



# **COMMUNITY COUNSELLING PROGRAM**

## **WAIT TIME DATA COLLECTION MANUAL**

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# INTRODUCTION

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Federal, provincial, and territorial governments are committed to working together to ensure that health care systems continue to respond to the evolving needs of Canadians. The Government of Northwest Territories has partnered with the Canadian Institute for Health Information (CIHI) in the development, collection, and reporting of pan-Canadian indicators that focus on measuring access to mental wellness and addictions recovery services. This aligns with mandates to deliver meaningful information that will support improvements in health systems and the overall health of Canadians.

This manual provides background and instructional information to support the NWT Community Counselling Program (CCP) staff with the wait time data collection and reporting.

# KEY TERMINOLOGY

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## WAIT TIME

The *wait time* is defined as the number of calendar days a service-user waited for ongoing counselling services (i.e. SC2.0: Step 7 or 8), from the date the initial referral was received to the date of the first mutually agreed upon appointment (regardless of whether the service-user cancels, reschedules, or does not attend the appointment).

## COUNSELLING

For the purpose of this wait time indicator, *counselling* is defined as therapy grounded in a psychological theory or evidence-based practice that uses a set of recognized communication skills by trained mental health professionals to promote positive growth, wellbeing, and mental health. Counselling must be planned to be provided over one or more scheduled sessions. Counselling sessions may be individual, group, or family-based. Counselling may be provided by any mode (i.e. in-person, phone, videoconferencing, online, etc.)

Examples of types of counselling included are dialectical behavioural therapy (DBT), cognitive behavioural therapy (CBT), brief low-intensity counselling, interpersonal therapy, solution-focused therapy, narrative therapy, psychoeducational counselling, psychodynamic therapy and mindfulness-based interventions.

Examples of types of counselling not included are crisis, formal drop-in or same-day services, self-help, peer led, clubhouses, residential care, day hospital/day programs, educational counselling, information sharing, specialized consultations, and general support.

## REFERRAL

A new referral is simply defined as any time a referral is generated, regardless of the referral source (self-referral, doctor's office, drop-in, emergency department, crisis services, etc.) or referral method (written, verbal, voicemail, etc.).

It is important to note that CIHI's wait time indicator refers to *ongoing* counselling sessions (i.e. SC2.0: Step 7 or 8). Formal drop-in and same-day services are not included UNLESS they are the source of referral for *ongoing* counselling. For example:

### SCENARIO:

A person accesses a same-day or drop-in service on May 10/20 with the intention of having a single counselling session. During this session, it is mutually decided that the person would benefit from ongoing counselling services (i.e. SC2.0: Step 7 or 8). A counselling session is scheduled for May 20/20. In this scenario, the referral date is May 10/20 and the first mutually agreed upon appointment date (for ongoing counselling services) is May 20/20. The wait time is 10 days.

If an individual is referred for ongoing counselling services but does not agree to a scheduled appointment, they will be excluded from the data collection. There cannot be a wait time if there is no stop time (i.e. no scheduled appointment).

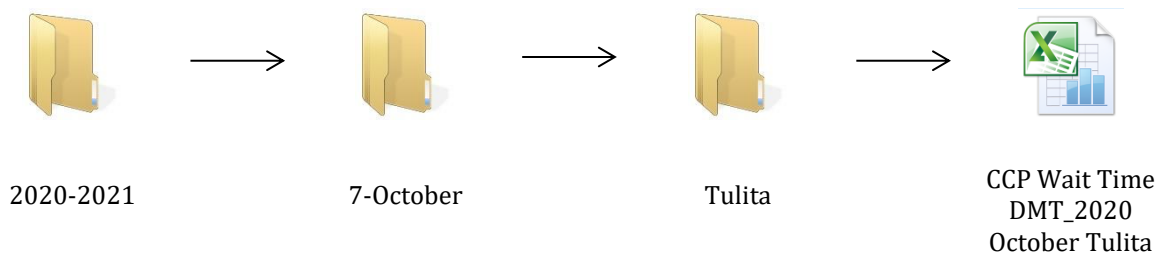
# DATA STORAGE

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Well organized filing systems are an important aspect of data storage, collection, and reporting. CPP Staff are encouraged to use the following filing system for consistency across the territory (to help to avoid data mix-ups):

