

New study shows relationship between job loss and mental health
Calgary Counselling Centre's seeing increasing amount of unemployed clients

Calgary, AB – Feb. 8, 2016 – A new study at Calgary Counselling Centre shows that the economic downturn continues to weigh heavy on the community. The number of people who stated that they were unemployed in 2014 and looking for work increased by 17 percent from 11.4 percent in 2014 to 13.3 percent in 2015. Additionally, the mental health status of those feeling distressed deteriorated between 2014 and 2015.

“Clients in 2015 showed much higher levels of distress compared to clients in 2014, suggesting that there is significant relationship between those looking for work and mental health,” said Dr. Robbie Babins-Wagner, Chief Executive Officer, Calgary Counselling Centre. “In addition to these numbers, the demand for our services continues to increase month-over-month. This is a clear indicator that there are thousands in the community feeling strained due to the economy.”

Babins-Wagner is not surprised by the increase in the number of clients who are unemployed, but notes that the real concern is the higher level of distress. Like a doctor monitors a patient's vital signs, the Centre monitors client's level of distress. This is done by having clients answer a series of questions at each session. It's through this process that the Centre can see a significant increase in the level of distress that people are feeling at their initial counselling session.

“We're concerned about the pressure our community is under. And more significantly, that they're pushing their level of stress to an extreme before seeking help. We want to remind people experiencing job loss that they don't need to suffer in silence. Seek help,” adds Babins-Wagner. “Our new support groups will help those dealing with stress and uncertainty. Our highly-experienced counsellors will offer expertise and guidance on how to manage and cope during a time when opportunity seems far down the road.”

In January 2016, there were 915 requests for service. Not only was this number the highest in the organization's 50-year history, but it aligns with trends seen in late 2015. Request for services increased by 15 percent in both November and December 2015 when compared to 2014. It's clear that the trend is continuing as we begin 2016. Since the price of oil dropped in November 2014, the Centre has seen a total increase of 30 percent in requests for services.

Calgary Counselling Centre is always here to help with no waitlist, a sliding fee scale based on income, and barrier-free access to counselling for all Calgarians.

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For more information or to arrange an interview, please contact:

Joanna Byers, Communications Officer
P. 403.691.5905 C: 403.818.3085
E. joanna.byers@calgarycounselling.com

Calgary Counselling Centre is the leading research, training and knowledge-based counselling organization in Canada. Since 1962, the Centre has been committed to providing best practices in counselling, training and research to improve the well-being of Calgarians through highly effective counselling based on solid research and practice. Our services are available to anyone regardless of financial status, the Centre is a recognized leader in the treatment of domestic abuse, depression, eating disorders, separation/divorce, trauma and self-esteem. Through its ongoing research and education programs, Calgary Counselling Centre strives to meet the changing needs of our community.

