



INFORMATION
AND REFERRAL
CENTRE OF GREATER
MONTREAL

Annual Report

2015 · 2016

**EXPANDED ACCESS TO SERVICES:
MISSION ACCOMPLISHED!**



**Centraide
of Greater Montreal**

Supported by:

INFORMATION AND REFERRAL CENTRE OF GREATER MONTRÉAL (IRCGM)

Annual Report
April 1st 2015 to March 31st 2016

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INFORMATION
AND REFERRAL
CENTRE OF GREATER
MONTREAL

HELPING THROUGH INFORMATION

Vision, Mission, Values & Goals

Mission

Helping Through Information

A vision for the future

The Information and Referral Centre of Greater Montréal is a key player in the Info-Referral field; Having a strong expertise and innovative intervention model, customized for all the information platforms; It provides reliable resource on social needs; And is very proactive in the field of community services.

Five core values

Respect, Empathy, Open-mindedness, Integrity, Discipline

Seven goals for the 2013-2018 strategic planning:

- Establish a culture of innovation
- Enhance IRCGM's leadership
- Consolidate the financial structure
- Negotiate the digital transition
- Strengthen our abilities
- Improve the promotion of our services
- Plan the recruitment and training of new staff members



A message from the President of our Board of Directors

When efforts towards development become reality....

The year 2015-2016 saw the creation of three key projects that have certainly contributed in consolidating the Centre's position in the social info-referral field: the Info-Refugees Helpline, the new schedule from 8:00 am to 6:00 pm/7 days per week for the Referral Helpline for Seniors and in March, the launch of 211 in Laval.

Establishing these projects highlighted two qualities held by the director and the Centres' team: perseverance and adapting to quick changes with great ease.

Furthermore, the efficiency and professionalism of IRCGM was noted by our partners during the implementation of these projects that were done seamlessly both for the quality of services, as well as the work atmosphere. We can certainly witness the commitment of the members at all levels of the organization. Hat's off!

On the addiction services side, we must stress the relevance of the TeleCounselling program which exceeded our registration goals planned for the 2015-2016 budget.

One thing's for certain, we would never have been able to achieve all this progress without the confidence and support from our funding donors. This is even more appreciated with choices being harder to make

in these times of restricted budgets and thorough program revisions. I wish to thank *Centraide du Grand Montréal*, the *ministère de la Santé et des Services sociaux*, the *ministère de la Famille*, the City of Montréal, *l'Union des Municipalités du Québec* and the City of Laval who believed in us by supporting our new projects and entrusting us with new mandates.

In conclusion, I would like to mention the unwavering commitment of my colleagues within the Board of Directors who ensure the proper administration of the Centre and who are always present to voluntarily put their expertise to use for the Centre and its great challenges.

**Me Louis-Phillippe Bourgeois, CRIA
Dunton Rainville S.E.N.C.R.L.**



A message from the Executive Director

A year rich in achievements!

What a year! What a team! One would have thought that the past fiscal year was the year of change. And that is without taking into account the desire for innovation from my team and without thinking of the last months of 2015-2016 with their cascade of confirmed projects at an accelerated pace.

Even if these feats were accomplished in rapid succession within the Documentation team, between April 2015 and January 2016, innovation was not left out. For example, in our directory for Montréal seniors and in the one for the homeless, information capsules were incorporated, as well as a new way of processing information based on the collaboration of our key partners and community consultations. So well, in fact, that we can now speak of a new version of our specialized directories.

As for other major achievements, at the beginning of December, the City of Montréal asked us to make available a specialized helpline for Syrian refugees in order to better direct the many offers to volunteer and to donate. Our coordinators had to triple their efforts to make the service available ... in one week ... while our counsellors had to adapt in the same amount of time to a new work schedule expanded to 7 days, 10 hours per day, including statutory holidays. The challenge was met, magnificently... and with enthusiasm.

In December, we also received confirmation of funding from the *ministère de la Famille* aiming for greater access to our Referral Helpline for Seniors and for the gradual deployment of the 211 service over the next three years in order to make access to resources for

seniors that much easier. From the beginning of January, the Referral Helpline for Seniors has been available 70 hours per week ... and an advertisement strategy aimed at seniors and their caregivers was presented through various media. A good start!

Then, in the springtime, our talks with the municipalities of the Montréal Metropolitan Community for the implementation of the 211 service started bearing fruit. Last March, the City of Laval kicked things off by adopting a resolution authorizing the implantation of 211 in its territory with a first step of setting up the database online as of spring and implementing the telephone service this fall.

Meanwhile, on the specialized helplines side, the counsellors continued to respond to callers and to properly direct them through the health and social services and addiction networks despite the significant restructuring of services. As to the TeleCounselling program for compulsive gamblers, it has exceeded our expectations!

And if the trend continues, 2016-2017 won't be any calmer. There is a lot left to accomplish so that the 211 path may progress in the Metropolitan Area and we also fully intend to continue improving our practices and intervention tools!

Pierrette Gagné
Executive Director

Assessment and Prospects



While adding new milestones to our strategic planning 2013-2018, we have concentrated a big part of our efforts in gathering all the necessary ingredients to offer an Info-Referral service of greater value, which will become 211 in the near future. We also gave ourselves the priority of continuing to show the great relevance of our support, information and referral addiction helplines, as well as, the TeleCounselling program. Here are our major achievements for 2015-2016:

Goal 1: To Establish a Culture of Innovation

Continuing on the path of innovation, this year, we focused on refining our statistical tools, thanks to the possibilities available on the iCarol software. This tool enables us to identify and analyze the requests received by our callers, whether by their profile, or their type of inquiries. We can also perform crosschecks that will clarify our analyses or show the evolution of the trends in our clientele's needs.

Various communication tools such as our leaflets, posters, websites and retractable banners also benefited from a make-over further revealing the Centre's dynamism, areas of intervention and even its shift towards the future. Our directories published during the year, along with the new website (www.ainesmtl.ca) for seniors, also got a facelift as part of our determination to update our methods and procedures.

Goal 2: To Raise the Centre's Positioning

Having our role as a beacon on social needs recognized is a constant that is closely linked to our mission which contributes, of course, to raising the Centre's positioning within the field of social development. We therefore seized all occasions given to us to present our point of view and to share our analyses during round tables, meetings with organizations or with municipal and provincial bodies. Our three advisory committees have also given us food for thought and have allowed us to share our vision of important social issues with key partners.

The Centre's expertise in social info-referral is no longer a secret. One thing is certain, it was an asset that played an important part while signing the service contract with the City of Montréal for implementing the Info-Refugees Helpline; as it was the case for the resolution adopted by the City of Laval for the implantation, on their territory, of the 211 service, of which the Information and Referral Centre of Greater Montréal (IRCGM) is manager.

Goal 3: To Strengthen the Financial Foundations

During the past year, we focused our efforts on financial diversification in order to obtain solid and recurring funding for the 211 service. The goal is to rally all the natural partners such as *Centraide*, city halls, and government bodies around this project, structured as such so that it can be deployed in all the Montréal

Metropolitan Community by 2017, as was agreed with our co-leader *Centraide du Grand Montréal*. To this end, we have made important progress as the City of Laval and IRCGM have agreed on a five-year protocol to implement 211 starting in the spring of 2016.

Since then, other municipalities and MRC's in the North and South shores de Montréal have shown an interest in this project which will either meet the goals of their plan: *Municipalités amies des aînés (MADA)* or will fit nicely into their policy for social development.

On the Québec government side, procedures are also underway to show the complementarity of the service along with public services, especially for target clientele.

We have also favoured the publication of specialized directories that could be distributed for free thanks to the financial support of our public partners. The *Directory of Social and Community Services for seniors—Island of Montréal* was funded by the *ministère de la famille* and *l'Appui pour les proches aidants d'aînés-- Montréal* and the *Directory of Community Services for Homeless people in the Greater Montréal area* was funded by the City of Montréal and the CIUSS Centre-Sud-de-l'Île-de-Montréal.

Goal 4: To Negotiate the Digital Turn

This year, the Centre solidified its digital shift by further structuring of the development and maintenance of technological tools in order to control costs while continuing progress on the technological path. The Centre has made great strides in the past three years and it became important to entrust this specific mandate to a director who can take action in the heart of technological development. Computers with efficient software, online databases, user-friendly websites are all interconnected and the chain needs

to be well-oiled so that our counsellors can ensure an efficient and quick service to people asking for help. We are working hard on it!

Goal 5: To Strengthen Our Skills

As for professional development, we must mention the participation of our coordinator, Étienne Lajoie-Gagnon, to the 211 certification program given to all info-referral coordinators last October in Toronto. This intensive training notably enabled our coordinator to upgrade his skills in info-referral while allowing him to develop a dynamic transfer of knowledge and evaluation program for his team of counsellors.

In addition, both the Info-Referral and Documentation teams can now refer to this new training tool developed by our coordinators and accessible, at all times, thanks to Office 365. One of the significant advantages of this virtual guide is the possibility to make upgrades in real time. An important step in ensuring skill development!

Training sessions on mental health, addiction, and crisis management were given to the counsellors as well.

Goal 6: To Improve the Knowledge of, and Accessibility to, our Services

Launching our www.ainesmtl.ca website, our two specialized directories, announcing our new working hours and media campaigns targeting specific clientele such as, seniors, homeless and immigrants, in order to make citizens and counsellors aware of our new tools and services, were a pretext for getting to know the Centre better and improving access to our services.

Furthermore, our presence on social media like Facebook has intensified and was an occasion to reveal the socio-community resources of Greater Montréal while reminding everyone of our unique role as a guide in social info-referral.

Our media campaign in newspapers, local weeklies, specialized publications, bus shelters and in the subway all continued in order to incite people needing help to call.

Goal 7: To Plan for and Prepare Future Employees

A new position of director was created to support the executive director in the development of the 211 project. Mr. Mathieu Chaurette who was coordinator of Technology and Project Development is now Director of 211 and Technology.

This year, the Centre welcomed eight new employees to its team: two for the specialized helplines, one for communications, two for documentation and three for info-referral.

The salary scale was revised at an increase to take into account the new work hours which changed from 32 ½ to 35 hours/week to 8:00am to 6:00pm/7 days per week for the Info-Referral employees.

