

# Ottawa Inner City Health

Healthcare. Harm Reduction. Hope.

## ANNUAL REPORT 2022-23



## THIS YEAR'S HIGHLIGHTS

### A Year of Change

It has been a year of change for OICH. We said goodbye to our longtime CEO, Wendy Muckle. We commit to working and honoring her legacy.

### We thank our staff and partners

We are incredibly thankful to our staff and partner staff for the work they do in our programs. We could not do this work without them.

### Safer Supply

A Safer Supply report was released this past year that outlines strong data for the program, including some of the incredible benefits we continue to see in our clients.

### Programs and Services update

We offer a review of all of our programs and services, with a special focus on Merivale Rd, our newest Supportive Living program

### Grief & Loss

We lost many clients and friends in the community this year due to the worsening toxic drug supply. We honor them in this Annual Report.

### Goals for 2023-24

We outline our goals for the 2023-24 year, which include improving the lives of people who use drugs, improving staff wellness and continuing to educate & advocate for our community.

# A MESSAGE FROM THE BOARD CHAIR AND CEO

Ottawa Inner City Health is an organization in transition! We have a new CEO at the helm and a revitalized Board of Directors prepared to write the next chapter in our history.

Coming out of COVID and after years of growth to rapidly evolving challenges in our community we have begun to play “catch up” with the internal systems and structures that, while suitable for a small healthcare organization, are no longer able to sustain our staff and our organization in the work we do.

The task remains daunting. The ongoing toxic drug crisis continues to kill and injure many in our community, the lack of affordable housing in Ottawa is pushing more and more people into the shelters and onto the streets, and the impact of COVID-19 on people who are unhoused’s mental health will continue for years ahead.

Despite these challenges, this past year, we have continued to work toward solutions with our partners to improve access to Safer Supply, open new supportive housing units, and increase access to more mental health services. We need to build on what we have learned works and continue to innovate with new programs and new interventions, co-designed by the communities and people we work with and implemented through our collaborative partnerships.

Thank you to the staff and management team at OICH, and all of our partner organizations for the work you do every day to care for our community. Our clients deserve the best and you continue to deliver!

Warmly,  
Rob Boyd & Tyler Fainstat



Healthcare. Harm Reduction. Hope.



**Rob Boyd**  
Chief Executive Officer



**Tyler Fainstat**  
Board Chair

# A year of change

This past year has been one of significant change at Ottawa Inner City Health as we celebrated the retirement of our CEO and founder, Wendy Muckle and our Medical Director, Dr. Jeff Turnbull. Wendy and Jeff were incredible visionaries and leaders who have fundamentally changed the landscape of health care for people who are unhoused in Ottawa over the past 21 years. Always at the forefront of responding to changing needs in our community and always with our clients at the centre of their focus. There is no proper way to provide a tribute to the remarkable work they have done, but we encourage you to visit our website to understand the reach of their legacy in Ottawa.

## 2022-2023 Board of Directors

<b>Stephen Bartolo</b> Shepherds of Good Hope	<b>Martine Dore</b> Cornerstone Housing for Women	<b>Marc Provost</b> Salvation Army
<b>Tyler Fainstat</b> John Howard Society	<b>David Arnold</b> Carefor	<b>Catharine Vandelinde</b> Options Bytowne
<b>Susan Farrell</b> Royal Ottawa Health Care Group	<b>Dawn Lyons</b> Somerset West CHC	<b>Peter Tilley</b> The Ottawa Mission
<b>Honorata Bittner</b> The Ottawa Hospital	<b>Helen Gottfried-Unruh</b> Canadian Mental Health Association	<b>Andrew Hendricks</b> City of Ottawa

## Our Partners

Shepherds of Good Hope  
Carefor  
Cornerstone Housing for Women  
Centretown CHC  
Sandy Hill CHC  
Canadian Mental Health Association  
Somerset West CHC  
The Ottawa Mission  
Ottawa Public Health  
Rideauwood Addiction and Family Services

Salvation Army  
The Ottawa Hospital  
Royal Ottawa Health Care Group  
Options Bytown  
John Howard Society  
Youth Services Bureau  
Ottawa Police  
Ottawa Paramedics  
City of Ottawa Housing Branch  
University of Ottawa

# Our Story so Far

## OUR HISTORY

Ottawa Inner City Health Inc. (OICH) started in 2001 as a response to local healthcare providers struggling to meet the needs of people who were homeless and had complex health needs.

