

**Marketing and Communications  
Environmental Scan Report  
of  
Community Leaders & Client Stakeholders**

**For**



**February 2018**

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## Introduction

Hellingman Communications was retained by Quest CHC Marketing and Communications Work Group to conduct an environmental scan of a cross-section of key community leader stakeholders, slightly more than half of whom hold leadership positions with local health and social service agencies. The purpose of the project was to obtain:

- a better understanding of the nature of Quest CHC's current relationships with stakeholders
- a better understanding of the interests of stakeholders, and how Quest can help further those interests
- Baseline data of the awareness levels and stakeholder perceptions of Quest as a model and of the people it supports.

A questionnaire was developed with input from the Executive Director of Quest and the members of the Board's Marketing and Communications Working Group

A list of 35 possible stakeholders to be surveyed was developed by the Executive Director, and letters sent to each of these individuals, requesting their participation. Twenty-five of the 35 stakeholders who received letters participated. These were conducted on October 2, 3 and 6. Each survey was conducted over the telephone by Tricia Hellingman, and lasted an average of 15 minutes. Participants were assured that their aggregated responses would be shared with the Executive Director and the board at Quest, with individual responses kept confidential.

A similar survey of a cross section of Quest clients was also conducted. Again, a questionnaire for this stakeholder group was developed with input from the Marketing and Communications Work Group. Ten in-person interviews were conducted with members of Quest's Client Advisory Committee on October 6.

The results of the Environmental Scan are summarized on pages two through fifteen. The surveys were designed to be qualitative not quantitative. The information gathered is intended to provide a snapshot of perceptions and opinions from a limited cross section of Quest's major stakeholders.

Some of participants in the Community Leader stakeholder group responded to several of the questions by answering "Don't know." While these responses are not contained in the summary document, this lack of knowledge/understanding regarding Quest and our role in the community will certainly be taken into account when developing our Marketing and Communications Plan.

## Summary of Findings

### COMMUNITY LEADER STAKEHOLDERS

**Importance of Quest CHC** – The community leaders surveyed overwhelmingly indicated that they believed that Quest’s services were very valuable to the community, with 88% scoring that importance as a least an 8 out of a total score of 10. The lowest score given to this question was a 7 out of 10. Two people felt they could not provide any score.

After the survey was completed, when community leaders were again asked about their impressions of Quest’s value to the community, 100% scored this at least an 8 out of 10 with all 25 people surveyed answering this question.

**Awareness of Quest CHC** – Prior to being contacted by the survey 80% of respondents indicated they were aware of Quest “a lot,” while 20% said they were aware of the organization “somewhat,” a little bit” or “not at all.”

As for the people who Quest serves, the percentages of respondents who said they were aware “a lot” or “somewhat” were:

- people who suffer from mental health and/or addiction issues 84%
- people who are on the street, such as the homeless or sex trade workers 76%
- at risk children, youth and families 80%
- isolated seniors 60%
- the LGBTQ population 84%
- migrant agricultural workers 60%

In asking about their awareness of the services that Quest offers, the percentages of respondents who said they were aware “a lot” or “somewhat” were:

- primary health care services 84%
- support groups for such things as chronic pain self management, quitting smoking, and learning life coping skills. 60%
- its Rainbow Niagara Program to provide support and counselling to the LGBTQ community in Niagara. 68%
- its dental program 68%
- its chiropractic program 40%

In response to other questions about their knowledge about Quest:

- 20% Are aware that Quest is the third largest provider of transgender primary health care services in Canada
- 68% Are aware that a significant amount Quest’s work involves reducing Emergency Department visits, by providing services to people who would otherwise frequently access their care through hospital ERs
- 88% Know that Quest’s team includes people from a broad range of disciplines – from family physicians, to nurse practitioners, registered nurses, dentists, chiropractors, dieticians, social workers, therapists and others

- 56% Know there are people in some of these disciplines who volunteer their time and expertise to help Quest’s clients
- 68% Are aware that Quest provides its services to its clients at no charge if those people do not have an Ontario Health Card
- 68% Know that people can come directly to Quest’s services, and don’t need a referral from a family doctor or other health or social services professional
- 96% Know that Quest works with other community health providers and social service agencies to provide services, and to also make referrals for services that Quest does not offer
- 44% Know that Quest provides space for other organizations to offer services to Quest clients – such as chiropody and geriatric mental health services
- 80% Know that Quest receives funding from the Ontario Ministry of Health, through the Local Health Integration Network
- 64% Know that Quest also relies on donations from private individuals, corporations and foundations to help support its programs

Responses to the questions asking about how Quest might build stronger relationships, enhance its impacts in the community, etc. all fell into a few broad categories.

