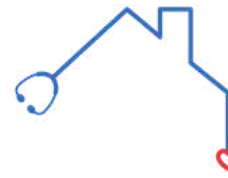


ANNUAL REPORT

Fiscal Year April 2025 - March 2026



**Ottawa Inner
City Health**

Healthcare. Harm Reduction. Hope.

Celebrating 25 Amazing Years of Healthcare, Harm Reduction, and Hope!





WHO WE ARE

Founded in 2001, Ottawa Inner City Health (OICH) is a community health provider of integrated healthcare and social supports to people experiencing homelessness or precarious housing. Our clients face significant barriers to care, particularly those with complex physical, mental and substance use related health needs.

We work in partnership with shelters, housing providers, hospitals, and community organizations to deliver person-centered services across shelter-based programs, supportive housing, and outreach.

Our innovative services meet people where they are, offering the healthcare and social supports needed to live healthy, meaningful, and fulfilling lives.

WHERE WE OPERATE

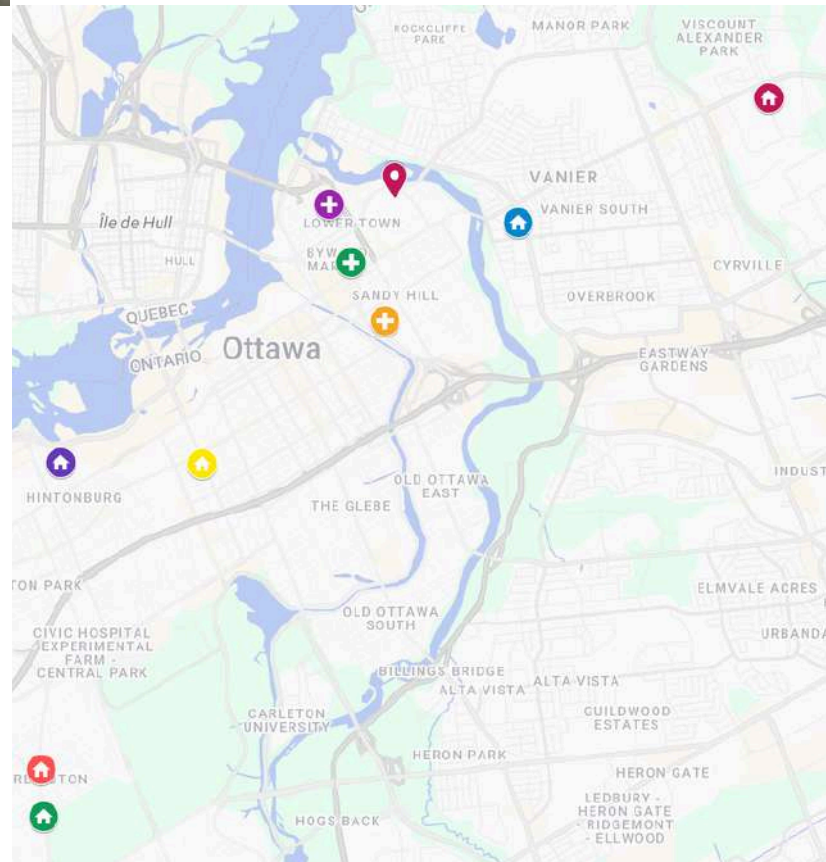
We acknowledge that we are doing this work on unceded Algonquin territory. We recognize that Indigenous people have their own traditional ways of healing, and that the bio-medical system perpetuates systems of colonialism and cultural assimilation. We commit to honouring a framework of cultural humility and recognize that decolonization is not a metaphor; even if it means giving up some of the privileges that the bio-medical system affords us.

Ottawa Inner City Health Main Office

550 Old St. Patrick St, Ottawa, ON K1N 5L5

OICH operates administratively from its office in Lowertown. We offer a wide range of programs and services both within the downtown core and throughout the greater Ottawa area.

