

ANNUAL REPORT

2025 - 2026

**Umbrella Society
for Addictions
& Mental
Health**



A Message from our Executive Director

What a year of change it has been for the Umbrella Society. Our team has had to adapt to an ever-changing landscape throughout the past year. These are challenging times in our sector. Demand for services continues to grow, yet funding has failed to keep pace.

As a result, organizations like ours are being forced to reduce capacity at the very moment our community needs us most.

This year, Umbrella faced the difficult reality of significantly reducing both our management team, our outreach services and group offerings. Despite these challenges, our incredible staff have remained unwavering in their commitment to the people we serve. Their dedication, compassion, and resilience have ensured that our clients continue to receive the support they need during some of the most difficult times in their lives.

The work we do is essential to the lives of those who have the courage to pursue change and recovery. We are relied upon heavily by both our health authority and the broader community to provide individualized, trauma-informed, low-barrier care throughout every stage of the recovery journey.

Umbrella remains the only organization providing a consistent continuum of care across the recovery landscape. Our team meets people where they are, helping them navigate a complex and often fragmented system while supporting them in achieving their recovery goals.



I look forward to the day when organizations like ours can focus less on fighting for our survival and more on developing innovative solutions through collaboration, communication, and coordinated community action. Until then, Umbrella will continue to advocate fiercely for those we serve and remain a voice for some of our community's most vulnerable members.

I remain committed to working tirelessly to secure sustainable funding opportunities that align with our values and mission, ensuring that Umbrella can continue supporting individuals and families on their recovery journeys for many years to come. While the challenges before us are significant, so too is the strength, courage, and resilience of the people we serve.

Their successes continue to inspire our work every day and remind us why this mission matters. It is a privilege to walk alongside individuals as they reclaim their lives, rebuild connections, and discover hope for the future.

Those stories of transformation are what fuel our commitment and reinforce the importance of ensuring that recovery support remains accessible to all who seek it.

A handwritten signature in dark blue ink, appearing to read 'Blake Andison', with a stylized, flowing script.

Blake Andison
Executive Director

A Message from our Board

On behalf of the Board of Directors of the Umbrella Society for Mental Health and Addictions, we are pleased to present this Annual Report and to reflect on a year that has tested our resilience while reaffirming the importance of our mission.

This past year has not been without its challenges. Like many community-serving organizations, Umbrella has navigated a difficult funding environment that required us to make hard decisions, decisions the Board did not take lightly. In doing so, we have remained guided by a single priority: preserving the quality and integrity of the services we provide to the people who depend on us.

In response to these pressures, we have taken deliberate steps to focus our energy and resources on our core programs, those that most directly reflect our mandate and deliver the greatest impact to our community. We believe this disciplined approach positions Umbrella for a stronger future, and we are actively working to rebuild and expand our capacity as new opportunities emerge.

None of this would be possible without the extraordinary dedication of our staff. The work of supporting people living with substance use issues and mental health challenges is demanding as well as rewarding. The Umbrella team has continued to show up with professionalism, compassion, and unwavering commitment. The Board is deeply grateful for their service and proud to stand behind them.

We also wish to express our sincere appreciation to our funders, community partners, and government supporters. Your investment in Umbrella is an investment in some of our community's most vulnerable members, and we do not take that trust lightly. We look forward to continuing to work alongside you as we build toward a more sustainable and impactful future.

The need for mental health and substance use services in our community has never been greater and Umbrella remains committed to meeting that need.

Respectfully submitted,

The Board of Directors

Umbrella Society for
Addictions & Mental Health

Outreach

AT A GLANCE

Umbrella's Community Outreach Program supports anyone in our community who is struggling

with their substance use and wants to make a change.

The majority of our workers have lived experience or have been deeply impacted by addiction. This provides our clients with peer support; those who have been there, who can turn their first-hand experience into knowledge, advocacy, and reliability.

The presence of our outreach workers is essential to our communities.