Many respondents commended Quest for the excellent work it is doing. Most also mentioned the need for Quest to increase communications and community awareness amongst its various stakeholders, and a few indicated the need for more and better collaboration with other providers of local health and social service organizations.

Additional suggestions were made about how Quest can enhance its leadership, and should advocate for more government funding and engage in community fund raising. The questions and summarized responses/themes are provided below.

1. Can you describe the ways in which Quest can build stronger relationships with organizations such as yours?

#### **General Positive Comments**

- *Quest is doing all the right things in reaching out and partnering with other organizations. Quest does exemplary outreach work in partnership with other organizations. Bring the community into events such as the BBQ. Coletta is generous in providing meeting space.*
- *Quest is already doing that but it could be more seamless.*
- *Continue leadership role in advocating for clients and increase investments in services.*
- *Our relationship is pretty strong now. They do for our people what we can’t do.*
- *Quest is very collaborative now.*

#### **Increase Awareness/Communications**

- *It’s all about awareness, but in different ways; not just the website. Quest is a “best kept secret.” It really needs to get the word out – e.g. social awareness.*
- *Speakers can come to our organization.*

- *People are unaware outside St. Catharines. Quest needs more outreach and public awareness.*
- *Push notifications of programs - for example, I did not know about seniors' services – even if they are not new programs, and how they can be accessed.*
- *Do communications with our organization to seek volunteers. Speak at different meetings to bring awareness (e.g. Rotary and Lions Club). Get news stories in the media. Give out statistics on the number of people served in different programs.*
- *There needs to be more frequent information sessions from Quest with front line staff of other agencies to provide constant reminders of what Quest does.*

#### **Increase Collaboration**

- *Collaborate with existing organizations that offer similar services –Aligning what government is trying to achieve with what Quest is trying to achieve. There are strong relationships already.*
  - *Through collaborative protocols or agreements. Stronger links with staff coming out to shelters – e.g. outreach workers – for the homeless.*
  - *We would like to continue to develop partnerships further at the strategic and operational level to serve our mutual clients.*
  - *The relationship is quite strong now. But more coordination is needed with the services Quest offers and those we offer .*
2. If I was to ask you for one specific recommendation that would help Quest build or expand its impact within the community what would it be?

#### **Raise Awareness in the Community**

- *Use the media to raise awareness of the services it provides. There's a lot of expertise – use it to put in the local media to raise awareness.*
- *Market what they do to have a larger profile.*
- *I didn't know a lot about Quest. It needs to be getting messages out*
- *There needs to be more awareness e.g. of migrant workers, and other partnerships.*
- *More frequent information sessions from Quest with front-line staff of other agencies.*
- *More outreach to the community.*
- *Provide concise summaries of each service with real-life examples of impacts.*

#### **Raise Awareness with Local Governments**

- *Perhaps raising awareness at municipal councils – St. Catharines and Regional council levels. For example, through meetings and getting on their radar.*
- *Build more bridges into other municipalities.*
- *Present to different councils e.g. municipal councils.*

#### **Increase Collaboration**

- *A bit more integration with people on the front lines of Quest with the front lines of other organizations.*
- *Increase partnerships.*

#### **Assume a Leadership Role**

- *Take a leadership role in the formation of the Queenston Street Neighbourhood Association.*
- *Quest needs to take on a leadership role in terms of driving opportunities - in driving innovative services*
- *Consider developing an alternate site or a mobile unit to get closer to the clients Quest is serving.*

3. What do you think is the biggest issue holding Quest back from achieving greater success in delivering its mandate within the community?

**No issues/Positive Comments**

- *No issues.*
- *Their reputation is gold.*
- *Nothing.*

**Raise Awareness**

- *Needs to continue to spread the word about the unique, vulnerable population that Quest serves.*
- *Don't know - I was unaware of Quest. I looked it up online before this survey.*
- *People need to see walking in as not a step down or step back.*

**Increase Resources**

- *Resources. Quest has a broad mandate and can benefit from additional resources e.g. through fund raising.*
- *Quest has become a neighbourhood service provider. It may need satellite locations– to replicate the model but maybe not the size. Clients with limited mobility must make their way to Quest at its location.*
- *Funding – long wait lists due to lack of funding.*
- *Funding. The need outweighs the funding and services that are funded outside the ministry's funding, e.g. dental for adults.*
- *Money and going after grants, etc. The government should be helping more.*
- *Funding from the province.*
- *Volume, and there are challenges for everyone. A lack of mental health and addictions resources. No one is taking charge of the opioid crisis. Mental health is totally out of control with not enough funding in the sector.*
- *Access to funds.*