Some Encouraging Prospects for the Year to come

2016-2017 is well underway. In fact, our agreements with *Centraide du Grand Montréal* and the *ministère de la santé et des Services sociaux* were renewed for our core mandate, as well as for our specialized

helplines and the TeleCounselling program. The five-year agreement with the City of Laval for the deployment of the 211 service on their territory will enter its second year next March, a first step made towards the deployment of 211 in the Montréal Metropolitan Community.

In addition, the three-year funding from the *ministère de la famille (MFA)* for the 211 seniors project will enable us, this year, to make progress in implementing 211 in the Metropolitan Territory. The MFA's funding constitutes an important element in the financial structure of the 211 that is based on a three-part contribution: Centraide, the Québec government and participating municipalities.

That being said, we still have great strides to make in the next year to establish solid partnerships with the municipalities involved in order to deploy the 211 service on the whole of the Montréal Metropolitan Community. The first step is to definitely offer a 211 service in Laval that is of highest quality and therefore respecting our commitment to this leader. By doing this, we will develop a convincing model that others will want to adopt and sustain to the benefit of their citizens.

In conclusion, all efforts put in strengthening the Centre's reputation, skill development and innovation on all levels will have a lasting effect on the Centre's development. We are certain that the commitment of our team will enable us to make advances in all the great projects during the year. To be continued!

A Terrific Team and Great Volunteers



Étienne Lajoie Gagnon, Salma Ben Romdhane, Monique Cantin, Anne Onana

The year 2015-2016 was especially rewarding for the Centre's team, reinforced by the arrival of new employees that are dynamic and highly qualified; whose learning continues within an on-going training framework, which is pivotal to IRCGM. Bravo for your determination, your empathy towards the people requiring our services, as well, as your proven professionalism!

We cannot also keep quiet about the essential role played by our volunteers whose personal commitment is only equaled by their passion for the Centre, its mission and its clientele. Many hours (1 510) have been dedicated by this wonderful group devoted to the well-being of the centre.

Executive Director

Mrs. Pierrette Gagné

Volunteers:

Mrs. Lorraine Bilocq Lebeau
Mr. Jean Boileau
Mr. Réal Laflamme

Mr. Michel Lefèvre
Mr. Paul Moffette
Mr. Frédéric Troalen-Muckle

Administration and Finances:

Mrs. Sophie Morin, CPA, CMA, director
Mr. Alain Barsalou, professional assistance in accounting
Mr. Roger Lambert, maintenance and renovation

211 and Technology:

Mr. Mathieu Chaurette, director

Communications:

Mrs. Monique Cantin, director
Mrs. Déborah Lomama, intern
Mrs. Marie Vaillant, coordinator

Documentation :

Mrs. Brigitte Gagnon Boudreau, coordinator
Mrs. Émilie Lefrançois, agente à la documentation
Mr. Mathieu Lemay, agent à la documentation
Mrs. Marie-Christine Palardy, documentation agent
Mrs. Anne Onana, documentation agent

Marketing and sales

Mrs. Manon Côté, marketing assistant

Info-referral

Mr. Étienne Lajoie-Gagnon, coordinator
Mrs. Salma Ben Romdhane, counsellor
Mrs. Micheline Paquette, counsellor
Mrs. Marisa M. Patrocinio, counsellor
Mrs. Valérie Pelletier, counsellor
Mrs. Sarah Zahed, counsellor

Specialized helplines

Mrs. Hélène Hamel, M.I.T., coordinator and counsellor

Drugs: Help and Referral

Mrs. Estelle Arcand, counsellor
Mrs. Isabelle Bernard, counsellor
M. Stéphane Grenier, counsellor
Mrs. Maria Rigas, counsellor
Mrs. Elizabeth Dupras-Leduc, counsellor

Gambling: Help and Referral

Mr. Gil Bellemare, counsellor
Mrs. Monique Côté, counsellor
Mrs. Maude Coutu-Sarrazin, counsellor
Mrs. Leila Ech-Chouyekh, counsellor
Mrs. Kim Labrecque, counsellor
M. Érick-André Leroux, counsellor

Supernumerary

Mr. Alexis Beaulieu-Thibodeau, counsellor
Mrs. Émilie Letellier, counsellor
Mrs. Jessica Miousse, counsellor

TéléCounselling

Mrs. Hélène Hamel, M.I.T., coordinator and counsellor
Mr. Jacques Ducharme, M. Ps., clinical supervisor
Mr. Gil Bellemare, counsellor
Mrs. Leila Ech-Chouyekh, counsellor
Mr. Érick-André Leroux, counsellor
Mrs. Isabelle Provencher, counsellor
Mrs. Nancy Rocha, counsellor

The Board of Directors

Supporting us of every minute

With a Board of Directors who have at heart the mission of the Centre, always fully engaged in offering precise orientations, the Centre possesses all the necessary key features to carry out the different projects, in progress or planned ones. Each member of the Board has a particular expertise that, once again, has contributed to the organization's success.

The Board, composed of eleven members, has met six times. Three new members have joined the Board this year Mrs. Valérie Dubreuil, Mrs. Louise Guillemette-Labory and Mr. Pierre Emmanuel Paradis of AppEco. Recipient of their enlightened advice and their constant support, the Centre thanks them for their commitment.

ADMINISTRATORS	
PRESIDENT Mr. Louis-Philippe Bourgeois, CRIA DUNTON RAINVILLE S.E.N.C.R.L.	Mrs. Pierrette Gagné Executive Director INFORMATION AND REFERRAL CENTRE OF GREATER MONTRÉAL
VICE-PRESIDENT Mr. Houssine Dridi, Ph.D. UNIVERSITÉ DU QUÉBEC À MONTRÉAL	Mrs. Valérie Dubreuil Administrator
TREASURER Mr. Michel Plante, CPA, CA FAUTEUX, BRUNO, BUSSIÈRE ET LEEWARDEN	Mrs. Louise Guillemette Labory Administrator
SECRETARY Mr. Michaël Mondor BANQUE NATIONALE DU CANADA	Mrs. Catherine M. Hooper Administrator
	Mr. Jacques R. Lemieux Administrator
	Mr. Yves Millette Administrator
	Mr. Pierre Emmanuel Paradis AppEco



Pierre Tessier (Social Development, Laval), Pierrette Gagné (IRCGM), M. Louis-Philippe Bourgeois (IRCGM), Mathieu Charette (IRCGM), Marc Demers (Mayor of Laval).

211 in Laval!

The City of Laval showed exemplary leadership by becoming the first municipality in the Greater Montréal area to acquire the 211 service in partnership with IRCGM.

It is therefore in March that the implementation of 211 in Laval was announced during a press conference held at the City Hall of Laval. M. Louis-Philippe Bourgeois, President of IRCGM's Board of Directors, Mrs. Pierrette Gagné, Executive Director of the IRCGM, Mr. Mario Régis, Vice President of Social Development of *Centraide du Grand Montréal*, Mrs. Corinne Favier, Executive Director of the *Table de Concertation des aînés de Laval*, as well as, Mr. Pierre Tessier, Head of the division of Social Development for the City of Laval were present.

Thanks to the acquired expertise in info-referral over the past 60 years, IRCGM will be able to provide citizens with all the information needed regarding socio-community organizations in Laval, as well as, outside the area that are able to help them. This will be done thanks to a Web site and telephone service making access to our services easier: 2-1-1.

The Deployment of 211 in Laval

The new 211 service, of which the Centre is manager, is set up in two components; one is on the Web and the other is over the telephone. As for the Web, Laval citizens will have access, by the end of spring 2016, to a continuously updated on-line directory of all community services, self-help and support groups, community resources for families, seniors, the homeless, as well as, food banks for people on a low income, just to name a few.

Starting in the fall of 2016, 211 will be fully operational. Meaning that thanks to the easy to remember 211 number, the Centre's counsellors will answer all telephone requests from Laval's citizens, 70 hours and 7 days per week, including statutory holidays. The Centre's team possesses all the knowledge, skills and necessary tools to quickly guide the person towards the pertinent resource at the right time. Let us note that the information and referral service will be offered free of charge, in English and in French. As well, a multilingual service will be available enabling callers to communicate with the 211 service in more than 200 languages.

The scope of the socio-community needs of the citizens is very broad: housing, training, food banks, and help in the home, etc. These are just a few examples of calls that the Centre receives and answers on a daily basis. The IRCGM team is made up of trained professionals and of certified documentation agents.

For IRCGM's team, the social role and importance of the 211 service in society, as a tool to combat poverty and social exclusion is undeniable. By quickly and efficiently directing the caller searching for the right resource to help him out of his precarious situation, 211 therefore helps him take charge of his life.

A person whose social and economic issues got under control because he had access to the right resource at the right time will not only contribute directly to improving his circumstances, but also to his community and to the social climate.

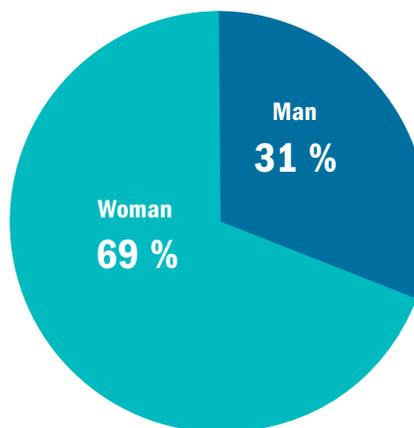
Info-Referral

More Meticulous Tools

During the past year, many changes took place within the Info-Referral team. In fact, with the goal of improving our practices, the way of compiling statistics was modified to be even more accurate. It is now easier to put a number on the requests that were unmet and to have an overall picture of the callers' needs. These statistics are excellent indicators of citizens needs within the Montréal Metropolitan Community. Furthermore, the work of the Info-Referral specialists has greatly improved with the addition of the AIRS Taxonomy in its database. This taxonomy system holds the structure for defining the services of each organization. Therefore, the counsellors of Info-Referral can, thanks to this tool, search for a community resource by the types of services being offered. Furthermore, the capacity to analyze the needs of people calling the Centre, remains one of the great professional qualities of the Info-Referral specialists.