Over 20 years later, OICH operates a Consumption and Treatment Service for people who use drugs, special shelter based health care services, supportive housing and outreach programs to help people with their health concerns. All OICH programs are operated in partnership with shelters, housing providers, hospitals, and community health providers.

The healthcare we provide is firmly rooted in evidence-based research, a harm reduction framework and a fierce love of our clients and the incredible community they bring to us. Our clients are resilient and strong and continue to be our biggest teachers daily.

## OUR SERVICE PHILOSOPHY

OICH is committed to:

- Excellence in the provision of care to individuals in our community
- Innovation, flexibility and responsive programs
- Collaboration and respect between all the partner organizations and service providers who support our work
- The responsible use of resources in keeping with the expectations of funders and the public
- Ending homelessness in our community
- Working collaboratively with people who use drugs to reflect their voice in all aspects of our work
- Actively reducing stigma and discrimination towards all members of our community.
- Being a teaching organization that facilitates teaching and research
- Creating a work environment in which staff are valued and respected and in which professional growth is nurtured





# OUR 2023-24 GOALS



## 1 Improving the lives of people who use drugs

The affordable housing crisis, the toxic drug supply and the impact of the pandemic have led to serious health impacts for people who use drugs. We are working with our community and our partners to restore hope and purpose to people who feel forgotten and abandoned through empowering community leadership, inclusion of their voices in the work we do, low barrier access to health care and support to maintain housing.

## 2 Staff Wellness

Working at the front lines of multiple crises and within broken systems of care has created tremendous challenges for our staff who have a deep love and empathy for the communities we serve. The development of a staff wellness strategy is top priority for us as we work with our teams and our partners to reconnect, reenergize and recommit to the reasons that we came into this work to begin with.

## 3 Community Education & Advocacy

Broader understanding of the complex social issues that are impacting the health of our clients and our ability to provide care to them is essential to working collaboratively with all our stakeholders to advocate for and implement strategies to improve the health of people who are unhoused and lessen the impact of these challenges on local communities.



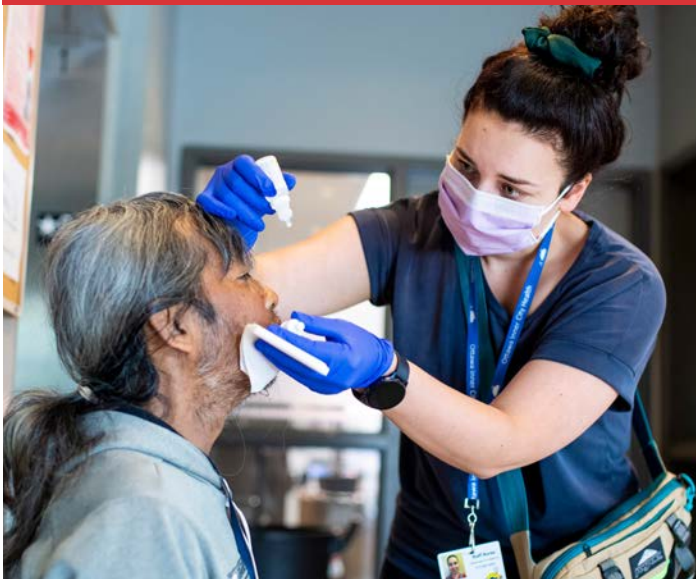
# OUR SUPPORTIVE LIVING PROGRAMS

## Booth House

Booth House provides supportive housing for 20 formerly homeless, older women in partnership with Cornerstone Housing for Women. Housing supports include 24-hour health and social supports enabling the women to live well despite the challenges of aging in combination with mental and physical health challenges.

## The Oaks

The Oaks is a supportive housing program which specializes in housing for people who are enrolled in a Managed Alcohol program. The Oaks is a highly social community with many activities and events. Over 40% of the Oaks residents are either First Nations or Inuit, making the inclusion of Indigenous culture an important part of daily life.



