

Nine Circles Client Services Survey – 2011

PART I – SURVEY RESULTS

INTRODUCTION

The goal/theme of the client survey was to gather feedback from clients in these areas:

- Accessibility
- Communication
- Safety

The survey ran from: February 22nd to March 31st, 2011

Two peer research assistants were hired to assist the research & evaluation coordinator in the promotion and dissemination of the survey, and also to assist any clients who may have vision, literacy or dexterity challenges in filling out the survey.

134 surveys were filled out:

- 23 (17%) were filled out online
- 111 (83%) were filled out as paper copies

DEMOGRAPHICS

- The majority (32%) of respondents have been coming to Nine Circles for 1 – 5 years
- The sample was 61% male
- Most (37%) respondents were between 45 – 50 years of age
- The majority (46%) of respondents identified as Aboriginal/First Nations
- Most (49%) respondents identified as heterosexual

APPOINTMENT ATTENDANCE

To help clients with attending appointments, clients were asked to list some of the reasons they may miss appointments at Nine Circles. Clients identified the following (organized into themes):

- Transportation/the distance from home
- Illness or feeling tired
- Other responsibilities or appointments to attend to
- The weather
- Oversleeping/ forgetting
- Substance use/hangover

SAFETY, PRIVACY & COMMUNICATION

84% specified they feel Nine Circles staff listens to them

79% feel Nine Circles keeps their information private

On average, 68% of clients indicated they feel “comfortable” or “very comfortable” using Nine Circles programs

72% answered “no” when asked if they’ve felt uncomfortable at Nine Circles during the past year

Client-Identified Reasons for Feeling Uncomfortable

Respondents who indicated they had felt uncomfortable while at Nine Circles sometime during the past year, where asked to describe the situation. The following themes were identified:

- Clients or staff not treating others according to the Nine Circles Code of Conduct (e.g. gossip, volume/tone of voice, choice of language)
- Feeling judged or misunderstood as a person because of appearance, ethnicity, lifestyle/life choices, etc.
- Challenges in communicating with, and/or approaching staff
- Service providers not validating alternative healing practices
- HIV status or other medical conditions being disclosed by others
- During co-ed groups and activities

AWARENESS OF PROGRAMMING & SERVICES

This section of the survey sought to learn the ways clients find out about programming at Nine Circles. Also, to identify ways for Nine Circles to better promote programs and services to our clients:

How clients find out about **services** at Nine Circles:

- #1 Nine Circles staff (in person or clients call in) (53%)
- #2 Posters/handouts at Nine Circles (52%)
- #3 Other Nine Circles clients/"word on the street" (41%)
- #4 Nine Circles "Activity Schedule" (17%)
- #5 At another organization (10%)
- #6 Emails from Nine Circles (8%)
- #7 Nine Circles website (6%)
- #8 Radio ads** (1%)

** Nine Circles has not run radio advertisements promoting the organization itself, but have participated in advertisements promoting sexual health testing campaigns.

How clients find out about **events and workshops** at Nine Circles:

- #1 Posters/handouts at Nine Circles (56%)
- #2 Nine Circles staff (in person or clients call in) (50%)
- #3 Other Nine Circles clients/"word on the street" (41%)
- #4 Nine Circles "Activity Schedule" (28%)
- #5 At another organization (12%)
- #6 Emails from Nine Circles (8%)
- #7 Nine Circles website (8%)
- #8 Don't know how to find out (4%)

Client suggestions on some **other ways we should let clients know what's happening at Nine Circles:**

- A newsletter
- Facebook and Twitter
- Hand out a monthly calendar
- Send emails to clients
- Email other organizations about what's going on at Nine Circles
- Advertise/put up posters and handouts at places around the city

Note: several of these strategies are currently, or have recently been put into place. To find out how they can keep updated on upcoming workshops, groups and events, clients can:

- Call Nine Circles (940-6000)
- Ask the front desk or medical reception
- Talk to Tania or Sané at Nine Circles
- Ask their Nine Circles care provider
- Go to ninecircles.ca (look for the event calendar)

ACCESS TO HELP & SERVICES

To assess client's ability to access services (at Nine Circles and in the community), clients were asked, if (during the past year) there was a time when Nine Circles **could not** get them the help or service they asked for:

- 75% answered "no"
- 25% answered "yes"

Those who indicated they **did not** get the help or service they needed, were asked to describe the situation. The following items/times they could not get help were identified:

- Transportation/travel fare
- Funds or subsidies for items for daily living (utilities, clothing, nutritional supplements)
- Food bank/emergency food
- Information for homeless persons
- PHA Assistance Fund
- Physical pain
- No computer access (because there was a group session in the Gathering Place)
- Staff were busy/already had appointments with other clients
- Nine Circles was temporarily out of some safer sex supplies

HELPING CLIENTS TO STAY HEALTHY

78% of respondents indicated that Nine Circles helps them learn ways to stay healthy

CLIENT-CENTERED CARE

Client-centered care is one of Nine Circles core principles; we encourage and support clients to be involved in decisions about their care together with their service providers.

Most respondents indicated they would feel “comfortable” or “very comfortable” addressing the following items with their Nine Circles care providers. On average, 74% of clients answered “comfortable” or “very comfortable” with the statements below:

- I’d like you to explain the issue we’re meeting about
- What do I need to do about this issue?
- Why do I need to do this?
- What are my other choices?
- What will you do to help me?
- How will you keep me updated?
- If what we do doesn’t help, what are my options?
- I’ve decided I don’t want to work on this issue anymore

NEW IDEAS

To identify gaps in programming, respondents were asked to comment on groups/services they would like to see at Nine Circles. Respondents identified the following (which are organized into categories of availability):

Suggestions that are currently offered at Nine Circles:

- Help with housing
- Volunteer opportunities
- Information about attending classes/school
- Couples counselling
- Sharing Circles

Suggestions that are currently being offered at partner agencies:

- Creative projects*
- Sports/a gym
- PHA Caucus
- Laundry facilities
- Christmas hampers
- Pastoral care
- Public speaking
- Drop-in centre/drop-in time**

*Occasionally there are creative projects in the Gathering Place at Nine Circles. Clients can check the calendar of events, or ask a staff member for dates and times.

**Nine Circles periodically offers a drop-in time called Gathering Time. Clients can check the calendar of events, or ask a staff member for dates and times.

Suggestions we are not currently offering:

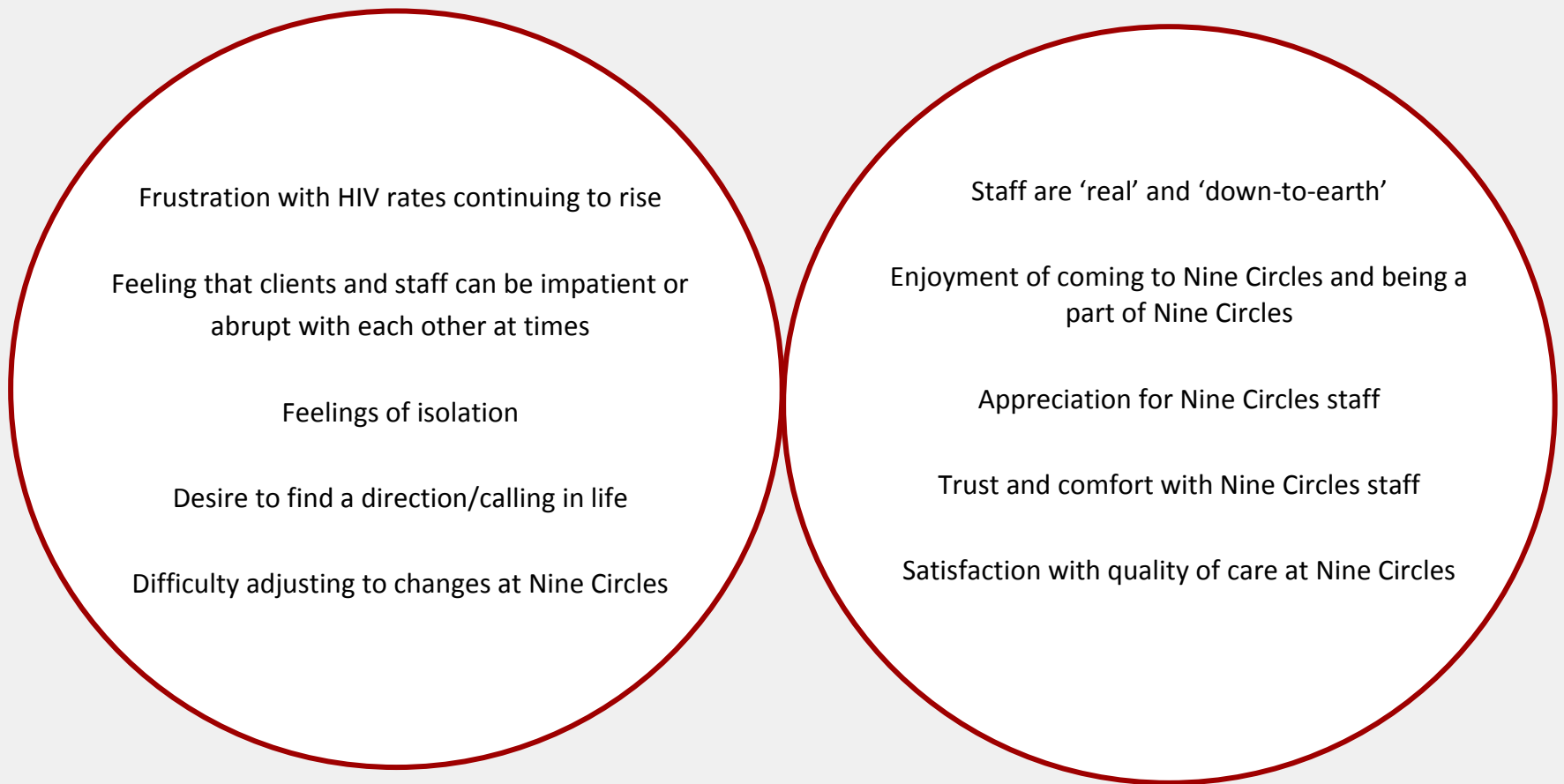
- Peer counselling/client one-on-one support program
- Safe injection room
- Transportation services
- Access to the Nine Circles food bank for hepatitis C clients
- Alternative medicine (acupuncture, chiropractic, herbalist, etc.)

Suggestions we are working on, or may be able to provide in the future:

- Income tax preparation
- Programming/activities for women and transgender women
- More opportunities to socialize, connect, and communicate with each other
- A peer/client AIDS Walk planning committee
- Men’s support group
- More peers in staff/volunteer positions
- Groups/events in the evenings
- Info sessions about HIV for children and family of clients
- A more interactive/exciting website
- An annual Nine Circles picnic or barbeque
- A list of places that PHAs can go to get dental work, massage, manicures, pedicures, etc.

CLIENT COMMENTS

Clients were asked to provide any additional comments they had. The following themes emerged:



CONCLUSIONS & FUTURE DIRECTIONS

The results of the survey indicate that overall:

- Clients provided positive feedback regarding care and services at Nine Circles
- Clients are receiving the services they need
- There are several options in the community for desired complimentary programming
- Clients can communicate and discuss care plans with service providers
- Clients are comfortable coming to, and being at Nine Circles
- There are some client concerns with comfort, conduct, and interaction with staff and other clients

Nine Circles staff, Coordinators and Management Team will review the results as a part of program planning.

Nine Circles will continue to conduct an annual survey as well as other evaluation activities to gather client feedback on programming and client care*.

*As resources and staffing allow.

PART II – CLIENT PRESENTATION & FEEDBACK SESSION

The survey results and feedback session was held at Nine Circles on October 4th, 2011; 12 clients and 4 staff (including the Nine Circles Executive Director) attended. The results of the survey were presented and attendees were asked to provide any comments, feedback, and questions they may have. The conversation that emerged is organized into the themes below.

APPOINTMENT ATTENDANCE

The group discussed timeframes around getting an appointment when you want one, and no-shows and use of clinician time. What barriers to attendance may exist beyond those presented? Ideas/suggestions on how we can help individuals in this area?:

Rescheduling of Appointments

- Clients expressed that sometimes appointments that are supposed to be rescheduled are not rescheduled, or the client is not informed about the new appointment.

Appointment Reminders

- Clients articulated the usefulness of appointment reminder cards; clients expressed these cards are not always provided.