For instance, here are some requests our counsellors regularly receive:

Sex of callers



General requests

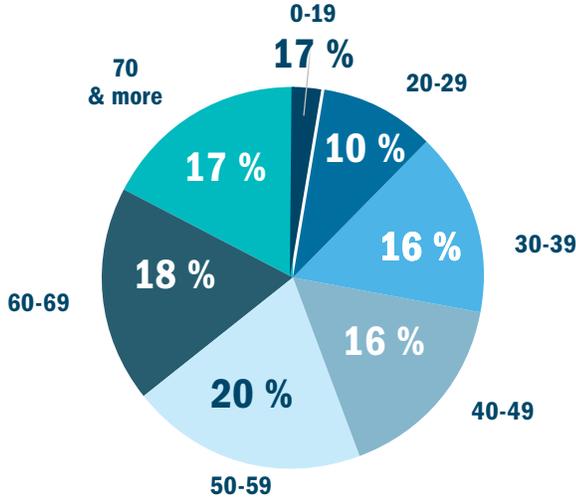
- Where can I go to fill out my income tax returns?
- Where can I get help for a psychosocial crisis?
- Where can we find transitional housing for homeless women?
- Is there a self-help group offering support and listening for an anxiety problem?
- Who can help me with my procedures to go back to school?

Requests for immigrants and refugees

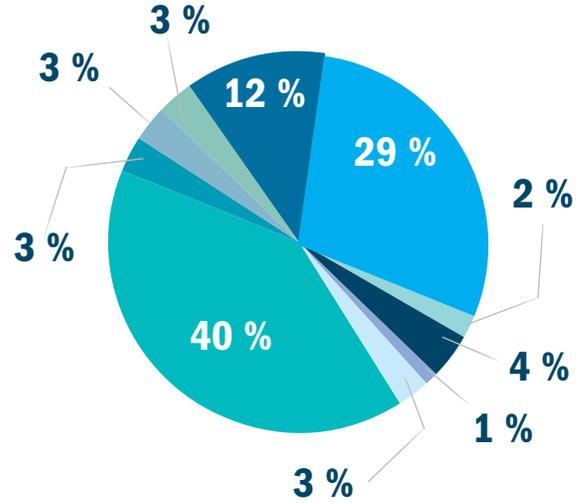
- Are there resources that can help immigrants find jobs?
- Where can I find a resource that translates official documents?
- Is there a service, in my neighborhood, that can help me apply to sponsor a refugee?

Age of the person in need

(years old)



Type of requests



Requests for seniors

- Is there a resource that does housework in my neighborhood?
- Is there a Meals-on-Wheels service in my area?
- Can you give me computer classes?
- Is there a resource, in my neighborhood, that offers recreational activities to people that are 60 and over?



Requests for youth and families

- Where can I get help with homework in my area?
- Where can I find classes to improve my parenting skills?
- Who can help me at home after giving birth?
- Can you give me resources that offer information and support in cases of divorce?

More complex requests...

With more than 40,000 calls received by the Info-Referral team this year, we see more than ever that calls are more complex and the transmission of information require more elaborate research and are of longer length.

... from Women

The vast majority of callers are women, since 69% of received calls are from women against 31% from men. This situation finds its explanation by the fact that generally speaking, men are less inclined to ask help than women. Moreover, we observe a stronger number of calls from women who search for resources for the well-being of their loved ones.

... Seniors

No fewer than 55% of callers to the Centre are 50 year-olds and older or come from people who are looking for social and community services for people near their home. This is quite a normal phenomenon, since Quebec is an aging society and data shows that seniors have many challenges to overcome. There are also health problems, naturally, but also issues as housing, solitude and poverty.

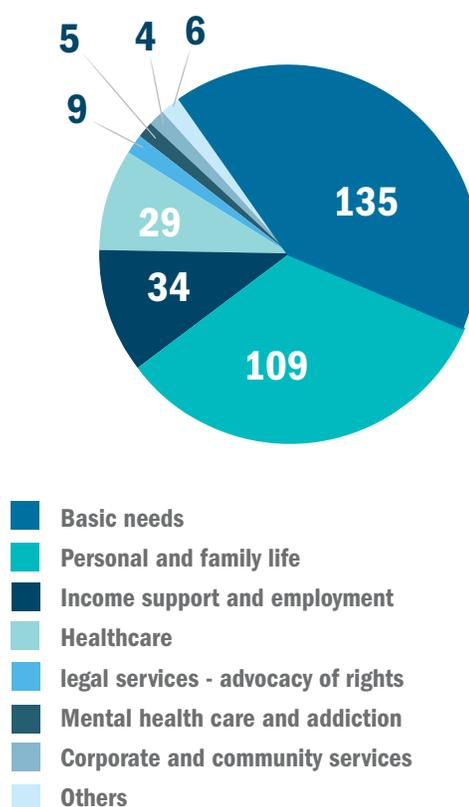
... for Necessary Needs

If in a large proportion, people call the Centre for donations of goods, especially furniture, a high percentage of people need basic needs, as we say fundamental dramas. These are food aid, clothing, affordable housing, housing for homeless people or in difficulty, senior homes, for medical transportation, etc. All elements needed for their well-being and survival.

... but There Are Also Unmet Needs

Our statistics show us that certain needs are unmet. It's the case of some donations that are lacking, like mattresses and beds that aren't offered or large appliances. Another example, in certain sectors, resources in accompanying patients for medical treatment is non-existent.

Type of requests - unmet needs



Finally, in many quarters, many social needs are lacking. Seniors who are losing autonomy are looking for affordable housing - a rarity! - and wish more sustained home care services. Important gaps are felt in the matter of psychological support, personality troubles and mental health issues. Even if there are many social and community-based groups, we must note that social needs are numerous. The complexity of human dramas and the constraints linked to the deployment of resources in health and social services create a very fragile social framework for people in situation of poverty and social exclusion.

Advisory Committee Info-Referral

The members of the *Advisory Committee for the Info-Referral service* offer, without reservation, the most positive contribution to the team by counselling them on key elements related to info-referral: practices,

information tools, changes and trends to take notice of in the field of social development. We thank them for their wise assistance.

Advisory Committee for the Info-Referral Service

Mrs. Johanne Bélisle
Executive Director,
Centre des femmes de Montréal

Mrs. Diane Bertrand
Director, programs and grants
Fondation du Grand Montréal

Mrs. Johanne Derome
Director, Ville de Montréal,
Direction de la diversité sociale

Mrs. Annie Deslauriers,
Head of division,
Ville de Longueuil, Loisirs et vie communautaire

Mrs. Manon Dubois
Development and
communications Director
La Fondation de la Maison du Père

Mr. Carlos Dias
Program Manager at the Mood
Disorders Clinic,
Douglas Mental Health University
Institute

Mrs. Magalie Dumas,
Director of operations, manager
of the helpline
Info-Aidant,
L'APPUI pour les proches aidants
d'âinés Montréal,
Société de gestion pour le soutien
aux proches aidants

Mrs. Pierrette Gagné
Executive Director,
Information and Referral Centre
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Mr. Steeve Gauthier
Director Service Québec
Ministère de l'Emploi et de la
Solidarité sociale

Mrs. Lyne Harris,
Director, Allowances and Social
Analysis
Centraide of Greater Montréal

Mrs. Jocelyne Jolin
Assistant Director
SOS Violence Conjugale

Mrs. Esther Laforte,
Assistant Director Intervention
Services Canadian Red Cross,
Québec section

Mrs. Maryse Leclair
Coordinator
Table de concertation des aînés
de l'île de Montréal

Mrs. Louise Michel Laurence
Development Officer
Concertation Montréal

Mr. Robert Manningham
Executive Director
Atelier habitation Montréal

Mr. Jocelyn Rodrigue
Director of business development
Moisson Montréal

Mr. Pierre Tessier
Social development, culture, leisure,
sport.- City of Laval

Mrs. Annie Tremblay
Executive director
Tel-Jeunes

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Mr. Étienne Lajoie-Gagnon,
Coordinator, Info-Referral
Information and Referral Centre
of Greater Montréal

Mrs. Marie Vaillant
Coordinator of communications
Information and Referral Centre
of Greater Montréal

Priority to Seniors!

2015-2016 was branded the year of prioritizing seniors! While statistically numerous, they are also, in a lot of cases, living in difficult socio-economic circumstances and social isolation. We therefore focused on key projects that are not only directed at them, but their loved ones as well.

A Project for and by Seniors

Launched one year ago, the integrated info-referral project on accessible services to Montréal's seniors, which was carried out thanks to the financial contribution of the *ministère de la Famille*, allowed for the meeting of seniors via an advisory committee. They met three times to better understand the elders' needs on information regarding available socio-community services. These meetings served to target relevant resources from our data base and make them available on an adapted web site and in printed directories. Computer workshops also helped seniors navigate the data base on line.

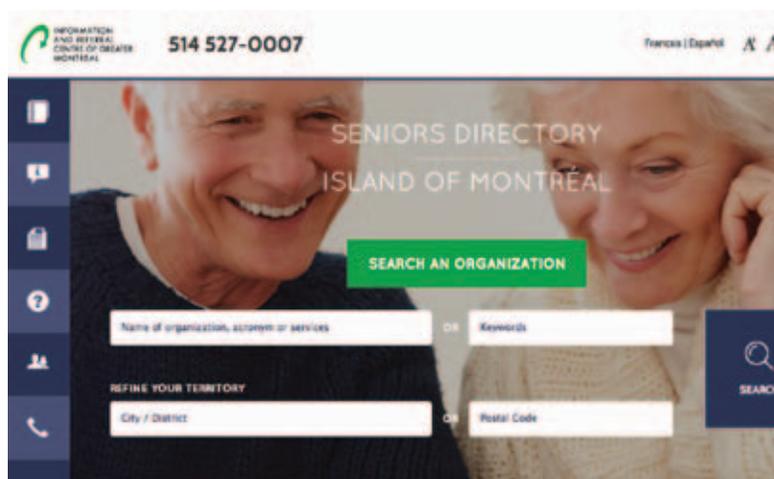
Completed at the beginning of 2016, the project was a rewarding experience in many ways and showed, once again, how important it is to really listen to seniors in order to better support them during their search for socio-community resources.



