

Virtual Care in BC

Learnings from the first year of
Foundry's provincial virtual service
for youth and their caregivers.

Evaluation Report | 2020–2021



With the declaration of a global COVID-19 pandemic, Foundry had to work quickly to implement innovative virtual solutions. In early April 2020, Foundry Virtual BC began offering services to young people and caregivers across BC with access to virtual services.

One year later, these are our learnings:

- 1.** Foundry's provincial virtual service filled a gap for youth and their families/caregivers who otherwise may not have accessed services.
- 2.** The soft launch of the Foundry BC app has already changed the way youth and families/caregivers access services virtually in BC.
- 3.** Breaking down barriers to access and advancements in technology have led to increased youth engagement with Foundry Virtual BC.
- 4.** With the rapid launch of Foundry Virtual BC, youth in BC have been able to access multiple services to address their needs and improve their outcomes.
- 5.** Foundry's provincial virtual service is reaching high risk and high-needs youth across BC.
- 6.** BC youth and families/caregivers are having positive experiences with Foundry Virtual BC technology, services and staff.
- 7.** Foundry's provincial virtual service team has gained valuable insight for quality improvement opportunities and innovations in virtual care.



Thank you to Frayme for their Virtual Innovations in Care grant in support of the evaluation of Foundry's provincial virtual services. We also wish to acknowledge the entire Foundry network and all other supporters of Foundry's provincial virtual services without whom the rapid launch and success of these services would not have been possible.

Learning #1

Foundry's provincial virtual service filled a gap for youth and their families/caregivers who otherwise may not have accessed services.

40%

of youth felt more comfortable accessing services virtually than in a physical centre

27%

of youth indicated that they had nowhere else to go and wouldn't have received help if Foundry's provincial virtual service was not available

15%

of youth chose to access Foundry's provincial virtual service because of the COVID-19 pandemic

30%

of youth indicated that they can't access in-person services in their community

15%

of youth indicated that Foundry Virtual BC service hours work better for them

Youth

3,038

visits

3,585

total services offered

1,399

unique youth accessed services

Family and Caregivers

306

visits

314

total services offered

179

unique family/caregiver accessed services

Learning #2

The soft launch of the Foundry BC app has already changed the way youth and families/caregivers access services virtually in BC.

This app is the first of its kind and will change the way youth access health services in BC. Co-designed by youth, for youth.

Since the “soft” launch on March 1, 2021 (not promoted publically):

567

youth registered

87

family / caregiver registrations

500

youth appointments completed

55

family / caregiver appointments completed

229

future appointments booked with youth

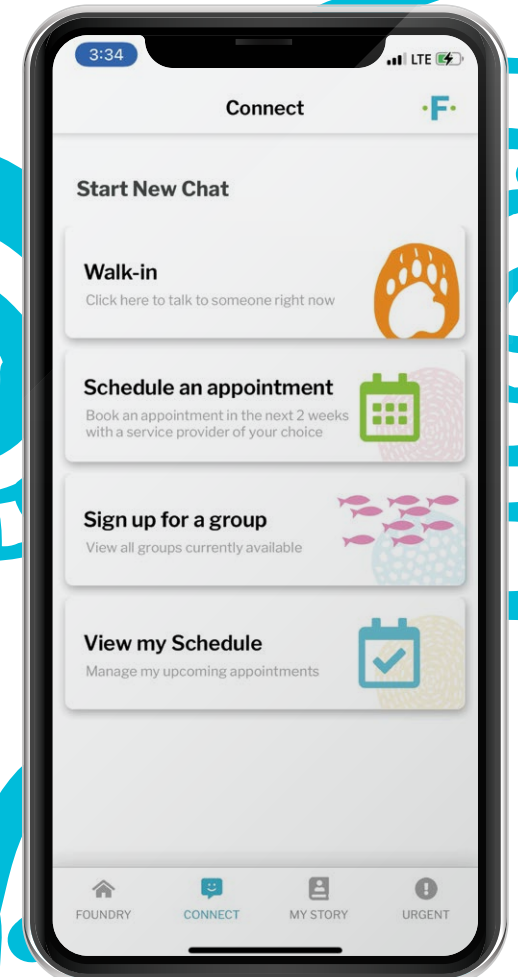
10

future appointments booked with families / caregivers

Foundry BC app is now available.