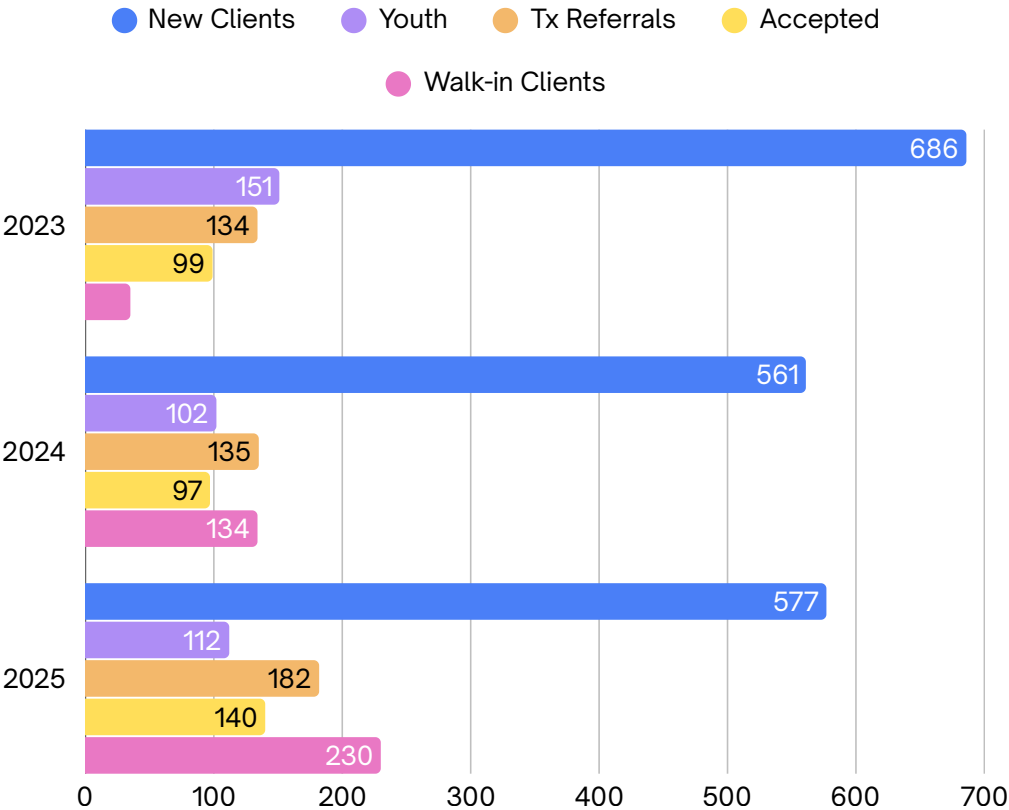
With Umbrella workers, community partners' initiatives gain word-of-mouth, those in recovery have the opportunity to reinvigorate their senses of confidence and agency, and addiction can continue to become destigmatized.



“Our meetings throughout the year have meant a great deal to me. You have consistently listened without judgement, offered honest advice, and genuine support without sugarcoating difficult truths. I leave each session feeling connected, refreshed, and a little more capable of facing what comes next. I only wish our time together was longer”

”

Outreach Over the Years



Key Takeaways

Number of walk-in clients have risen by over 500% since we made the program available 5 days a week.

Outreach team has reduced, due to lack of funding.

Number of walk-in clients have risen by 72% in one year.

“

Mon, Dec 8 at 14:08

Good day [redacted]
I just heard you graduated the Edgewood program, great work!!!! So proud of you!!!! Also heard you're going to second stage, great news, second stage played a huge part in my recovery. You're putting in the work and deserve all the great things coming your way!! Id love to chat with you at some point, you've got my number if you want to reach out!! Take care!!

Who is this? Lol

Its Lance with Umbrella!!

Omfg

Hi hi!

THANK YOU

Endlessly. You helped changed my life.



No thank you my dude, absolutely made my month getting the new!!

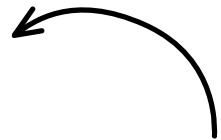
Treatment acceptance rates have not faltered:

2023: 34%

2024: 72%

2025: 77%

Ultimately, we have been offering the walk-in program first.



why we do what we do

Counselling

AT A GLANCE

Umbrella offers professional and practicum counselling services who work primarily with family members, and individuals struggling with mental health and substance use.

Our practicum placements are with Umbrella for 8 months and receive support and mentorship as they achieve their Masters' degree.

