

COMMUNITY OF COMMUNITIES 2021-2022 NATIONAL REPORT



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Summary and Acknowledgements

Foreword



Just to reintroduce myself - I am John Turberville and have been chair of the Advisory Group at Community of Communities since 2015.

I am also CEO of The Mulberry Bush, a charity based in Oxfordshire, but working internationally offering a range of services to all those made vulnerable by childhood trauma. At the heart of The Mulberry Bush is an accredited therapeutic community for children and their families.

The advisory group comprises an impressive range of knowledge, experience and talent from across the range of service membership. The group meets regularly and supports and advises the management team based at the CCQI in the delivery and development of the quality improvement and accreditation systems for therapeutic communities and therapeutic childcare settings.

This 2021 – 2022 National Report is the first produced by this new management team at Community of Communities and it is a credit to them. It demonstrates how the team have continued to deliver adapted services to members through a particularly challenging time. It also captures and highlights just how tough and turbulent the past year has been for communities as they start to emerge from the impact on them and their members of the pandemic.

There is no doubt that one of the impacts of the pandemic has been that more people than ever will now need the help that TCs can offer.

At the same time as the pandemic cutting through many of the practices and structures services have come to rely on as the main stays of their intervention, it has demanded increased flexibility and creativity to ensure that the needs of the community members remain front and centre and that they provide the appropriate level of support to everyone at such a traumatic time. This all has meant that member organisations have had to change and adapt at pace and although supporting change for members is at the heart of their work, the sorts of changes that TCs have had to introduce very quickly, often without consultation or the level of thought and discussion they are used to, will have been hugely challenging. The report makes clear just how well members have done in this regard.

Foreword

What shines through in all the content, - especially the thematic analysis section, is relationships and relational practice which are at the very heart of the standards. It is clear that despite the challenges, the importance of relationships remained the golden thread running through the way members adapted. I was in a number of online discussions with member organisations, and heard first-hand how communities were coping, the adaptations they had made and the learning they were taking from the experience. It was very impressive.

Although most of the long-standing TC practice will be re-introduced as and when communities are ready, I am sure that next year's report will identify practices that have been adapted following the learning from the pandemic. A highlight of the year was the Annual Forum and being able to meet face to face again after a 2 year break. The feedback was excellent and we are delighted that attendees gained so much from the day. It is always a challenge to design a program that enables attendance at the maximum number of sessions when there is so much of interest to engage in. This at the same time as providing spaces for reflection and networking!

The team continue to find ways of networking and communicating with members and the Knowledge Hub is a key way this is done, I would encourage everyone to make use of this resource. The report also highlights the increasing move to use the CARS system for managing the recording of reviews and accreditation and again members using these systems the team introduce really help with their workload and their ability to efficiently deliver services to you all. Please use them if you can!

Once you have had a chance to dive into this report and read it through, the team would welcome your thoughts and feedback - so please do get in touch!

Finally, I would like to wish you all well for this coming year. I hope that the transition out of the pandemic is a smooth one for you and that the quality improvement systems of peer review and accreditation continue to support you to develop your work in service to all those that need us.

Many thanks!

John Turberville
Chair of the CofC Advisory Group

Introduction

Who we are

The Community of Communities (CofC) is a quality improvement and accreditation programme for Therapeutic Communities (TCs) in the UK and overseas.

The network is an initiative of the College Centre for Quality Improvement (CCQI) within the Royal College of Psychiatrists and our work supports members to meet the highest standards of TC practice through a process of self- and peer-review. The project aims to engage TCs in quality improvement, through developing external links with other TCs to promote best practice, improve knowledge and share learning.

Member TCs work with adults and children with a range of complex needs including personality disorder, offending behaviour, addictions, learning disabilities and severe mental illness. They are found within health, education, social care and prison settings.

CofC and the network works in partnership with The Consortium of Therapeutic Communities (TCTC).

For more information on who we are, [click here to visit our website.](#)



What we do

CofC combines a review cycle with the benefits of a peer-support network. Standards are agreed and then applied through a process of self-review and external peer-review where members visit each other's services.

The peer-review process allows for greater discussion on aspects of the service and provides an opportunity to learn from each other in a way that might not be possible in a visit by an inspectorate.

The results are fed back in local and national reports and action is taken to address any development needs that have been identified. The process is ongoing rather than a single iteration, and take place within an Annual Cycle.

The Annual Cycle



The Core Values

- CofC has developed a set of 10 **Core Values** subscribed to by all members of the CofC Network
- The values articulate the basic principles and philosophy of Therapeutic Communities (TCs)
- Services may use the values to provide context for the standards and to inform training relating to TC practice
- The values are not intended to be measured as part of the self- and peer-review process.

| Core Values | |
|-------------|--|
| CV1 | Healthy attachment is a developmental requirement for all human beings, and should be seen as a basic human right |
| CV2 | A safe and supportive environment is required for an individual to develop, to grow, or to change |
| CV3 | People need to feel respected and valued by others to be healthy. Everybody is unique and nobody should be defined or described by their problems alone |
| CV4 | All behaviour has meaning and represents communication which deserves understanding |
| CV5 | Personal well-being arises from one's ability to develop relationships which recognise mutual need |
| CV6 | Understanding how you relate to others and how others relate to you leads to better intimate, family, social and working relationships |
| CV7 | Ability to influence one's environment and relationships is necessary for personal well-being. Being involved in decision-making is required for shared participation, responsibility, and ownership |
| CV8 | There is not always a right answer, and it is often useful for individuals, groups and larger organisations to reflect rather than act immediately |
| CV9 | Positive and negative experiences are necessary for healthy development of individuals, groups, and the community |
| CV10 | Each individual has responsibility to the group, and the group in turn has collective responsibility to all individuals in it |

The Core Standards

The **Core Standards** operationalise the Core Values and represent the basic requirements of a service using a TC approach

| Core Standards | |
|----------------|--|
| CS1 | There is a clear Therapeutic Community model of practice that is consistently applied across the service |
| CS2 | Community Members are aware of the expectations of Community Membership |
| CS3 | Community Members are encouraged to form a relationship with the Community and with each other as a significant part of Community life |
| CS4 | Community Members work together to review, set and maintain Community rules and boundaries |
| CS5 | There is a structured timetable of activities that reflects the needs of Community Members |
| CS6 | All behaviour and emotional expression is open to discussion within the Community |
| CS7 | Community Members take part in the day to day running of the community |
| CS8 | Everything that happens in the Community is treated as a learning opportunity |
| CS9 | Community Members share responsibility for the emotional and physical safety of each other |
| CS10 | Community Members are active in the personal development of each other |

To learn more about the development of the Core Values and Core Standards, click here to access our briefing paper



TC Service Standards

The majority of our members use the [TC Service Standards \(10th edition\)](#). The 10th Edition of Service Standards has been developed in conjunction with our members and on best available evidence and expert consensus. The Service Standards are organised into five categories: *Core Standards*, *Staff*, *Joining and Leaving*, *Therapeutic Framework*, *External Relations and Performance*. The Standards within these categories contain a total of 140 Elements, broken down into 30 Standards and 110 supporting Criteria. Each Standard has typically three or four criterion statements, which define what we would expect to see in a service that meets the overarching standard. The criteria are not an exhaustive list, and communities are able to identify additional ways they meet the standard during the self- and peer-review process. It is important to note that each criterion is accompanied by a number, 1, 2 or 3. These number represent the “typing” of associated with the accreditation process. They are however, relevant to the peer-review process in that they identify those criterion that are:

Type 1: Essential

Type 2: Expected in a good Therapeutic Community

Type 3: Recognised as best practice

Therapeutic Child Care (TCC) Standards

For the 2017-2018 cycle, the Community of Communities introduced a new set of standards focusing on therapeutic childcare (TCC). This included a total of 12 standards which focus on 7 sections: *Statement of Principles and Practice, Leadership and Management, Staffing, Therapeutic/Care Programme and Framework, Physical Environment, Safety and Health, and Governance and External Relations*. The marking criteria for the standards is the same as for the service standards for Therapeutic Communities.

During the 2021-2022 review cycle, seven members used these standards.



Purpose of this report

This report has been written for all CofC Members. It allows everyone to see how the network is doing overall, and get an insight into our overarching findings. The report can be used:



For communities' own quality improvement purposes

To show Commissioners and Stakeholders



To recognise achievements

For the CofC team to review our own practice



How to read this report

This report includes data from the 2021 – 2022 CofC review cycle. Within this cycle, 31 members completed either a self-review, online peer-review or online accreditation using the TC Service Standards, 10th edition (see [page 26](#) for an overview of reviews).