Brigitte Gagnon Boudreau (IRCGM) and participants at the computer workshops

An Updated Directory for Seniors

Published for the first time, the *Directory of Social and Community Services for Seniors—Island of Montréal* containing the structured and detailed description of over 500 resources that respond to the specific needs of Montréal seniors, was an opportunity to explore new ideas. A computer tool developed in collaboration with MG2 Média, allowed for significantly improving the efficiency of the editing process and data indexation, by automatically executing the classification and layout of selected information. Furthermore, information capsules were added in each chapter to answer to the most frequently asked requests, to share information on the structure of services offered and to allow seniors to discover the tools that would improve their quality of life. The data base was entirely translated during the year and two types of directories were able to be published—one in French and the



other in English. This made consulting it easier since it was reduced in size. We must also mention that this directory was distributed for free thanks to the financial contribution of the *ministère de la famille* and from *L'Appui pour les proches aidants d'ainés—Montréal*.

The Info-Referral 2-1-1 Seniors Project

For a large number of seniors, the maze of multiple government services makes it complicated to access the right resource at the right time. That is why the Centre started the Info-Referral

2-1-1 Seniors project thanks to the support of the *Secrétariat aux aînés* through the *Québec ami des Aînés (QADA)* program which will extend over a period of three years.

Since January, seniors can call the Centre (514 527-0007) 7 days a week, including holidays, from 8:00 am to 6:00 pm. Our team is able to direct them towards the right socio-community resource that will address their



needs, whether they are for affordable housing, food banks, transportation, welfare, advocacy or mutual aid, etc.

This service is essential for certain seniors that are isolated and vulnerable. By calling the Referral Helpline for Seniors, they can explain the problem to a counsellor who will know how to refer them to reliable resources that are capable of addressing their specific needs.

At the end of the project, the Centre plans on further improving the accessibility to services for seniors living in the Montréal Metropolitan and Montérégie areas. They will have access to a three-digit telephone number (2-1-1) that is easy to remember, as well as, a data base of socio-community resources available at all times on an adapted and user friendly web site.

Furthermore, the Centre will produce a printed directory dedicated to seniors and to caregivers that will be a most useful tool, as much for them, as for the counsellors working with this clientele within the Metropolitan community and Montérégie area.

There is no doubt as to our commitment towards seniors and we wish to demonstrate it further through other facets in the upcoming years.

Breath of Fresh Air to the Directory for the Homeless

In continuing with the improvement of the *Directory of Social and Community Services of Greater Montréal* published last year, the two specialized directories published in 2015-2016 have also benefited from this breath of fresh air! As is the case with the *Directory of Social and Community Service for Seniors—Island of Montréal*, which we talked about through our commitment towards seniors, it is also the case with the *Directory of Community Services for Homeless People in the Greater Montréal Area*.

This directory has undergone major rejuvenation. It now contains useful information, and the detailed

description, in French and in English, of more than 300 organizations, within the Greater Montréal area, that offer their services to the homeless or to people who are at risk of becoming homeless. For the first time, each chapter contains testimonials from vendors of the *Magazine L'itinéraire* who have, at certain times in their lives, called upon certain resources found in the directory. This valuable tool was distributed for free thanks to the financial contribution of the *Centre Intégré Universitaire de la Santé et des Services Sociaux du Centre-Sud-de-l'Île-de-Montréal* and *City of Montréal*.

Learning a Valuable Tool: Taxonomy

The year 2015-2016 enabled the Documentation and info-referral teams to further understand the complexities of the AIRS/211 LA County Taxonomy system, which sets the standard for defining services and for indexing and accessing the variety of human services that are available. This flexible tool has also made compiling statistics on individual requests a lot simpler.



Info-Refugees Helpline

In the Spotlight



It is at the request of the City of Montréal that the IRCGM put in place, within ONE week, the Info-Refugees Helpline showing, once again, our ability to meet a challenge of this magnitude swiftly and professionally. Launched by the Mayor Denis Coderre in a press conference, the Info-Refugees Helpline saw the knight of day on December 8. This service holds the mandate of referring the many (at that time) offers of donations and volunteering to the organizations helping the refugees. In addition, the Helpline informs Syrian and Iraqi immigrants about the different services available to them.

In order to better understand, by everyone, the information given, IRCGM became a multilingual service by hiring someone who speaks Arabic and by using a multilingual translation service (Language Line Solution) which enables citizens to communicate with our counsellors in more than 200 languages.

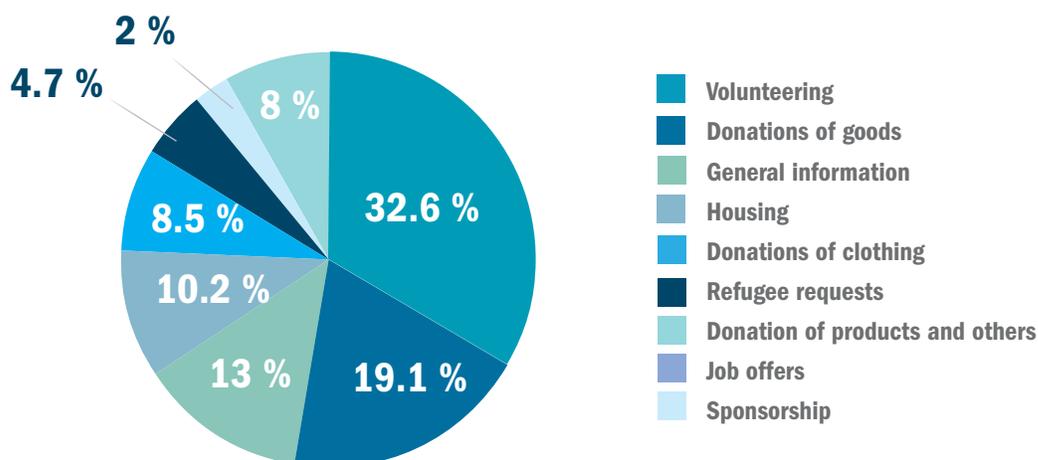


**Info-aide
réfugiés**
514.527.6951

GÉRÉ PAR :
CENTRE
DE RÉFÉRENCE
DU GRAND
MONTRÉAL

Montréal 

Categories of requests



Furthermore, during the months following the launch, the Centre carried out regular follow-ups with organizations, in order to coordinate the donations and the volunteers needed by these organizations.

By March 31, 2016, our counsellors had answered 1370 requests on this helpline. The majority of the calls were received in December and January and mainly came from the public's generosity of wanting to donate or to volunteer.

In recent weeks, the urgency of the arrival of the first refugees has waned and calls to the Info-Refugees Helpline have considerably dropped. We have even observed a change in the types of requests. In fact, the helpline now answers calls from refugees and from people sponsoring refugees that wish to obtain resources for various needs: material assistance, housing, help filling out forms, etc. It is here that IRCGM can count on the whole of its expertise to guide

people towards various resources capable of acting on different levels. Its vast database specialized in social info-referral can therefore be put to good use in all aspects of the integration of refugees.



Drugs: Help and Referral

A Service in Human Colours



It was in 1992, 24 years ago, that the provincial telephone service *Drugs: Help and Referral* was created.

In 1990, the Bertrand Report was submitted to the *ministère de la Santé et des Services Sociaux (MSSS)* du Québec. The group, led by Mr. Mario Bertrand, had the mandate from the Robert Bourassa government to present a clear picture of what the substance abuse situation was like in Québec. One of the recommendations from this report was to “... implement a telephone Information and Referral Helpline, available 24 hours/7 days.”

It is therefore, in April 1992, at the request of the MSSS the *Information and Referral Centre of Greater Montréal (IRCGM)* inaugurated *Drugs: Help and Referral (DHR)*. To this day, *DHR* is still managed by the IRCGM and funded by the MSSS. It is a telephone service that is, free of charge, bilingual, anonymous, confidential and 24/7 and given to the population of Québec. Above all, it is a service that is human, offering support, information and referral.

Support...

- to parents of adolescents using drugs;
- to addicts that are going through a psychosocial or suicidal crisis;
- during difficult moments when the cravings are too much;
- to partners of at risk addicts.

Information...

- on different types of drugs used in 2016;
- on the withdrawal symptoms of various drugs;
- on resources offering rehabilitation, therapy or social reinsertion;
- on help that is available to friends and family of the addict.

Referral....

- towards self-help groups for addictions;
- towards specialized addiction rehabilitation centres;
- towards a mental health resource;
- towards certified inpatient addiction rehabilitation centres.

During the year 2015-2016 a team of twelve counsellors answered 14,704 calls. These counsellors, for the most part have completed certificates in substance abuse and hold baccalaureates in one of the following fields: psychology, criminology, social work, special education, multi-discipline baccalaureates combining certificates in mental health, youth intervention, violence, victims and society or a DEC in correctional intervention, etc.

Furthermore, all counsellors who begin working at *DHR*, receive a 200-hour training in a 1/1 ratio setting. This “in house” training includes: theory on addiction, the concepts of co-dependency, intervening during a psychosocial or suicidal crisis, intervening with the loved ones of an addict, intervening with youth, reviewing different approaches to treatment, the basics of the motivational interviewing approach, awareness of mental health issues including personality disorders, knowledge of the different areas of Québec and their main cities, learning the database, as well as, various referral tools.

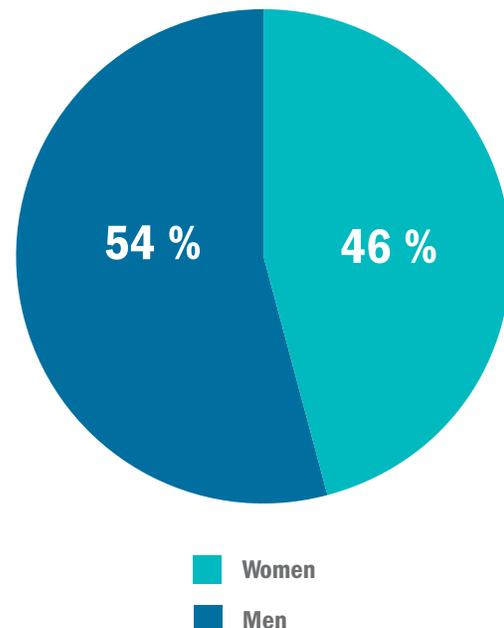
All our interventions are without judgment and filled with empathy, confidence that the caller will be able to face his problems, provided we offer the proper tools for him to do so, hope and accuracy in transmitting information and referrals.

In its 23 years of existence, *DHR* has helped 613,463 people. During this 24th year, the team has responded to nearly 15,000 people: of these 6% are Anglophones. The service received two complaints that were handled by the coordinator to the satisfaction of the complainants.