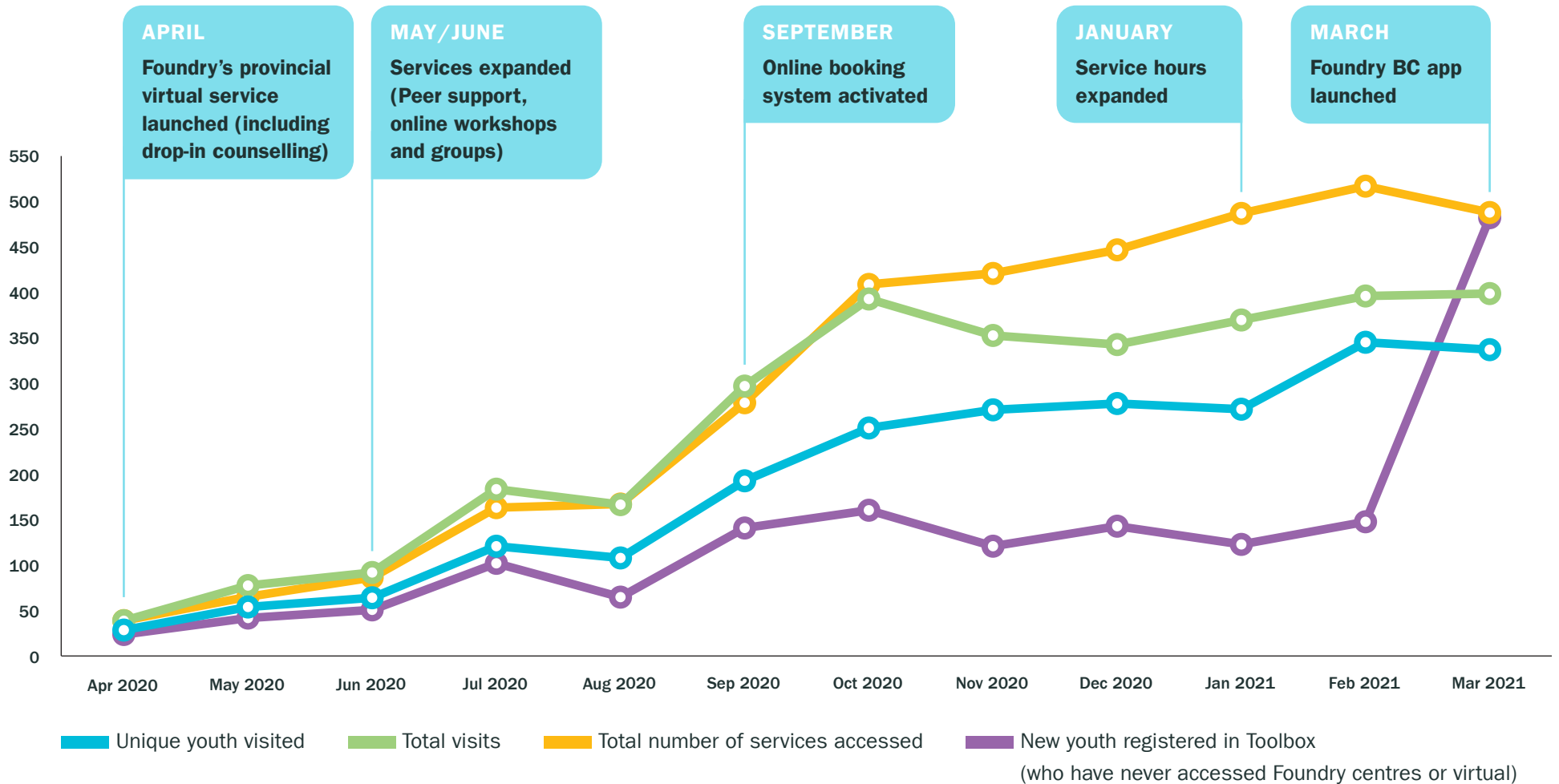
My Story feature

Foundry Virtual BC Youth Advisory committee co-designed the ‘My Story’ feature which allows youth to share their journey with Foundry’s provincial virtual service team. This feature will facilitate knowledge sharing between youth and service providers without burdening youth to retell their story multiple times to different staff.



Learning #3

Breaking down barriers to access and advancements in technology have led to increased youth engagement with Foundry Virtual BC.