The majority of results reported within this report are taken from these reviews. However, some communities did not complete full self-reviews. For example, some chose to focus on the Core Standards only. Therefore the sample size for the figures within this report changes. This is reflected using (n =), so if 20 communities completed a section of their report, this will be shown as n = 20.

The report also contains data from four TCC reviews, includes an overview of 13 His Majesty's Prison (HMP) focus groups, and contains a thematic analysis of 10 open discussions held within the network.



Outline of report

Section One

Overview of Membership

Infographics of:

- Amount of Members
- Types of Membership
- Locations of Members
- Sizes of Member TCs
- Standards Used by Members
- Regulatory Bodies Across the Network

Section Two

Overview of the 2021-2022 Cycle

- Overview of Reviews
- Most and Least Met Criteria
- Benchmarking Data
- Reflecting and rebuilding: A thematic analysis of open discussions held within the Community of Communities network during 2021-2022
- HMP Findings
- Review Feedback

Section Three

Looking to the Future

- The CofC 2021 - 2022 Annual Forum
- "Back on the Road" - The Return to In-Person Reviews
- Community Meeting Changes
- Knowledge Hub

Section One:

Overview of Membership

Overview of Membership

The infographics across the following pages represent the Community of Communities' (CofC) membership between September 2021 - April 2022 including the:

Amount of Members

Types of Membership

Locations of Members

Sizes of Member TCs

Standards Used by Members

Regulatory Bodies Across the Network

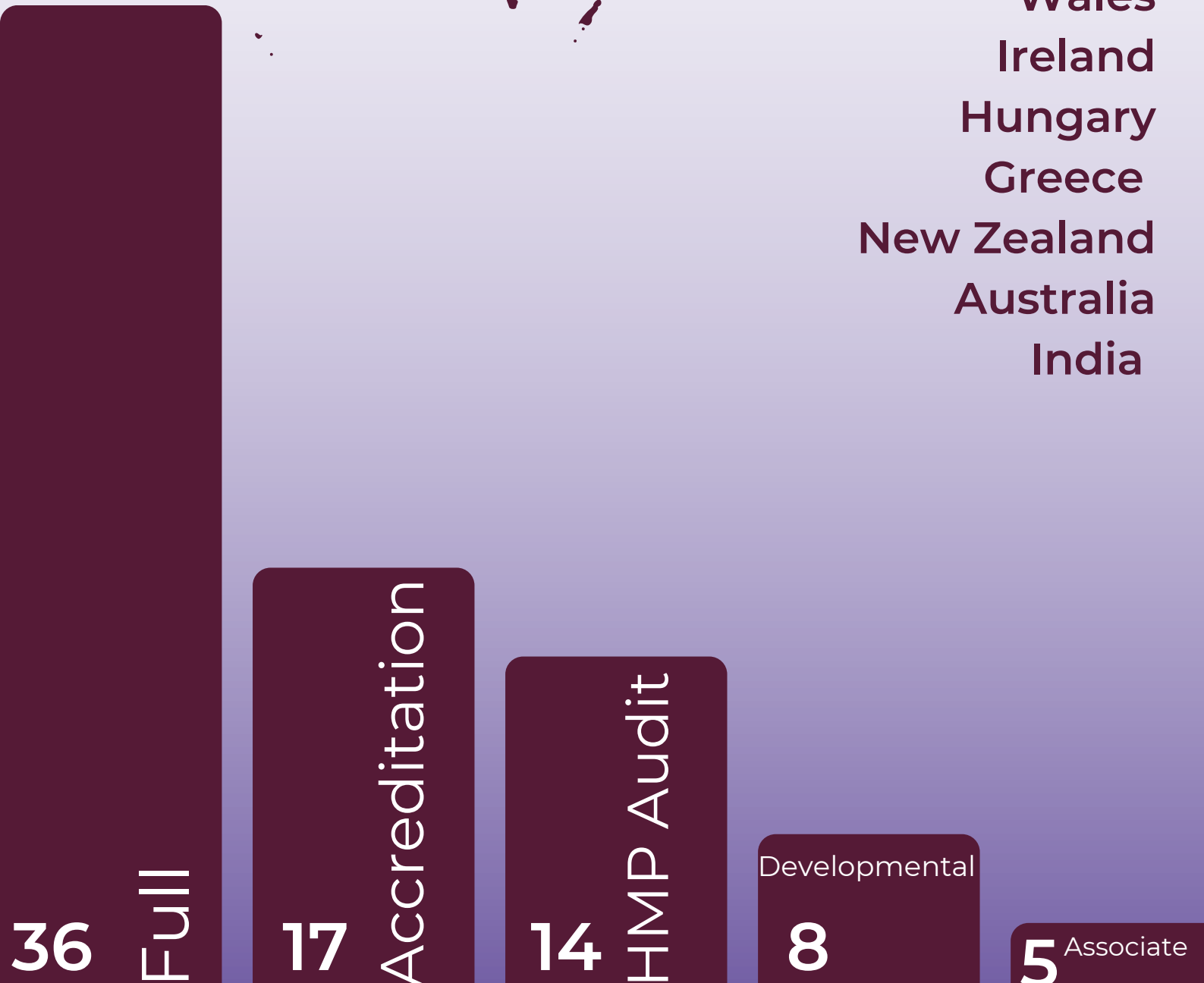


80

members of the
CofC network
during
2021-2022

Across the world in

England
Wales
Ireland
Hungary
Greece
New Zealand
Australia
India



Map of Members across England, Ireland and Wales

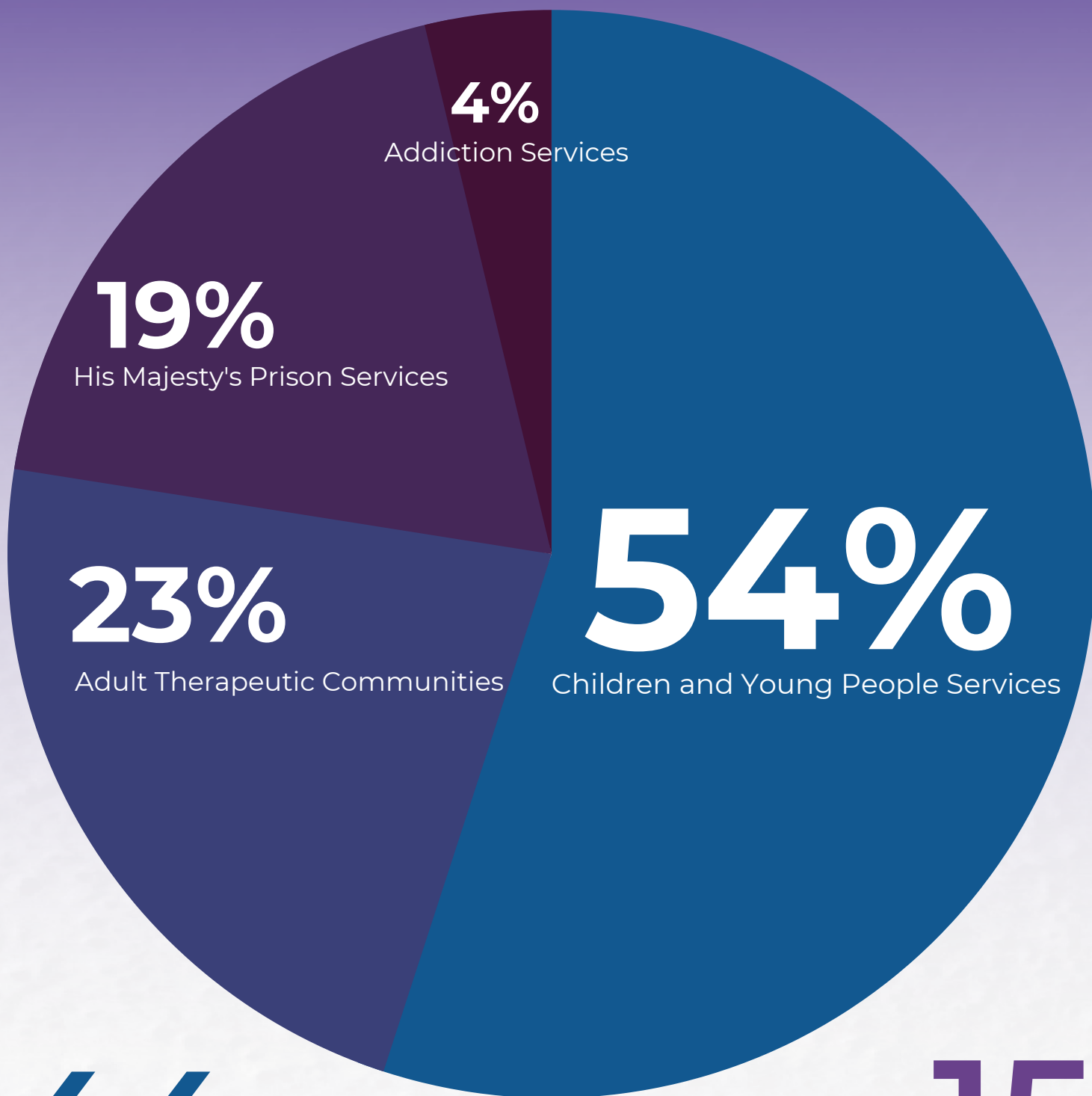


Population sizes of
member services
range from



3 to 400+

Our members are...



