

Chapter 9

Corrections, Policing and Public Safety—Monitoring the Community Safety and Well-Being Initiative

1.0 MAIN POINTS

In 2017, the Ministry of Corrections, Policing, and Public Safety’s Building Partnerships to Reduce Crime initiative rebranded as the Community Safety and Well-Being Initiative. As a result, the focus of the Initiative shifted to further increase multi-ministry and agency collaboration and determine coordinated responses to connect at-risk individuals and families to support services through Community Mobilization Hubs.

As of January 2024, 14 Hubs continued to serve 15 communities across the province. A Hub is comprised of various government and community agencies with program delivery and support expertise of their respective community, such as the Ministries of Social Services and Health, policing services, and school divisions.

Since 2021, the Ministry uses connections made with at-risk individuals and families to coordinate services as one of its measurable outcomes for the Initiative. The Ministry monitors the number of cases (i.e., at-risk individuals and families) the Hubs connect to various support services (e.g., counselling, addictions services, educational supports).

Measuring the success of the Community Safety and Well-Being Initiative’s Hubs helps the Ministry identify the number of individuals and families connected to services, thus leading to improved outcomes for at-risk individuals and families working with the Hubs.

2.0 INTRODUCTION

2.1 Background

Historically, Saskatchewan has, and continues to have, one of the highest crime rates in Canada.¹ The province requires a focused approach to crime reduction in addition to law enforcement. The Community Safety and Well-Being Initiative (formerly called Building Partnerships to Reduce Crime) was launched in 2012 to address the urgent need for new approaches to crime in Saskatchewan as desired by police, the Government of Saskatchewan and the public. Community Mobilization Hubs are a component of this Initiative. In 2022–23 the Ministry of Corrections, Policing, and Public Safety allocated \$2,900 to support Hubs. The Ministry also provides in-kind services to Hubs amounting to approximately one full-time equivalent staff.

The Hubs’ objective is to provide coordinated and proactive intervention to at-risk, marginalized, and vulnerable populations. Understanding risk factors helps to inform responses while improving community safety and wellbeing.

¹ www150.statcan.gc.ca/n1/en/pub/11-627-m/11-627-m2023041-eng.pdf?st=yaW7mHjr (26 March 2024).



The Hubs also identify individuals or families with acutely elevated risk factors. The Hubs mobilize human service agencies for a targeted response specific to individual and/or family needs, connecting them to support services (e.g., counselling, addictions services, and educational support).

2.2 Focus of Follow-Up Audit

This chapter describes our third follow-up audit of management's actions on the recommendations we made in 2016.²

In 2016, we reported that the Ministry of Justice and Attorney General and the Ministry of Corrections, Policing and Public Safety did not have effective processes for leading the Community Safety and Well-Being Initiative. We made four recommendations. By January 2021, the Ministries implemented two recommendations, partially implemented one, and did not implement one recommendation.

To conduct this audit engagement, we followed the standards for assurance engagements published in the *CPA Canada Handbook—Assurance* (CSAE 3001). To evaluate the Ministries' progress toward meeting our recommendations, we used the relevant criteria from the original audit. Ministries' management agreed with the criteria in the original audit.

To perform our follow-up audit, we discussed actions taken with representatives of the Ministry of Corrections, Policing, and Public Safety management team, and reviewed guidance and reports provided by the Ministry.

3.0 STATUS OF RECOMMENDATIONS

This section sets out each recommendation, including the date on which the Standing Committee on Public Accounts agreed to the recommendation, the status of the recommendation at January 31, 2024, and the Ministry of Corrections, Policing and Public Safety actions up to that date.

3.1 Initiative's Measure of Success Identified and Monitored

We recommended the Ministry of Justice and Attorney General and the Ministry of Corrections, Policing and Public Safety identify how to measure the success of the Community Safety and Well-Being Initiative. (2016 Report – Volume 1, p. 108, Recommendation 2; Public Accounts Committee agreement January 11, 2017)

Status—Intent of Recommendation Met

² *2016 Report – Volume 1, Chapter 10*, pp. 99–112; *2019 Report – Volume 1, Chapter 16*, pp. 223–227; and *2021 Report – Volume 1, Chapter 20*, pp. 227–230.

We recommended the Ministry of Justice and Attorney General and the Ministry of Corrections, Policing and Public Safety in collaboration with the Centre of Responsibility and Community Mobilization Hubs analyze and report on the success of the Community Safety and Well-Being Initiative.³

(2016 Report – Volume 1, p. 111, Recommendation 4; Public Accounts Committee agreement January 11, 2017)

Status—Recommendation No Longer Relevant

The Ministry of Corrections, Policing and Public Safety identified and monitored service connection rates as a key measure of success for the Community Mobilization Hubs component of the Community Safety and Well-Being Initiative.

As of January 2024, 14 Hubs continued to serve 15 communities across the province. The Hubs identify individuals or families with acutely elevated risk factors and mobilize human-service agencies for a targeted response specific to the individual’s and/or family’s needs by connecting them to these agencies for support services.

As noted in **Figure 1**, the Ministry measures the total number of discussions at the Hubs and the number of individuals or families connected to services.

Figure 1—Community Safety and Well-Being Initiative Measures of Success

Year	Total Discussions Concluded	Individuals or Families Connected to Services
2020–21 ^A	117	56%
2021–22	501	57%
2022–23	459	51%

Source: Adapted from information provided by the Ministry of Corrections, Policing and Public Safety.

^A Management indicated the reduced numbers in 2020–21 were due to the COVID-19 pandemic.

Identifying and monitoring success measures for the Community Safety and Well-Being Initiative’s Hubs help the Ministry evaluate the number of individuals and families connected to coordinated services, thus leading to improved outcomes for at-risk individuals and families working with the Hubs.

The Centre of Responsibility (COR) previously analyzed provincial data to identify systemic issues impacting Saskatchewan and collaborated on longer-term solutions to those issues; the COR disbanded in June 2019. As such, the second recommendation in this section is no longer relevant because the COR and Hubs no longer collaborate or report.

³ The only Centre of Responsibility (COR) in the province located in Prince Albert discontinued operations effective June 28, 2019. As a result, the Ministry of Corrections, Policing and Public Safety assumed some of the COR’s responsibilities, including tracking of risk information.