- | | |
|--|---|
|  Main Office |  Richcraft Residence |
|  TED Program |  Rita Thompson Residence |
|  Men's Special Care Unit |  Booth Residence |
|  Diane Morrison Hospice & Dymon Health Clinic |  Carruthers Residence |
|  Oaks Residence |  Merivale Residence |



WHO WE SERVE

-  People experiencing homelessness or living in select supportive housing programs
-  Individuals who use substances and/or live with complex physical and mental health needs
-  People who face systemic barriers to care, including Indigenous, racialized, and 2SLGBTQIA+ communities

CONNECT WITH US

Reach us through our social media or contact us directly:

- | | |
|--|--|
|  613-562-4500 |  inquiry@oich.ca |
|  @ottawainnercityhealth |  Ottawa Inner City Health |
|  Ottawa Inner City Health |  ottawainnercityhealth.ca |

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MESSAGE FROM OUR CEO AND BOARD CHAIR

Over the past year, OICH advanced its strategic priorities of fostering innovation, caring for the carers, building connections, and telling our story, while navigating the uncertainty surrounding the closure of our Consumption and Treatment Service, the Trailer. Despite this setback, which disproportionately impacted some of the most vulnerable members of our community, OICH continued to make a meaningful difference every day through the dedication and commitment of our staff.

This commitment led to several important initiatives that strengthened support for both our clients and the broader community. We expanded peer support in supportive housing and successfully piloted peer recovery. We also introduced two Resource Nurse Coordinator positions to enhance care across our bed-based programs, providing mentorship and support to new Nurse Coordinators while helping to strengthen clinical practice and person centred care.

OICH collaborated with local partners on key initiatives, including HART Hubs, outreach programs, health and housing projects, and the ByWard Market District Authority's Community Safety and Wellness Strategy. Alongside this work, we strengthened our social media presence and continued engaging with mainstream media to raise awareness of both the challenges facing people experiencing homelessness and the innovative solutions being developed in Ottawa.

No matter how the landscape changes, OICH remains committed to caring for the most vulnerable with kindness, compassion, and respect, while supporting one another through every challenge. We draw our strength from our community's voices, stories, and lived experiences, which continue to inspire and guide our work every day.

- Honorata Bittner & Rob Boyd



OUR STORY

OICH was born out of a small pilot project of hospital services addressing men's special care needs, managed alcohol program, and end of life care for people experiencing homelessness. From these roots, we have grown into a network of shelter-based, supportive housing, a hospice, outreach, and treatment programs that provide evidence-based care to some of Ottawa's most vulnerable residents.

OICH has remained committed to innovation, collaboration, and equity, with a strong focus on reducing stigma, amplifying the voices of people with lived experience, and helping individuals achieve healthier, more stable lives.

As we approached our 25th anniversary, we engaged key stakeholders including staff, community members, partners, and the people we serve to refresh our mission, vision, and values. This important work informed the launch of a strategic plan that has guided our efforts over the past year, and we are proud to share the progress and impact it has helped achieve!

Our Vision

An inclusive and equitable community where everyone has access to the care they need, a place to live and a sense of belonging.

Our Mission

To create an inclusive community for individuals experiencing homelessness with complex care needs, by driving innovative service delivery and systems transformation.



OUR VALUES

Person-Centred Care

We believe in person-centered care; therefore, we develop holistic individualized care plans with clients, based on the best evidence, and respect for their right to make decisions about their own health.

Collaboration with Partners

We believe in collaboration, requiring communication, shared commitment, and the shared resources across partner organizations and service providers.

Collaboration with PWLE

We are committed to working collaboratively with people with lived or living experience (PWLE), ensuring empathy, compassion, and a judgement-free approach. This is vital to keep our services relevant and accessible to those who need them most.

Advocacy for Systems Change

We believe everyone has the right to healthcare, housing, and to lead the lives they want to live; therefore, we advocate with decision makers, support system change, and educate the public to break down barriers for stigmatized groups. This includes advocating for upstream causes and barriers to health such as housing and drug policies.