44

CYP members

15

ADD members

18

ADTC members

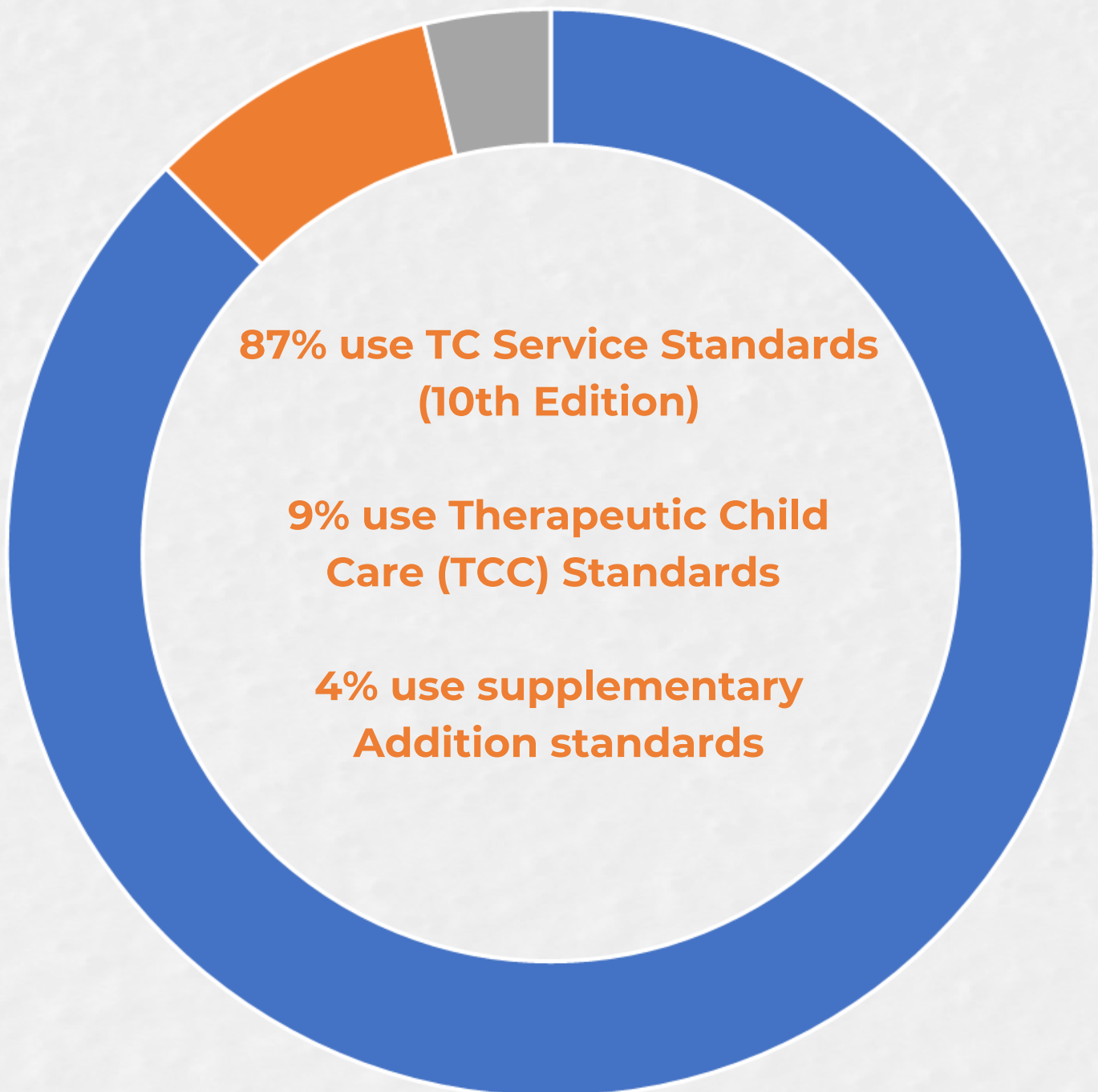
3

HMP members

Our members work with regulatory bodies including...



- The Care Quality Commission (CQC)
- Ofsted
- Tusla
- Care Inspectorate Wales (CIW)
- Health Service Executive (HSE)



**87% use TC Service Standards
(10th Edition)**

**9% use Therapeutic Child
Care (TCC) Standards**

**4% use supplementary
Addition standards**

Section Two:

Overview of the 2021-2022 Cycle

Overview of the 2021-2022 Cycle

This section includes data from the 2021-2022 review cycle. It covers:

Overview of Reviews

Most and Least Met Criteria

Average Scores on TC Service Standards

Average Scores on TCC Standards

Reflecting and rebuilding: A thematic analysis of open discussions held within the Community of Communities network during 2021-2022

Summary of HMP Focus Groups

Review Feedback

Overview of Reviews

During the 2021-2022 Cycle, our members completed...



Supportive Visits

This year we piloted supportive visits to member communities who wanted a less formal visit from a peer-review team.

These visits involved open discussions and provided the host community with an opportunity to work through the self-review workbook with visitors from other established therapeutic communities.

Due to the success of these visits, we will continue to offer this option to communities instead of a traditional peer-review upon request.



CYP New Members' Event

We hosted a new members' event for new joiners from the Children and Young People (CYP) sector. This involved a detailed discussion of the standards with two TC Specialists, who provided tips and tricks for completing a CofC Self-Review workbook.

14 communities were represented on the day.

Most and Least Met Criteria

We conducted an analysis of the scores given during Accreditation, Peer- and Self-Reviews. The following pages highlight the Most and Least Met TC Service Standard Criteria across the network.



Core Standards



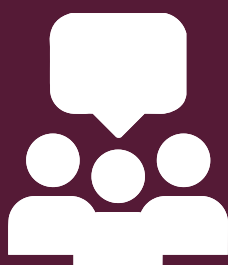
Most Met:

1.1.4 - There is evidence of commitment to the Therapeutic Community approach by the wider organisation within which the community sits. For example, a Strategic or Business plan

(Type 2)

94%
marked as
fully met

45%
marked as
fully met



Least Met:

1.10.3 - There is a process in place to gain input from service users and staff into each other's reviews or appraisals. For example, using 360-degree feedback.

(Type 3)

n = 31

Staffing



Most Met:

2.3.1 - Staff undertake continuing professional development (of at least two days per year) relevant to working within a Therapeutic Community.

(Type 1)

91%
marked as
fully met

70%
marked as
fully met

Least Met:

2.5.2 -The staff dynamics or sensitivity group enables staff to reflect on their relationships with the wider organisation.

(Type 1)



$n = 23$

Joining and Leaving



Most Met:

3.4.1 - Service users and staff are involved in the planning and preparation for members leaving the Therapeutic Community (Type 1)

3.4.2 - Service users and staff explore and work with issues relating to endings for those leaving and for those being left (Type 1)

3.4.4 - The community marks an individual leaving with an event or celebration (Type 1)

100%
marked as
fully met

64%
marked as
fully met

n = 22



Least Met:

3.2.2 - The information pack is reviewed regularly (minimum annually) with contributions from current service users and staff. (Type 2)

Therapeutic Framework



Most Met:

4.1.2 - The leadership has a comprehensive understanding of the Therapeutic Community Model of practice.

