

COMMUNITY CONVERSATIONS

Physical and Mental Health What are we hearing?



JUNE 2020

With nowhere to go, exercise options have been limited. It's been challenging to get into an exercise routine with only having access to ones apartment or backyard. However, for those living close to green space and parks this has presented an opportunity, but there is still a fear of getting fines when in public spaces.

For people living with disabilities, this pandemic and its restrictions have presented a lot of challenges. For people with mobility issues, getting into the community has been an ever-bigger challenge.

Isolation has taken a real toll on mental health.

For those working long hours, the workloads have become increasingly high, in some cases up to 80 hours a week which also exposes people to to higher risk of contracting the virus.

Things that have worked in addressing mental health challenges include setting boundaries on technology and how many people you can emotionally support, meditation and prayer, using the phone when you don't want to video chat, and talking to family.

Social health has taken a hit and understanding how we reintegrate is really hard to navigate.

During this pandemic, "day-drinking" and substance use has been normalized and even glorified. This will be a big problem to address.

Online mental health supports have been good, but there are restrictions. If people can't confidentially speak to someone because of who is in their house, people won't contact these supports. It also seems even more difficult to access elevated mental health support, like psychiatrists. Setting up a 'safe and confidential video zone' at community hubs should be considered for the future.

Access to Elders and other culturally appropriate supports disappeared during this time because they happen in person.

We should keep the things that have been working, like free online yoga and meditation classes, options for people to call or video chat with a counsellor, and the increased empathy people seem to have for one another.

Enough for All Lever of Change - Physical and mental health
When an individual's physical, mental and social health are compromised, their chances of falling into poverty are increased. Calgarians require broad access to an integrated healthcare delivery system and services that are respectful of the diversity of personal situations.

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