Source of Requests

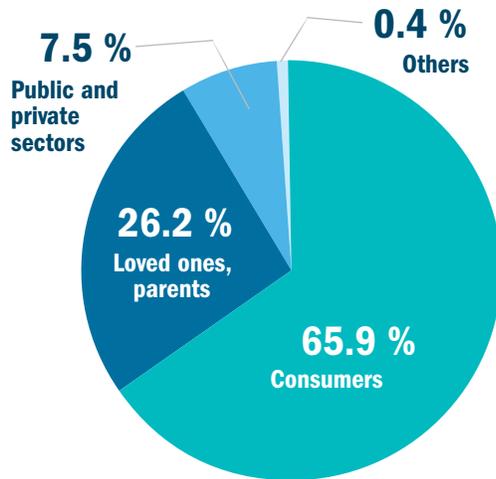
In 2015-2016, 66% of callers had a substance abuse problem: of this number, 46% are women (30% of callers) and 54% are men (36% of callers). Partners, parents and loved ones represent 26% of our callers.

Sex of consumers



Counsellors and professionals from the private and public sectors count for 7% of our callers. Of the total number of callers, 97% are adults, 2% are seniors and 1% is adolescents and children.

Source of Requests



Substances Mentioned

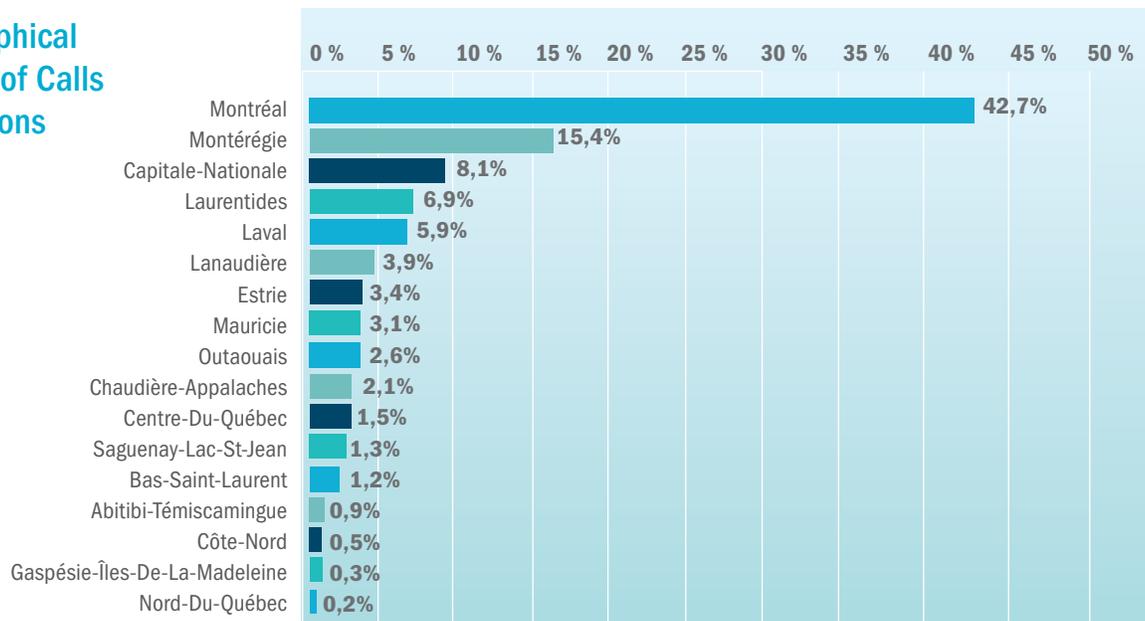
The substances mainly mentioned during the calls are, by descending order: alcohol, cannabis (at times with alcohol), cocaine (at times with alcohol, intravenously, or in the form of crack), prescription medication, amphetamines, nicotine, heroine (either intravenously or not), ecstasy, GHB or Rohypnol, ketamine, magic mushrooms, steroids, LSD, mescaline, PCP, as well as, solvents. At least 6% of our callers are multiple substance users, meaning that they use more than two substances.

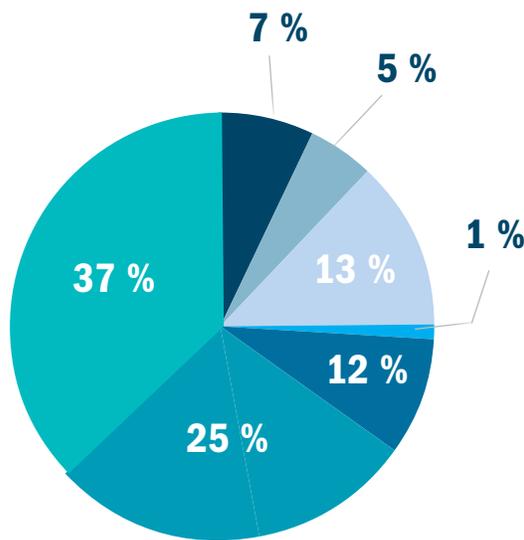
Geographical Source of Calls

During this last year at *DHR*, 43% of calls came from Montréal, more than 15 % from the Montérégie, 8 % from the Capitale Nationale Area, close to 7 % from Laurentides, almost 6 % from Laval, more than 4 % from Mauricie and Centre-du-Québec, near 4 % from Lanaudière, and more than 3 % in estrie. The other 8 regions share around 9 % of calls.



Geographical Source of Calls by Regions





Types of Requests

- Specific information
- Readaptation with inpatients
- Listening and support
- Other related problems
- Support groups
- Medical desintoxication
- Crisis call

Types of Requests

Specific information on addiction, substances, withdrawal, prevention, as well as, on *DHR* counts for 37% of calls.

Rehabilitation and inpatient therapy count for 24% of calls.

Listening and support by addicts, partners, peers and parents represent 13% of calls.

Other related problems that were revealed, such as mental health, shelter, dealing with psychosocial or suicidal crises, violence, gambling and legal services, etc., count for 12% of the volume of calls.

Support groups count for 7% of calls.

Medical detoxification and non-medical detoxification count for 5% of calls.

Lastly, 3% of calls involve social reinsertion, sterile injection equipment, opiate substitution treatments and support during relapse.

Transfer of Knowledge Activities

The coordinator participated in or assisted in various events in 2015-2016:

- Forum on cannabis : *Défis pour une nouvelle politique publique*, organised by RISQ, at the *Centre de recherche du Centre hospitalier de l'Université de Montréal (CHUM)*
- Participation in a discussion group on the future of the *AITQ* and the *ACRDQ*
- Second seminar *AITQ-RISQ*, regarding substance abuse and mental health
- 19th edition of the *Journées annuelles de santé publique : conférence de l'ASPQ (Association pour la santé publique du Québec) Prendre un verre, prendre un coup Débanaliser et agir!*
- *Congrès Questions de substance 2015 par le Centre canadien de lutte contre les toxicomanies (CCLT)*

Continuous Training

The scope of intervention in substance abuse presents numerous challenges to researchers, practitioners, as well as, counsellors. Consequently, the team of *Drugs: Help and Referral* benefits from ongoing training which is key in maintaining the quality of this service.

Thus, the counsellors of *DHR* participated in several training days, through the partnership with the University of Sherbrooke and the *Association des intervenants en toxicomanie du Québec (AITQ)*:

Adolescence, consommation, comportements difficiles et problèmes de santé mentale / Le CRAFT : comment aider les proches à améliorer leurs interactions avec un toxicomane qui ne veut pas changer. Les substances psychoactives et la performance par le Groupe de recherche et d'intervention psychosociale (GRIP). And lastly, Stratégies de coping en santé mentale et en toxicomanie, avec l'Association des intervenants en dépendance du Québec (AIDQ).

A Sustained Presence on all Platforms

This year, the team of *DHR* did not cut corners informing the population about our specialized helpline that offers crucial services to the loved ones of addicts and to addicts themselves.

In fact, it is through information booths, kiosks, seminars and meeting with counsellors that public relations got off the ground.

This year enabled the Centre to carry out a project that had been in the works for a long time: creating a Facebook page dedicated to *DHR* and creating a new web site for *DHR*.

Amongst the platforms where *Drugs: Help and Referral* was in the spotlight, we must mention our involvement in the following events:

- Participation in the *Congrès annuel de l'Ordre des infirmières et infirmiers du Québec*
- Meeting at the *Association des intervenants en toxicomanie du Québec*
- *Salon du développement Canado Maghrébin*
- *Les Terrasses Versailles, Open Doors Day*
- Seminar of the *Association des Intervenants en Toxicomanie du Québec*
- *Congrès Questions de substances*
- *Salon Ma Santé Institut Universitaire en Santé Mentale Douglas*
- *Conseil central CSN du Montréal Métropolitain*
- *Conseil régional FTQ du Montréal Métropolitain*

Many written media mentioned our services. We appeared four times in the magazines *L'Intervenant* and *Opération Nez Rouge*. The material during Drug Prevention Week of the *ministère de la Santé et des Services sociaux* also mentioned us and the *Journal du Bel âge* gave us several complimentary mentions.

Advisory Committee Drugs: Help and Referral

The expertise of the members of the *Advisory Committee for Drugs: Help and Referral* is undeniable. Its members share their respective knowledge and know-how to the benefit of the Centre. Their

perspective on drug addiction and substance abuse and the conversations that have resulted from that are significant sources of information and we thank them for their generous implication.

Advisory Committee for Drugs: Help and Referral

Mrs. Pierrette Gagné,
Information and Referral Centre of Greater
Montréal

Mrs. Lynne Duguay
Mrs. Sonia Morin,
Ministère de la Santé et des Services sociaux

Mrs. Caroline Gélinas,
Centre d'accueil Le Portage Inc.

