



Airdrie and District Victims Assistance Society

2019 Annual General Meeting
Submitted by Michelle Wagner – Executive Director

ADVAS continues to offer:

- Free and confidential crisis and follow-up support, information, referrals to everyone,
- Victim Impact Statements, Financial Benefits, Request for Restitution, and the Victims of Crime Protocol outlining what to expect when you're involved in the Criminal Justice System
- Court preparation and accompaniment,
- Resources and information specific to people's needs and
- Assistance for individuals affected by assault, family violence and domestic assault, sudden death, theft, break and enter, sexual assault, harassment and more.

TRENDS AND CHANGES OF 2018

- ADVAS currently provides its services to a population base of over 114,204 and the communities ADVAS serves continues to grow. As the communities continue to grow, the need for specialized support services is evident. There is no shelter, sexual assault services, addiction treatment programs or long term mental health support programs in the communities we support. Victims continue to wait for increased lengths of time to get the support they need, therefore leaving ADVAS filling the gap in the interim.
- ADVAS staff and volunteers worked on 3691 files in 2018, up from 2,827 in 2017.
- The Alberta Serious Incident Response Team (ASIRT) and Calgary Police Services (CPS) have utilized the ADVAS programs & services to support victims of serious crime.
- RCMP Southern Alberta District (SAD) is located on the second floor of the Airdrie RCMP detachment. ADVAS provides support to those units as requested.
- ADVAS continues to have a large criminal court program with 784 hours dedicated top court support in 2018.

FINANCIAL SUSTAINABILITY

ADVAS applies for sustainable funding from the Alberta Justice and Solicitor General (JSG) and annual FCSS and other provincial grants. Funding fluctuates (ie. reduced funding from FCSS programs) and to maintain and sustain our programs and services we continue to fundraise and gratefully accept donations. In order to balance our budget, ADVAS needed to fundraise approximately \$78,000 in 2018 in order to sustain its programs offered to the community. Unfortunately, we did not meet our targets and were only able to fundraise \$55,053 dollars, \$22,947 below our target. In 2019, in order to balance our budget, ADVAS will need to fundraise \$90,000 to maintain our programs and level of service to the community we serve.

HUMAN RESOURCES – WHAT HAVE WE BEEN UP TO?

The ADVAS Board currently has 9 directors and two RCMP liaison officers. ADVAS currently has 19 volunteer advocates and 6 new volunteers at various stages of security clearance and training. A total of 34 volunteers and four staff make up the current human resources of ADVAS.

- In 2018, ADVAS volunteers and staff, in partnership with the RCMP, contributed over 10,652 hours of their time and talents to support victims in our community.

- Volunteers and staff were available for 24 hours on call crisis support for a total of over 20,000 hours in 2018.
- ADVAS assisted approximately 3128 people in our district.
- Volunteers and staff worked on 3691 files, a 30% growth over the last year. Domestic violence, criminal harassment, assault, sexual assault and theft/fraud/robbery continue to be the greatest number of files referred to ADVAS.

The past year has been a year of transition for ADVAS. In 2018, two staff, Angela Wright, Executive Director and Leah Rohner, Court Coordinator left the organization to pursue new opportunities. In the late summer, Michelle Wagner was hired into the role as Executive Director. Michelle has been with the organization the past five years as director on the ADVAS board. Debbie Reid who has been a Volunteer Advocate with ADVAS since 2016, was hired into the Court Coordinator role. Front line volunteers will continue to be recruited to meet the operational needs of the organization in 2019.

- Capacity Building project was launched in November 2018 to build a business plan for the next 3-5 years.
- Cross training between all staff positions continues to occur on an ongoing basis.
- Wellness of our Society is always foremost in the minds of ADVAS. The nature of the work done by frontline volunteers, court volunteers and staff lends itself to vicarious trauma and compassion fatigue. Continuous training and self care was paramount in 2018 and will be ongoing throughout 2018.