(Type 1)

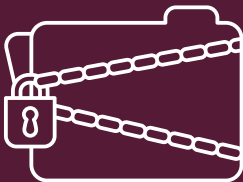
100%
marked as
fully met

70%
marked as
fully met

Least Met:

4.4.3 - The confidentiality policy is reviewed regularly (minimum annually) with input from service users and staff.

(Type 2)



n = 21

External Relations and Performance



Most Met:

5.1.1 - Visitors are welcomed and service users and staff explain the work of the Therapeutic Community.

(Type 2)

81%
marked as
fully met

29%
marked as
fully met

Least Met:

5.2.5 - The Therapeutic Community collects environmental data that will help provide evidence for their effectiveness. For example, Ward Atmosphere Scale, Essences.

(Type 2)



n = 21

Average Scores on TC Service Standards

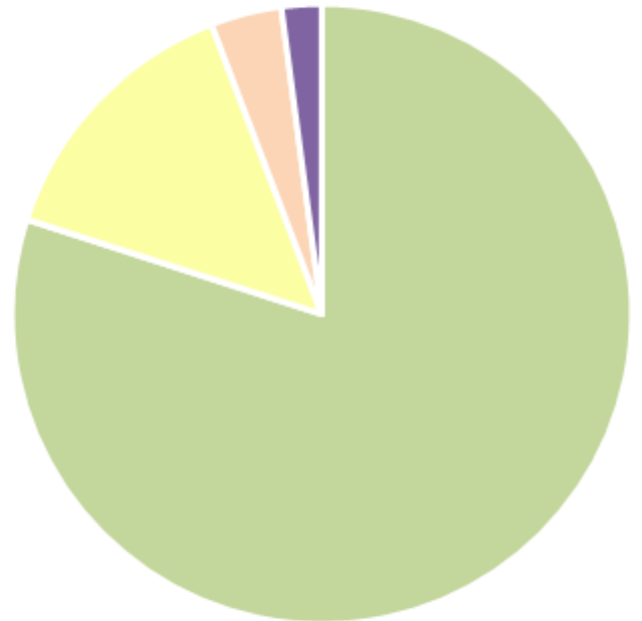
The graph below represents the average percentage of standards and criteria met, partly met and not met by the whole CofC membership using TC Service Standards in the 2021-2022 cycle. This data will be used in the benchmarking section of 2022-2023 CofC Reports.

80% Met

14% Partly Met

4% Not Met

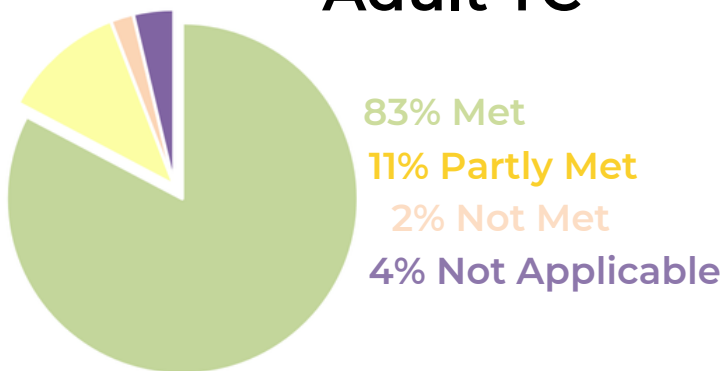
2% Not Applicable



n = 37

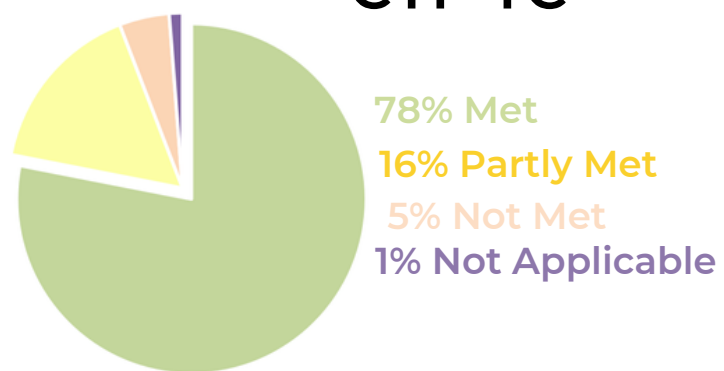
Breakdown by Sector

Adult TC



n = 9

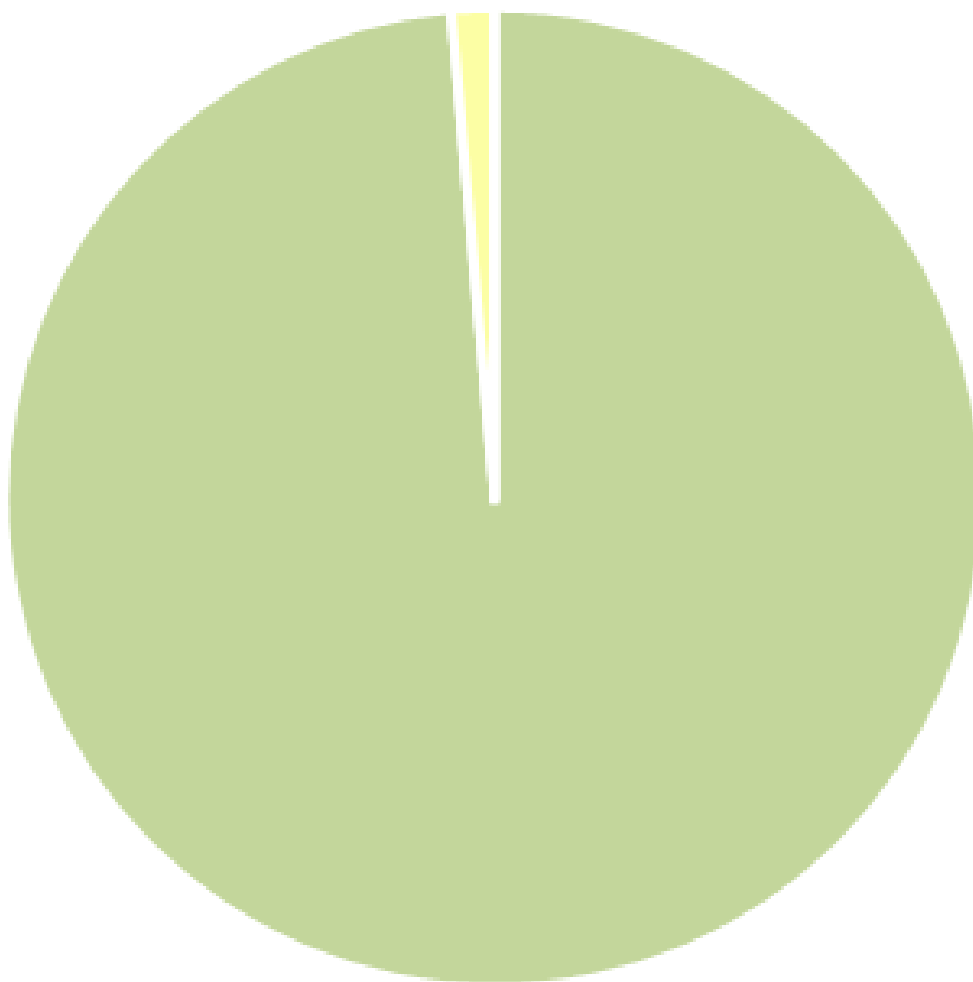
CYP TC



n = 22

Average Scores on Therapeutic Child Care Standards

Four communities completed reviews using the Therapeutic Child Care Standards (TCC). The average score is represented in the graph below.



