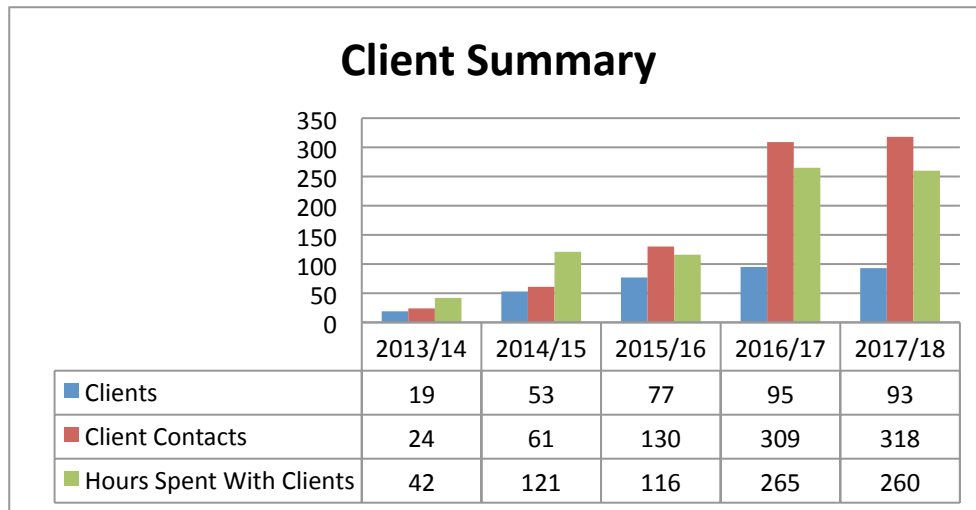


Community Information & Resource Coordination Service

At The Meeting Place Tobermory – May 2018

Service Summary and Comparison

The Meeting Place ‘community hub’ in Tobermory provides a unique blend of rural social support called Community Information & Resource Coordination or CIRC. It’s designed to respond to those who may be in stressful situations, are isolated or need system navigation. CIRC connects people to a wide range of resources, through a skilled ‘community connector’. This informal connection and personal support approach works well for people living in small towns.

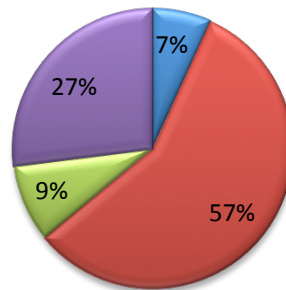


Notes:

- The number of Client contacts is higher than the number of Clients because most Clients require 2 or more visits to the office, and some Clients return with a new request.
- Client contacts and time spent with Clients does not include the customary check-up call to ensure they received all the information and have no further questions or concerns nor does it include research conducted in their absence.
- There are 3 open files as of the completion of this report. Those Clients and corresponding statistics are not represented in these findings.
- Number of Clients does not include the 71 Clients the CIRC (Community Information and Resource Coordinator) contacted/booked for appointments with CVITP (Canadian Volunteer Income Tax Program)