Teaching, Learning & Research

We believe in increasing knowledge to support the future of healthcare, teaching students, evaluating novel approaches, and promoting integrated, participatory learning.

Staff Health and Well-Being

We are committed to creating a work environment that values and respects staff through a culture of care and safety, fair and adequate compensation, skills development and professional growth, and shared responsibility for wellness.

Reconciliation

We acknowledge that our work takes place on unceded Algonquin territory and honour the Algonquin people, as well as the diverse traditional healing practices of all Indigenous communities. We recognize our role within a biomedical system shaped by colonialism and commit to cultural humility through staff education, partnership with Indigenous communities, and ongoing organizational learning and change.

Equity

We are committed to fostering a diverse, equitable, and inclusive environment where all individuals feel valued, respected, and empowered. We recognize the barriers faced by marginalized and underserved communities and believe everyone has the right to health, safety, and well-being. We actively listen to the people we serve to ensure our care remains inclusive, responsive, and effective.



ORGANIZATIONAL STRUCTURE

Delivering integrated and person-centred care requires a diverse team, strong governance, and collaborative partnerships. The following overview highlights the people, leadership structures, and community relationships that support OICH's mission and vision, and make our work possible!

Board of Directors

OICH's Board of Directors is composed of senior leaders from healthcare organizations and key community partners whose work directly impacts the populations we serve:

Honorata Bittner, The Ottawa Hospital, Chairperson

Caroline Cox, Centretown Community Health Centre, Vice-Chairperson

David Arnold, Carefor Home and Community Services, Secretary/Treasurer

Helen Gottfried-UnRuh, Canadian Mental Health Association Ottawa Branch Members, Representative of the Membership At Large

Chantal Cadieux, Cornerstone Housing for Women

Ali Campbell, Shepherds of Good Hope

Kira Mandryk, City of Ottawa, Health Department

Lynn Landis, Ottawa Mission

Josh Bridges, John Howard Society of Ottawa

Catherine Vandelinde, Options Housing

Community Partners

Partnership is at the heart of OICH's work. Every OICH program is delivered in collaboration with community partners, including shelters, hospitals, housing providers, community health centres, and social service agencies. These partnerships allow us to provide coordinated care and develop innovative solutions that better meet the complex needs of the people we serve:



OUR PEOPLE

As of March 31, 2026, OICH employed 128 people, 27% of whom possess intermediate or advanced French-language skills. Our interdisciplinary team delivers trauma-informed physical, mental health and substance use health care and peer-based harm reduction and social supports.

Medical Staff

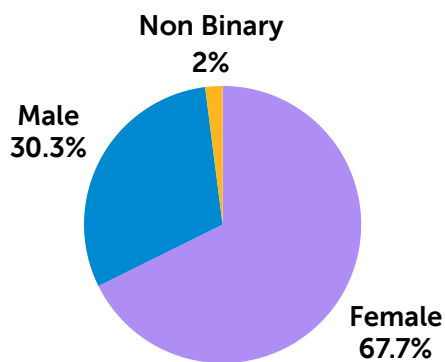
Nurses make up half of OICH staff. Nurse Practitioners provide walk-in clinic services as well as street and encampment outreach, while Nurse Coordinators (RNs) deliver primary care and coordinate services within housing and shelter programs. Registered Practical Nurses (RPNs) support health care across housing, hospice, shelter programs, and the walk-in clinic. Physicians provide direct client care and mentorship, while Paramedics work alongside RPNs and Harm Reduction Workers in Trailer to respond to overdoses and other medical emergencies.