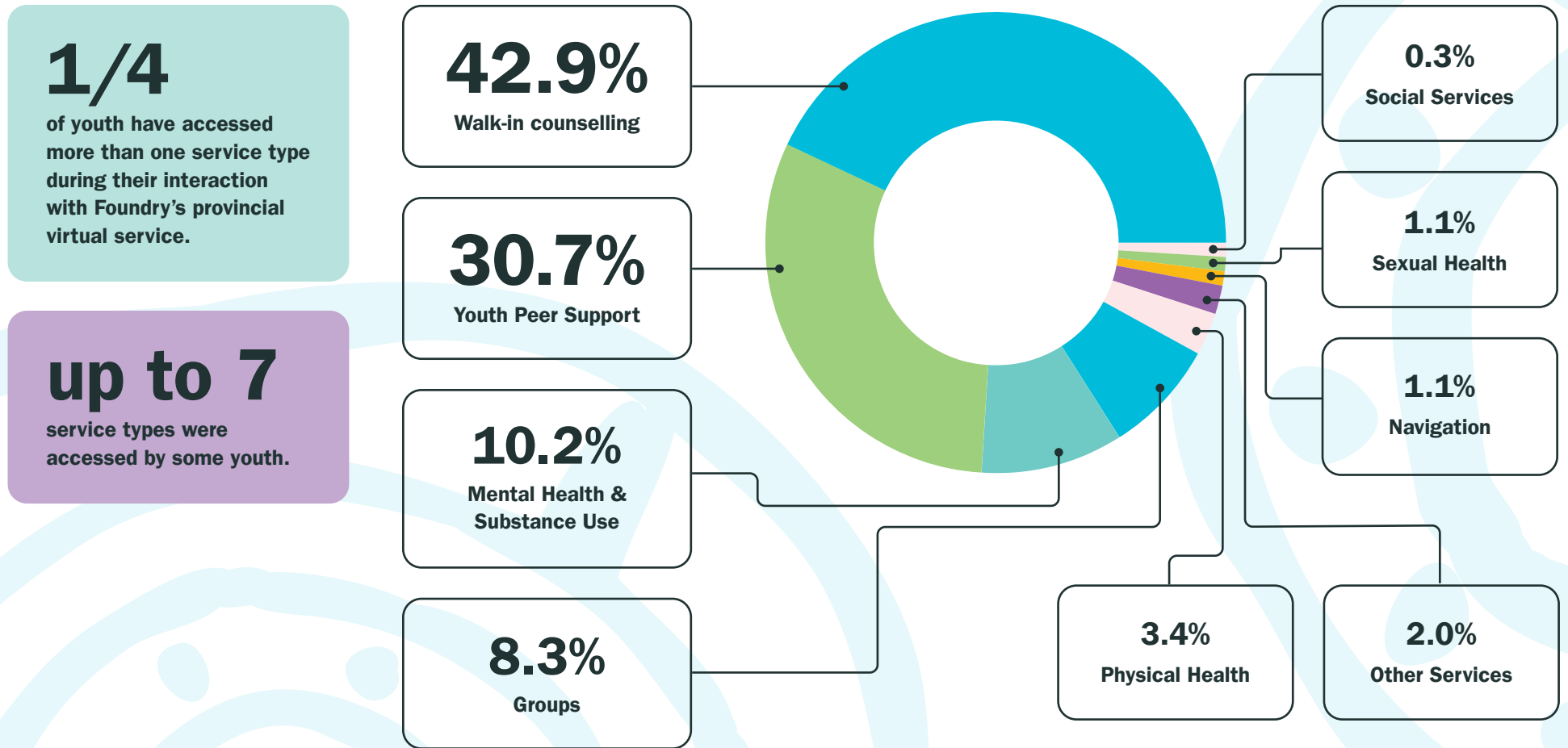


Foundry's internal data collection system, 'Toolbox' service and registration data, April 1, 2020–March 31, 2021.

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Learning #4

With the rapid launch of Foundry Virtual BC, youth in BC have been able to access multiple services to address their needs and improve their outcomes.



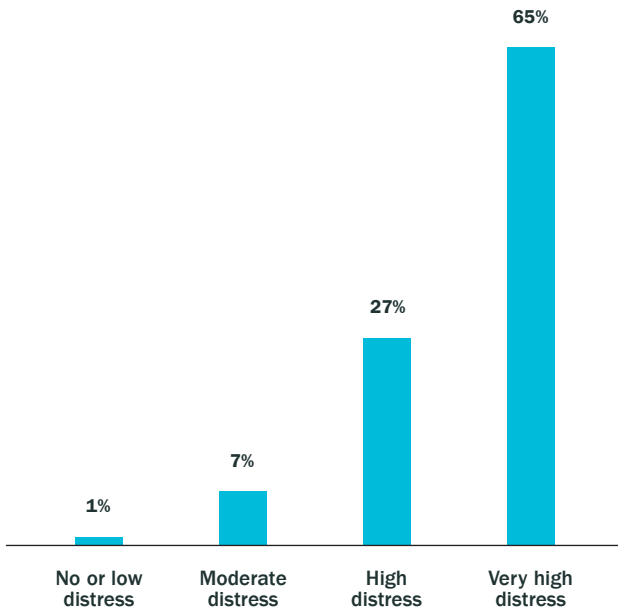
Learning #5

Foundry's provincial virtual service is reaching high risk and high-needs youth across BC.