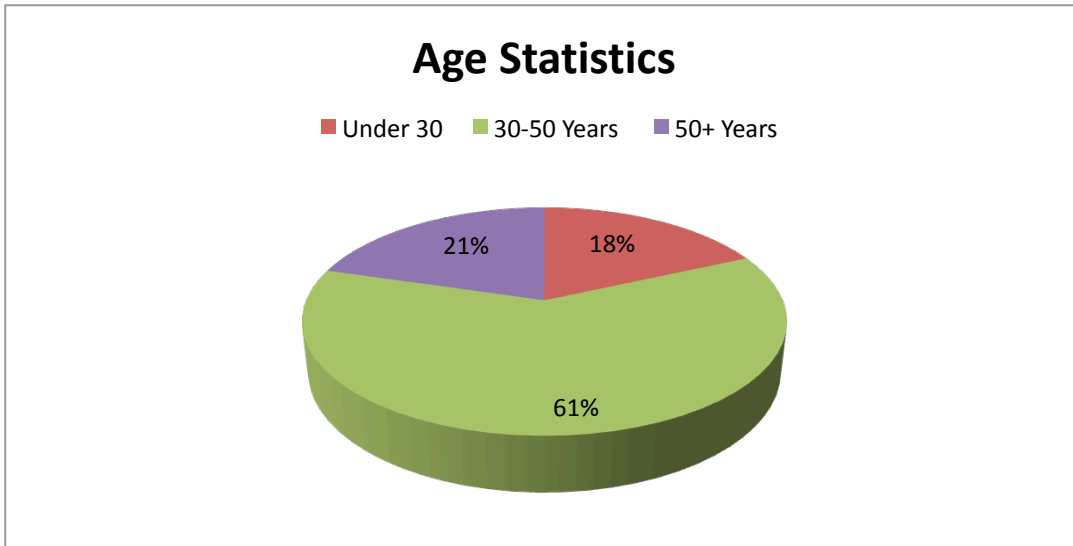
Client Referrals

■ New Client Not Referred ■ Word of Mouth Referral
■ Food Bank Referral ■ Past Client



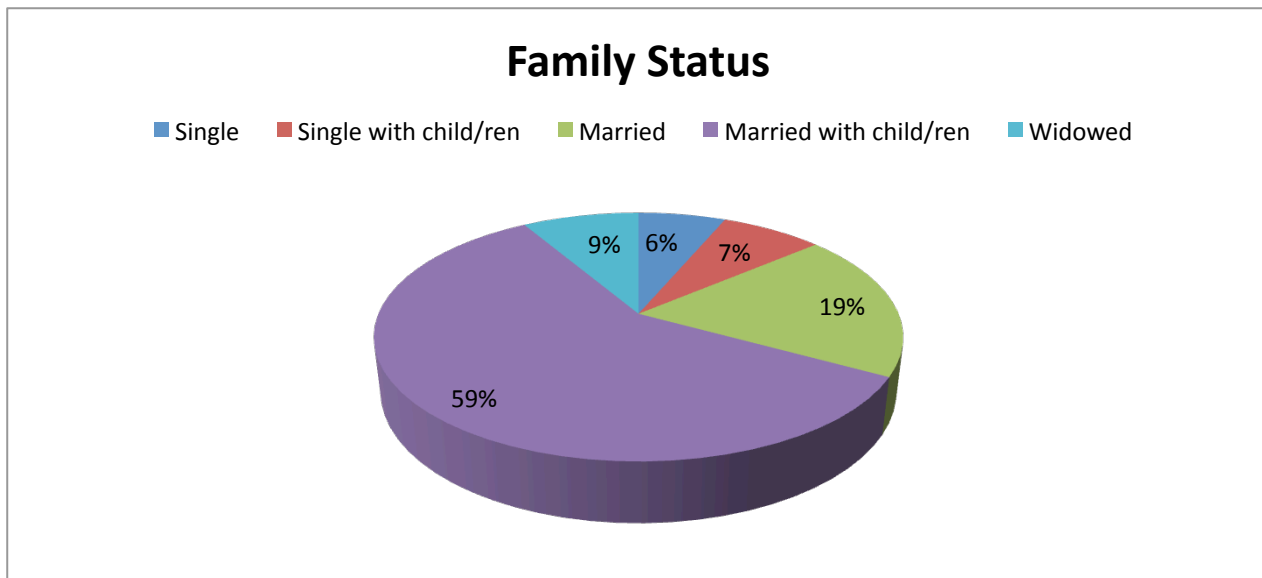
Notes:

- Past Clients are always encouraged to return should they require more information and/or assistance. This year, 27% of Clients had been a client in the past 3 years. This is a significant decrease from last year when 45% of clients had been a client in the previous 2 years. The number of new clients this year represents a broader reach into the community.
- CIRC has a very close working relationship with the organizers of our local Food Bank, granting CIRC access and permission to take Clients into the food bank during closed hours should the need arise. The Food Bank volunteers know of the services CIRC provides and encourages their clients to visit the CIRC office. Foodbank referrals increased 2% this year which coincides with the increase of foodbank clients.
- Word of mouth referrals increased from 37% in 2016/17 to 57% in 2017/18 and surpassed returning clients this year. Word of mouth referrals are new referrals and mostly come from past clients telling family, friends, neighbours etc. about CIRC services. The United Way GB office, CVITP (Canadian Volunteer Income Tax Program), as well as our Bruce Peninsula Family Health Team social worker have also referred clients to CIRC for services
- New Client not referred increased from 2% to 7% this year. The majority of these Clients were patients of the Tobermory Hyperbaric Chamber, that use the facilities at The Meeting Place as a comfortable and quiet place to rest and enjoy their lunch between treatments, and upon hearing the CIRC services offered, they requested further information.



