

\$10K grant from Riverview will help provide more mental-health services

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TIMES & TRANSCRIPT

The director of the Atlantic Wellness Community Centre says a \$10,000 grant from the Town of Riverview will help them cut down on a four-week waiting list, and offer more hours of mental-health counselling to troubled youth in Metro Moncton.

"We are funded entirely from grants and donations in order to provide our services free of charge, so we are very thrilled that we got what we asked for," said Lesley Smyth, clinical therapist and founder of the centre.

This week, the Town of Riverview announced it has awarded grants totalling \$42,650 to various community organizations. The Atlantic Wellness Centre received the largest single grant of \$10,000. That is twice as much as the \$5,000 the centre received from the town in 2016.

Smyth said the centre now has three full-time and one part-time counsellors, and the grant will go directly toward hiring another so they can provide more hours of service and shorten the waiting list.

Smyth said the centre provides

counselling services to 300 youths aged 12 to 21 and their families each year. About 35 per cent come from Riverview and the remainder come from Moncton, Dieppe and other communities. She said most of the clients are looking for help with anxiety, depression and the effects of bullying in school or through social media. The centre offers counselling services to individuals and families free of charge, with a goal of helping youths overcome their mental-health issues. If left untreated, depression and anxiety can often lead to alcoholism, drug abuse and more serious issues, she said.

The Albert County Action Committee, which operates a food bank, received a grant of \$6,000. The Atlantic Ballet Theatre of Canada received \$4,000, while the 292 Coverdale Sea Cadets received \$3,000. Harvest House Atlantic in Moncton, which provides shelter and drug addiction services, received \$2,000.

Riverview Mayor Ann Seamans said Wednesday the total amount of \$42,650, was less than half of the \$89,900 that was requested. Last year, the town received requests totalling \$99,287 but only awarded \$38,750. The grant money comes directly from the town's budget. Seamans



Lesley Smyth, clinical therapist and executive director of the Atlantic Wellness Community Centre in Riverview PHOTO: TIMES & TRANSCRIPT ARCHIVES

said they are holding another \$25,000 in reserve for other grants that could be awarded through the year.

Seamans said all organizations applying for grants must file a request with town hall and meet certain criteria, including a benefit for the citizens of Riverview. The grants are screened by a committee, which then makes recommendations to council. The grants were

approved during a council meeting Monday night.

"Every request is worthwhile but there is only so much money in the budget," Seamans said.

The following groups received funding grants from the Town of Riverview:

- 292 Coverdale Sea Cadets (RCSCC), \$3,000
- AIDS Moncton, \$500

- Albert County Action Committee, \$6,000
- Atlantic Ballet Theatre of Canada, \$4,000
- Atlantic Wellness Community Centre Inc., \$10,000
- Capitol School of Performing Arts, \$1,000
- Frye Festival, \$2,000
- Greater Moncton Chorale, \$600
- Greater Moncton Crime Stoppers, \$1,000
- Greater Moncton Music Festival, \$1,000
- Greater Moncton Santa Claus Parade, \$1,000
- Harmonic Codiac Concert Band, \$500
- Harvest House Atlantic, \$2,000
- HubCap Comedy Festival, \$2,500
- MAGMA, \$1,500
- Riverview Scouting (Group Committee), \$1,750
- Town of Riverview Seniors Roundtable, \$800
- Tri-Community RCMP Volunteer Policing Services, \$1,500
- Tri-County Ground Search & Rescue Group, \$1,000
- YWCA Moncton, \$1,000
- Total: \$42,650