**Enhance Communication/Leadership**

- *More direct communications with organizations; put their link on websites.*
- *Think about where the province is going re integration and innovation*

4. What advice might you have for Quest in overcoming this issue?

**Increase Awareness**

- *Spread the word with politicians.*
- *I don't really know enough, but they do really great work.*
- *Increase awareness to businesses that can help with funding and target high income earners for fund raising.*
- *Quest needs stronger brand recognition.*

**Lobby for More Funds & Engage in Fund Raising**

- *Explore voluntary donations. Beef up that aspect of solicitation and seek funds from other sources.*
- *Keep applying for funds and responding to proposals. The BBQ shows they are doing a good job re. the stigma.*

- *Advocate with the government about the services and supports required, and understand the policy changes that need to happen.*
- *Facility tours for politicians in Toronto and Ottawa so they can see it (Quest) working. There is a big impact when you walk into their waiting room and see the staff and volunteers working.*
- *Partner with other agencies to lobby for more funding.*

#### **Increase Collaboration and Enhance Leadership**

- *Speak up and continue to be a leader. Approach funders with ideas.*
  - *All organizations in the sector need to come together more often.*
  - *Identify maybe two other areas of the community and begin to expand services and reach.*
5. Do you have any advice on how Quest might do a better job at communicating how its services benefit marginalized people in our society, and in having the community recognize those benefits?

#### **Positive Comments**

- *People who are accessing services are satisfied. They don't need to do more.*
- *I think they're winning now. If you are doing a good job, you're busy. I think everybody – at the tables I sit at – knows what they are doing, and that they're doing a good job.*

#### **Increase Awareness**

- *Social media, news media and through the organization I work for.*
- *They're doing a fine job with the BBQ, and having people from the LHIN, etc. speak. Again, meet with municipalities.*
- *Maybe a subcommittee of the board can do community outreach or fund raising.*
- *Share outcomes; communicate the change that has occurred with clients through their own stories.*
- *Organize things such as events where Quest can have an opportunity to tell its story. Do networking and make it fun.*
- *An open house for stakeholders*
- *Be involved at the local level. Have a booth at events and at markets.*
- *Get in front of other boards e.g. board to board events. Get to staff leaders and present at grand rounds. Ask to come to speak to agency staff. Quest needs both a top town and bottom up awareness.*
- *Target where people congregate who aren't Quest clients. Advertise outside its normal scope.*
- *More public awareness and education, but Quest is pretty well connected and integrated with other service providers. They are always at the table.*
- *Quest needs to consider communications and a media relations plan.*
  - *A newsletter, e-blasts, social media presence, newspaper articles, a blog, etc. highlighting client stories.*

#### **Increase Collaboration**

- *Develop more partnerships with other local agencies in providing services.*
6. In your opinion is there anything Quest should do - or do better - in the services it provides, or the way it delivers those services?

#### **Positive Comments**

- *I think they're doing a fine job, given the resources they have. I don't think there is anything else.*



- *No, I think they're doing a great job in collaborating.*
- *They are doing what they can now with the people they have. Quest is doing an awesome job.*
- *No, Quest is absolutely outstanding.*
- *No, I think they're magnificent now.*

#### **More Collaboration and Review Resource Allocation**

- *The public needs to know how successful they are – share data and outcomes*
  - *Longer hours and be more nimble.*
  - *"Mission, vision and value should align with core services."*
  - *Work in partnership with agencies offering similar services*
  - *Working with primary care, especially with solo practitioners*
  - *There are challenges with funding issues and restrictions. We need to bend the rules for the best interests of the people we serve.*
7. Is there anything you'd like to know about Quest that I haven't touched on in this survey?

#### **Positive Comments**

- *Quest is a really active, community-minded and client-focused organization with strong leadership at the management and board levels.*
- *No but I am glad that Quest is doing this survey.*
- *No, I'm pretty familiar with Quest. They are very important and are in the right location in that neighbourhood, close to the centre of the city.*

#### **Miscellaneous**

- *Volunteer opportunities for students; they really benefit.*
  - *I'd like more information about opportunities to create intersections with child & youth services*
  - *I am curious about why this survey. Quest is well known in the community. They are fulfilling their mandate and the people who need to know do know about it.*
  - *I want to know about Indigenous populations.*
  - *No, but I didn't know about isolated seniors or the chiropractic service before this survey.*
  - *I would like a greater understanding of the gaps in funding and how the community is making an investment - through in-kind and financial etc. donations.*
8. Do you have any other thoughts you'd like to share?