Sergeant Éric Kiss,
Service de Police la Ville de Montréal

Mr. Vincent Marcoux,
Association québécoises des centres
d'intervention en dépendance (AQCID)

Mrs. Jennifer Mascitto,
Centre de réadaptation en dépendance
Foster

Mrs. Lisa Massicotte,
Association des intervenants en dépendance
du Québec

Mr. Jean-Ignace Olazabal,
Université de Montréal

Mrs. Rachel Perreault,
Centre de réadaptation en dépendance
Le Virage

Contact persons:

Mrs. Monique Cantin,
Director of Communications,
Information and Referral Centre of Greater
Montréal

Mrs. Hélène Hamel,
Coordinator, Specialized Helplines
Information and Referral Centre of Greater
Montréal

Mrs. Marie Vaillant
Coordinator of communications
Information and Referral Centre
of Greater Montréal

Gambling: Help and Referral

Support, Information, Referral

From 1993, when the first casino opened in Québec and the Video Lottery Terminals (VLTs) arrived in bars, until 2001, Loto-Québec funded the creation (and the management administered by the Information and Referral Centre of Greater Montréal), of *Gambling: Help and Referral (GHR)*. Since 2001, the *ministère de la Santé et des Services sociaux (MSSS)* has taken over the funding. At that time, in 1993, everything had to be invented: specific services for gamblers were non-existent, knowledge about gambling by counsellors was limited and the public, in general, had very little awareness of the problem. Today, in 2016, we can rejoice in all the services available specifically for gamblers. The help is there, the expertise in treatment research as well; all that remains is to convince at risk gamblers to ask for it.

Gambling: Help and Referral is a telephone service that is free of charge, bilingual, anonymous, confidential and 24/7 given to the population of Québec. A service that offers support, information and referral.



Support...

- during difficult moments, during the uncertainty of acknowledging the problem;
- while facing a craving even though procedures for getting help have already begun;
- during moments of crisis when suicidal thoughts are overwhelming;
- while facing anxiety before treatment.

Information...

- on the signs of eventually developing a gambling problem;
- on how to talk to a loved one we suspect of having a problem;
- on all therapy, support and social reinsertion available to gamblers;
- on what irrational thinking is and what the factors of protection and triggers are.

Referral...

- towards specialized resources in the treatment of compulsive gambling;
- towards support groups for gamblers;
- towards programs for the loved ones of a gambler;
- towards short-term treatment over the telephone called TeleCounselling.



This year, a team of 12 counsellors answered 12,374 calls. These counsellors, for the most part, have completed certificates in substance abuse and hold baccalaureates in one of the following fields: psychology, criminology, social work, special education, multi-discipline baccalaureates combining certificates in mental health, youth intervention, violence, victims and society or a DEC in correctional intervention, etc.

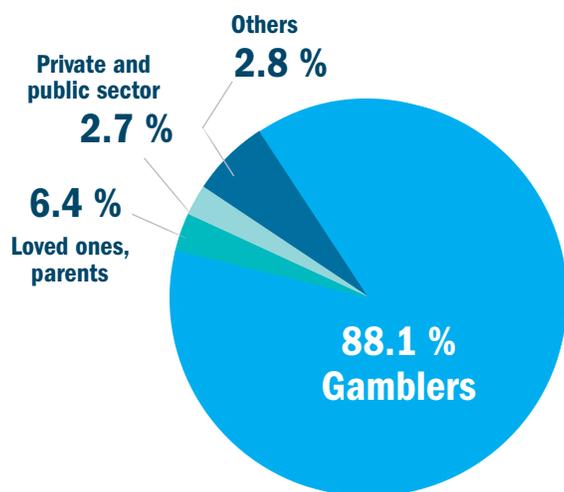
Furthermore, all counsellors who begin working at *GHR*, receive a 200-hour training in a 1/1 ration setting. This “in house” training includes: theory on compulsive gambling, its Cognitive Behavioural Treatment, the concepts of codependency, intervening during a psycho-social or suicidal crisis, intervening with the loved ones of a gambler, intervening with youth, reviewing different approaches to treatment, the basics of the motivational interviewing approach, awareness of mental health issues including personality disorders, knowledge of the different areas of Québec and their main cities, learning the database, as well as, various referral tools.

The philosophy of our interventions is based on believing in the skills and abilities of our clients: we therefore apply ourselves to mirror these skills and to restore confidence in our callers so that they may use them. Using the basics of motivational interviewing makes sense here. Being anonymous and confidential enables callers to speak the unspeakable without fear of being identified. In fact, suffering, shame, despair, anxiety and insecurity are all part of their experience.

Between November 15, 1993, and March 31, 2015, more than 200,000 people phoned *GHR*. For twenty-three years already, *Gambling: Help and Referral* offers a reliable and high-standard service of support, information and referral to the population of Québec. We continue to make every effort so that the callers’ (for whom *GHR* acts as a safety net) confidence in us is well-deserved and maintained.

This year, almost 12,500 people used our service: of these, 6% are anglophones. The service received two complaints that were handled by the coordinator to the satisfaction of the complainants.

Source of Requests



ones: partners, siblings, parents, friends, etc. Almost 3% is counsellors and professionals from the public and private sectors. Of the total number of callers, 93% are adults, 6% are seniors, an increase of 1% since last year and 1% are adolescents and children.

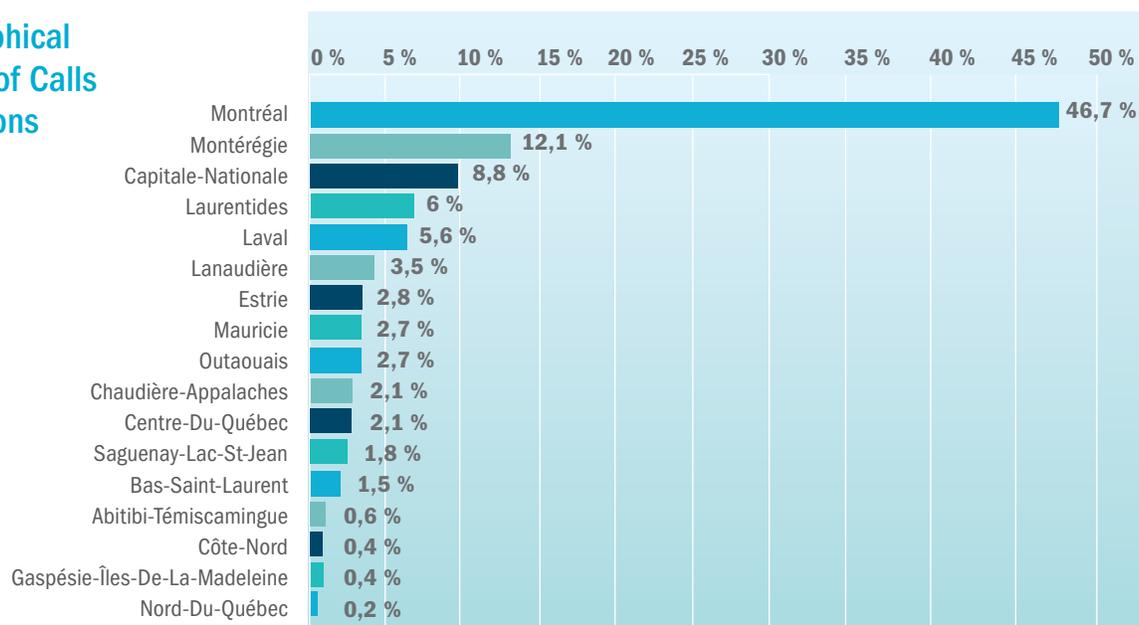
Source of Requests

In 2015-2016, 88% of callers said they were very preoccupied by their gambling habits: of that number, 43% are women (38% of callers) and 57% are men (51% of callers). Please note that the number of men went up by 2% since last year. Among the other callers, more than 6% is part of the gamblers loved

Source of Calls

As always, almost half are from Montréal with 47% of calls, followed by 12% from the Montérégie, 9% from the Capitale-Nationale, 6% from the Laurentians and Laval each, 5% from Mauricie/Centre-du-Québec and 4% from Lanaudière. The remaining 9 areas share 12% of the calls. As we know, the service covers all of Québec. Here is the deployment of calls.

Geographical Source of Calls by Regions



Types of Gaming Mentioned

The type of gaming most often mentioned by our callers are VLTs which counts for 58%, 12% for lotteries, doubled from last year, 8% for casino slot machines, 7% for on-line games, 5% for poker, a decrease of 2% from last year and 2% for electronic games. Bingo, horse racing, sports betting and other casino games share the remaining 8%.

Types of Requests

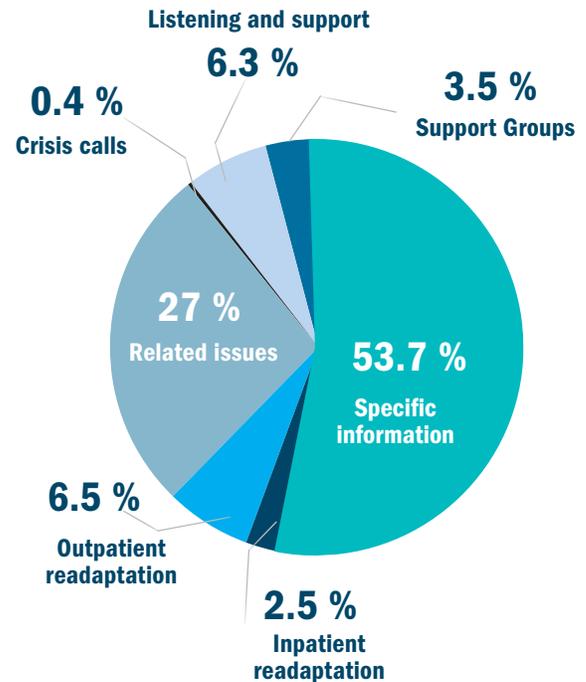
Specific information on prevention, gambling, the profile of at risk gamblers, *GHR*, comorbidity, as well as, the gambling industry represents 54% of the volume of calls.

Related issues like crises, suicidal thoughts, mental health, substance abuse, violence, legal services, budgeting and shelter represents about 27% of calls.

Requests for rehabilitation services and for support groups represent 13% of calls.

Listening and support represents more than 6% of the volume of calls.

Type of requests



Online Help

In 2006, the *ministère de la Santé et des Services sociaux (MSSS)* entrusted *Gambling: Help and Referral* with the mandate of answering requests online via its web site. Since then, more than 1700 people have used this service. In 2015-2016, almost 200 people benefited from it.

In fact, since January 2006, online help is available at www.jeu-aidereference.qc.ca.

