

**FORM "A"**  
**TO BE COMPLETED BY ANYONE**  
**WISHING TO ADDRESS COUNCIL OR COMMITTEE OF THE WHOLE COUNCIL**  
***No decision will be made at the same meeting as your presentation.***

**Names of individuals making the presentation:**

Amy Mackinnon - Executive Director, Shelburne County Youth Health and Support Association

(Our House Youth Wellness Centre, Barrington Care and Recovery Centre)

**Points to be made:**

To provide an update on activities and community engagement to Council in regards to the Barrington Care and Recovery Centre which currently operates out of the former MOB Visitor Information Centre.

**Purpose and any requests that may be forthcoming from the presentation:**

In hopes to inform council of its value to community and to further extend the original agreement of 9 months for our use of the space as a community hub

**Please attach a copy of your written or power point presentation.**

**Will your presentation be made in person or virtually?** in person

**Time requested for presentation:** 15 minutes x 30 minutes \_\_\_\_\_

  
\_\_\_\_\_  
**Signature**



Shelburne County Youth  
Health & Support  
Association



Subject: Update/ Check in for the Barrington Community Care and Recovery Centre

Dear Municipality of Barrington CAO and Council Members ,

Executive Summary:

I've grappled with finding the right words to begin. Recently, a Facebook message urged us to reconsider and rename the Barrington Care Recovery Centre, suggesting that Barrington has recovered from the wildfires. This statement caught me off guard. While acknowledging progress, it's essential to recognize that a significant portion of those directly and indirectly impacted by the wildfires is far from recovered. Displaced individuals still move from one temporary home to another, families remain separated, and many continue to grapple with anxiety triggered by the scent of smoke or thoughts of fire.

I don't want to dismiss the value in the suggestion; I believe there will be a time when we move forward and heal. However, that day is not today. As we witness the struggles of those who have lost everything they've worked for, it's crucial not to be naive about their recovery, especially within a few short months. The road ahead for them is long.

This report aims not to dwell on the negative but to highlight the positive outcomes emerging from the wildfires—the creation of the Barrington Care and Recovery Centre. This unique community response has garnered attention globally, even attracting interest from a psychologist in Australia studying various global responses to disasters. This individual plans to visit in the spring to learn more about our work. While unsure if our model can be replicated, the success we've achieved in eight months, driven and responsive to the community, led by the community, is evident when one visits the center and meets the people. Just imagine what we could accomplish in 8 years.

The Barrington Community Care and Recovery Centre has emerged as a cornerstone of support and well-being for our community. Its multifaceted programs and services address a range of physical, mental, and social needs, fostering a healthier and more resilient community. This report aims to highlight the key aspects that underscore the value of the center and its positive influence on the lives of our residents.

#### 1. Health and Well-being:

The center plays a pivotal role in promoting health and well-being among community members. This is achieved through our daily drop in model, where folks don't need an appointment to visit. Thus leaving

to the community members how and when folks engage with our work in their own way. Many of our social focused programs contribute to preventive care and early intervention. This, in turn, reduces the burden on other services and enhances the overall health of the community. All of our programming offerings, whether its community meals, book clubs, walking groups etc. have one goal in mind for us and that is bringing people together, however it's more magical than that when you are in it.

## 2. Mental Health Support:

Given the growing concerns surrounding mental health, the center's mental health support programs have become indispensable. The provision of caring and compassionate staff and volunteers we have been able to help folks, through compassionate counseling, systems navigation and support groups addresses the psychological well-being of residents, helping them navigate the challenges of daily life and overcome mental health issues. Through partnership with Louann Link and Shine your Light- The Jevon Link Society crew, we have been connected to provincial groups such as Roots of Hope, Bereaved Families of Nova Scotia, Canadian Mental Health Association, and through those connections we have been able to access training and supports along with the foundational work to facilitate groups who support the many grievors in our community

## 3. Social Inclusion and Community Building:

The center serves as a hub for community engagement and social interaction. Through various events, workshops, and recreational activities, residents have the opportunity to connect, share experiences, and build a strong sense of community. This not only enhances social inclusion but also contributes to a safer and more supportive neighborhood. Each program offering we have promoted has filled up in less than 24 hrs, these include book clubs, learn to knit, vision boarding. Our crown jewel of the centre is coffee time, each wednesday from 10-12, we have on average 12- 20 residents, each week the crowd is a little different with returning and new faces.

## 4. Recovery:

For individuals facing challenges such as recovery from illnesses, addiction, grief and loss the center's meeting folks where they are at is a vital support for those who are struggling. This approach empowers individuals to regain control of their lives, fostering a culture of recovery and resilience within the community. While this is less of a program then in it the way we approach the work in a trauma informed way. Meeting people where they are opposed to where you want them to be.

## 5. Economic Impact:

Beyond the immediate health and well-being benefits, the center generates positive economic impacts. Through our concrete supports program we have been able to help ease the stress of back to school preparedness. We have also implemented several food relief initiatives. By supporting the physical and mental health of residents, the center indirectly contributes to increased productivity, reduced absenteeism, and a generally healthier and more productive workforce.

Our Hopes for the Future:

In light of the evident benefits provided by the Community Care and Recovery Centre, I it is our hope that you will consider the extension of our occupancy so that we may implement the following actions:

1. Securing Sustainable Space/ Funding: Ensure consistent and adequate funding to maintain and expand the center's services. We would like to extend our residency of 2517 Trunk 3 for a minimum of 2 years. This will allow us to secure funding through grants and partnerships and make some necessary investments into the space to allow for other community partner use.
2. Community Outreach: Develop strategies to increase awareness of the center's programs and services to encourage broader community participation to extend to families, youth and children.
3. Collaborative Initiatives: Explore opportunities for collaboration with local businesses, healthcare providers, and educational institutions to enhance the center's impact.
4. Continuous Evaluation: Implement a system for ongoing evaluation and assessment to measure the effectiveness of programs and identify areas for improvement.

In conclusion, the Barrington Community Care and Recovery Centre has emerged as an indispensable asset to our community. Its impact extends far beyond the walls of the center, reaching into the homes and hearts of the residents it serves. By recognizing and supporting the value of this essential resource, we can continue to build a healthier, more resilient, and closely-knit community.

Thank you for your attention to this matter, and I am available to discuss any aspects of this report further.

Sincerely,

Amy MacKinnon (she/her)  
Executive Director  
Shelburne County Youth Health and Support Association  
Our House Youth Wellness Centre  
Barrington Care and Recovery Centre  
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