People with Lived and Living Experience (PWLLE)

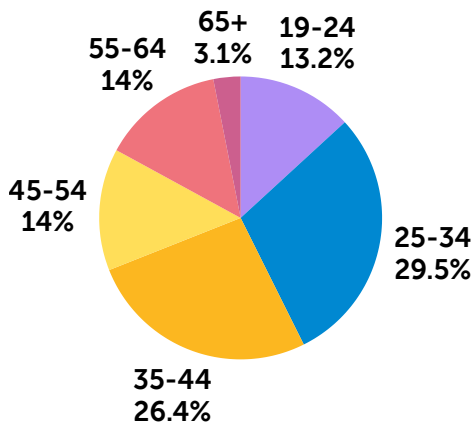
Peer support is central to OICH's work. PWLLE serve as Harm Reduction Workers, Program and Appointment Peers, Case Managers, and ByWard Support Workers, providing support, advocacy, outreach, and service navigation. OICH also creates meaningful employment opportunities through Residential Peer positions and initiatives such as the Block Leader Program.

Supervisory and Administrative Services

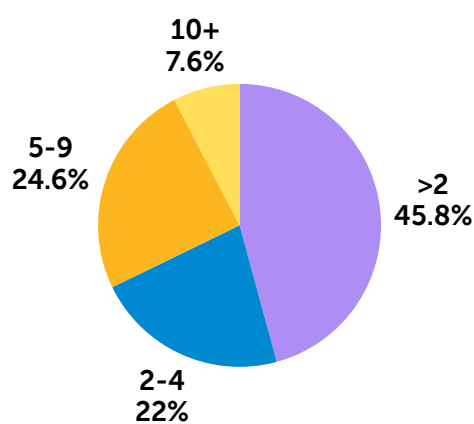
OICH's commitment to centring PWLLE extends to leadership roles. We value the knowledge and perspectives these leaders bring and support their ongoing growth and development. The Human Resources and Administrative Services team provides the operational foundation that keeps OICH running smoothly, supporting administration, finance, human resources, communications, facilities, information management, clinical administration, and reception services at the Dymon Health Clinic.



Gender Identity



Age



Years in Service



SENIOR LEADERSHIP TEAM

Rob Boyd, Chief Executive Officer

Rob has worked at the intersection of homelessness, mental health and substance use health in Ottawa for the past 35 years, including over 20 years in senior leadership positions. He has extensive experience in developing programs and services centred on clients' needs and responsive to the changing environment in which they live. Rob is a champion for the inclusion of people with lived experience in all aspects of the work being done, from systems advocacy to service delivery. Rob lives in the country and likes working around his property and spending time outdoors. He is known as the office dog whisperer, likely due to his calm nature and relaxed energy.



Danny Lang, Director of Strategic Operations

Danny Lang has over 30 years of experience supporting marginalized populations, particularly in the areas of homelessness, concurrent disorders, and trauma. He is committed to evidence-based practices and brings a wealth of knowledge related clinical supervision and leadership. Danny is a registered social worker with a Master of Social Work from Carleton University and is a long-standing Motivational Interviewing Network of Trainers member, internationally recognized for his expertise in motivational interviewing and capacity building. In addition to his professional contributions, Danny actively volunteers as a martial arts instructor and is one of the coaches for the national and Canadian sport karate teams.



Joanne Rousseau, Director of Human Resources and Administrative Services

Joanne Rousseau, CHRL, holds a B.A. (Sociology) from the University of Windsor. Soon after joining OICH in April 2023 as Director of Human Resources, her scope expanded to include the Administrative Services team. Her extensive experience in HR leadership and supporting administrative services staff, as well as her love of a good spreadsheet, have served her well. OICH's mission, values and guiding principles, particularly Caring for the Carers, are a balm to her heart after years in the corporate world. If you visit the OICH office, you'll likely been greeted by her dog Lily, the Director of Pawperations. Away from work, you will find her reading a book, in a theatre, or focusing her camera on a bird in her quest for the perfect photo.



Louise Beaudoin, Director of Clinical Services

Louise Beaudoin has been a part of OICH since its early days when OICH was a pilot project. She earned her Bachelor of Nursing from the Université du Québec and brings decades of dedication and expertise. Passionate about working in the grey areas of harm reduction, Louise thrives on finding flexible solutions that meet the community's unique needs. Outside of work, Louise is all about physical activity and sports! She keeps active through skiing, cycling, and yoga.



