

Triage Consulting Team - A Community Collaborative

Enabling Schools to Better Support their Students

White Rock-South Surrey (WRSS) Child and Youth Mental Health and Substance Use (CYMSHU)

Aim

Enabling school counsellors and principals to better support students through case based mental health assessments and interventions:

- Timely triage consultation.
- Guidance and an action plan for the best course of treatment; delivered in the context of the student's family, culture, community and school.



Problem

Elementary and secondary students are not getting timely access to mental health services, resulting in increased mental health symptoms, increased school absenteeism and increased hospitalization.



Context

Issues :

- Lack of proactive identification of students with mental health issues.
- Principals, school counsellors and families appear to have difficulty navigating the complex array of mental health resources in the community.
- No conduit for effective coordination and communication between school counsellors, community service providers and physicians.
- Lack of coordination of services results in reactive and isolated care.
- There appears to be a frustration with the long wait times for access to some services.



Jack's Story



- 8 years old
- Violent, disruptive behaviour
- Lack of impulse control
- Social withdrawal
- Skiping school
- Resistance to authority figures
- Anxiety

Many students are in similar situations like Jack, and Jack's mental and physical health will continue to spiral if something is not done...

Case Based Mental Health Model

Students have timely access to integrated mental health services and supports they need



Target – 90% of Students triaged within 3 weeks of referral

Referral / Intake - Target Population & Inclusion Criteria

- Triage referrals for children in K-12 from school counsellors within Local Health Area 202 and Surrey School District South Zone boundaries:
 - Mental health concerns
 - Behavioural issues
 - Social/emotional concerns reviewed by the school based team
 - Any acuity level (except acute crisis)
 - Student in the mental health system but declining fast while waiting for access
- School based team has exhausted all options without success
- Parent/guardian consent provided

Triage Consultation

- Triage Team includes a Child Psychiatrist, Family Doctors, Mental Health Clinicians and members from the School District.
- Triage Team provides a 30-minute consultation to school counsellors and/or principals.
- The school representative presents the student's case providing reason for referral, key issues, services and resources already accessed and specific concerns they would like guidance on.

Action Plan

- The Triage Team recommends services and resources based on the information at hand, and a practical action plan is drawn up.
- The school counsellor leaves the meeting with the action plan, and some new tools to support their student.
- With consent, the action plan is shared with the student's primary medical care practitioner.

Post Triage Follow-Up – Planning In progress

- Student/family experience and outcomes.
- School counsellor/principal experience.

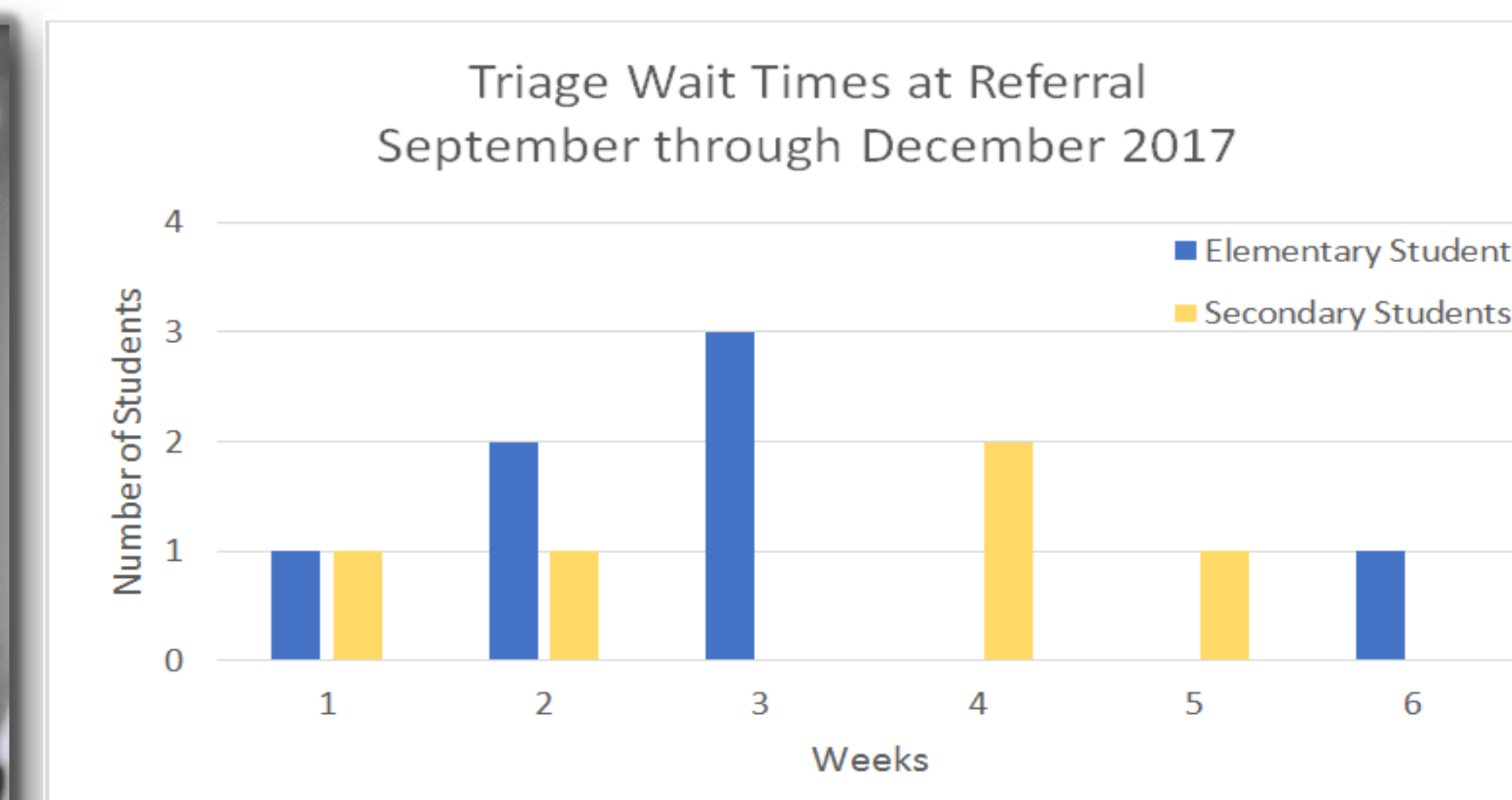
Results

21 Triage Consultations between April-June & Sept-Dec 2017

15 cases from Elementary Schools and 6 from Secondary Schools

Quantitative Outcomes:

- In practice, 66% of cases were triaged within three weeks of referral.



Qualitative Feedback:

- "Enables me to better support students and connect them to services early, before they are in crisis."
- "What would have taken a year to sort out, was addressed in 30 minutes!"
- "Triage consult reduced my feeling of isolation in supporting students and has also promoted my professional development."

Counsellor

Parent

- "I am so thankful for this process".

Triage Team

- "Improves communication between school counsellors, community services providers and physicians, resulting in better coordination of care and improved student/family experience."

Lessons Learned

- Elementary and secondary schools are overwhelmed by the need for mental health and behavioural support and services.
- Schools are eager to partner with community services, mental health and primary care providers to better support their students.



- School counsellors and principals are well positioned to support students but need guidance how to navigate mental health services.
- There is significant value to school representatives contributing to the development of the student action plan.
- Consult times and locations must be scheduled to best accommodate school counsellor schedules.
- Complex cases exist at both elementary and secondary level.
- Based on mock trial consults, it was not possible to adequately support student/family participation within a 30 minute consultation.

Acknowledgements

Triage Project Team:

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