98.6% Met

1.4% Partly Met

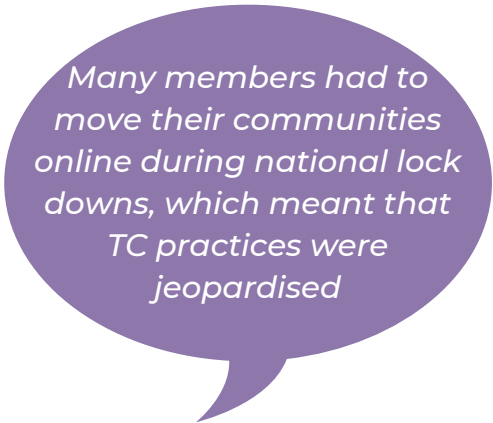
Reflecting and rebuilding: A thematic analysis of open discussions held within the Community of Communities network during the 2021-2022 review cycle

Introduction

During 2021-2022, Therapeutic Communities (TCs) across the United Kingdom and beyond were going through a process of rebuilding following multiple lock downs and restrictions caused by the COVID pandemic. During this time, the Community of Communities (CofC) also conducted 10 open discussions within peer-review and supportive visits, as well as a new members event. These discussions included representatives from 24 communities, and 28 lead and peer reviewers from a further 11 communities. Therefore, we decided to conduct a thematic analysis of these discussions in order to get a better understanding of the experiences of our members during this unique period. The analysis was conducted by coding the open discussion sections of finalised reports until initial themes arose. These were then developed and explored until overarching themes were established. Although not all of the TCs chose to explicitly discuss the effects of COVID within their open discussion, this subject unsurprisingly arose throughout. Therefore, the themes below offer a reflection of how CofC members adapted during the pandemic, and their thoughts and experiences on returning back to face to face therapy.


Loss and Limitations

The theme of loss and limitations reflects how the COVID pandemic caused challenges for member TCs that were incredibly difficult to deal with. Many members had to move their communities online during national lockdowns, which meant that TC practices were jeopardised. For example, informal time is a crucial part of TC life, which allows beneficial conversations to happen within a group setting in an organic way. However, some communities that had moved online described how this element felt missing and could not be replicated in the virtual world. Moreover, this loss of informal time also affected communities that were able to meet in person. A Therapeutic Child Care (TCC) service described how children were only allowed to eat together in social “bubbles”, and so the opportunity for meaningful connections within a larger setting was limited.



Many members had to move their communities online during national lockdowns, which meant that TC practices were jeopardised

Communities also described how their culture was affected during this time. An adult day TC chose to discuss how to regain their TC culture, which suggested that they felt this culture was absent during their time online. Within their discussion they explained that a lot of senior community members left during the pandemic which meant that culture carriers were no longer there. The loss of culture carriers was also reiterated by another adult day TC, who described how some members found moving online particularly difficult, and so they had left the service completely.



Online services can be impossible to engage with for those who have limited access to technology

Moreover, online services can be impossible to engage with for those who have limited access to technology. For example, one adult day TC described how some community members could not access their community at the beginning of the pandemic, because they did not have equipment to join videoconferencing platforms. This difficulty was also reiterated by a TCC service who described how they had children who struggled to access computers at home because they lived in large households with multiple young people requiring an online education

Additionally, accessibility can also be affected by health barriers. For example, some community members within TCs could not engage in online therapy due to anxiety, and others described how their autism meant that they struggled to engage online.


Overall, many TCs felt that the pandemic was characterised by limited functioning and losses within their communities, with many describing how crucial elements of TC culture, such as informal time, were missing and that some community members had restricted access due technology and health barriers.

Working hard and creatively

The theme working hard and creatively demonstrates that despite the limitations caused by COVID, there were fantastic adaptations achieved due to communities' dedication, creativity, and hard work. An adult day TC described how community members combated technology inequalities by working together to help find mobile phones or iPads for those without access. Additionally, they took detailed notes of community meetings to share with members until technology was put in place by their organisation. This adaptive working was also reiterated by a TCC service who explained that they provided their children's carers with personalised timetables to ensure that all children in larger households could have access to online education.



There were fantastic adaptations achieved due to communities' dedication, creativity, and hard work.



Service users and their support networks were always prioritised during this unprecedented time

Communities also described how community members and their support networks were always prioritised during this unprecedented time. While virtual methods do have their limitations, they did allow for communities to continue during a time when meeting in person was not an option. One TCC service explained how they used virtual methods to support children at home, for example by reading them bedtime stories, or teaching them lessons on videoconferencing software. This was echoed by another TCC service who supported families by calling them on a weekly basis for check-ins.

Finally, peer-review teams heard how staff members worked strenuously to ensure that their TC could be therapeutically effective during the COVID pandemic. An adult day TC described how staff members had to work hard to resolve the many issues and difficulties that arose over the months. This was echoed by a TCC service who explained that staff had to band together during this time to prioritise the wellbeing of their children and young people. In fact, within one peer-review for a child day TC, the peer-review team recognised that the service's effective adaptations were only made possible by the tireless work and dedication of the staff.

It is therefore clear that community members worked incredibly hard and creatively to ensure that their TCs could continue, and that everyone within the community could be supported during this time.

Challenges for staff

Throughout many of the open discussions, the hard work and dedication of staff members was acknowledged and praised. However, the theme challenges for staff reflects how this period was also extremely difficult for the staff of TCs. The line between professional and personal life can be blurred for someone working within the care sector, and some members explained how this was exacerbated during the pandemic. A TCC service described how staff were concerned about their own health, particularly if they were medically vulnerable, and how this would understandably affect their ability to work throughout the pandemic. This staff anxiety was also echoed by another TCC service, who explained that there was a huge psychological impact on staff, and how they tried to negate this with support sessions and wellbeing check-ins.

The line between professional and personal life can be blurred for someone working within the care sector, and some members explained how this was exacerbated during the pandemic

Furthermore, one of the blurred boundaries between one's professional and personal life was raised by members who described how some staff were concerned about getting a COVID vaccine. Nationally, laws were being put in place requiring those working in care homes to get vaccinated against COVID. While this was not a requirement for our member TCs, some services engaged in discussions around the implications of working in a care environment without the COVID vaccine. Some staff were troubled with this decision making, which is something those working in different sections may not have to grapple with.

Challenges were also exacerbated by the wider staffing problem felt across TCs. One adult day TC described how quality improvement work such as the CoFC self-review process was challenging to complete due to the lack of staff and resources they had available during this time. This was echoed by another adult day TC who described how a lot of staff members left their community over the course of the pandemic, which put serious pressures on their service.



The best way to improve the wellbeing of staff and tackle recruitment issues within a service was to have an effective and supportive leadership

However, many communities agreed that the best way to improve the wellbeing of staff and tackle recruitment issues within a service was to have an effective and supportive leadership. One TCC service described how their leadership team was crucial in keeping staff well informed and supported, which ultimately prepared them for further challenges. This idea was also reiterated within the new members event, where TC Specialists highlighted the importance of a supportive and communicative Senior Management Team.

Therefore, it seems that this period was very challenging for the staff of TCs, but having a supportive leadership team was seen as the most effective way of dealing with these difficulties.

Moving forward

TCs reflected on how they coped during the pandemic, the difficulties they experienced, as well as the creative adaptations they had made. However, during this unique period, many communities were in the process of returning to in-person settings or larger groups. Therefore, the theme moving forward reflects how communities were looking to the future and processing this next considerable change.

For some, returning back to face to face brought about its own challenges. One adult day TC explained that after 18 months of getting used to their virtual community, adjusting back to an in-person setting was also difficult, and that for some of the newer community members, this process felt too sudden. This was echoed by another adult day TC, who described how they were needing to adjust back to face-to-face way of being together after a long period online.



Returning back to face to face brought about its own challenges

For those communities struggling, it was suggested that quality improvement, and the CofC review process in particular, could be used a way to address any challenges that arose

For those communities struggling, it was suggested that quality improvement, and the CofC review process in particular, could be used a way to address any challenges that arose. For example, during an adult day TC peer-review, the peer-review team suggested that the CofC workbook could be used as a live document that the community can refer to for developmental purposes. This notion was reiterated within the new members event, where TC Specialists explained that the review process is about breaking practices down to identify where challenges may be, and to action plan against these.

However, despite the concerns, most communities described how they were excited to move forward during this time. An adult day TC described how they had reached a “tentatively exciting point” since they were looking to transition to in-person group therapy. Additionally, children of a TCC service expressed excitement towards the idea of alternative therapies, such as massage therapy, returning. Furthermore, communities described how the pandemic had provided them with an opportunity to look towards the future and rebuild. One adult TC explained that since the pandemic had changed their community dramatically, they were now going through a period of growth, and were able to relook at their community and its needs. This was also reiterated by another adult TC, who explained how their community was preparing for expansion before the pandemic, and now they were able to look to the future and plan for these developments.

Therefore, for the majority of CofC TCs, the return back to face to face was greatly anticipated and was looked to as an opportunity to develop and move forward.