A.M./P.M. Issues

- A.M. or P.M. appointments should be based on client availability, preference, and life situation (dealing with side-effects of medication, arranging child care, not being a “morning person”), rather than fitting clients into a pre-determined schedule.

Waiting

- Clients expressed frustration with wait times when seeing their provider(s). As an example: sometimes clients are late, but they are seen by a clinician anyways. Then in turn, the next client has to wait to be seen, even though they were on time or early.

SPACE & ENVIRONMENT

Stigma

- Clients expressed this is an issue and a barrier to accessing services (e.g. being seen going into an “HIV place”).
- Participants vocalized that Nine Circles is generally understood to be “only for HIV”, and sometimes staff deliver that message in public spaces. People who are not HIV positive people feel they cannot attend programming and events.

Signage

- Clients suggested a “Welcome” at the building entrance(s)

Unique nature of Nine Circles

- Participants discussed the Round Room and the HeartSong Retreat as areas for Nine Circles to be proud of (in comparison to other services across Canada).

PROGRAMMING & SUPPORT

Promoting the range of Nine Circles services

- Nine Circles should highlight and promote services and activities that are open to the whole community.
- Let HIV be part of what we do in public communications, but also highlight the other aspects of what we do.
- Consider signage out front that promotes public services in sexual health prevention and education.
- Posters up around the building listing the services and groups offered at Nine Circles, including brief descriptions of each.

Peer-to-Peer support

- Peer support programming would build comfort and trust.
- Peer mentor programs in British Columbia were recommended as a model to consider, as well as phone-based peer-to-peer supports.
- Participants expressed concern that the desire for peer-to-peer efforts is long standing at Nine Circles; there is confusion and frustration with lack of movement on this issue.

Cultural Support

- Participants wished to know how they could access meeting with Aboriginal Elders and traditional healing and medicines; clients were encouraged to connect with the Nine Circles cultural support worker for assistance with these items.

PRIVACY

Electronic Medical Record (EMR)

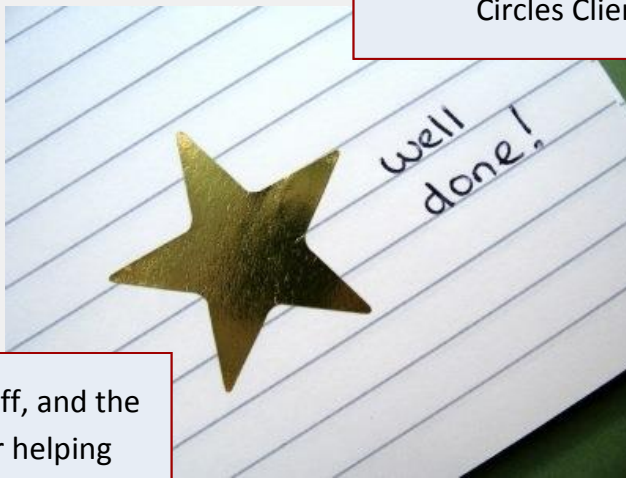
- Participants had many questions about what information, how much information, the type of information that goes into their EMR, as well as how long information is kept.
- Moreover, participants had questions on how much of historical/past information was transferred from paper charts into EMR.
- Participants had questions regarding the difference between our EMR and the Provincial Electronic Health Record (EHR).

OTHER AREAS OF DISCUSSION

- Clients were encouraged to participate in AIDS Walk planning and how that could help increase PHA participation in the walk (i.e. word of mouth).
- Participants recommended we look at Red Road Map from Vancouver (an online resource) and Sask Street Signs from Saskatoon (an online resource) as models for how to effectively communicate resources available in the broader community.
- Clients suggested a paid peer or volunteer opportunity – an individual who follows up with agencies who receive our promotional information to make sure they actually post and promote it.
- Participants offered ideas on other agencies that could be called on to promote HIV-specific and broader programming.
- Dental dams can be purchased in a business card size – recommended as an alternative to our current supply of larger ones.

THE END

Thank you for your interest in the 2011 Nine Circles Client Services Survey!



Thank you to clients, staff, and the research assistants for helping make the survey a success.

This summary of the results, and the full report will also be available online at ninecircles.ca

If you have any questions about the Client Services Survey ask for, or call Tina at 940-6000

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