#### **Positive Comments**

- *Quest has a tremendous team that does great work.*
- *I wish them well. They are an important service provider.*
- *Quest is responsive and a great partner. They have a collaborative case management model and a good, informative web site.*
- *It's great that Quest is doing this survey. I'm proud that there's an organization like this that is taking care of those less fortunate.*
- *Their menu today isn't what it was five years ago. They are nimble enough in their structure as the community morphs to be at the right place at the right time – e.g. the opioid crisis. To me that's magic.*
- *No, I'm pretty familiar with Quest. It's very important that they are in the right location in that neighbourhood – close to the centre of the city.*

### **Miscellaneous**

- *No, I think they're really great and collaborative, but need to get their message out.*
- *As a community member I'm not as familiar in my role about accessing their services.*
- *CHCs are important in the community. There needs to be a better understanding of those of us on the front lines.*
- *I am interested in synergies. We have counsellors for mental health.*
- *I'd love to see them increase their mandate outside their physical space. E.g. for opioids, a health promotion mobile unit or popup.*

## Summary of Findings

### CLIENT STAKEHOLDERS

The client group surveyed comprised 10 members of Quest CHC’s Client Advisory Committee. It can be assumed that these individuals may have a greater knowledge of the organization than other Quest clients, as a result of their service on this committee.

**Importance of Quest CHC** – The client group surveyed indicated that they believed that Quest’s services were extremely valuable to the community, with 100% scoring that importance as a least an 8 out of a total score of 10. The lowest score given to this question was 8 out of 10.

After the survey was completed, when the clients were again asked about their impressions of Quest’s value to the community, again 100% of them scored this question at least 8 out of 10.

As for the people who Quest serves, the percentages of respondents who said they were aware “a lot” or “somewhat” were:

- people who suffer from mental health and/or addiction issues 100%
- people who are on the street, such as the homeless or sex trade workers 100%
- at risk children, youth and families 80%
- isolated seniors 100%
- the LGBTQ population 100%
- migrant agricultural workers 100%

In asking about their awareness of the services that Quest offers, the percentages of respondents who said they were aware “a lot” or “somewhat” were:

- primary health care services 100%
- support groups for such things as chronic pain self management, quitting smoking, and learning life coping skills. 100%
- its Rainbow Niagara Program to provide support and counselling to the LGBTQ community in Niagara. 80%
- its dental program 70%
- its chiropractic program 100%

In response to other questions about their knowledge about Quest:

- 100% Know that Quest’s team includes people from a broad range of disciplines – from family physicians, to nurse practitioners, registered nurses, dentists, chiropractors, dieticians, social workers, therapists and others
- 70% Know there are people in some of these disciplines who volunteer their time and expertise to help Quest’s clients
- 50% Are aware that Quest provides its services to its clients at no charge if those people do not have an Ontario Health Card
- 100% Know that people can come directly to Quest’s services, and don’t need a referral from a family doctor or other health or social services professional

- 90% Know that Quest works with other community health providers and social service agencies to provide services, and to also make referrals for services that Quest does not offer

### Comments About Quest

Many of the clients surveyed indicated that the perceived shortage of health professionals, especially physicians, is the biggest issues holding Quest back from achieving greater success in serving its clients.

The clients surveyed were uniformly effusive in their praise of Quest and their appreciation for the services the organization provides. Comments included:

- “Quest has been a life saver.”
- “I think they’re pretty fantastic. They are very non-judgemental; they’ve saved my life.”
- “I am really grateful Quest is here. I was at the end of my rope.”
- “My experience with staff and the services has had a powerful impact on my life. They’re absolutely wonderful here.”
- “Quest was like my lifeline - with support and group counselling.”
- “I wouldn’t be here without Quest. I’m thrilled with the place.”

When asked about suggestions for improvements, responses ranged from providing better client follow up, to providing a consistency of counsellors seen by clients, offering evening and weekend services, and addressing the wait list for services.

