

# HARD FEELINGS

STRONGER MENTAL HEALTH

**Strategic Direction 2021-2024**

# Table of Contents

Introduction.....3

Mission, Vision and Values.....5

Hard Feelings Logic Model.....7

Strategic Priorities.....9

# Introduction

## Background

Hard Feelings is an innovative non-profit social enterprise that addresses the gap in service for accessible and affordable mental health supports and resources.

Hard Feelings works to address three issues:

- 1) the lack of accessible counselling services;
- 2) the need for innovation in clinical practice models that offer professional support to private practitioners;
- 3) the demand for curated mental health resources. Hard Feelings addresses these issues by supporting an innovative professional Community of Practice that offers low-cost counselling services and by operating a storefront and community space that provides curated resources and stimulates dialogue about mental health.

Hard Feelings was founded in 2017 by Kate Scowen, a registered social worker with a background in community work. Kate has over 30 years of experience working in the non-profit sector and draws on a deep network of professionals in the fields of counselling, community work, social work, publishing, business, academia and entrepreneurship. Kate's goal in founding Hard Feelings was to meet the needs of those who face barriers in accessing mental health supports due to long wait times, high private practice fees, and the complexity of navigating the mental healthcare system.

## **Strategic Direction (2021-2024)**

The Hard Feelings Board of Directors initiated a strategic planning process in early 2021. The Board's preliminary discussions focused on clarifying the organization's mission, vision and values and charting a course for the organization's future. The COVID-19 pandemic context was a significant factor in shaping the current Strategic Direction. The Board decided that a 3-year duration was an appropriate length of time for the plan given the ongoing impacts and challenges related to the pandemic. The Board engaged an external consultant to interview key stakeholders and facilitate strategic planning sessions in September 2021. These sessions led to the development of the organization's logic model and allowed the Board to both set strategic priorities and renew the organization's mission, vision and values.

# Mission, Vision and Values

## **Mission**

Our mission is to bring innovation to the mental health sector that reduces barriers and increases access to stronger mental health. We work with mental health professionals, community members and partners in the delivery of low-cost counselling, the curation of mental health resources, and fostering conversations that fight stigma.

## **Vision**

A world where everyone has the mental health supports they need.

## **Values**

**Equity, Diversity, and Inclusion** - We acknowledge that mental health systems have adverse impacts on individuals and communities based on their identities and social location. In particular, Indigenous, Black, racialized, LGBTQ+ and disabled communities experience ongoing forms of exclusion and discrimination in healthcare settings. Hard Feelings is committed to learning and growing in our capacity to meaningfully address these challenges. We do this by reflecting on our work, listening to those with lived experience, changing policy and practice when necessary, partnering with communities and organizations with relevant expertise, and supporting the ongoing work of Truth and Reconciliation and decolonization.

# Mission, Vision and Values, cont.

## Values cont.

**Access** - Within our model of low-cost short-term counselling, we prioritize those who face barriers and have fewer resources to find support. We recognize that access can be impacted by a variety of factors and continually diversify our offerings to increase our reach.

**Community** - We work to foster healthy, warm, inclusive and welcoming communities. We recognize the role we play in an ecosystem of mental health services, and we seek to work in partnership with mental health professionals, community members, and organizations aligned with our mission.