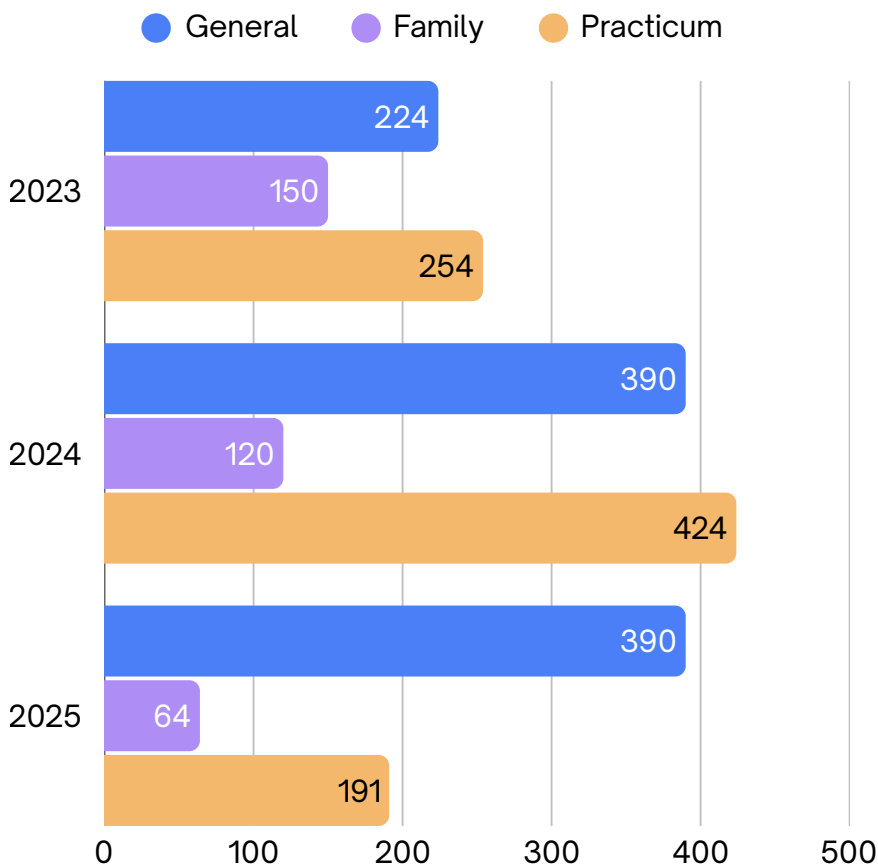
This year we've also been able to offer a practicum counsellor specializing in Expressive Arts Therapy.

Free counselling to those in recovery and their loved ones empower our community to explore what they need, what they deserve, how to express, and interact with the world around them.

No one will be turned away for lack of funds.