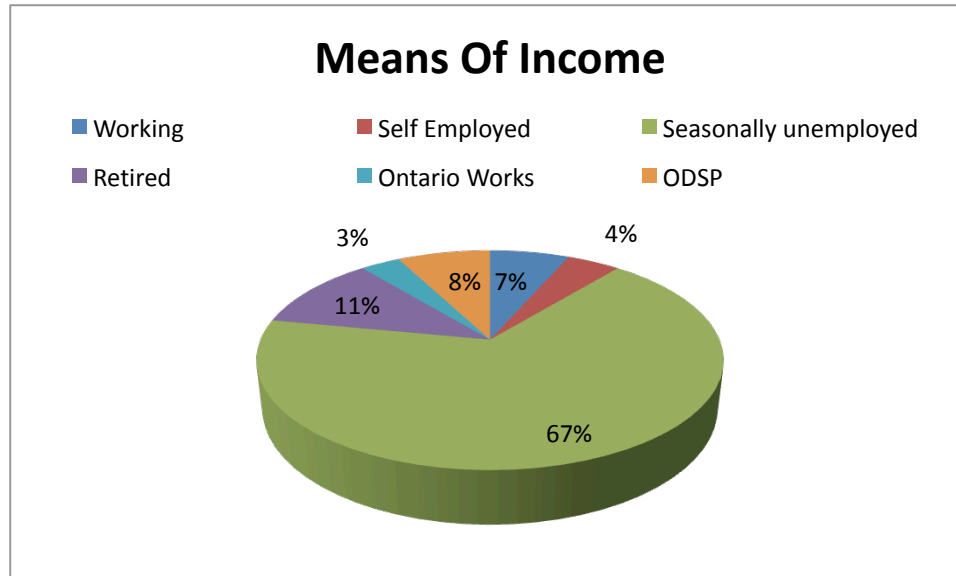
Notes:

- Large increase in the age group under 30 from 6% in 2016/17 to 18% in 2017/18.
- The majority of under 30 were single, Female with children
- Of the 50+ age group, 50% of the Clients were widowed Males.



Notes:

- Married includes families with no child/ren as well as families with child/ren no longer living at home. This group increased from 2% to 19% this year.
- 3 Clients with custody of and raising Grandchildren are recorded as Married with child/ren or Single with child/ren.