VICTIM SUPPORT AND PUBLIC AWARENESS

ADVAS strives to ensure every person impacted by crime has been informed of the programs and services offered by the Justice and Solicitor General. We also recognize that crime is ever changing and victimization requires current and up to date information.

Online Resources for Victims:

The online resource is reviewed and new resources are updated quarterly to reflect the trends and changes in victimization. The following online resources in the crime and trauma areas include; domestic violence, sexual assault, assault, internet crimes, suicide, bullying, grief and more. Victims impacted by these crimes and emotional trauma can now access support, information and referrals in the privacy of their homes. On line resources in no way replace the front line work of the ADVAS volunteers and staff, they enhance the longer term support people may need or wish to explore. To learn more about online victim support visit www.airdrievictimassistance.com

Social Media:

An administrative page for FaceBook advertising and Twitter continues to increase public awareness, assist with volunteer recruitment, provide online support for victims and generate online donations.

More people are accessing our website directly, evident in the spike visits after public awareness events. The awareness, recruitment, access to victim's resources and financial support goals of social media advertisement far outweighs all other forms of advertising.

EVALUATING OUR PERFORMANCE

The 2018 outcome based evaluations from victims and volunteer advocates indicate that ADVAS has once again successfully supported victims of crime and tragedy and remains strongly committed to volunteers and their success as advocates.

Victims who completed the 2018 ADVAS satisfaction survey strongly agree or agree that the services ADVAS provided were compassionate, timely, appropriate, professional, and the information provided was appropriate.

Volunteer Advocates who completed the 2018 satisfaction survey strongly agree or agree that ADVAS is committed to their success as a volunteer, they are committed to their volunteer role, communication is effective, their strengths are utilized, training opportunities are meaningful and prepare them for their volunteer work and their work is recognized and celebrated.

COLLOABRATION

ADVAS has developed strong partnerships with numerous community agencies based on the current and changing needs of victims of crime and tragedy.

ADVAS sits on the Domestic Violence Community Stakeholders Group geared to develop an action plan for a community approach to address domestic violence within the City of Airdrie. The work of this group wrapped up in 2018 with a formal presentation to City Council with three-year plan, addressing domestic violence in our community.

ADVAS sat on the Mental Health Task Force group in 2018 which was geared to lead planning to create an optimum early identification, prevention, treatment and support services for those with mental illness in Airdrie and area. A final report on the outcomes and strategic next steps was release late fall 2018.

ADVAS actively participates as a member of the Prevention of Family Violence Interagency Committee. Stakeholders in this committee include: Provincial Crown Prosecutor, Probation, RCMP Domestic Violence Unit, Home Front, Alberta Health Services and North Rockyview Community Links Society.

ADVAS supported victims whose partners were mandated through court to participate in the Men's and Women's Domestic Violence Treatment Program in 2018. ADVAS provides follow up calls to ensure that victims feel safe and supported during the 14-week program. This work is now reflected in the Justice and Solicitor General Logic Model outcome reports.

OUR FOCUS

VISION: A community that assists in bridging the gap from hurt to hope to empower victims to take control of their experience as it becomes part of their life.

MISSION: to respect the victims we support by providing a compassionate response, emotional and practical assistance, information on victims' rights and referrals necessary to help reduce the negative impact of victimization.

VALUES:

We value integrity and confidentiality

We value and respect supportive community relationships

We value and respect professional relationship with the RCMP, our Board, staff and volunteers

We value diverse, highly trained and skilled people who deliver superior services

We value a sincere, compassionate and timely response for all

We value exceptional services delivered in a diverse, non-judgmental manner for all

We value providing accountable and fiscally responsible quality services

Thanks to everyone involved in ADVAS throughout 2018. A big shout out to the board and liaison officers for your support to the staff and volunteers who provide assistance to those affected by crime and tragedy in the communities we serve. Your support and commitment to the organization is greatly appreciated.