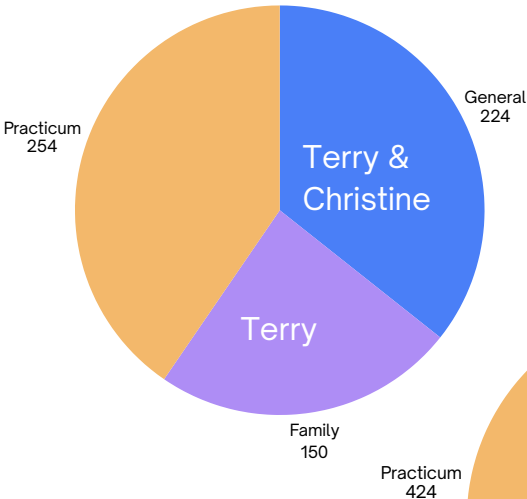


Counselling Over the Years

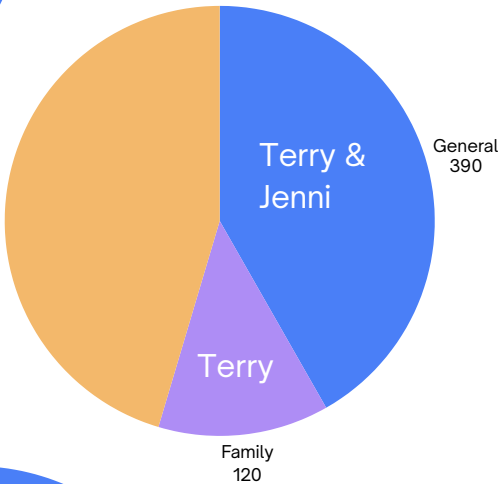


Counselling At A Glance

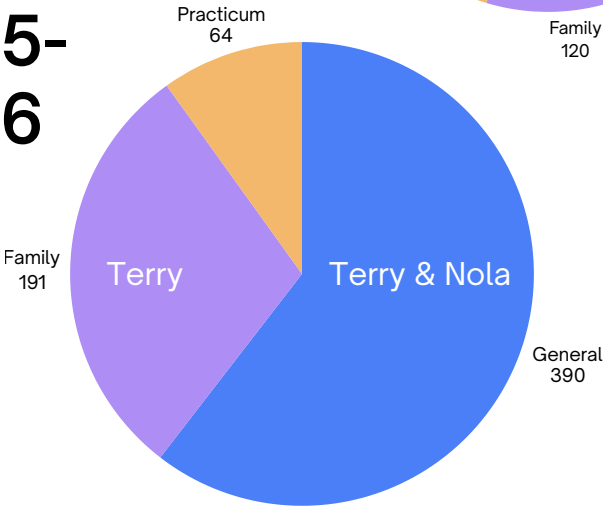
2023



2024



2025-
2026



Counselling Takeaways

We can safely project that next year's general counselling intakes will remain an average between 300 and 400. In our current position, Umbrella will only have one clinical counsellor to support them.



“

My experience with counselling Umbrella is that my counsellors have been non judgemental and really good at helping me reframe my negative thoughts. My counsellors have been professional and kind. It's been really healthy for me to have someone in my life that I can tell my secrets to and hear a professional opinion about my problems.”



-client of Nola's

GROUPS

AT A GLANCE

The opposite of addiction is connection.

Those words ring true. It is our job to foster that connection. We recognize that substance use issues are diverse, so we offer groups that include as many needs as we can.

Unfortunately this year we've had to put some groups on pause. Thanks to the Angels, we will be offering the registered Women's Group in the fall, and are working towards bringing back our other vital registered programs.

So we pivoted. While our registered groups are on hold, we've stepped up our drop-in group offerings:

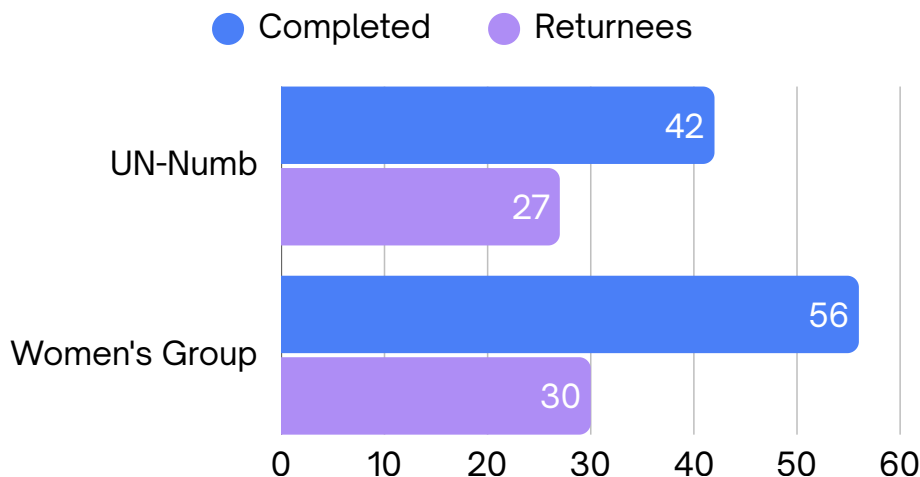
- Saturdays from 1-4pm, we have staff in-office to facilitate a drop-in Women's Support Group
- We are now hosting a Tuesday evening AA Big Book Study
- We trial-ran a registered 6-week long Yoga group, facilitated by certified yoga instructor with lived experience in recovery and mental health

“

I gained the connections which I had lost due to drug abuse, and understanding, and the ability and safety to join in with complete honesty.”

”

Groups At A Glance 2025/2026



Comfortably UN-Numb
Registered Women's Group
Hammertime
Intensive Journaling

Men's Group
Women's Group
AA Big Book
SMART
SHE RECOVERS®
A Journey Into Yoga



Comfortably UN-Numb

Program Evaluation

Thank you for participating in the Comfortably UN-Numb group. Please provide your feedback on this form and give it to the admin staff. This form is anonymous, your name is not required.

• Kelsey - Community Resources

Please rate from 1 (not my favourite) to 5 (loved it) and comment on the following presenters.

Highlights	ORG resources ! tergend lol legend.
Suggestions for improvement	N/A
Notes	Why is no one talking about this? !? So informed. Thank you.



Comfortably UN-Numb

Program Evaluation

Thank you for participating in the Comfortably UN-Numb group. Please provide your feedback on this form and give it to the admin staff. This form is anonymous, your name is not required.