## Rita Thompson Residence

Run through a partnership with the John Howard Society, the Rita Thompson Residence provides 34 people of all genders with an opportunity to live in their own apartments while receiving an amazing depth of treatment and support surrounding mental health, physical health and substance use challenges. RTR has an amazing community of residents who work together to support each other and those in need in the larger community.

## Richcraft Residence

Despite the delays caused by the pandemic, Shepherds of Good Hope managed to build and open a brand new housing program which provides safe, individual apartments for all genders. The Richcraft Residence was the first OICH housing program which offered all available substance use, physical health and mental health treatments in one location, providing a full menu of care options for residents.





# OUR SUPPORTIVE LIVING PROGRAMS

## Carruthers

Carruthers is a supportive housing program operated in partnership with the John Howard Society with 46 units. Originally, the substance use treatment available focused strongly on Injectable Opiate Agonist Treatment (IOAT) with 20 of the available apartments reserved for people who were enrolled in that program. As was expected, many of the original residents have now migrated to other forms of treatment and to different lives where volunteering, work and time spent with family and friends are a priority.



## Merivale Road: Our newest program!

In partnership with the Shepherd's of Good Hope, our newest program opened recently. A supportive living building with 57 units, this program opened in the Carlington area and offers many supports- mental health, physical health, substance use support, case management, peer support and nursing care. This building offers wheelchair accessible units and lots of community space. We are excited to see what this community will bring!



Some of the  
wonderful  
staff team at  
Merivale

The new  
building in the  
Carlington  
community



# OUR SHELTER PROGRAMS

## Special Care for Men

Located at the Salvation Army, the Special Care Unit for Men provides space for 30 men needing intensive support for mental health, substance use and mental illness. This program is committed to helping men living with complex health needs to exit homelessness and to find housing with the right kinds of support needed for them to have a healthy future.

## The Diane Morrison Hospice

Between the 14-bed acute residential hospice and the 7-bed chronic palliative care program, the Diane Morrison Hospice is home to many people from our community in the last years and months of life. The hospice has an incredibly skilled staff time who brings comfort in the last moments of life. The breadth of supports provided to residents of the hospice is made possible through the partnership and support of the Ottawa Mission.



## TED- Targeted Engagement & Diversion

TED is a health care program which is embedded in the Temporary Enhanced Shelter Program (TESP) operated by Shepherds of Good Hope. The TED program consists of two services. The first is 24-hour monitoring for homeless people under the influence of drugs and alcohol which allows them to safely detox in the community rather than in a hospital ED. The second service entails accessible treatment and care for health care problems. This includes nursing, mental health services, intensive case management, peer support for appointments, nurse practitioners, psychiatry, access to an internist and medical monitoring. The increase in people experiencing homelessness with complex needs was evident as the TED program had to be expanded to address the increased number of clients needing care.



## OTHER PROGRAMS & SERVICES

## Consumption & Treatment Service: The Trailer

With 14 booths operating 24/7 we provide in excess of 7000 visits per month. Frequent overdoses in combination with the effects of an unstable drug supply make working in this site both challenging and rewarding. In addition to supervision of people while they inject drugs, the Trailer provides primary care, mental health care, case management and substance use treatment. See our data page to review some OICH stats on the Trailer from this past year.



## Safer Supply

Safer supply is a harm reduction approach to combatting the unregulated toxic drug supply. Clients in this program are prescribed opiates in order to reduce or eliminate their use of the unregulated toxic drug supply. This program targets clients who experience the most harms from unregulated drug use, such as repeated overdoses or other health harms. See our data page in this Annual Report to review important data about the Safer Supply program.



## DYMON HEALTH CLINIC



## Dymon Health Clinic

The primary care clinic operates 7 days a week to provide health care to homeless or street-involved people. In addition to operating the primary care clinic, the nurse practitioners also provide outreach services with a focus on improving access to primary care for people who use drugs. Since moving to the new clinic space, the addition of many specialty clinics like infectious diseases, HIV, foot care and a women's clinic at the Shepherd's of Good Hope.

