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MEDIA RELEASE - FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Hastings County's Partnership With HelpSeeker Having Impact During COVID-19 Crisis

NEWS

Since mid-March, COVID has been the tag that has been most searched on the internet in Hastings County, indicating the need in our community for increased access to information.

Hastings County Community and Human Services Department has been working in close partnership with HelpSeeker, a Canadian mobile app that connects individuals with local resources.. When analysts at HelpSeeker honed in on the top COVID-related needs the top areas identified were: food, housing, counseling, addictions, abuse, and domestic violence. This key information validates the need for government programs to be focused on these important areas.

The numbers of inquiries are showing increased demand, and what has been encouraging is how the community and local support agencies have been stepping up. There are over 200 COVID-19related services registered on HelpSeeker in Hastings County to date.

By creating a searchable tag for COVID and opening up the ability to list supports and services to the general community, this resource is helping create a comprehensive list of available services, by encouraging those offering services the ability to populate the site with their information.

QUOTES

"We have been thrilled by the ingenuity and generosity of Canadians across the country. Everyone from cultural and faith communities to businesses and the charitable sector have come together to offer help. All we are doing is offering a free mobile app experience to connect those offering help to those looking for it," says HelpSeeker CEO & Co-Founder, Dr. Alina Turner.

"There's no way any one group can keep up with the speed of change happening right now; this is the time for innovative technology solutions that uses crowdsourcing to get us through this crisis - we are thankful to have the opportunity to pitch in," notes Jenny Cull, HelpSeeker VP Community Engagement.

"This resource can be used by both the public looking for resources, and the agencies themselves, who can create their own messaging and content," stated Erin Rivers,

Director of Community and Human Resources. “To have all of the resources available in one location will certainly help our most vulnerable during this crisis.”

“This is another example of Hastings County supporting people and our communities,” said Warden Rick Phillips. “We are always looking at innovative ways we can assist our residents and this partnership has created an invaluable resource to help our most vulnerable.”

BACKGROUND

HelpSeeker is a Canadian mobile app that connects individuals with local resources. When the COVID-19 crisis took hold in March, Calgary-based social enterprise company HelpSeeker issued a Call to Action to communities across the country; identifying all organizations and businesses that are providing support and services during the COVID-19 crisis, and getting these listed for everyone to find quickly. Already, thousands of organizations and businesses have updated and added their information to HelpSeeker.org across Canada, showing how communities come together in times of need.

If you are interested in participating in the Call to Action, go to HelpSeeker.org and add your service -- it is free. For anyone struggling, download the app or go to HelpSeeker.org to find support (free, anonymously).

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