• SMART Goal-Setting-Stef

Please rate from 1 (not my favourite) to 5 (loved it) and comment on the following presenters.

Did you find the SMART Goal-Setting Presentation helpful?	1 - 2 - 3 - 4 - 5
Highlights	im terrible at setting and achieving goals and this helped me learn that skill
Suggestions for improvement	

GROUP FEEDBACK FORM

UMBRELLA SOCIETY FOR ADDICTIONS & MENTAL HEALTH

What were you expecting upon registering for the group?

I wasn't sure, what would happen during the sessions. Came in blind.

What did you gain from group?

Knowledge & closeness and meaning of community with the "class mates"

How likely are you to recommend our services?

I am happy to recommend Umbrella !! It has been an incredible experience.
--

why we do
what we do



Housing

AT A GLANCE

Our approach to recovery housing is simple: everyone deserves a safe and supportive space to call home. Foundation House and Potter House are those spaces to practice the tools of recovery that the residents have just learned in treatment, and begin the process of reintegrating back into the community.

Our houses demonstrate that recovery housing should and can be accessible.

Affordable:

Rent is all-inclusive, with funding options available.
Food is provided, so long as residents cook communally.

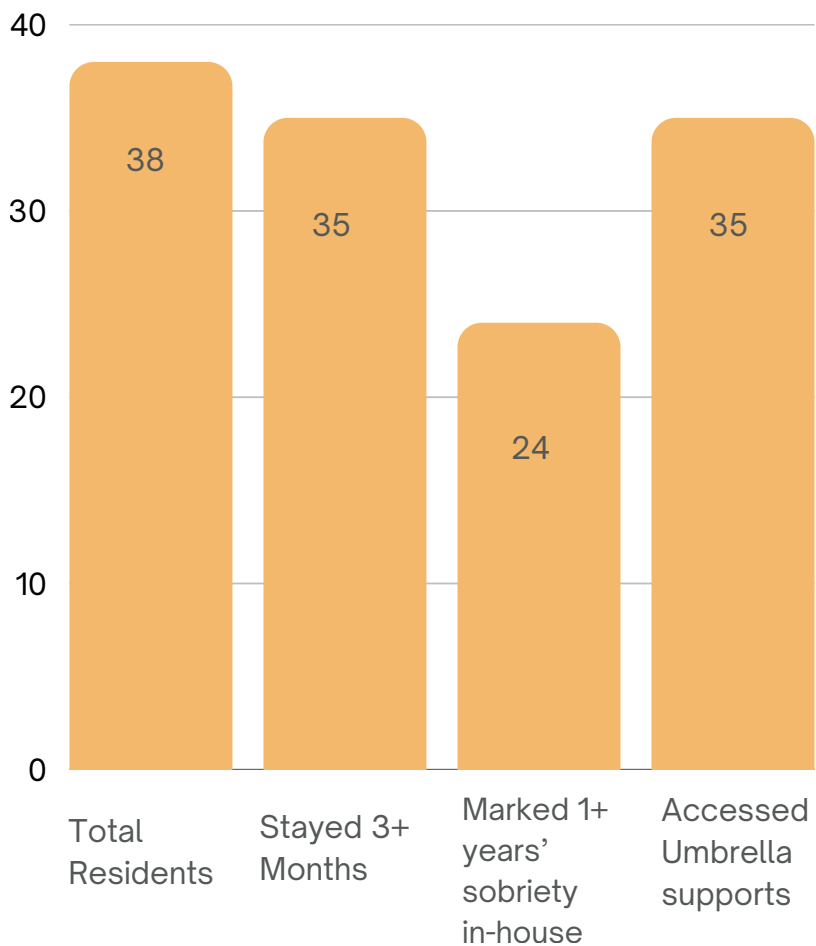
Empowering:

Residents are free to pursue work, school, and volunteering.
Supportive staff are everpresent, and easy to reach.

Structured:

Residents are responsible for sharing cooking, cleaning, laundry and yard work chores.
Must adhere to evening curfews, weekend passes, and house meetings.

Housing At A Glance 2025/2026



“

The biggest positive change since living in the Foundation House has been my ability to be more vulnerable, which I owe to the comfortability of my housemates and our in-house meetings. The conversations I have with my housemates are very helpful as well. We have a great group of guys in the house. I owe a lot to the house and Umbrella.