Conclusion

CofC held 10 open discussions with member TCs during 2021 – 2022. This period of time was particularly unique, as many communities were processing the effects of the COVID pandemic, and the associated lock downs and restrictions, while also preparing and looking forward to the future. We found that the pandemic caused a great deal loss for TCs, because they had to grapple with virtual methods that isolated some vulnerable individuals and also reduced the effectiveness of TC practice. We also heard how despite these challenges, the hard and creative work of community members and staff allowed TCs to continue and adapt over this period. Communities explained how staff faced many challenges, that could only be negated by an effective and supportive management team. Finally, we heard how TCs were going through a process of rebuilding and moving towards the future, which was characterised by some adversity but mostly excitement and hope.

Overall, this era has caused immense challenges for TCs, but the hard work of community members as well as their dedication and commitment to TC practice is something to commend during this period of reflection and restoration.

Review Feedback

Following peer, supportive and accreditation review visits, communities were asked to complete a community feedback form to share their thoughts around the review day. The following pages summarise the responses from ten communities. Responses highlighted **in purple with white writing** represent CofC's areas for development, and we action plan against these on page 48.



Word Map of Responses given by Communities.

Thinking about the day generally, tell us how the review went.....

You Said:

Overall, it was positive. It was an opportunity to come together as a community, and connect with the larger CofC network. There was shared learning, and it was a supportive process.

There were some anxieties before and during the review day, that were exacerbated by some meetings overrunning.

There were issues regarding IT, and a feeling that online reviews left a host community disconnected from the peer-review team

Tell us what you learnt from the review.....

You Said:

There were examples of good practice, how to go further. This was linked to how the CofC standards relate to therapeutic goals.

How to reflect on experiences as a team, and the importance of service user input.

That face to face interaction is preferred, both for daily community life and for the review day

Did you enjoy taking part and preparing for the review day?

You Said:

It was great to pull together as a team and the process was empowering to service users, whose input was valued.

It was enjoyable to meet new people from the network, and reconnect with those not seen for a while. This provided opportunities to share experiences.

The day was a bit overwhelming and caused some anxieties – particularly for those who had other inspections, or had to stay late to accommodate the day.

What else would you like to gain from a peer-review visit?

You Said:

It would be good to hear about the successes and challenges of other organisations to get more insight into how other TCs run.

More acknowledgement and advice on training needs of the service, and the anxieties that the host community may have.

It would be useful to have a face to face visit so that the review team can get a proper feel of the community. There was a lack of informal time and discussions.

Did you find completing the self-review helpful and were you able to learn from this process?

You Said:

Learnt how to develop the service and it provided an opportunity to evaluate practice

Being busy, the process allows for a reflective period to focus on therapeutic practice

It is a big task – but necessary to find new initiatives

Was the self-review a helpful tool in identifying areas of improvement and areas of achievement for your community?

You Said:

Yes, it shows what is being done well, what needs to be worked on and how there has been improvements over time.

It provides an opportunity to work together across the wider TC and gather data which helps to inform decision making.

Is there anything else you would like to see in the self and peer-review process?

You Said:

Overall, the process met expectations, encouraged reflection and shared learning

It would be good to return to face to face and the workbook could be more user friendly

If you could add anything new to the review process, what would it be?

You Said:

An opportunity to share best practice on how to complete the self-review

A child-friendly booklet or questionnaire separate to the main workbook

Highlight training opportunities and link these with areas of development

Introduce creative ways to begin the day - such as an activity to get the group engaged, which will make the process less scary.

Action Plan for CofC

Following this feedback, our action points are as follows:

1

We will continue to support people with the preparation for their reviews. For example, we can support with technology and adapting timetables. For reviews online, we can be flexible and creative to encourage more interactive and informal elements.

2

CofC now uses a hybrid model. We can offer face to face visits where possible for communities that prefer this.

3

We will increase the amount of peer reviewers we train, and offer lead reviewer training to those who have attended three or more peer-reviews.

4

We will continue to encourage members to share learning and resources on Knowledge Hub and at the Annual Forum so that communities can receive advice on training needs.

5

We will continue to encourage host communities to break their self-review workbook into manageable chunks so it doesn't feel like a huge task.

6

We have launched CARS for the 2021-2022 cycle, which should make the self-review process more user friendly. We will also be on hand to support with any technical needs.

7

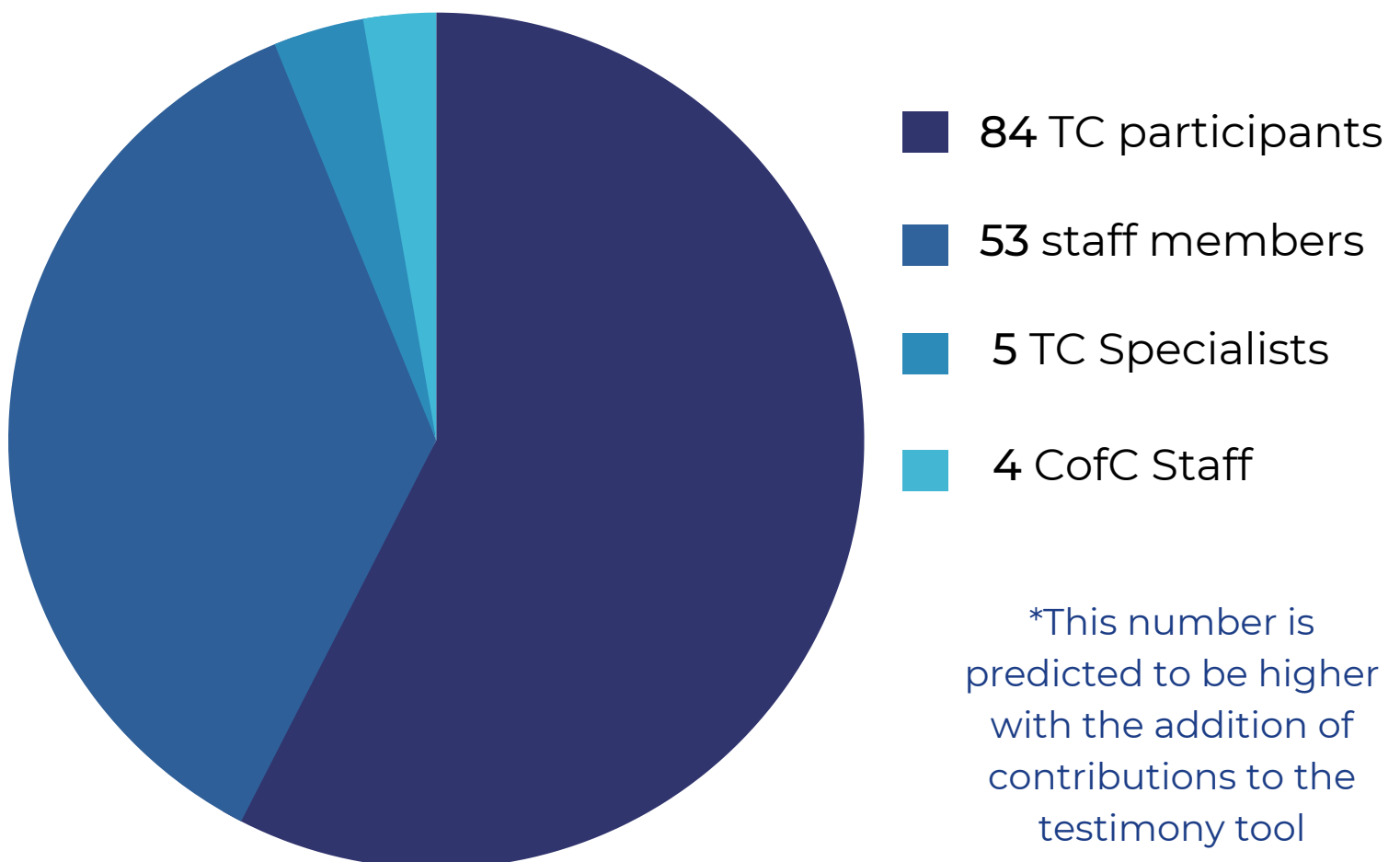
We will continue to make improvements to our materials to make them more accessible for members.

Summary of HMP Focus Groups

Due to the significant impact of COVID-19 there were restrictions on the ability of Democratic Therapeutic Communities (DTCs) and Therapeutic Communities for Offenders with Learning Disabilities (TC+) to deliver their therapeutic programme.