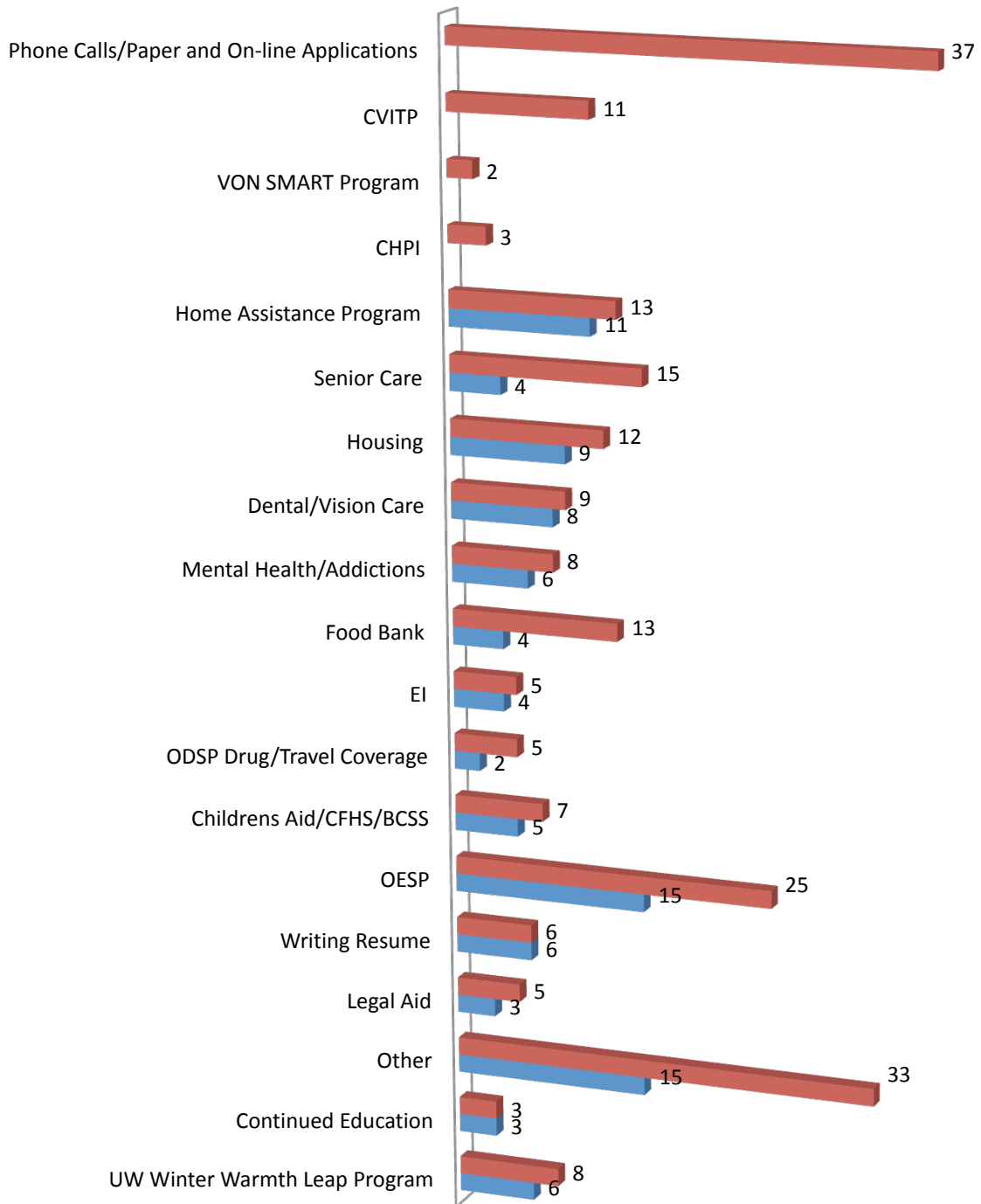


Notes:

- Of the 11% (or 10) retired Clients, only 2 had had RRSP or pension income other than OAS/CPP.
- The above information clearly shows the majority of Clients seen are married, with children, seasonally employed between the ages of 30 and 50 years old. These clients have high seasonal child care expenses.
- 21 Clients were Male and 71 were Female. This is the first year I have seen married clients at the same time, statistics are based on who made the initial contact.
- One male married Client was seen, and a month later his wife was seen as a client. Due to the confidentiality of the CIRC work, neither of them know the other had also been seen by the CIRC.
- 3 Clients this year have no home phone, no cell phone and no access to internet and there are no pay phones in our area. This made it impossible for Clients to access information for themselves, and difficult for CIRC to communicate with them.
- Next year it would be interesting to collect more statistics on transportation. Many Clients mentioned transportation as a barrier which is shown in a following graph, but those statistics relate to travelling outside our community for assistance. Many Clients travel by bicycle, walk or carpool to both the CIRC office and foodbank. Many others have vehicles, but are not reliable enough to take far from home.

Initial Requests and Information Provided

■ Additional Information Provided ■ Initial Request



Notes:

- Chart above shows initial requests totalling 93. Additional information provided totals 220. A client never leaves with just the original requested information. CIRC uses "caring questions" to open a dialogue and address other concerns the client may not have known there was help for. Some examples of "caring questions" are;
 - ❖ Have you struggled with this before
 - ❖ How do we stop this from happening again
 - ❖ Is there anything anyone in the family needs
 - ❖ Would you like to be more involved in our community
 - ❖ What is getting in your way of getting involved
 - ❖ How will you stay active this winter
 - ❖ Is there anything you would like to do for fun

- Example of how one concern can lead to many sources of relief; Client comes in that is seasonally employed, EI (Employment Insurance) has run out, and is not expected to work for another month and a half. Client is now behind in Hydro/Heating bills, which lead to falling behind in rent, phone bill and inability to buy groceries. Client is informed of the following programs; UW winter warmth/Leap program, OESP (Ontario Energy Savings Plan \$30 credit off Hydro bill), BCSS daycare subsidy (for when client returns to work), CHPI (Community Homeless Prevention Innovative grant to help with emergency housing needs such as rent arrears), CVITP (Canadian Volunteer Income Tax Program) and Food Bank.