This year, the *GHR* web site had 98,393 sessions, 86,774 users and 209,022 page views. The site is both for general information and for online help. Upon entering, the user is asked to choose between help or information on gambling. Lastly, this web site is intended for gamblers, but also, their families, loved ones, as well as, for counsellors. Since implementing

this service, 53% of women and 47% of men have used it. By descending order, here are the geographical sources : Montréal 22.7 %/Montérégie 14.3 %/Capitale-Nationale 10.1 %/Bas-St-Laurent 7.7 %/Laurentians 7.5 %/Mauricie and Centre-du-Québec 5.7 %/Lanaudière 5.5 %/Laval 5,1 %/Outaouais 4,2 %/Chaudière-Appalaches 3.8 %/Saguenay-Lac-St-Jean 3.3%/Eastern Townships 3.2 %/Abitibi-Témiscamingue 2.5 %/Côte-Nord 1.4 %/Gaspésie-îles-de-la-Madeleine 1,2 %/Nord-du-Québec 0.9 %.

TeleCounselling for Compulsive Gamblers

In addition, in 2012, the MSSS entrusted *GHR* with the mandate of offering TeleCounselling to gamblers. Thus, after four years in existence, 331 people made use of this new short-term telephone service. We are particularly grateful to the MSSS for trusting us for a fourth year.

TeleCounselling for gamblers is a form of short-term help, over the telephone, given by the team of *Gambling: Help and Referral*. The potential of such an approach on the short-term therapeutic plan was clearly demonstrated by the pilot project conducted in 2006 which the *ministère de la Santé et des Services sociaux* funded. It also showed that serving the whole territory of Québec from one point of service is not only realistic, but also very well received by the population.

This free, TeleCounselling service for gamblers, whose clinical supervisor is Mr. Jacques Ducharme M.Ps., is meant for a socio-demographic diverse clientele in all areas of Québec. The recruitment of participants is done by the *GHR* team. In 2015-2016, 117 people with a compulsive gambling problem used the TeleCounselling program, an increase of almost 17% from last year: 54.7% are men and 45.3% are women. The geographical source of the participants reads as follows: Montréal 28%/Capitale-Nationale 19%/Montérégie 18%/Laval 7%/Eastern Townships and Laurentians 6%/Saguenay-Lac-St-Jean 5%/Nord-du-Québec 3%/Abitibi-Témiscamingue and Lanaudière 2%. The remaining areas share 1%.

This short treatment program, innovative in that it's given over the telephone, includes an hour and a half evaluation session, as well as, six, one hour, telephone sessions each comprised with the following themes: motivation, finances, irrational thinking, triggers, preventing relapse, as well as, the retention of what was acquired. Four follow-up sessions are offered as well, at 1,3,6 and 12 months following the end of the program. TeleCounselling is a pertinent approach for early intervention, for serving a population with reduced mobility, for a clientele reluctant in asking for help in the public sector for fear of being identified, etc.

The team of TeleCounselling for compulsive gamblers are:

- Mr. Jacques Ducharme, M.Ps., clinical supervisor
- Mrs. Hélène Hamel, M.I.T., coordinator and counsellor
- Mr. Gil Bellemare, counsellor
- Mrs. Leile Ech-Chouyech, counsellor
- Mr. Érick-André Leroux, counsellor
- Mrs. Isabelle Provencher, counsellor
- Mrs. Nancy Rocha, counsellor

Transfer of Knowledge Activities

The coordinator assisted in a conference given by the “Centre international pour la prévention de la criminalité (CIPC) et la Commission scolaire de Montréal (CSDM)” on cyber bullying.

She also participated in an activity through the «Actions concertées du Fonds de recherche du Québec – Société et culture (FRQSC)» where upon three researches were presented: Gambling careers : a longitudinal, qualitative study of gambling behavior, by Gerda Reith from the University of Glasgow;

Trajectoires de jeu à l’adolescence et au début de l’âge adulte : description, prédiction et prévention» by Frank Vitaro from the University of Montréal;

Trajectoires de jeu en ligne et hors ligne des adolescents (CyberJeunes) et des joueurs de poker» by Natacha Brunelle from the University of Québec in Trois-Rivières and Magali Dufour from the University Sherbrooke. Madame Sylvia Kairouz from the Concordia University Research Chair on the study of gambling conducted the meeting.

Lastly, the coordinator was part of a permanent committee through the “programme de bourse de recherche sur le jeu responsable” by the “FRQSC” and Mise sur toi” through the “Programme Actions concertées”

Increased Visibility

Consistent with the Centres’ willingness to advertise the services of Gambling: Help and Referral to the general public and socio-community organizations, the team has multiplied its presence in the public forums. The consequences of compulsive gambling are such that we will spare no effort regarding this area so that the greatest number of people needing our services may get to know the help we are offering.

As is the case with *GHR*, public events were numerous and it is with great enthusiasm that we participated in kiosks, meeting counsellors, information booths and joining other community organizations in various round tables, where our expertise is well-respected.

This year, we took part in many public forums, notably:

- **Canadian Partnership for Responsible Gambling, Toronto**
- **Centre international pour la prévention de la criminalité (CIPC) et la Commission scolaire de Montréal (CSDM)**
- **Radio Centre-ville 102,3 FM - Émission Folie Douce sur Jeu : aide et référence.**
- **Multicaf**

On the promotion side, IRCGM launched its Facebook page for *GHR* and implemented a Facebook campaign for 18-45 year olds on the subject of *GHR*, as well as, an advertising campaign for TeleCounselling in various written media such as: the magazine *L'Intervenant* and in weekly regional newspapers.

Other Releases:

- **Magazine Gay Globe, 8 parutions**
- **Fédération interprofessionnelle de la santé du Québec, Agenda 2016**
- **Première avenue Communications - Guide du citoyen de Lotbinière, Point de repère de Lévis**
- **Te Paso el dato, 2 parutions**
- **Journal le Filon**
- **Fraternité des policiers et policières de Montréal : Revue Ensemble**

A broad advertising campaign was also conducted by displaying panels inside the buses of many areas of Montréal and the indoor parking lots of Montréal and the South Shore, as well as, inside bus shelters of those areas.

A 30 second public service announcement was broadcast on RDS and Télé-Québec.

Advisory Committee Gambling: Help and Referral

What the members of the *Advisory Committee for Gambling: Help and Referral* have to offer to the Centre's team is their valued advice and knowledge of gambling and gambling-related issues. They are

experienced professionals in this field and devote their time and efforts to impart their expertise on the subject of gambling. We thank them for their active participation.

Advisory Committee for Gambling: Help and Referral

Mrs. Manon Barnabé
Direction des programmes Santé mentale
et Dépendances
CIUSSS Centre-Est-de-l'Île-de-Montréal

Mr. Claude Boutin
Maison Jean Lapointe

Mrs. Lynne Duguay,
Ministère de la Santé et des Services sociaux

Mrs. Pierrette Gagné,
Executive Director,
Information and Referral Centre of Greater
Montréal

Mrs. Sylvia Kairouz, Ph.D.
Université Concordia

Mrs. Xixi Li
Service à la famille chinoise du
Grand Montréal

Mrs. Jennifer Mascitto
Centre de réadaptation en
dépendance Foster

Mrs. Élisabeth Papineau, Ph.D.
Institut national de santé publique
du Québec

Mrs. Guylaine Rioux, M.D.,
Loto-Québec

Mrs. Carmen Trottier
Association des intervenants en dépendance du
Québec (AIDQ)

Mrs. Patricia Robert,
Régie des alcools, des courses et des jeux

Contact persons:

Mrs. Monique Cantin,
Director of Communications,
Information and Referral Centre of Greater
Montréal

Mrs. Hélène Hamel,
Coordinator, Information and Referral
Centre of Greater Montréal,
Specialized Helplines

Mrs. Marie Vaillant
Coordinator of communications
Information and Referral Centre
of Greater Montréal
Centre de Référence du Grand Montréal

Ongoing training at the Centre

Top Priority !

Goal #5 of the «2013-2018 Strategic Planning: Strengthening our Skills» presented itself through various training received by the personnel or given by more seasoned personnel. The importance of upgrading our skills, being well trained and assisting in transfer of skills sessions, in order to enrich our knowledge of technology and raise our awareness on major social issues make the professionals of the Centre key players, efficient and equipped with all the tools necessary to answer in an adequate and professional manner to anyone calling the Centre for help.

- Looking at the notions of health and mental health according to different cultures
- *ACSM-Montréal*
- Seniors rights
- Training given by *Juripop*

Internal tools 1:

- Training given by Étienne Lajoie, coordinator of Info-Referral, to the team
- The organizations of Montérégie

Internal tools 2:

- Liaison with *Centraide*
- Cartography of Greater Montréal
- Translation services

- *AIRS* convention in Dallas, Texas
 - Series of conferences on better practices, standards, certifications, etc. relating to 211 and to info-referral

- The art of Feedback, an *AIRS* webinar
- Call Center Manager Certification given by the *Resource Center for Customer Service Professional/Professional Education Alliance*
- *Grenier aux nouvelles* :
 - Writing on the Web, techniques and better practices
- *Biennale du développement social*
 - How to make social development advances in Montréal?
- *États généraux de l'itinérance au Québec*
- Series of conferences and panels on the state of homelessness in Québec
- *Déjeuner numérique Google*
 - How to develop your business activities using different marketing techniques online
- *Colloque de la société canadienne des directeurs d'association*
 - How to manage the reputation on your non-profit?
- Pauvreté et exclusion sociale
 - Presentations of three social projects from university researchers.

The Year of Communications

One of the major projects of 2015-2016 was to strengthen our tools of communication, so that we may broadcast our messages, our accomplishments and our services, internally, as well as, externally.

Updating ourselves on Social Media

The importance of social media in the communications universe is now well known. This year, Facebook and Twitter were the chosen forums of the digital world to promote our organization and its public events, but to also maintain and improve our bonds with community and public organizations. Posting messages, as well as our accomplishments in these showcases has increased substantially and it has enabled us to improve our reputation while strengthening our ties to the community and socio-community organizations. Furthermore, a particular focus was placed on promoting the *Drugs: Help and Referral* and *Gambling: Help and Referral* helplines.

In addition, IRCGM created an Instagram account, in order to post pictures of our events and to show (in full colour!) some of our success. .



From left to right: Mrs. Monique Vallée (City of Montréal), Mrs. Julie Grenier (CIUSS, Centre-Sud), Mrs. Manon Dubois (Maison du Père), Louis-Philippe Bourgeois, President of the Board (IRCGM), Pierrette Gagné, Executive director of IRCGM.