This meant that the usual audit process that provides quality assurance in our prison sites was unable to take place. To share how the communities have continued to function since March 2020 with CSAAP, our accrediting body, each community was asked to complete a reflective testimony and focus group, thinking about past, current and future experiences and plans.

- **11 DTCs and 3 TC+ sites contributed.**
- **146* individuals contributed to focus groups:**



TC+ sites were supported by allowing self-facilitation of focus groups and were forwarded short biographies and pictures of facilitators to ease any anxiety around the introduction of new people in their community.

Findings were summarised into six themes that highlighted these experiences. The themes were:

- restriction
- isolation
- lack of communication
- TC participant and staff changes
- creative support and rebuilding.

This information was used to create a short thematic report to be shared with CSAAP and the HMP network to inform on the unique experiences during this time, as well as supporting CofC to highlight support needs and good practice moving forward. Please contact CofC for more information on this report.

Artwork submitted from tools was also presented at the CofC Annual Forum and can be seen throughout the report.



Community Participant at HMP Warren Hill

Section Three:

Looking to the Future

Looking to the Future

This section includes data from the 2021-2022 review cycle. It covers:

The 2021-2022 Annual Forum

"Back on the Road" written by Peer Representative, Simon Coope, describing the pilot in-person visit and the return to face to face reviews

Changes to the Community Meeting

Knowledge Hub

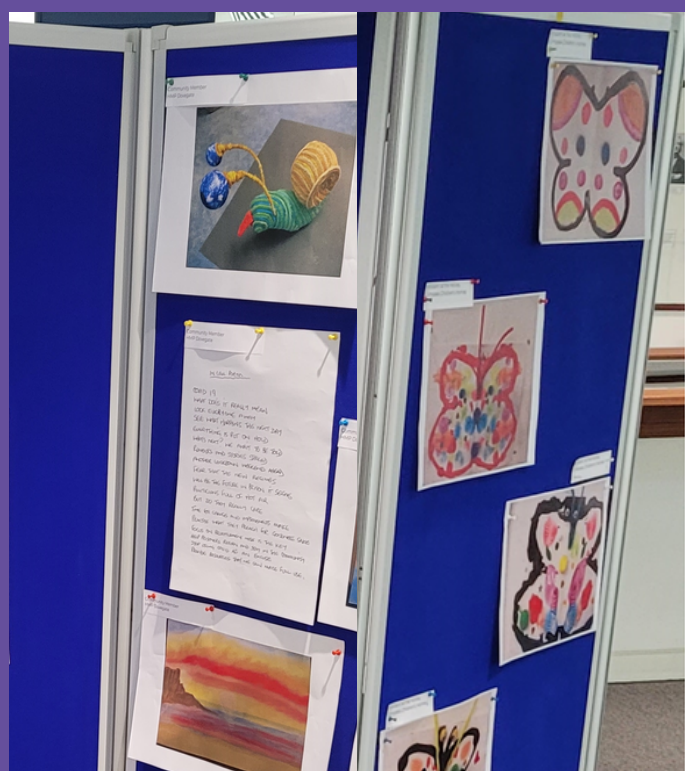
The 2021-2022 CofC Annual Forum

On the 1 June 2022, over 70 people attended the first face to face CofC Annual Forum in almost three years. The theme of the conference was *Therapeutic Communities in Transition*, which reflected how member TCs were going through a period of transition following the restrictions and lock downs caused by the COVID pandemic.

The theme was explored within eight different workshops, all held by different CofC member communities, including a Diversity and Inclusion Workshop, a session on Core Creative Psychotherapy, and a performance by Oxford STARS (ex-community members).

The keynote speech was delivered by Fakhry Davids, a Psychoanalyst working clinically in London who is also the author of *Internal Racism: A Psychoanalytic Approach to Race and Difference*. His thought-provoking speech explored the relationship between psychoanalysis, race and racism, and the relevance of this today.

In the lobby, an art competition took place in which artwork from different member communities was on display, and delegates could vote for their favourite piece. The winner was from HMP Dovegate and is featured on the front cover of this report.



Congratulations to our artwork winners...



1st Place

Community
Member from
HMP Dovegate



2nd Place

Community
Member from
HMP Dovegate

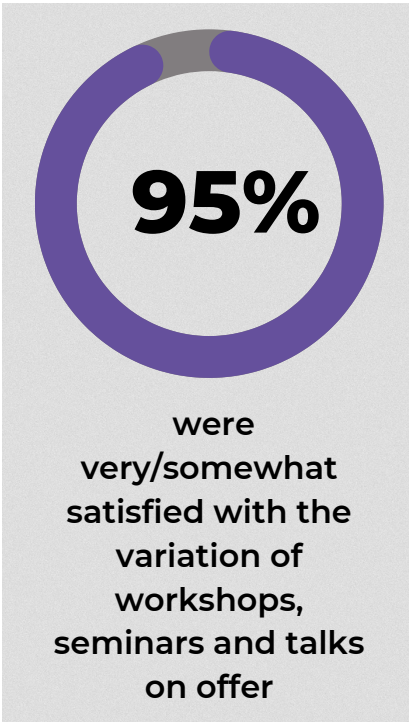
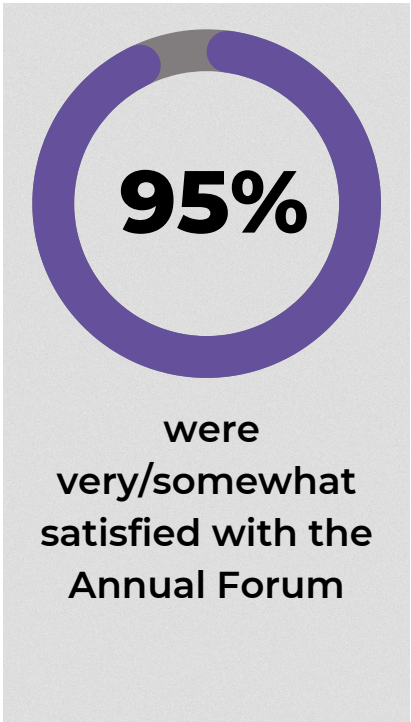


3rd Place

Community
Member from
HMP Dovegate

Feedback

Overall, the day was incredibly positive. Attendees were happy to be together again, after a difficult period apart, and this was certainly reflected within the feedback received after the day:



Average Rating (out of 5) for the...

4.5



Art Competition

4.7



CofC Presentation

4.53



Morning Workshop

4.37



Keynote Speech

Areas for Improvement

We also received some useful constructive criticism which will allow us to improve our next face to face event.

Attendees wanted...

More breaks, or an earlier afternoon break

For workshops to take place at different times so that they could attend more

Average Rating (out of 5) for the Food and Drink

3.6



Overall, the CofC team would like to thank everyone who attended and took part in the Annual Forum. Events such as these could not happen without our members' engagement, and so we thank you for your continued support.

Back on the Road

During the 2021-2022 review cycle, CofC piloted an in-person peer-review following two years of online visits. Lead Reviewer **Simon Coope** attended this review, and presented a workshop at the Annual Forum exploring the network's return to face to face. He reflects on this in the article below...

After two years of the COVID-19 pandemic, during which time limited peer reviews have only been completed via video, it was good to go out and visit a Therapeutic Community again.

As a “Pilot Peer-Review,” aimed at seeing how visits are able to resume again there were some anxieties:

- Would I remember how to do the Peer-Reviews?
- What would it be like traveling long distances again?
- What impact has the pandemic had on communities?
- What restrictions would I come across to protect people?

With many years of such reviews behind me, I was able to quickly get back up to speed with the standards however a nagging doubt remained. Travel was organised, the timetable set and during conversations with the service all restrictions were understood.

Setting off once again with my rucksack felt very strange and more so being on crowded trains with other passengers. This got me thinking about the relationships we find in Communities. Not only because of my own experiences of lock down, but also because several communities around the network had described how relationships and the culture of Therapeutic communities had suffered during the last two years. Residential Communities have reported that relationships had improved, whilst relationships in day services who only met online had diminished.



Arriving after a long journey at the hotel for the night, I once again settled into some more reading about the community I was visiting the next day.

Up bright and early the next morning so I could do my Lateral Flow Test and then a short walk to the community.

Even after two years away from visits, the recognition of a therapeutic community was instant. There was a buzz about the place, people chatting and offering support to others. Although this was a Peer Review, it was recognised that quite a part of the discussions would be about the last two years as this service had only been meeting online and via outreach.