## Telus Van

In partnership with TELUS Health for Good allows our mental health team to remove some the barriers that homeless or street-involved individuals face when accessing health care services. Mobile Health Clinics powered by TELUS Health are an efficient and innovative mobile healthcare delivery tool to reach communities in need by bringing essential services like primary and mental health care directly to the communities that need it most. The Telus van has allowed us to overcome barriers to client care that we previously struggled with.



# A Year in Data



## Consumption & Treatment Service Data

**228**

Average visits per day at the Trailer

**39091**

Referrals to other services made

82% opiates,  
9% stimulants,  
9% other

Drug usage  
breakdown

**220**

Unique clients seen by case managers

**2607**

Unique clients seen for primary care across all units

**305**

Number of EMS hospital diversions Jan-March 2023 in the TED program

**751**

overdoses reversed in 12 months

**145**

Shelter beds supported by OICH

**240**

Supportive living beds supported by OICH

## Program Highlight: Safer Supply

We continue to be amazed by the progress we see in our clients on safer supply. Clients in the Safer Supply program experience many benefits. In a 2022<sup>1</sup> report that analyzed data from 478 clients on Safer Supply (48 clients from OICH):

- 70% reported a decrease in illicit fentanyl use
- Overall improvement in mental health: at the beginning of SS intake, participants reported their mental health at a score of 1.75 with an increase to 3.74 since being on Safer Supply.
- More stability surrounding housing
- Less participation in criminalized behavior

“

'I would usually be overdosing at least a few times a week or at least a couple. Now it's been one overdose in a month or two, so it's definitely a big improvement. It [Safer Supply] helps with the cravings and helps me try and stay out of the cycle of repetitively draining my energy or my willpower.' -Safer Supply client

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Haines, Tefoglou, & O'Byrne. (2022). Safer Supply Ottawa evaluation: Fall 2022 report. <https://safersupplyottawa.com/research/>



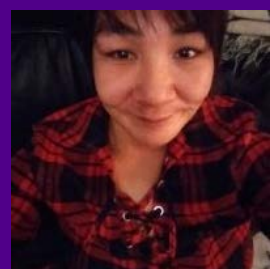
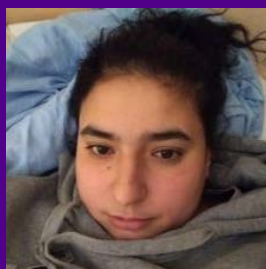
# In Memoriam

It is hard to capture or communicate a dedication that encompasses all the members of this community we have lost. Community and collective grief is a powerful thing. This page is dedicated to all of the folks in our community that we have lost too soon. Thank you for being our greatest teachers, our biggest source of joy and the driving reason for the work we do. You have taught us so much about community, taking care of each other and the fiercest strength and resilience we have ever seen. Though you are no longer with us, we will never forget you.

James Mitchell  
Edouard-Olivier Legare  
Russell Scott  
David Stitt  
Carole Twolan  
Daniel King  
Connor Whiteside  
James Vilon  
Abdallah Bassuny  
Stuart Gatt  
Claude Lavoie  
Emmanuel Frenandez  
Tanner Hiemstra  
Jessica Kangol  
Sandy Gordon  
Jacques Bedard  
Scott Leslee Brule  
Terri Lynn McGonagall  
Stephanie Childerhose  
Aleah Pattey

Paul Innualuk  
George Paden  
Lawrence Thomas  
Erin Beahen  
Elaine Thomas  
Plourde Frank  
Nancy Curley  
Blair LaPlante  
Ashakah Uwhomano  
Christopher Greenwood  
John Furman  
Suzy Gregoire  
Charlambois Loukivitis  
Miriam Napish  
Heath Bona  
Jean-Francois Richer  
Karl Lepage  
Ashlee Watford  
Clifford Preston  
William Hunter

Breanna Brickman  
Kierstin Salmon  
Solomon Simeonie  
Samira Daoud  
Stefan Malozzi  
Keith Burns  
Alasuaq Tunnillie  
Jamesie Kopalie  
Wendy Herbert  
David Johnson  
William hunter  
Ouinimia Walle  
Paco Jerome Busch  
Erik Lorrie  
Noel Brousseau  
Shawn Qaunaq  
Ahmed Metwally  
Connor Mcdonald  
Jesse-Rene "Gino" Thibault  
Philpse Shaqu





# Thank you to our staff!

