more and more traction with each passing year. Typically, there are 140 days of programming per year, but Chabot says in 2016/17, there are 168 days of programming, which is 28 more that were provided after stretching their funding dollars. As a non-profit organization, the facility is always trying to “dream big” with limited dollars all the time.



Future initiatives for BridgePoint include some rebranding and increasing promotion to continue getting its name out there, as Chabot noted that the Center has always been something of an "introverted program".

Despite some perhaps limited exposure, the facility has had support from some notable names. When BridgePoint was in its beginning stages back in 1997, Lady Diana, the Princess of Wales sent them a letter of support before her untimely death that year. During the anniversary program, letters from Carlton-Eagle Creek MP Kelly Block and Lieutenant-Governor Vaughn Solomon Schofield were read, and a message was even played from Sophie Grégoire Trudeau, wife of Prime Minister Justin Trudeau. Sophie, who suffered from an eating disorder at one point in her life, voiced her support for BridgePoint's programming and congratulated the team on reaching twenty years. Trudeau was at one point actually slated to appear for the anniversary celebration, but a scheduling error prevented it from happening.

Guest speaker Siera Bearchell, a Miss Universe Canada pageant winner and entrepreneur was introduced, and the Moose Jaw native spoke highly of what BridgePoint is doing to help women understand their own body image and realize that no one person needs to look the same. In her time vying for victory on the beauty pageant

stage, Bearchell was told to lose weight in order to go for the big titles, and she says it started her on a dark road.

"I started going down a very dangerous path," she said. "I was trying to fit this image that people have of pageant contestants. I wasn't healthy, and I didn't recognize who I was."

Siera says she was lucky to have a platform that allowed her to speak her mind and tell others about her eating disorder problems, but she noted that many don't, and that's where programs such as BridgePoint come in.

Perhaps the most powerful words of the day came from Tonya O'Keefe, who spoke of her time at the center. Having gone through other eating disorder programs in the past, she was hesitant to go through with it. Even speaking in front of those gathered to mark the facility's 20th anniversary had O'Keefe a little choked up and apprehensive, but her words highlighted the impact that the program has had on her and many others in its two decades of existence.

"I was quick to say yes," said Tonya, on being asked to speak at this event. "Speaking at BridgePoint's 20th anniversary? That's awesome!"

The soft-spoken O'Keefe said she felt in over her head with her disorder, and didn't know where to turn. When she was introduced to BridgePoint, she

was unsure whether to proceed.

"I arrived very skeptical and feeling defeated," she said. "My eating disorder had controlled and consumed me."

Tonya's skepticism soon gave way to hope and positivity, and she realized that the center was unlike any other facility or program she'd heard of or experienced before.

"Today, I can tell you that coming to BridgePoint in 2010 changed my life," she said. "I used to say 'saved' my life, but now I say 'changed'. That's because I saved my life. At BridgePoint, you meet other people, you share your story, and you genuinely feel you're not alone."

Stories such as Tonya's go to show that programs, particularly non-profit ones, continue to yield positive results as they strive to help the people who need them. For those dealing with eating disorders of any kind, survivors such as O'Keefe say that the Mildred-based facility is a beacon of hope.

BY DEREK RUTTLE /
THE OUTLOOK

"Wherever you are in your journey,
BridgePoint will always meet you there."

PARTICIPANT CORNER

“ I've considered myself recovered from disordered eating for close to five years

It's been a complex journey and when I take time to reflect back I see pretty distinct phases. I can recall the different stages of my recovery quite vividly still -but I often feel confused and a bit guilty that my memory of life in the depths of my eating disorder is much more difficult to pull up. I can recall certain things but actually remembering what life felt like in those darkest moments is near impossible.

When I was at the beginning of my recovery I was so proud and so hopeful. I was eager to help share my insights and bring light into peoples lives who felt things were too dark to see the path leading them out. My life had been so consumed and my eating disorder affected every part of it so therefore my recovery did too. Although I was not relying on the eating disorder to cope- The eating disorder or lack thereof was still the biggest part of who I was. This wasn't a bad thing- I think it was necessary for me and even a helpful stage in my recovery. During this stage, my recovery was my focus. I held it up on a pedestal and I was proud of it.