92%

of youth are distressed or highly distressed when they come to Foundry's provincial virtual services

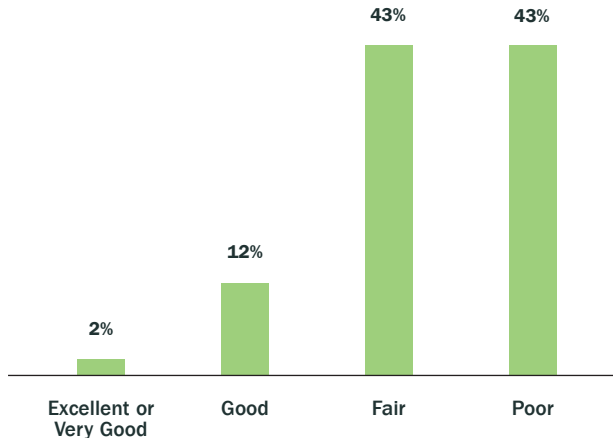
K10 (Kessler Psychological Distress Scale)
First Assessment Results (n=571)



86%

of youth identify having fair or poor mental health when they come to Foundry's provincial virtual services

In general, how would you rate your mental health?
First Assessment Results (n=581)



COVID-19 is impacting the mental health of youth who are accessing Foundry's provincial virtual services

"So many more low days. Extreme loneliness. High anxiety. It's been a very hard year."

"Things got real bad in the beginning, and with a whole lot of counseling, I'm doing better than I've ever been."

"The beginning was bad, but I got to work on myself a lot and am doing the best I've ever been."

"It makes me anxious since I live with elderlies and honestly it prevents me from socializing with a lot of friends."

"It has made my paranoia of being in public worse due to people that choose to not wear a mask. It has made being at my workplace very anxiety inducing due to coworkers that do not follow protocol."

Youth Experience Survey Findings
(n=25), March 2021

Learning #6

BC youth and families/caregivers are having positive experiences with Foundry Virtual BC technology, services and staff.

100%

of youth agree

it is easy to access services

staff are willing to go the extra distance to help support young people

it is easy to use technology

they were satisfied with their experience

Foundry's provincial virtual service is youth friendly

they felt less alone

services meet their needs and they can get help at Foundry

They would recommend Foundry Virtual BC to a friend

Foundry's provincial virtual service hours of operation work well

Youth expressed that they found Foundry provincial virtual services helpful in the following ways:

"My peer supporter really knows me by now and is able to make really personalized suggestions."

"Getting to talk about how I was feeling and ask for coping mechanisms. Allowing myself to say personal things."

"Affirmation that I am doing my best and not the only one struggling."

"It was convenient, and well thought out."

"Being able to talk about my goals and experiences without judgement."

"I was diagnosed with a disorder and that will now allow me to begin receiving treatment."

Learning #7

Foundry's provincial virtual service team has gained valuable insight for quality improvement opportunities and innovations in virtual care.

While youth don't have trouble accessing technology for their appointments, 13% do have trouble finding a space that they feel is suitable for their appointment. Foundry's provincial virtual service team could explore how to support youth to safely and comfortably access services.

In the virtual space, 6% of youth found it challenging to figure out what services or resources were available to them. There is an opportunity for Foundry's provincial virtual service team to investigate if there are ways we could improve the mechanisms for youth to access this information. It would also be important to compare this finding to youth experience at physical centres to see if there are any significant differences.

About 10% of youth were not satisfied with the level of involvement of their family members, caregivers or other service providers for decisions about services. More exploration is needed to understand if youth were not satisfied because they were too involved, or not involved enough.

If we could go back in time, we would...

- Invest in youth and family/caregiver engagement earlier on in the planning/development phase
- Ensure there are accessible mechanisms for feedback and this feedback is integrated
- Better integrate data collection tools and forms within systems to improve data quality
- Invest in technical expertise and training supports earlier in the process and allow more time for training/uptake
- Ensure robust HR policies/practices are embedded and assess the formal and informal supports needed for the remote work environment that would typically be available to staff in traditional office-based environments to try to minimize gaps
- Prepare for an increase in cancellations/no-shows with the introduction of the app including a plan to address how times can be rebooked