

John Howard

THE JOHN HOWARD SOCIETY OF PRINCE EDWARD ISLAND

THE JOHN HOWARD SOCIETY OF CANADA ANNUAL REPORT

MEMBER SOCIETY:

THE JOHN HOWARD SOCIETY OF PEI
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ATTENTION: JOHN HOWARD SOCIETY OF CANADA

PRESENTED BY: THE EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR AND PRESIDENT OF THE JOHN HOWARD SOCIETY OF PEI

Dear John Howard Society of Canada,

We, on behalf of the staff and Board of Directors of the John Howard Society of Prince Edward Island (JHSPEI), are pleased to share recent achievements, milestones and projects on PEI over the past year in the areas. We're incredibly proud of the progress that has been made on PEI in the areas of incarceration, restorative justice, prevention and diversion, and other factors that negatively impact on those who are at risk or involved with the criminal justice system.

JHSPEI STRATEGIC PLAN DEVELOPMENT

In the fall of 2022, the John Howard Society of PEI engaged MRSB Consulting Services (MRSB) to assist with the development of the [2023-2027 Strategic Plan](#). The development of this plan included extensive collaboration with and engagement of numerous JHSPEI stakeholders including staff and the board of directors, volunteers, the Department of Social Development and Housing, and other advisors.

Key outcomes of this project allowed for the redevelopment of a vision and mission for JHSPEI, ensuring it aligned with the core purpose of the John Howard Society of Canada and its member societies, while also capturing the history of JHSPEI since its inception in 1960, and the uniqueness of the PEI context and the environment in which the organization operates.

The 2023-2027 Strategic Plan outlines that the John Howard Society of PEI works with people to help address social needs, with a specialized focus on the criminal justice system and housing issues. It notes three primary areas of support as:

- › Provide client-focused supports using strengths-based and harm-reduction approaches;
- › Help to address prevention and diversion from homelessness and incarceration; and
- › Build connections and referrals to supportive community services.

The 2023-2027 Strategic Plan also clarifies the three core goals of JHSPEI:

1. **Person-Focused Supports:** Inspire individuals to build confidence and to promote self-sufficiency and stability.

2. **Prevention and Diversion:** Influence positive impacts on individual lives and society through community leadership. And;
3. **Organizational Performance:** Build organization capacity and culture to positively impact individuals and community.

PREVENTION AND DIVERSION AND COORDINATED ACCESS

A portion of the engagement of MRSB also included a component to co-develop a guide with proposed directions for the development of a Homeless Prevention and Diversion (P&D) Program on PEI. As noted in the 2023-2027 Strategic Plan, P&D Program development would support a key area of focus for JHSPEI: helping to address prevention and diversion from homelessness and incarceration.

In part, the P&D Program is supported through JHSPEI's designation as the Community Entity (CE) for Reaching Home: Canada's Homelessness Strategy established by the Government of Canada, with strong provincial government and community collaboration. Reaching Home engages JHSPEI with nearly 20 organizations who provide housing and other supports to the most vulnerable on PEI.

Additionally, as the CE for the province of PEI, JHSPEI has also taken the lead on PEI's Coordinated Access System (CAS). Working with over 20 community groups and provincial government representation from several departments, incredible steps have been made in the areas of collaboration and shared resources for service providers, as well as an improved management of cases and coordination of referrals and record keeping.

In June 2023, the John Howard Society of PEI, the Department of Housing, Land and Communities and the City of Charlottetown co-hosted a two-day workshop in Charlottetown to bring service providers together to discuss the future, including matters of housing, incarceration and cross-sector collaboration. With active participation from community groups from across PEI, as well as from the Minister of Housing, Land and Communities, Rob Lantz, the Mayor of Charlottetown, Philip Brown, and the Deputy Mayor of Charlottetown, Alanna Jankov.

CONTINUANCE OF CRIMINAL JUSTICE SUPPORTS

JHSPEI works with individuals on PEI who have become, or who are at risk of becoming, involved in the criminal justice system.

A major focus, since Covid-19 procedures and practices have allowed for it, has been the representation of case- and outreach workers from the John Howard Society in the Provincial Custody Programs. By way of meetings in the correctional centres for incarcerated clients and in the John Howard Society of PEI office(s) in Charlottetown and Summerside for probationed, parolled and at-risk clients.

There are a variety of services offered by JHSPEI for those looking to develop life skills, gain further education, and assistance in finding employment or housing, including:

- › Employment Assistance Services (i.e. Employment Counseling, Resume/Portfolio Building, Job Searching, & Interview Preparation)
- › Case Management (i.e. Skills PEI Funding, Job Retention, Education, Pre-Employment Programming, Matching with Housing and Programming)
- › Assistance with Applications and Payment for Record Suspensions
- › Income Tax and Employment Income Supports
- › Life Skills Development

RESTORATIVE JUSTICE PROGRAM GROWTH

In July 2021, the Prince Edward Island provincial government launched a Restorative Justice Program which has gained a significant amount of exposure and development in the two years since its introduction on the Island. While some form of restorative justice had been available to Indigenous individuals since the early 2000s, the expansion in availability has been instrumental in providing those who have been harmed by a crime, either directly or indirectly, the opportunity to communicate with the offender who caused the harm.

Much of the recent success of the program is thanks in part to the Manager of Justice Innovations within the Department of Justice and Public Safety, Bethany Knox, who has gained restorative justice experience and training from across Canada, including extensive involvement in programs in BC and Ontario. In collaboration with other experts in judicial and legal issues, Knox and the Department of Justice and Public Safety have developed a restorative justice project that is one of the most progressive in Canada.

MOVING FORWARD

Above highlights only a few of the incredible accomplishments that have been made over the last year or so, and we're both very optimistic for the future ahead. The John Howard Society of PEI will continue to focus efforts on supporting the most vulnerable and improving the lives of those living on Prince Edward Island. Should you have any questions or desire further information about our projects, please do not hesitate to contact us.

Sincerely,

Conor Mullin, President
John Howard Society of Prince Edward Island