“

**Even after two years
away from visits, the
recognition of a
therapeutic community
was instant.**

”

It felt so good to be back in a community with everyone engaged in discussions and sharing how the community is working since restarting face to face meetings. Apart from the core standards which are completed at each visit, discussions about the impact of COVID-19 were valuable and very interesting for all. As expected, the main area which had suffered from a therapeutic point of view was the culture. It was accepted that a culture was bound to be lost within a community who only met online or via outreach services. Culture carriers had finished their therapy and moved on, leaving a new group of Members to rebuild it. Staffing had changed during this time as well, which added to the loss. An issue which is reflected in other services.

The day ended with a feeling of positivity for this community and those communities within the network. I now look forward to visiting communities again, meeting old friends and new along the way and helping, where possible in the work needed after the disaster of the pandemic.



Since this first pilot visit, I have taken part in face-to-face assessment visit through the Enabling Environments program however I was interested to learn what other Therapeutic Communities had experienced during the pandemic. With this in mind, I organised a workshop for the Annual Forum of Community of Communities.

This took place on the 1 June 2022 at The Royal College of Psychiatrists head office and the workshop was attended as part of the day by some 20 people. A mixture of service providers and members of communities.

Although only a short workshop within a day of talks and workshops, the discussions were of great interest to me. I focused on relationships within communities and how the pandemic had affected these relationships.

It was concluded that many services had been affected, some in a positive way but many negatively. Services operating on multiple sites found their relationships with other parts of their service had suffered, whilst those services operating in a “Bubble” found internal relationships were strengthened. It was interesting how services reported that they felt contained whilst wondering if that feeling was evident in the outside world. Children and young people often wondered why they could not freely access activities externally and this created tensions within the therapeutic community.

Fears and concerns were also expressed in some services, where members became concerned about others entering their environment.

The workshop closed with some feelings of hope for the future development of Therapeutic Communities and the re establishment of the culture found in them prior to the Pandemic.

Simon Coope
Lead Reviewer

Community Meeting Changes

During the 2021-2022 cycle, CofC held ten monthly community meetings for members of the network, facilitated by David Jones.

There were:



122

Attendees across all meetings



63

Representatives from member TCS

And an average of:



12

Attendees per meeting

However, feedback on these sessions has suggested that going forward, meetings should involve contributions from the network. Therefore, CofC have decided to reserve this space for our members to present, engage in short discussions and/or have a community meeting.

If you would like any more information on this, or would like to present a topic or discussion, please get in touch at cofc@rcpsych.ac.uk

Knowledge Hub

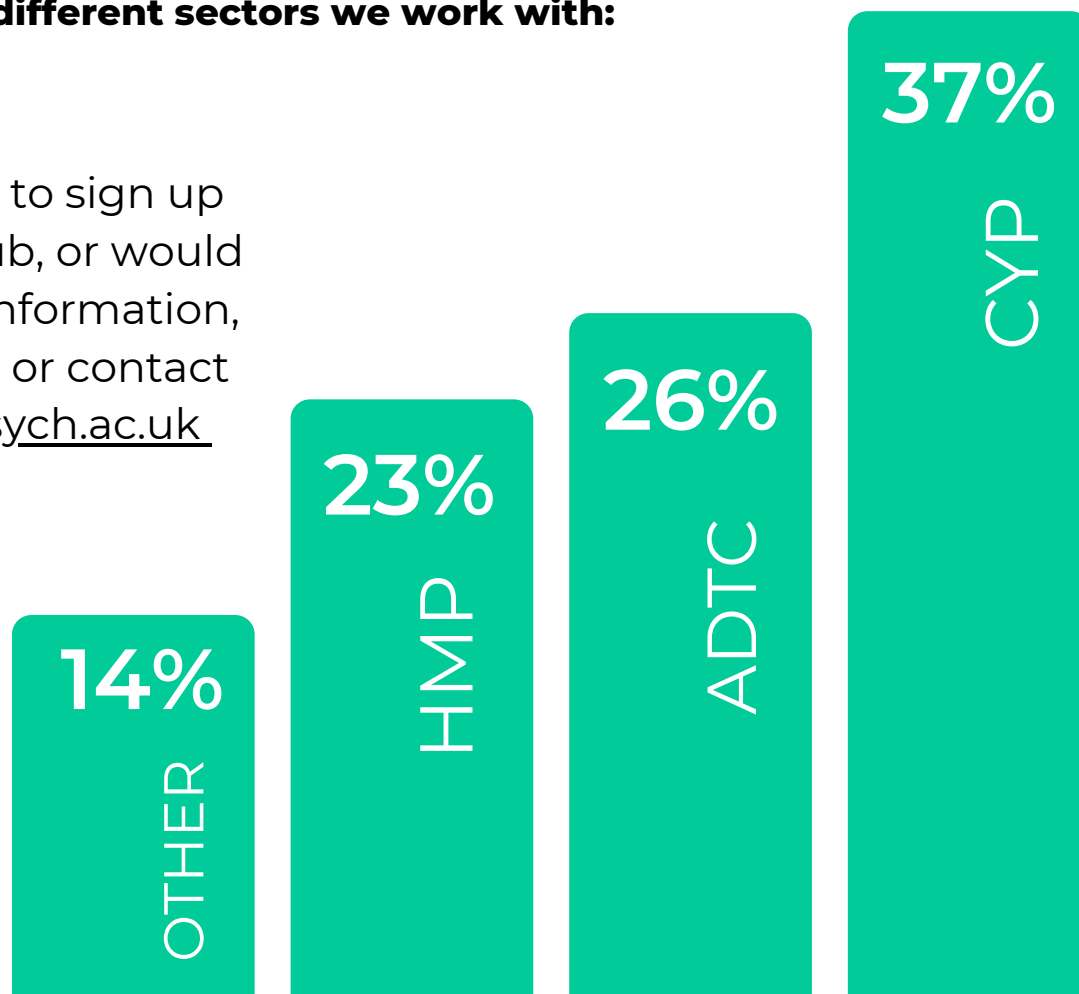
The Knowledge Hub is an online collaboration and knowledge share platform, which has been tailored so that our members can access resources and events, and also connect with peers who are members of CofC through live forums and discussion.



It is a fantastic platform to find out what is going on in the TC world, ask questions to peers, and get more involved with the network. We also post updates about reviews, events and documents here so it is useful for keeping on top of your CofC membership.

We currently have over 60 individuals signed up to the Hub from across the different sectors we work with:

If you would like to sign up to Knowledge Hub, or would like some more information, [visit our website](#) or contact us at cofc@rcpsych.ac.uk



Summary and Acknowledgements

Summary and Overall Recommendations

This report has explored membership figures of CofC during the 2021-2022 cycle. It has outlined an overview of the cycle, including an overview of reviews, the most and least met criteria, and the average scores across the standards. A thematic analysis of open discussions has been presented, as well as a summary of HMP Focus Groups that took place. We analysed feedback from reviews, which has informed an action plan for CofC, and summarised the report with a "Looking to the Future" section.

Despite the challenges caused by the pandemic, and transition back to face to face, we have had a successful cycle. The CofC Annual Forum demonstrated that there is an appetite to return to face-to-face, and our pilot in-person review has set the precedent for more in-person reviews within the 2022-2023 cycle.

CofC's main focus over the past two years has been to support member communities during this difficult time. Now, as we transition back to face-to-face reviews and events, our main goals and overall recommendations to ourselves for the 2022-2023 cycle include:



Developing our monthly community meetings and encouraging members to use this space to present and engage in short discussions on topics of their choice.



Providing support to our members during this transition period, by offering supportive visits in lieu of peer-review visits, and providing an option of either in-person or online visits.



Increasing engagement with our Knowledge Hub so that members can share learning and resources.



Supporting members to use CARS to complete their self-review, so that the process is more user-friendly.



Developing our Therapeutic Child Care (TCC) standards.

Acknowledgements

Community of Communities would like to thank the following for ensuring that the 2021-2022 Cycle was a success, and without whom, the quality improvement work could not have been completed:

- **Peer Representatives**
- **The CofC Advisory Group**
- **Members of the Therapeutic Community Accreditation Panel (TCAP)**
- **Members of Working Groups**
- **TC Specialists**
- **Lead Reviewers**
- **Peer Reviewers**

and of course

Our member communities!

Community of Communities (CofC)

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