

UNITED WAY OTTAWA – CALL FOR PROPOSALS

CRISIS SUPPORTS – PRIORITY GOAL DESCRIPTION

PRIORITY GOAL	ENSURE PEOPLE IN CRISIS HAVE ACCESS TO COORDINATED AND IMMEDIATE SUPPORTS
KEY ISSUE	A crisis can affect anyone at any time. Many members of our community face barriers (socioeconomic, geographic, cultural and language) that make it difficult to access services that address and prevent crisis. Many people have a support network of family, friends and colleagues to turn to in times of crisis, but others do not. Many members of our community are more vulnerable to crisis and face barriers (socioeconomic, geographic, cultural and language) that make it difficult to access services that address and prevent crisis. There are many factors that contribute to crisis (i.e. financial, legal issues, personal safety, and health). As such, a diverse network of resources is required for people to access community services quickly and effectively. A healthy community is one that supports its citizens when facing crisis and creates an environment that provides a balance between prevention and intervention through a network of supports and services. When effective networks exist in the community, people spend less time, are less frustrated and become less discouraged in finding and accessing the help that they need; individuals and families have the supports they require to recover from a crisis and build resiliency.
ADDRESSING SYSTEMIC CHANGE	People find themselves in crisis situations for a great variety of reasons. Naturally there is great impetus to ensure that people can avoid being in crisis in the first place and in effect, it could be said that the work of United Way's other Priority Goals, in one form or another, play a role in preventing crisis. However, there will likely always be a need for crisis supports no matter how much impact prevention efforts have. United Way Ottawa would like to see these key needs considered in any crisis response: • There need to be enough linguistically and culturally appropriate crisis supports to meet the needs of different populations • Some crisis supports need to be available 24/7 • People need to be aware of where to find help in accessing support There is a lack of data concerning the extent to which some of the frequent users of paramedic, emergency department and police services are also frequent users of community-based crisis services. Other clients simply use community-based crisis supports on a regular basis. Clearly, these clients are not getting the ongoing supports they need to prevent crises. Research into this issue would help determine how best to ensure that they do.

FUNDING CATEGORIES AND EXAMPLES	• Programs and Services that have an immediate impact on clients' crisis states, feelings of hopelessness, and stress. Programs that reduce barriers to accessing information, support and services aimed at addressing crisis. • Advocate for increased public awareness about the availability of crisis supports and services • Convene community partners to improve the collaboration and coordination of efforts among service providers and stakeholders • Research to identify, track and refer frequent users & number of frequent users of crisis services in Ottawa.
TARGET POPULATIONS	Individuals experiencing crisis with an emphasis placed on those facing additional barriers such as low income, multicultural, Francophone, Aboriginal people, rural and GLBTTQ2S