”

Island Health

Umbrella staff bring a practical element and play a vital role on several Island Health multi-disciplinary community initiatives. We bring a trauma-informed, human approach to an otherwise clinical engagement.

Partnering with Island Health helps us connect with those who otherwise may not have reached out. We continue to value our partnerships and collaborations.

SURF

Substance Use Rapid Follow-Up

A transitional connector for those with moderate to severe substance use issues who have overdosed, providing intensive short-term outreach until individuals are connected to appropriate community services.

ICMT

Intensive Case Management Team

The ICM team provides wrap-around services to clients with severe and persistent substance use issues with or without concurrent mental health concerns. Aimed to help clients improve their quality of life and independence. Client centered care plans address social relationships, physical, mental health and substance use needs.

AMCS

Addictions Medicine Consult Services

An addictions medicine physician, a social worker, and an Umbrella outreach worker offers consultations, assessments, and treatments.

We assist with discharge planning, hands-on patient support, and connecting patients to community services.

RAAC

Rapid Access & Addictions Clinic

This includes promoting understanding, acceptance, and support through advocacy, educational efforts, and resources. The RAAC team comprises of a certified physician specializing in addiction medicine, a social worker, a nurse practitioner, and one our staff.

IOT

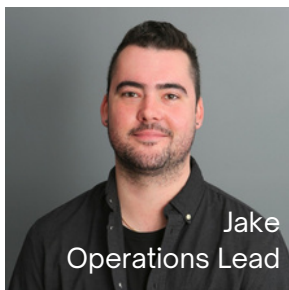
Indigenous Outreach Team

Offers support to Indigenous individuals facing challenges related to substance use, mental health, housing, criminal justice, and their caregivers/families. Working closely with community resources, we help clients establish and accomplish significant objectives in areas such as finances, housing stability, substance use management and recovery, community engagement, personal development, social connections, legal involvement, and education.

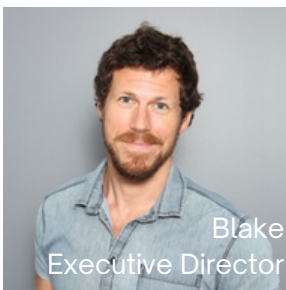
Housing Overdose Prevention & Peer Support

A team who work within the Albina and Mirrors supportive housing sites to offer emotional support and harm reduction supplies, encourage safer usage, provide detox and treatment options, and help pave the road for residents to succeed in their recovery.