1. Create a folder for the relevant fiscal year (e.g. 2020-2021).
2. Within the fiscal year folder, create separate folders for each month. Number the folders so that they sort chronologically rather than alphabetically (e.g. 1-April, 2-May, 3-June, etc.)
3. Within the month folders, create separate folders for each community where your CCP delivers services (e.g. Inuvik, Paulatuk, etc.)
4. Save the monthly wait time tracking sheets in the appropriate folders. Label the Excel files according to the following format: CCP Wait Time DMT\_2020 April Inuvik

## EXAMPLE:



# DATA COLLECTION

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This section provides instructions for completing the *CCP WAIT TIME DMT\_ Ver 2 (October 2020)* Excel file. The CCP wait times will be tracked monthly by community.

## YEAR (CELL A4)

*Year* refers to the calendar year that is being tracked in the current spreadsheet. Select the year from the dropdown menu in Cell B4. Please note that *Year* is based on the *Mutually Agreed Upon Appointment Date* (see Cell F9) not the *Referral Received Date*. In other words, the wait times are being tracked monthly by stop time not start time.

For example, a person is referred on December 18, 2019 for ongoing counselling in Fort Smith. Their mutually agreed upon appointment date is January 3, 2020. This wait time will be recorded in the *CCP Wait Time Data\_2020 January Fort Smith* Excel file. Within the spreadsheet, the Year (Cell B4) will be 2019 and the Month (Cell B5) will be January.

## MONTH (CELL A5)

*Month* refers to the month that is being tracked in the current spreadsheet. Select the month from the dropdown menu in Cell B5. Please note that *Month* is based on the *Mutually Agreed Upon Appointment Date* (see Cell F9) not the *Referral Received Date*. In other words, the wait times are being tracked monthly by stop time not start time.

For example, a person is referred on March 27, 2020 for ongoing counselling in Behchokò. Their mutually agreed upon appointment date is April 3, 2020. This wait time will be recorded in the *CCP Wait Time Data\_2020 April Behchokò* Excel file. Within the spreadsheet, the Year (Cell B4) will be 2020 and the Month (Cell B5) will be April.

## COMMUNITY (CELL A6)

*Community* refers to the location where the CCP services were received. Select the community from the dropdown menu in Cell B6.

## SERVICE-USER ID (CELL A9)

Wait time data is being collected at the individual-level. Type the service-user ID in the cells below Cell A9. Please ensure that the individual's first and/or last names are not reported, for privacy purposes. Please note that the same person can be listed multiple times (on separate rows) if multiple referrals have been generated for the individual (e.g. one referral for individual counselling and one referral for group counselling).

## SESSION TYPE (CELL B9)

Counselling sessions may be individual, group, or family-based. Select the appropriate session type from the dropdown menus below Cell B9.

### **CAVEAT:**

If a single referral was generated for ongoing family/couple counselling, then it would be recorded as one new referral (i.e. one row in the Excel file). If there's a primary service-user in the family/couple, please provide the primary service-user's *Gender* (Excel Column C) and *Age Group* (Excel Column D). If there is no primary service-user identified within the family/couple, please leave *Gender* (Excel Column C) and *Age Group* (Excel Column D) blank for that referral (i.e. that row in the Excel file). However, please note that there is no primary client in the *Comments* (Excel Column H). This will validate that the cells were intentionally left blank (rather than accidentally missed).

## DELIVERY MODE (CELL C9)

Counselling sessions may be delivered virtually or in-person. Select the appropriate delivery mode from the dropdown menus below Cell C9.

## GENDER (CELL D9)

*Gender* refers to the service-user's self-reported gender identity and/or gender expression. This is the individual's lived gender. Lived gender refers to how a person publicly presents their gender (which can include behaviour, outward appearances, chosen name, pronouns, etc.). A person's gender may change over time.

Male: this category includes persons whose current gender was reported as male (includes cisgender and transgender persons who reported being male).

Female: this category includes persons whose current gender was reported as female (includes cisgender and transgender persons who reported being female).