After a while, it became my new normal and not such a defining piece of who I was. It was still something that I mentioned to new people in my life and still something I was proud of but it wasn't the biggest piece of me. Life went on and as a year or two passed I entered into a stage where my recovery and my past eating disorder were never brought up. It no longer held any real part in my life. I was so busy parenting my kids and dealing with other things that my history with food sort of disappeared. My circle of friends had completely changed and most of them had no idea. Not because I hid it, but because it just didn't seem important and didn't ever come up.

Through each of these stages I had trying times and although my coping methods were not always the healthiest choices I never felt like I struggled with food. I sometimes would think to myself how lucky I was that I wasn't even tempted to go back to restricting. Because there was never any temptation it kept reinforcing to me that I had nothing to worry about. If there was one thing in my life I did right it was recovery. I will never tell anyone that it was easy... It wasn't easy at all and truthfully I worked my ass off. But I believed 100% that there was some magical line I crossed and that I would never find myself back on the other side.

These last few months of my life have been tough. I've struggled with depression and there are many different areas of stress and I have no solutions I'm willing to use. I have noticed myself slipping but compared to my emotional state a year and a half ago when my grandma died I figured this is nothing. I wasn't worried. Life isn't awesome but it will eventually run its course. I just have to wait it out.

So I continued on with my days trying to ignore the stress. These little things are not going to go away though. I can keep hoping they will.... which is what I chose to do and little by little life got worse.

I realized the reason I never felt tempted to fall back on restricting wasn't because I crossed a magical line marking me as "safe" but because eating disorders don't happen over night.

With all my knowledge on eating disorders I watched for the signs and I knew that I would notice right away if my eating was changing. I would see it coming and because I know how dark and awful it is I would make sure to get help right away so that I am never there again. I've been reminded this week that eating disorders do not happen overnight and I've become aware today that although I am not restricting.... I'm walking that path at a very fast pace.

And I'm scared. Eating disorders are not about the food. Eating disorders do not happen overnight. You do not wake up one day with an eating disorder and you don't choose one either.

These are all very important things to remember.... because it means that no matter how much experience or knowledge you have.... No matter how many years you've not been tempted.... If you are not working through the hard stuff you may wake up one day back in the darkness. Relapse(at this stage of recovery) would be no different then my original eating disorder.

I'm not using food to cope. I'm not dieting or restricting or exercising..... but I know. I just know in my core of who I am that I'm in danger.

I'm actually not even tempted to restrict which makes this all the more difficult because there isn't a single person in my life who wouldn't think I'm crazy if I tried to explain it. So I feel alone which I know is a dangerous place to be. I'm scared to admit it. Shame is another deadly component and there is shame in sharing that I'm terrified. I'm sitting in this familiar place of knowing that I'm not happy where I am but not brave enough to change it.... - TO

ACCOLADES & TESTIMONIALS

“

I continue to be impressed with all that BridgePoint does to instill hope, inspire healing, and provide the skills necessary for a full and complete recovery. I highly recommend it for anyone seeking freedom from eating disorders.

ANITA JOHNSTON, PHD
AUTHOR, EATING IN THE LIGHT OF THE MOON
CREATOR, LIGHT OF THE MOON CAFE
CLINICAL DIRECTOR, AI PONO HAWAII EATING DISORDER
PROGRAMS

“

In my professional opinion, their unique approach is giving individuals a greater chance of lasting freedom from eating disorders. I am very impressed with their treatment model, which provided customized care, giving concrete tools to take recovery into their everyday life.

DR. DORIE MCCUBBREY, PHD, MSED, LPC, CEDS
CREATOR EDIT™ EATING DISORDER INTUITIVE THERAPY
TREATMENT METHOD AND CLINICAL TRAINING PROGRAM

INTERNAL PROGRAM EVALUATION

BridgePoint's programming is rated highly on an internal basis by participants and reviewed by management and board executives on an ongoing basis. We receive feedback (qualitative and quantitative) from all participants at the completion of every program.