HOPPS



Jake
Operations Lead

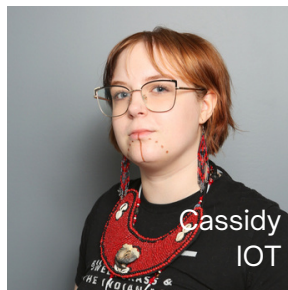


Blake
Executive Director



Erik
Recovery Housing
Manager

THE 2025/2026 TEAM



Cassidy
IOT

THAT
MADE
IT
HAPPEN



Lisa
AMCS



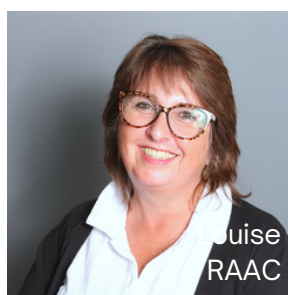
Stefanie
Outreach, Groups



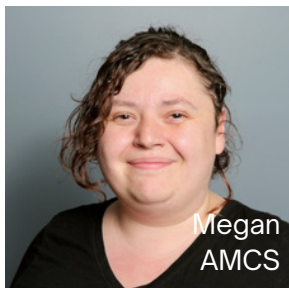
Scott
Referral Agent,
Administration



Danielle
SURF, AMCS



Louise
RAAC



Megan
AMCS



Shelagh
Office Manager



Kelsey
Outreach



John
IOT



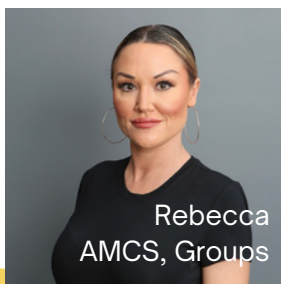
Isaac
ICMT



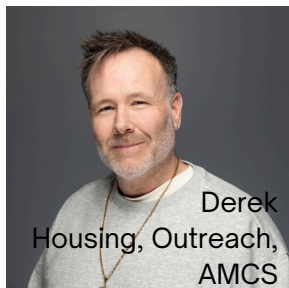
Tina
Housing Sites



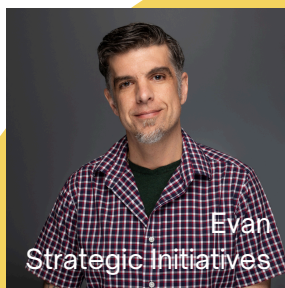
Amy
SURF, AMCS, Groups



Rebecca
AMCS, Groups



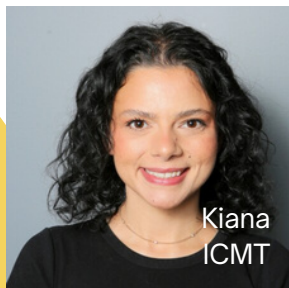
Derek
Housing, Outreach,
AMCS



Evan
Strategic Initiatives



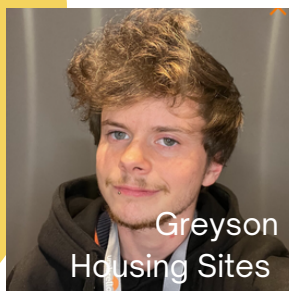
Josh
Recovery Housing,
Groups



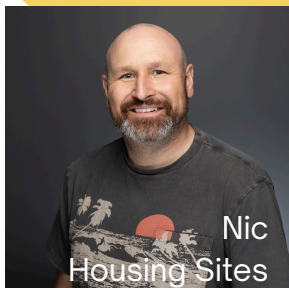
Kiana
ICMT

“Many of us who get into this kind of work come from a place of wanting to give back in our own recovery & journey; to sit with people in their darkest hour and walk with them through it is a powerful and profound gift to be able to give.”

-Megan



Greyson
Housing Sites



Nic
Housing Sites



Emily
Administration



Lance
Outreach
Housing Sites Lead



Logan
SURF



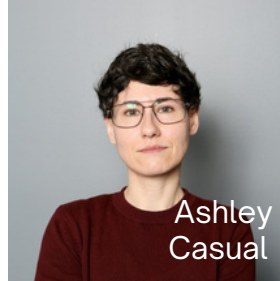
Jeff
Groups



Danielle
Human Resources



Mekayla
Casual



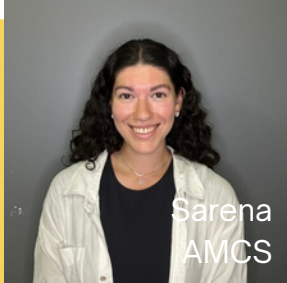
Ashley
Casual



Noelia
Casual



Simeon
Casual



Sarena
AMCS



Corey
Salt Spring



Cassie
Casual



Rachel
Casual



Carly
Casual



Madison
Scheduling



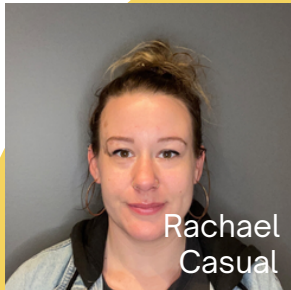
Brianna
Health & Safety



James
AMCS



Peter
Salt Spring



Rachael
Casual



Sara
Casual



Oshun
Salt Spring



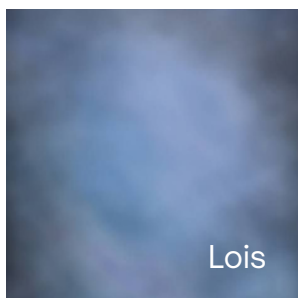
Kristine
SURF



Zoa
Casual

OUR BOARD OF DIRECTORS

“Everyone who works for Umbrella enjoys their work and appreciates the organization. This makes the work we do all the more purposeful.”



Lois



Jeff



Julie



Guy



Amanda



Wendy



Pride, July 2025



Lance & pumpkin, Oct 2025



Jeff's \$1000 donation for Giving Tuesday!



Thank you Manitoulin Transport!



Angels' Luncheon, Nov 2025



Loise's 10 years at Umbrella!