Gender Diverse: this category includes persons whose current gender was not reported as exclusively male or female. It includes persons who reported being unsure of their gender, persons who reported as both male and female, and persons who reported being neither male nor female.

Select the appropriate gender from the dropdown menus below Cell D9.



## AGE GROUP (CELL E9)

Service-users who are enrolled in adult programs will be considered adults, regardless of age. Similarly, service-users who are enrolled in child/youth programs will be considered children/youth, regardless of age. Where services are available to all ages, those 18 and older will be considered adults and those under the age of 18 will be considered children/youth.

Please select the appropriate age group from the dropdown menus below Cell E9.

## REFERRAL RECEIVED DATE (CELL F9)

The wait time clock begins the date the initial referral for ongoing counselling is received by the CCP, regardless of the referral source (self-referral, doctor's office, drop-in clinic, emergency department, crisis services, etc.) or referral method (written, verbal, voicemail, etc.).

Record the date the referral is received in the rows below Cell F9. Please use the following date format: DD-MMM-YY.

## MUTUALLY AGREED UPON APPOINTMENT DATE (CELL G9)

The wait time clock ends the date of the first mutually agreed upon appointment for ongoing counselling; regardless if the service-user cancels, reschedules, or does not show up for the appointment. The first mutually agreed upon appointment refers to the first appointment that is offered by the CCP and accepted by the service-user.

Record the first mutually agreed upon appointment date in the rows below Cell G9. Please use the following date format: DD-MMM-YY.

The wait time clock will continue past the first mutually agreed upon appointment date IF a *CCP Staff Member* (as opposed to the service-user) changes the scheduled appointment date. In this case, the wait time clock ends on the rescheduled appointment date. *Update the Mutually Agreed Upon Appointment Date* in the Excel file: replace the first mutually agreed upon appointment date with the rescheduled appointment date. The wait time will then be calculated according to the new stop time (i.e. the rescheduled appointment date).

### SCENARIOS:

A service-user agrees to attend a scheduled appointment on May 15/20.

1. The service-user later cancels the appointment. The wait time clock still ends on May 15/20 as the system was prepared to provide services on May 15/20.
2. The service-user later reschedules to attend counselling on an earlier date. The wait time clock still ends on May 15/20 as May 15/20 was the first appointment offered by the CCP and accepted by the service-user.

3. The service-user later reschedules to attend counselling on a later date. The wait time clock still ends on May 15/20 as the system was prepared to provide services on May 15/20.
4. The service-user is expected but does not attend the scheduled appointment on May 15/20. The wait time clock still ends on May 15/20 as the system was prepared to provide services on May 15/20.
5. The counsellor (or CCP staff) reschedules the appointment. The wait time clock ends on the rescheduled date.

## **DID SERVICE-USER ATTEND MUTUALLY AGREED UPON APPOINTMENT? (CELL H9)**

In other words, did the service-user attend the appointment that marked the end of the wait time clock? Select “Yes” if the service-user attended the mutually agreed upon appointment. Select “No” if the service-user cancelled, rescheduled, or did not show up for their mutually agreed upon appointment.

Please select the appropriate response (i.e. *Yes* or *No*) from the dropdown menus below Cell H9.

## **COMMENTS (CELL I9)**

Please provide any contextual information that may be relevant to the service-user’s wait time experience. This may include exceptional circumstances such as the service-user waiting for specialized care, waiting for a particular counsellor, delaying the start of counselling due to personal reasons, etc.

## **WAIT TIME (CELL J9)**

No action required. The Excel file automatically calculates the wait time based on the *Referral Received Date* and the *Mutually Agreed Upon Appointment Date*.

# DATA REPORTING

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Wait time data is to be submitted to the Northwest Territories Health and Social Services Authority (NTHSSA) on a monthly basis. The data is due on the 15<sup>th</sup> of the following month (e.g. wait time data for September 2020 is due on October 15, 2020).

Please send all completed *CCP WAIT TIME DMT* Excel files to [ccpmonthlstats@gov.nt.ca](mailto:ccpmonthlstats@gov.nt.ca).