The following Program Reflection Indicators are measured:

- Presentation Methods
- Overall Program Quality
- Relevant Content
- Tools & Skills Gained
- Facilitator Knowledge

In 2017-18,
the participants' rating
of our program was
4.4 out of 5

100% of our
participants reported
Healing of Core Issues

78% had
positive shifts in:
Body Image, Emotional
Self Care, and Future
Perspective

89% of our
participants self-rated
a positive shift in:

Self-Esteem, Self-Direction, Intuitive
Eating Abilities, Emotional Awareness,
Coping Skills, Physical Self Care,
Intellectual Self Care, Spiritual Self Care
and Relapse Prevention

PARTICIPANT CORNER

I cautiously step up to the door, my heart is pounding and my anxiety is disrupting my breathing. "Welcome, welcome" calls a gentle, kind and friendly voice. I walk in and stiffly sit as comfortably as I can. "Please place your feet on the floor and feel your butt in the chair, this will keep you nice and grounded."

A stranger follows me in and sits next to me. She looks nice enough and I sure hope that she doesn't touch me. You stay on your side and I'll stay on mine, and we'll get along just fine. She smiles and looks as uncomfortable as me. The team who controls the ride look excited and happy to see us. She is excited and yet peaceful somehow, friendly and approachable.

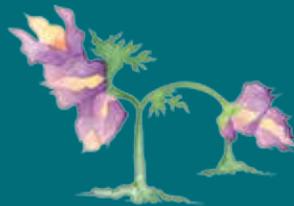
We are strapped in and our meds and sharps are signed away. I hold on to what I find later is the ride of my life. Let's begin with feelings! Feelings? Are you kidding me? Is that the twisted knot in my stomach? That has got to be what they mean. Nervous, excited, scared and curious. Doubting, is this where I am supposed to be? Am I doing the right thing? Am I safe? Who knows? I have never been on this ride before. Maybe I should have taken one of those rides that I have taken before. They are familiar, no surprises, nice and comfy. But no, I want something different, I want more! The seat begins to rock, slowly at first, gently moving upwards, picking up speed as we go. It goes faster now, my grip is tighter.

The stranger next to me smiles shyly, I smile back. She looks scared too. Her name is Kristen, I like her. We connect; she and I are a team. We reach the top, up and over, down and down swirling around. I feel dizzy! My stomach flops. Nausea, excitement, fear, and faith, as we take another turn. I think we went upside down that time. Wow! I need to catch my breath. Are we going to do that again? I sure hope not.... well, maybe it would be okay. I feel stronger with Kristen by my side. I think that we made a connection.

Oh, we are climbing again. This is so high, are you sure it's safe? I look at Kristen; her eyes mirror my fear, my pain. She grabs my hand and down we go again. Our world is spinning. I am so not sure that I can handle this. Am I coming or going, am I up or down? My heart is fluttering and my hair is now in Kristen's face. She doesn't mind. We are friends now. We round our last curve and take our last dip and then slowly we come to a stop. I need a moment, to feel my feelings, collect my thoughts and muster up enough courage to stand up. A friendly hand reaches out, I grab hold and with shaky legs and tears streaming down my cheeks, I step off. Team on one side and soul mates on the other.

I continue on my journey. "What now?" I eagerly ask, with curious eyes and a child-like faith. I'm sorry, we can't say, we don't want to pre-empt your experience.

"Trust in the process."



BRIDGEPOINT
CENTER FOR EATING DISORDERS

ADDRESS:

Box 190 744 Saskatchewan Ave Milden, Sask. S0L 2L0

PHONE: (306) 935-2240

FAX: (306) 935-2241

EMAIL: bridgepoint@sasktel.net

www.facebook.com/bridgepointcenter
twitter.com/BridgePointCen2
www.instagram.com/bridgepoint_center

www.bridgepointcenter.ca