Strengthening our Bonds

Our active and constant participation in round tables, associations, community and social events, is well established and is viewed as essential in achieving our mandate. Being biased towards the exchange and sharing of information, the Centre participated in meetings with the following organizations:

- *Le Comité de suivi du Forum sur l'Entraide à Montréal*
- *Table de concertation sur la faim et le développement social du Montréal métropolitain*
- *Table de concertation des aînés de l'île de Montréal (TCAIM)*
- *Regroupement des organismes humanitaires et communautaires pour les mesures d'urgence à Montréal (ROHCMUM)*
- *Table de concertation des organismes au service des personnes réfugiées et immigrantes (TCRI)*
- *L'Appui national, Société de gestion pour le soutien aux proches aidants*
- *The Chamber of Commerce of Montréal Metropolitan*
- *Canadian Society of Association Executives (CSAE)*
- *Inform Canada*

IRCGM is a key player in the *Regroupement des organismes humanitaires pour les mesures d'urgence à Montréal (ROHCMUM)*. Acting as vice president, the executive director attended their Board of Directors meetings. The ROHCMUM was founded in 1999 following the recommendations of the *Commission Technique et Scientifique* on the Ice Storm. It ensures the efficient coordination of procedures for the humanitarian and community organizations helping major disaster victims.

Media Coverage of our Accomplishments

Using a more regular deployment of external communications, the transmission of press releases has increased and updating our website got easier by adding texts, pictures and interesting information for our diverse audience. Although the usual way of covering press is generally associated with world or local politics, economic and social issues, IRCGM's press coverage improved this year and became more vigorous during the announcement of the undertaking of the Info-Refugees Helpline and the Referral Helpline for Seniors projects and 211 Laval.

Advertising Our Services

Our determination to reach the most people possible needing community resources (seniors, families, immigrants, youth, as well as, people or loved ones with addiction problems) has not weakened this year. On the contrary!

An advertising campaign for the Info-Referral service was carried out inside the buses of the Greater



Mrs. Pierrette Gagné at the Canal M.

Montréal area. More specific advertising placement relating to the Info-Referral 211 seniors' project was implemented in specialty magazines and weekly regional newspapers.

Making the general public aware of the IRCGM services and making us more visible, as well as, our specialized helplines, was accomplished through the distribution of posters, pamphlets and stickers during fairs, seminars, and transfer of knowledge events. These occasions were numerous and varied and attracted the interest of many visitors. In fact, the events in which IRCGM held an information booth have multiplied this year.

Putting Forward Our Accomplishments

Driven by the desire to shed the spotlight on our directories, the Centre organized two successful launches this year. The launch for the *Directory of Social and Community Services for seniors—Island of Montréal* was held in our offices and the launch for the Directory of Community Services for homeless people in the Greater Montréal area was held at the Maison du Père. Many members and representatives of the social and political communities were present during these events.

We must also mention the launch of 211 Laval in a press conference held at City Hall, in the presence of the Mayor of Laval, Mr. Marc Demers, and many distinguished guests.

Successful launches that reflect our commitment to making our work more visible and to stress the importance of our team as representatives of change is at the heart of the Centre's evolution.

Photo : Vincent Girard



Pierrette Gagné, Executive Director of IRCGM, Marc Demers (Mayor of Laval), Pierre Tessier (Social Development, Laval), M. Louis-Philippe Bourgeois, president of Directors of IRCGM.

A well-deserved retirement

After 24 years of service to IRCGM, Mrs. Monique Cantin, director of communications, retired in the spring of 2016. We thank Monique for her immense contribution to IRCGM's success and we wish for her retirement plans to live up to artistic aspirations. Mrs. Marie Vaillant replaces her at her post.



Marie Vaillant and Monique Cantin

Our Financial Partners

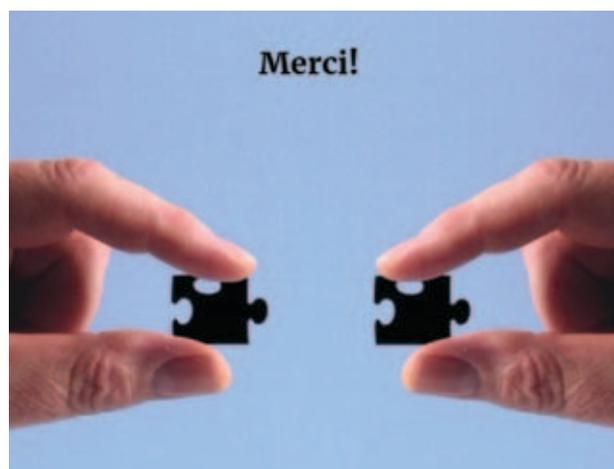
In 2015-2016, The Information and Referral Centre of Greater Montréal (IRCGM) received a grant of \$205,800 from Centraide of Greater Montréal for its core mandate of social info-referral.

The *ministère de la Santé et des Services sociaux (MSSS)* also awarded the IRCGM with a grant of \$154 887 for its mandate through the *Programme de soutien aux organismes communautaires (PSOC)*.

To this, the MSSS added funding for the provincial services *Drugs: Help and Referral* (\$334,000) and *Gambling: Help and Referral* (\$467,570), as well as, \$137,556 for promoting the latter. \$50,000 was given for online referral and \$156,424 for the TeleCounselling service.

During the year, in order to finalize the Integrated Services project of the Info-Referral on socio-community resources for Montréal seniors, the Centre relied on the financial contribution from the *ministère de la Famille (MFA)* of \$54,972. This amount constitutes a payment from the total amount of 75 000\$ received by the MFA for this project through the specific agreement : *Adaptation régionale pour l'amélioration des conditions de vie des personnes âgées dans la région de Montréal*.

Furthermore, the City of Montréal and the *Centre intégré universitaire de santé et de services sociaux du Centre-Sud-de-l'Île-de-Montréal* each contributed a sum of \$5,000 to the 2016 edition of the *Directory of Community Services for Homeless People in the Greater Montréal area*.



The City of Montréal contributed \$40,775, from December 2015 to march 2016, for the implementation of the Info-Refugees Helpline managed by the IRCGM.

Since March 1, 2016, the *Union des municipalités du Québec* added \$8,400 for this service in order for us to be able to assist communities outside the city of Montréal.

The *Secrétariat aux Aînés du ministère de la Famille* granted the sum of \$200,000 for the first year of the 211 Seniors Info-Referral project which began in January 2016. During 2015-2016, a part of this amount was used to extend the hours of operation for this project, its advertising and the preparation of a web site on socio-community resources.

The active members of the Corporation of the Information and Referral Centre of Greater Montréal

Mrs. Ginette Bardou,
Gestion G. Bardou inc.

Mrs. Lorraine Bilocq Lebeau,
Administrator

Mr. Jean-Claude Boisvert,
Social program administration
Consultant

Dr. Guy Bonenfant,
Administrator

Mrs. Marthe Bouchard,
Administrator

Mr. Michel Bourque, Ph.D.
Administrator

Mr. Denis Couture, CPA, CGA
Administrator

Mr. Gilles Daigneault,
Administrator

Mgr. Louis Dicaire,
Diocese St-Jean-Longueuil

Mr. Guy Dubreuil,
Architect, Administrator

Mrs. H  l  ne Gauthier-Roy,
Vice-President Developpement
Groupe Provencher Roy

The Honourable Bernard Grenier,
Schurman, Longo et Grenier

Mr. Alex Harper,
President, Publications Anchor-
Harper Inc.

Mr. Cl  ment Janelle,
Administrator

Me Marie-Claude Jarry,
Dunton Rainville S.E.N.C.R.L.

Mr. Pierre Y. Langlois
Administrator

Me Marc A. Leduc, B.Comm., LL.B.,
Avocat
Administrator

Mr. Andr   Marsan,
President, Sigma Alpha Capital

Mrs. Rollande Montsion,
Administrator

Mrs. Marie Normandeau
Administrator
Dr. J.-Robert Ouimet, C.M.,
C.Q. M.B.A., Ph.D.
President and CEO Holding O.C.B.
Inc.
And/Et Ouimet Tomasso Inc.

Mrs. Mona Laflamme
Administrator

Me Claude Quido, z,
Quidoz, Tremblay & Associ  s

Me Jean-Jacques Rainville,
Dunton Rainville S.E.N.C.R.L.

Mr. Claude Roy
Administrator

Mr. Tony Shorgan,
Administrator

Mr. John Topp,
Executive Director,
Centre de r  adaptation en
d  pendance Foster

Our Foundation

Since 1983, the mission of the Information and Referral Centre of Greater Montréal's foundation has been to contribute to the development and sustainability of the Centre. The foundation is also the owner of the building on Hochelaga Street, in Montréal, which houses the Centre. A former technical school, it has been renovated and transformed into a location where community organizations are gathered.

The organizations found there are all non-profits and the majority of them follow the mission of promoting or defending the rights and interests of people or minority groups of any age, language, sex, sexual orientation etc. or who exhibit situational inherent characteristics such as handicaps. Others help the oppressed, people that are socially or economically disadvantaged or otherwise in trouble.

This year, several leases expired. The Centre is therefore proud to have new tenants, such as : *The Big Brothers and Big Sisters of Montréal* and many other organizations whose actions are essential to help people in need. Since the beginning, IRCGM is located on the first floor and the *Association du Syndrome de Sjögren* in the basement. A community room holds the tenants' meetings, training sessions and public events.

In order to ensure Foundation business, its Board of Directors held five meetings this year. As well, the Board of Fiduciaries of the «*Fonds commémoratif Jeannine Boyer*», so named in honor of the Centre's founder, is entirely devoted to the sustainability of the Centre.



Thank you to the Fiduciaries of the commemorative fund for their unshakeable commitment towards the Centre: Mrs. Élizabeth Lebeau, CPA, CA, Mr. Pierre Y. Langlois and Mr. Claude Roy.

We also wish to give our warmest thanks to the administrators of the Foundation that make sure the Centre will be able to pursue its activities in the future: Mr. André Meloche, president of the Foundation, Me Stéphanie Rainville, Mrs. Lorraine Bilocq Lebeau, Me Louis-Philippe Bourgeois, CRIA, M. Michel Plante, CPA, CA, Mr. Yves Millette, Mr. Pierre Y. Langlois, Mrs. Martine Tremblay, architect.