#### 1. What is the single most important benefit Quest provides to the people it serves?

- *Services of doctors or nurse practitioners*
- *More medical services.*
- *One-stop shopping for all health needs.*
- *Mental health and specifically the DBT therapy and diabetes/nutrition groups.*
- *The availability of services; Quest is unbiased and promotes inclusion.*
- *Support.*
- *They are caring to an extreme.*
- *The team of professionals that Quest has – doctors, nurse practitioners, dieticians, chiropractors, etc.*
- *Reliable medical treatment – getting a family doctor.*
- *They help everybody.*

#### 2. Can you describe the ways in which Quest can build stronger relationships with the people Quest serves?

- *More doctors or nurse practitioners*
- *No, I can’t think of anything.*
- *There’s not much more they could do.*
- *I don’t know.*
- *Increasing the number of practitioners, especially doctors.*
- *Consistency of counsellors.*
- *I don’t think so.*
- *I think they do a really terrific job. Strengthen relationships with St. Catharines Hospital’s mental health services.*

3. If I was to ask you for one specific recommendation that would help Quest strengthen the outcomes it achieves for the people it serves, what would it be?
- *More family doctors*
  - *More doctors*
  - *I think they do it all.*
  - *More follow up, for example with medical appointments.*
  - *More funding to do more. There's a waiting list and people can't get in now.*
  - *More doctors.*
  - *Not sure.*
  - *They can incorporate more Canadian Mental Health re. the hotline and crisis centres.*
4. What do you think is the biggest issue holding Quest back from achieving greater success in serving its clients?
- *Lack of family doctors, and public relations and advertising. A lot of people don't know what Quest is; I can't think of anything*
  - *They're not taking new patients*
  - *It's not just learning something new, but applying it.*
  - *The availability of evening and weekend programming.*
  - *Promote Quest more in the community and secure more funding.*
  - *Professional staff – including doctors – are not paid enough.*
  - *Funding. Also getting volunteers for professional services.*
  - *Money – funding.*
5. What advice might you have for Quest in overcoming this issue?
- *More walk-in signage and advertising in the building.*
  - *More follow-up sessions.*
  - *More evening and weekend programming.*
  - *Hire someone to promote the organization.*
  - *Get more information out to the community.*
  - *At the end of every meeting, there should be five minutes to be clear on what Quest will do next and what the client needs to do next, versus re-visiting the same thing every couple of weeks.*
  - *Keep showing that they're doing a god job.*
6. Do you have any advice on how Quest might do a better job at reaching out to potential clients?
- *Quest needs to be open to a greater demographic.*
  - *They are doing a good job already.*
  - *More community education.*
  - *More community awareness.*
  - *Provide literature (for example a pamphlet or information session) for current clients to use in their network.*
  - *Have a person whose job it is to be on the street – available to talk to street people or people in hospital in need.*
  - *Expand its facility. Quest cannot handle the volume now.*
  - *I think they're doing a pretty good job now.*

- *I think they are pretty visible now. More advertising but I don't think they can take any more clients. I learned about Quest through word of mouth.*
7. In your opinion is there anything Quest should do - or do better - in the services it provides, or the way it delivers those services?
- *No.*
  - *I don't think there's anything they could do better, but there could be more welcoming intake by some Quest intake workers.*
  - *Their services are excellent, but nothing is offered in the evenings. More doctors and therapists on staff.*
  - *I can't think of anything.*
  - *No I think they're doing a good job.*
  - *Not have a waiting list.*
  - *None that I can think of.*
8. Is there anything Quest is doing that it should not be doing?
- *No, I think they do an outstanding job.*
  - *I can't think of anything.*
  - *I don't think so.*
  - *No.*
  - *No.*
  - *No.*
  - *Not really.*
  - *No, keep what they have now.*
  - *No.*
  - *No.*
9. Is there anything you'd like to know about Quest that I haven't touched on in this survey?
- *No, I can't think of anything*
  - *No, I'm learning something new every day.*
  - *If there's a need for something at Quest, are there funds or should there be fund raising?*
  - *Who funds Quest? I would like to know.*
10. Do you have any other thoughts you'd like to share?
- *Quest has been a life saver.*
  - *I think they're pretty fantastic. They are very non-judgemental; they've saved my life.*
  - *I am really grateful Quest is here. I was at the end of my rope.*
  - *My experience with staff and the services has had a powerful impact on my life. They're absolutely wonderful here.*
  - *Quest was like my lifeline - with support and group counselling.*
  - *No, I'm quite happy with them. They've been there with everything I need.*
  - *I just think this is a great service. I went for five years without a family doctor because I didn't know about Quest.*
  - *Thank you. I wouldn't be here without Quest. I'm thrilled with the place.*

- *I do appreciate them. Here I feel important, and that I'm a person and not a number.*
- *The staff are fantastic – they bend over backwards for you. Doing this survey is great, and Quest needs to do follow-up surveys.*