EMPLOYMENT STATUS RESEARCH REQUEST

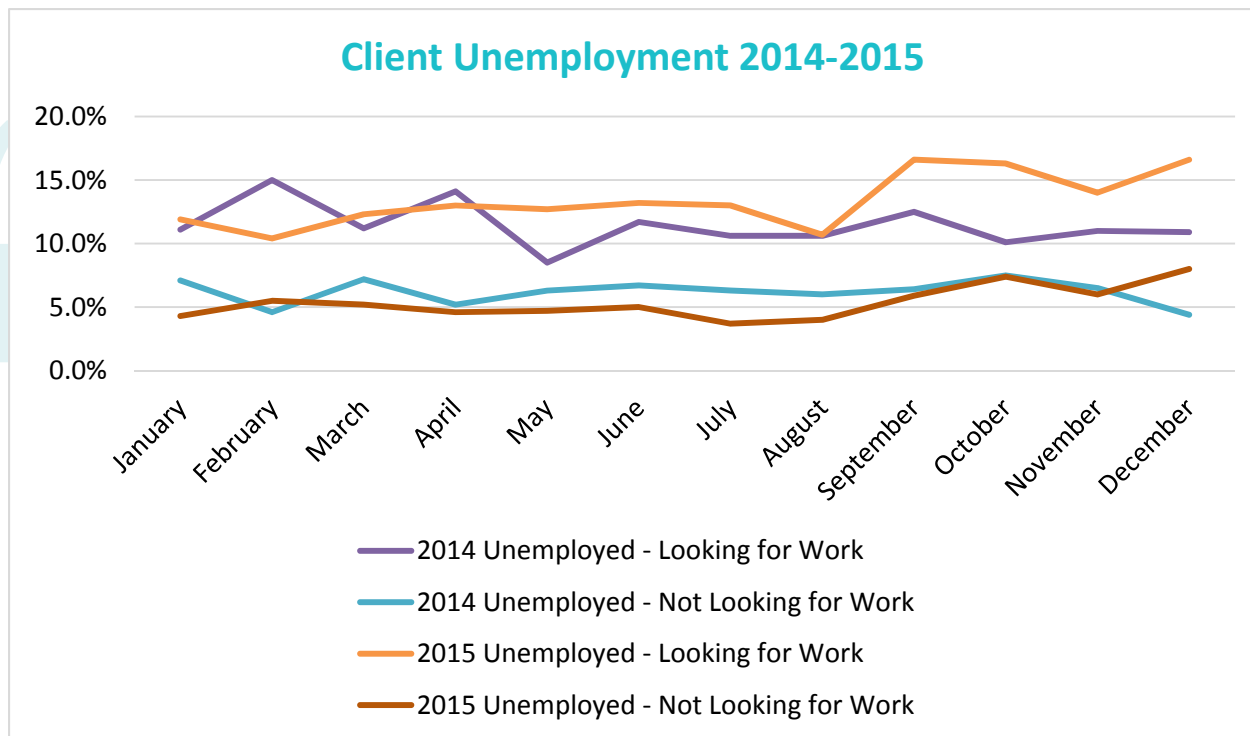


Table 1. CCC Client Unemployment 2014-2015

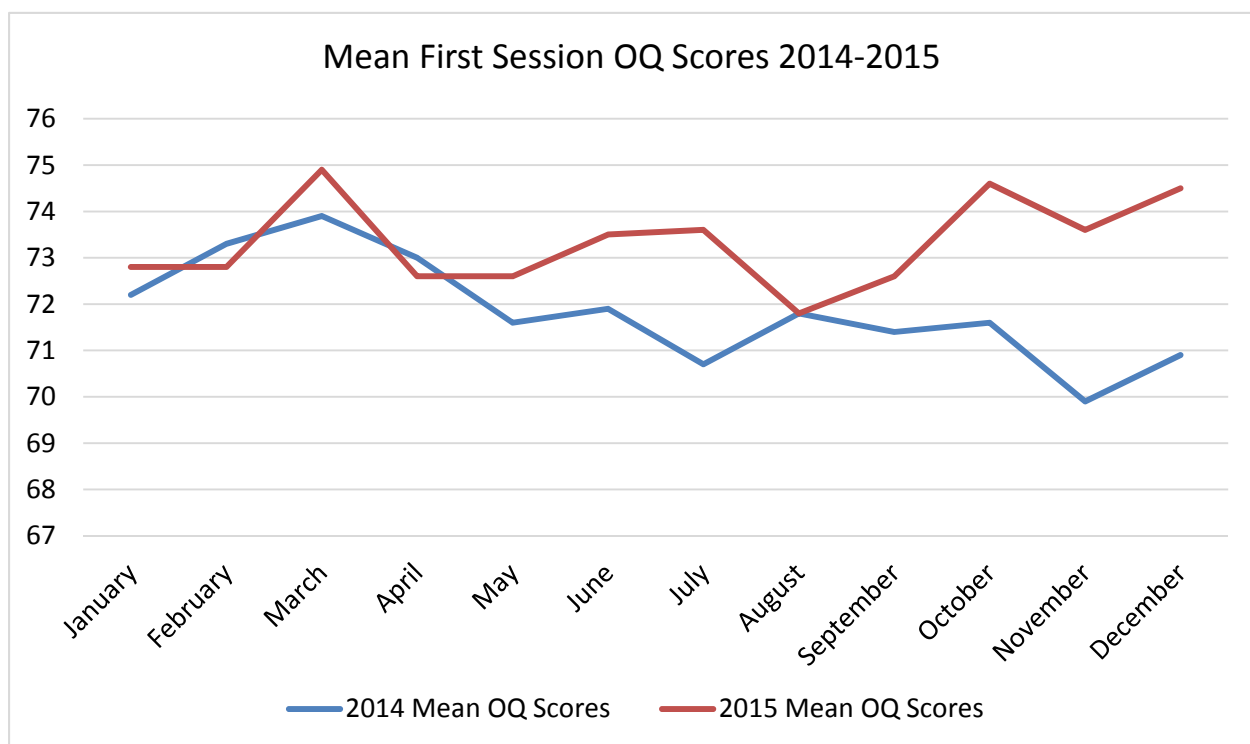


Table 2. Client Mean First Session OQ Scores 2014-2015