Kelsey & Emily, Dec 2025



an office staple



Scott & Shelagh, 2026



Jake, Josh, Stef & Rebecca,
July 2025



Cooper residents' goodbyes,
Sept 2025



Housing BBQ, August 2025



Josh at Camosun's Criminal Justice fair, March 2026



BPD Society's Infosession, 2025



Blake with MLA Krieger, Feb 2026



Louise, John, Cassidy, Rebecca (& Evan), Victoria Native Friendship Centre's Community Care Fair, April 2026



Jake & Barb, from the Alano Club, Oct 2025



Josh on the diamond with Our Place, 2025

Thank you to our Donors!



United Way
Southern
Vancouver Island



**Victoria
Foundation**

the Pinch Family Trust Fund



TELUS Friendly
Future Foundation



**COURTNALL
SOCIETY**
FOR MENTAL HEALTH



Sovereign Order Of
ST. JOHN OF JERUSALEM
Knights Hospitaller c.1048
Victoria Commandery



Canada



**Provincial Health
Services Authority**
Province-wide solutions.
Better health.



It's crucial to break down the stigma.

With a school counsellor, teacher, or Education Assistant present, two Umbrella workers share their lived experience with students from grades 9 to 12 at schools across Greater Victoria.

We want to empower young people with the knowledge and support available to them in a landscape where substances are ever-present. We want to open the discussion.

We thank the Government of Canada and the City of Victoria's Spark Program for making this happen.



Scott & Rebecca at Stelly's Secondary

Because of this project, we've seen an increase in intakes for family counselling, youth clients, and schools have reached out for another Umbrella presentation.



Ashley & Rebecca at Maria Montessori



Derek & Rebecca at St. Michael's University School



For years, our Women's Group has been operating curtesy of the Angels. Their support makes it possible for us to continue offering women in recovery a space for connection, healing, and sharing throughout the year. Umbrella and our clients say thank you.



Saturday women's group has been a wonderful group to belong to.
We share our lives together, the good and the bad. It is a safe, respectful place to be yourself.

Absolutely fabulous programme.
Would recommend it to my women,



Angels' Luncheon, 2025





Santé
Canada

Health
Canada

Canada

We rounded out our LevelUp online module project, funded by Health Canada's Substance Use & Addictions Program (SUAP). We assembled and filmed topics relevant to working with people with lived and living experience (PWLLE).

We had viewers from current staff, former practicum students, our social media community, and fellow organizations in the field.

Thank you to SUAP, and everyone who lent their voices and knowledge to train the future generation of workers in the field!



Harm Reduction



Support Groups



OAT



Gender Diversity



Mental Health



Confidentiality



Housing



Naloxone

Thank You

To our Board of Directors, for choosing to give your time, energy, and expertise; for your backing, and believing in our mission.

To our staff, our greatest assets. For making society's vulnerable population feel safe, feel heard, and feel advocated for. For being experts and learners. For supporting strangers and each other. For proving that compassion is crucial.

To our clients, thank you for taking that first step.



250-380-0595



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@umbrellavictoria



Umbrella Society for Addictions & Mental Health



A Message from our Board Chair

2025 was a year of many challenges for the Umbrella Society with a deepening inequity between our income and our expenditures, significant staffing changes and increasing organizational dysfunction.

Starting in 2024 the operating environment for nonprofit organizations in our sector shifted as the high levels of funding associated with the COVID pandemic were rolled back while service delivery costs continued to rise.

During this time of decreasing funding and increasing costs Umbrella failed to respond adequately leading to a deficit in 2025 which the organization dealt with by drawing down on funds held by the Umbrella Foundation.

As our financial situation deteriorated staff and management faced increasing pressures. This ultimately resulted in the departure of our long term Executive Director at a time when the organization most needed strong leadership.

These changes left Umbrella with staff worried about their jobs and funders and service delivery partners uncertain about Umbrella's future.

The Board has been active and focused in our response to these challenges.

Following the departure of the Executive Director the Board focused on the implementation of a recruitment strategy to find a new Executive Director capable of providing the leadership necessary to ensure operational stability and a focus on our core frontline services that are crucial to our clients.

With our new Executive Director in place the Board has supported the development and implementation of our sustainability strategy, including staff reductions and other cost savings while preserving front line services.

While there is more to do, particularly in the areas of fund raising and program development, the Board is confident that the Umbrella Society is on the right path to ensure organizational stability going forward.

Thanks to the commitment and hard work of our staff and the support of our funders and partners we are confident that Umbrella will be there to continue to support our clients struggling with addictions and mental health challenges in the years to come.

Guy Cookson

Umbrella Society for
Addictions & Mental Health