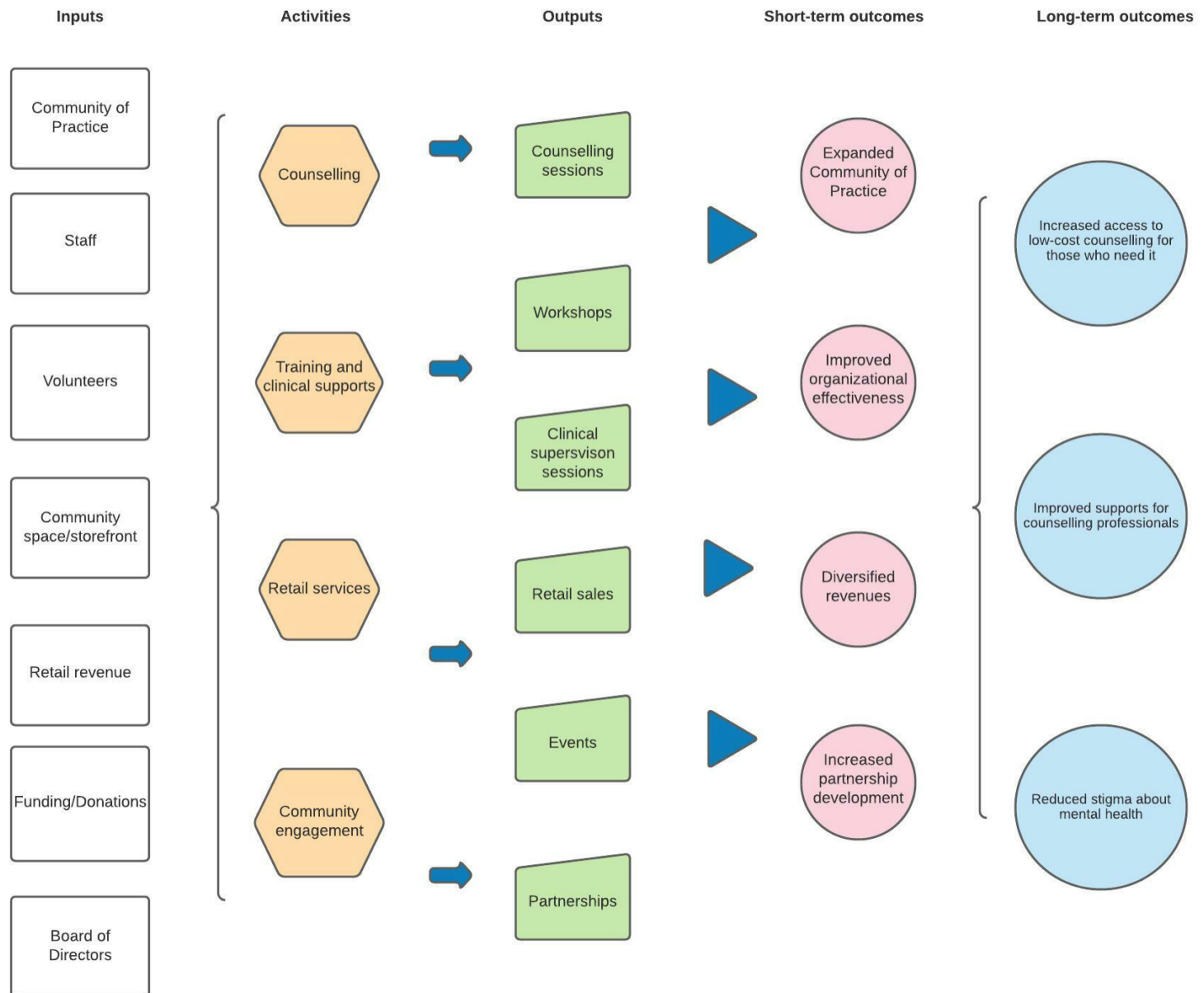
**Integrity** - We recognize that supporting stronger mental health means being honest, transparent and trustworthy in all that we do. We take this responsibility seriously and carry out our work with the utmost respect for the people and communities we serve.

**Innovation** - We are committed to thinking and acting with an open and creative mindset in all that we do. We grow and learn from our mistakes and strive to innovate through fresh perspectives.

## **Hard Feelings Logic Model**

Hard Feelings works to address the challenges of facilitating the delivery of low-cost counselling, supporting the need for innovation in clinical practice, and responding to the demand for curated mental health resources. Our work is carried out collectively by mental health practitioners, volunteers, staff, partners and our generous donors. Our Logic Model (see next page) is grounded in our mission, vision and values and guides our current strategic direction.

# Hard Feelings Logic Model





# Strategic Priorities

## Strategic Priority #1

Support and strengthen our Community of Practice.

**Rationale:** The Community of Practice is a core component of our work and success. By expanding the supports offered to the Community of Practice and clarifying its function and role, we will broaden its engagement and impact across all areas of the organization.

### **Actions:**

- Document and communicate the function, purpose and impact of the Community of Practice to stakeholders
- Broaden training and other professional support offerings for the Community of Practice
- Develop and implement plans to integrate the expertise of the Community of Practice into our communications and product development
- Create and implement a strategy for both online and in-person counselling services

# Strategic Priorities, cont.

## Strategic Priority #2

Renew and develop our organizational structure and leadership.

**Rationale:** In response to increased interest in Hard Feelings' innovative model and with a focus on long-term sustainability of the organization, the time is right to ensure our staffing structure and leadership are aligned with our priorities over the next 3 years and beyond. By recruiting staff with skills and experience required for our planned growth, funding development and expanded partnership and marketing activities, we will ensure Hard Feelings is prepared for the challenges and opportunities ahead.

### **Actions:**

- Create an organizational chart and role descriptions aligned with strategic priorities
- Develop and implement a board and staff recruitment plan
- Develop and implement a recruitment plan for executive leadership

## Strategic Priorities, cont.

### Strategic Priority #3

Expand our partnerships and networks.

**Rationale:** Hard Feelings recognizes the unique role we play in the mental health ecosystem. We also understand that we have a limited capacity and cannot be all things to all people. By expanding our partnerships with organizations that share our interests and goals in both service delivery and retail operations, we will broaden our impact while supporting the important work of our partners.

**Actions:**

- Conduct an environmental scan for partnership development
- Establish partnership agreement principles and priorities
- Explore strategic partnerships that create opportunities for expanded service delivery and social impact

# Strategic Priorities, cont.

## Strategic Priority #4

Secure revenues that support a sustainable model.

**Rationale:** To support our Community of Practice, facilitate the delivery of low-cost counselling, maintain the storefront as an access point for customers and clients, and grow the storefront offerings as a revenue stream for the organization, we need to secure financial resources that will enable this work. By diversifying our funding sources and moving toward long-term donor relations, we will create opportunities for sustained growth, increased reach and deeper levels of innovation.

### **Actions:**

- Create and implement a funding development plan with diverse revenue streams that complement the mission, vision, and values of Hard Feelings. This will include revenue from the Community of Practice and store; contributions from foundations, individuals and for-profit and non-profit organizations; and funding through partnerships and collaborations.
- Develop and implement a communication and marketing strategy
- Invest in product research and development