Kim Van Herk, Nurse Manager

Kim brings extensive nursing experience, compassionate leadership, and a strong commitment to person-centered care. She holds a Bachelor of Nursing from McMaster University and a Master's degree from the University of Ottawa, where her research explored access to care for pregnant and parenting Indigenous women in urban communities. A longtime OICH nurse, Kim is recognized for her empathetic leadership and dedication to fostering an inclusive and supportive environment. Outside of work, she enjoys spending time with her children, exploring nature, and reading.



Dr. Rakesh Patel, Medical Director

Dr. Rakesh Patel has served as Medical Director of OICH since 2018. An Associate Professor of Medicine at the University of Ottawa, he brings extensive experience in Internal Medicine, Critical Care, medical education, and healthcare leadership. Dr. Patel has held numerous leadership roles throughout his career and has been recognized for his excellence in both teaching and clinical practice. Outside of work, he enjoys golfing and hopes to one day shoot par at the Old Course at St. Andrews.



Dr. Simon Hatcher, Medical Director of Psychiatry

Dr. Simon Hatcher is a psychiatrist at The Ottawa Hospital, Medical Director of Psychiatry at OICH, and Chair of the Department of Psychiatry at the University of Ottawa. With decades of experience spanning clinical care, research, and leadership in the UK, New Zealand, and Canada, he is dedicated to improving the lives of people living with mental health challenges through compassionate care, teaching, and research. Outside of work, he enjoys beekeeping and riding motorcycles, but not at the same time.





OTTAWA INNER CITY HEALTH TURNS 25 !

In the summer of 1998, a group of managers working in programs serving people experiencing chronic homelessness came together around a shared concern. Among them were OICH founders Wendy Muckle and Dr. Jeffrey Turnbull, who had each noticed the same pattern: individuals with complex health and social needs were frequently accessing emergency departments, paramedic services, and shelters, yet were not receiving the coordinated care they needed. An informal count identified approximately 70 individuals who were among the highest users of both health and shelter services, highlighting the urgency of the issue.

It became clear that these gaps in care stemmed from the intersection of complex physical and mental health conditions, substance use, and structural barriers that made engagement with traditional systems difficult. While there was no immediate solution, there was a shared belief that better outcomes were possible through collaboration, communication, and a deeper understanding of the people being served. That belief became the foundation of what would eventually grow into OICH.

This year, OICH marked 25 years of innovation, collaboration, and compassion. For a quarter century, we have challenged conventional approaches, developed new models of care, and worked alongside our partners to support people too often left behind. Guided by a commitment to meeting people where they are, we have continually adapted to changing needs, embraced new ideas, and created solutions where none existed. Through every challenge and opportunity, our focus has remained the same: ensuring that everyone is treated with dignity and has access to the care they need.

Over the past 25 years, there have been countless milestones, achievements, partnerships, and moments of impact that have shaped our story. From pioneering new programs to responding to emerging community needs, each chapter has contributed to the organization we are today. While it would be impossible to capture absolutely everything, the following pages highlight some of the key moments that have defined OICH's journey!





1998

Before it all Began

OICH started with a simple but powerful belief: our community could do better. Founders Dr. Jeff Turnbull and Wendy Muckle, along with other leaders, recognized that too many individuals with complex physical and mental health needs were falling through the cracks. Rather than accepting the status quo, they came together to find a better way. Those early conversations laid the foundation for what would become OICH!



2001

Diane Morrison Hospice

As HIV and hepatitis rates increased, it became clear that many experiencing homelessness were unable to access palliative care. Too often, support was only available in hospital settings. Recognizing this gap, OICH began building expertise in palliative care and advocating for more accessible, compassionate services. Those efforts eventually led to a major fundraising campaign to create Diane Morrison Hospice dedicated to people experiencing homelessness.