- OESP numbers are high as Hydro rates continue to be a burden no matter the age, income source, or marital status. Every client seen is informed of and offered assistance in completing the OESP application forms.

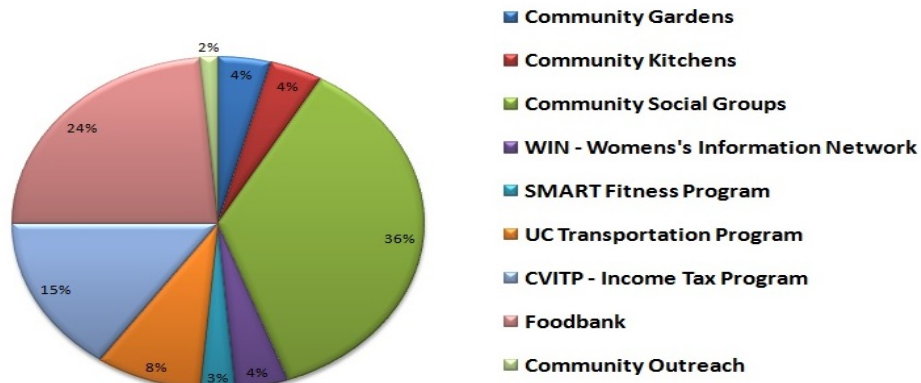
- Some Clients need help making phone calls. They become stressed with not being able to get a person on the other end and give up.

- Dental and vision care continues to pose a problem. There are some programs out there for children; CNIOT children in need of treatment, free glasses for children entering Kindergarten, and at cost dental care for those willing to travel to university dental programs.

- The Foodbank was a service offered to 13 clients, yet only 9 clients accepted that offer. Stigma and limited scope may account for this.

- 211 Ontario helpline and data base service was accessed 10 times in 2017/18.

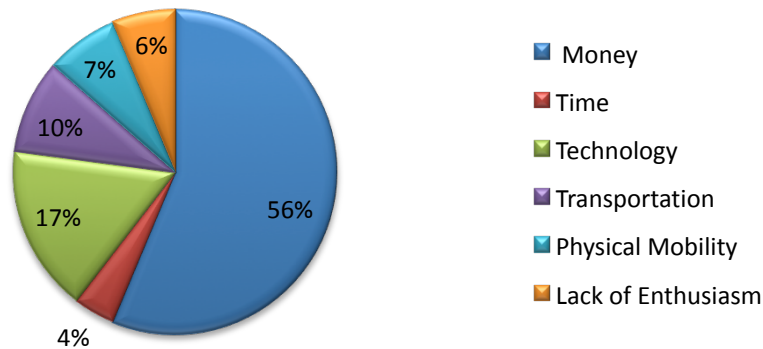
Local Community Services Offered 'Strengthening the Community'



Notes:

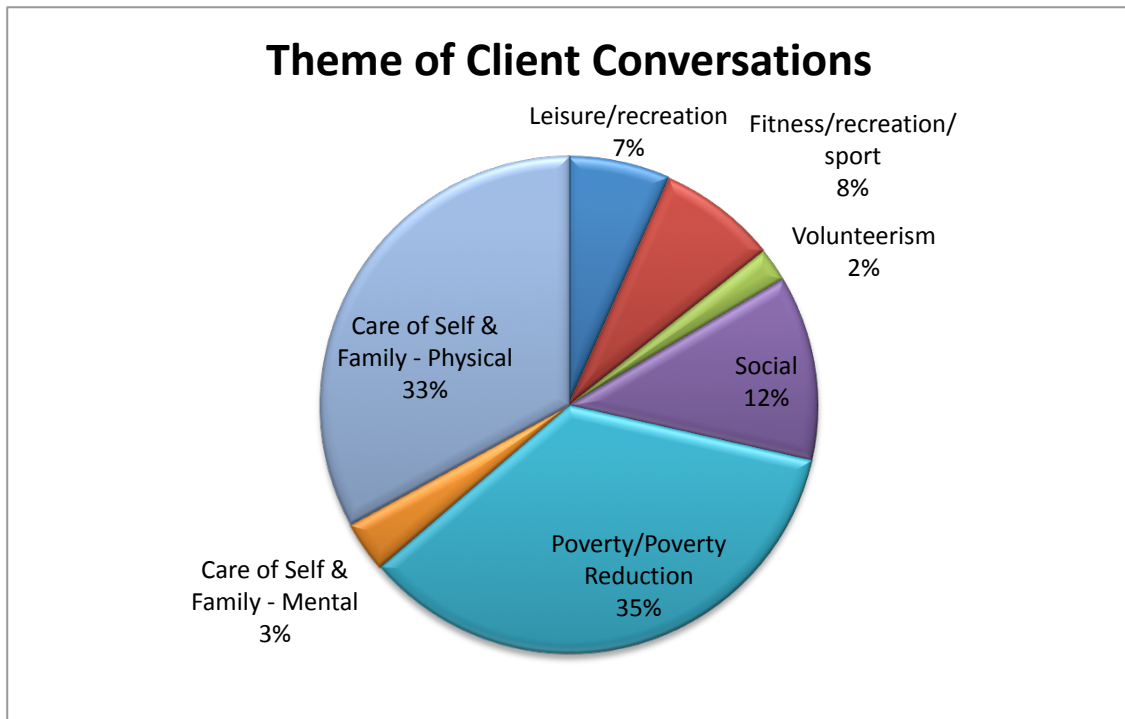
- By regularly attending the ecumenical Outreach committee meetings (consisting of representatives from 4 local churches) community concerns are brought to the CIRC's attention, clients are referred to CIRC for assistance, and the Outreach fund is available for CIRC to refer Clients to should they have no resources, grants or programs to assist the Client.
- Since transportation is an issue for many clients due to distance, weather, or access to a reliable vehicle, the United Church transportation program was recommended to 8% of this year's clients.
- Many Clients expressed concerns about trying to eat healthy on a fixed income, so they were referred to The Meeting Place community kitchen and community garden programs.
- Mobility restrictions for some senior Clients led them to be referred to the VON SMART (Seniors Maintaining Active Roles Together) program
- Last year, the CIRC published a brochure "Community Life in Tobermory" that highlights community groups both social and fitness, youth related volunteer opportunities and other volunteer opportunities and local Churches This brochure was offered to all Clients, and accepted by 75 of 93 Clients. This brochure was a valuable resource to give information to Clients that were feeling isolated, lonely, and were struggling with lack of social stimulation.
- The CVITP (Canadian Volunteer Income Tax Program) is mentioned to every Client that qualifies for the program.
- By offering Local Community Services, which are different and closer to home than other information and programs, many barriers (see pie chart below) are eliminated.

Barriers To Life Satisfaction Reported By Clients



Notes:

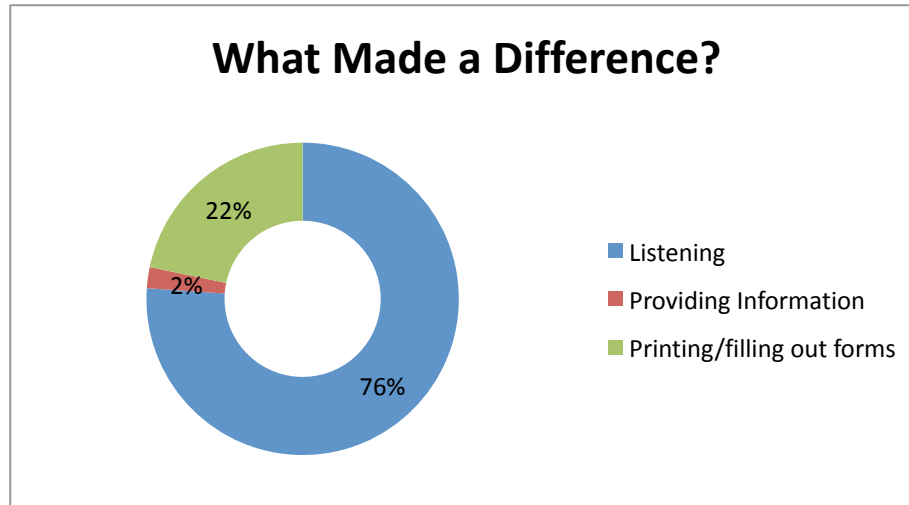
- Money continues to be the largest barrier faced by CIRC Clients, up to 56% from only 40% last year.
- Lack of phone, internet access and computer skills was a prominent barrier this year leading it to being added to the statistics. There are no pay phones in our area for Clients to use either. Many Clients have taken advantage of the opportunity to use computers at our local library once CIRC informed them of that option.
- There was a noticeable increase in transportation as a barrier. Clients were informed of the United Church transportation program, and many CIRC Clients took advantage of that program. Movin' GB is another program available, but the cost of using that program, and lack of coverage in our area made it an unaffordable and unreliable resource. Private transportation services on the Peninsula have been short-lived.
- 6 Clients were seen to assist with writing resumes. Lack of computer skills and literacy were the main factors for those clients. CIRC would like to investigate the possibility of offering computer classes for beginners next year, as well as finding volunteers to help individuals one-on-one with basic literacy skills.
- The barriers 'time' and 'lack of enthusiasm' statistics decreased dramatically this year, which is a positive statistic to make note of.
- Physical mobility barriers often related to 'getting around in winter' and fear of falling.



Notes:

The above chart shows the theme results of the "Caring questions asked" .

- The above chart is based on the overall interaction with a Client not the initial request.
- Clients almost always come in with an initial request regarding financial distress. However, once the dialogue is open, many other concerns, interests, and goals come to light.
- Clients are seen one on one in a quiet, safe, and confidential setting . This environment is the perfect way for people to open up and get to the underlying problems they didn't realize were part of the bigger problem.
- The theme may start out as poverty reduction, but after a friendly conversation, the Client is suddenly excited about talking about getting out more socially, joining a volunteer organization or fitness class.



Notes:

- This is the first year tracking this outcome. CIRC always makes a final call to the Client to make sure they have no other questions, concerns, or need assistance with the information they were provided before closing their file. This became the perfect opportunity to ask them what they thought made a difference for them through the CIRC program.
- Every Client was offered information, yet only 2% of them said that alone was what made a difference to them.
- Overwhelmingly the answer is listening and the feelings of emotional support that come with that. By always asking open ended questions, not questions that can be answered with a simple yes or no, allowed the Client to tell their story, and to get closer to the root of their problem. Many times, the client themselves didn't know where things started to go wrong until talking it out through the resources of CIRC.
- The ability to listen to and/or tune into a Client's needs is reflected in this chart as well. Some Clients like a formal setting across the table from each other, while other like to be offered a cup of tea and settle down on the couch and have a conversation.
- Having more time available for CIRC allowed for more one-on-one time with the clients, and through conversation and "caring question asked" concerns and resources needed by the client other than their original request were found and addressed.
- Many Clients noted that although listening is what made the difference for them, having the CIRC office open and accessible, coinciding with the foodbank hours also made a difference as it was a chance to stop in, catch up, book another appointment, or just say hello.
- It should be noted that self reporting is one source of 'outcome' but it is an important one.

Concluding Summary:

In 2017/18, CIRC has been pursuing an additional objective of **documenting impact and developing resources** as part of its social support mandate.

Documenting Impact: This report highlights that an initial request for information through CIRC is only part of the story. With time and use of active listening, the connections made to an additional range of information and resources beyond the initial request is impressive. See chart – ‘Initial Requests and Information Provided’. The number of people accessing CIRC was similar to the past year of 2016/17 and within the same resource base. How people get to CIRC continues to be a strength of the service. See Chart – ‘Client Referrals’. ‘Word of mouth’ referrals are the most common way people access the service and this is an indicator of trust coming from the rural community. The setting at The Meeting Place offers flexibility from living room style seating, to small group tables to closed door office and kitchen and all spaces support the conversation.

Developing Resources: For the second year, CIRC invited clients to engage in an exploration of meaningful connections within their own community. Many clients seeking information and resources were also invited to discuss leisure and recreation options, food security strategies, volunteerism and individual and family self care. These opportunities and **local community services** are found or can be developed in rural communities when the right connections are made. The majority of CIRC clients received the new brochure, ‘Community Life in Tobermory’ and many accessed the services and groups described within. See chart – ‘Local Community Services Offered’. When more people access the informal supports and participate in community life there is a good chance that their expressed barriers to life satisfaction can be altered. In turn the rural community is stronger when it has some capacity to care for and engage its citizens. The Meeting Place partnerships with other groups and the services and programs facilitated by The Meeting Place, among others, show up as important in this constellation of local community services.

Jennifer Cuffe, Community Coordinator, TMP

Noreen Steinacher, Board Chair, TMP