2001

Men's Special Care Unit

It quickly became evident that there was a need for a safe place for people experiencing homelessness to recover from illness and transition out of hospital care. At the time, many remained in hospital longer than necessary due to the lack of appropriate community based supports. In response, The Salvation Army Ottawa Booth Centre dedicated 10 beds for vulnerable shelter residents and partnered with healthcare providers to offer nursing, physicians, personal care, and home care services. This innovative approach grew into the Men's Special Care Unit, helping people receive the care they needed in a supportive environment while reducing unnecessary hospital stays.



2001

Managed Alcohol Program (MAP)

Also at this time, chronically homeless individuals with chronic alcohol use disorders were consistently identified as the "most challenging" to care for. Thus, the Shepherds of Good Hope aimed to develop a structured harm reduction program where controlled drinking would be permitted. A relationship was established with a similar program at the Seaton House Annex in Toronto, who provided support, advice and staff training. MAP challenged the community to consider a new approach to substance use health care.

2005

OICH Incorporates

In February 2005, OICH officially incorporated as a non profit organization and later obtained charitable status. OICH has received ongoing support from the Ontario Ministry of Health and Long Term Care.



2010

The Oaks

The idea for a new housing model came directly from residents of the MAP at Shepherds of Good Hope. As many achieved greater stability in their alcohol use, mental health, and physical health, they expressed a desire for a permanent residence. In response, Shepherds of Good Hope purchased a former apartment hotel and transformed it into The Oaks, a supportive housing program built on residents' vision of stability and community.



2007

Dymon Health Clinic

As demand for primary healthcare grew, many faced increasing barriers to accessing care outside the shelter system. In 2006, the Ottawa Mission commemorated its 100th anniversary by funding a clinic for people experiencing homelessness. This investment enabled OICH to hire nurse practitioners and renovate the hospice, creating space for a dedicated primary care clinic and expanding hospice beds.



2008

Women's Special Care Unit

Recognizing a significant gap in services for women experiencing homelessness, OICH partnered with The Royal Ottawa Health Care Group, Shepherds of Good Hope, and the Canadian Mental Health Association Ottawa Branch to develop a trauma-informed model of care tailored to women's unique needs. The program helped lay the foundation for more responsive supports in Ottawa, and although the unit closed in 2020, its principles continue to guide OICH's work today.

2011

Booth Residence

Another population underserved by traditional housing and healthcare systems identified was senior women experiencing severe mental illness, many of whom remained in shelters for years. Recognizing this gap, Cornerstone Housing for Women developed a women-only supportive housing program that eventually became Booth Residence, with OICH providing personal, medical, and mental health care services to residents.



2013

Peer Program Pilot

The peer program began as a six-week pilot designed to support the launch of the Targeted Engagement and Diversion program. Developed collaboratively with community partners, it created a unique approach to integrating people with lived experience of substance use and homelessness within OICH and alongside key partners such as Ottawa Police and Ottawa Paramedics. What started as a short-term initiative quickly grew from six weeks to six months before becoming a permanent program. This program helped challenge misconceptions about peer work and demonstrated the essential role people with lived experience play in delivering compassionate and effective care!



2008

Targeted Engagement and Diversion (TED)

The TED program was made possible through a strong partnership between OICH, The Royal, Ottawa Paramedics, Ottawa Police Service, Canadian Mental Health Association, The Ottawa Hospital, and Shepherds of Good Hope. Created to divert people experiencing homelessness away from emergency departments when appropriate and feasible, TED offered a more tailored and community-based response. The results quickly demonstrated its impact, and importantly, TED provided individualized support that concurrently addressed people's psychosocial needs, offering an alternative to the one-size-fits-all approach often found in traditional emergency care.



2015

Rita Thompson Residence

In partnership with the John Howard Society, OICH helped open an innovative supportive housing program for people living with complex health needs and active substance use. The model quickly gained attention from around the world for its unique approach to housing and care. Designed to improve quality of life while reducing reliance on shelters, hospitals, and the justice system, the program has had a lasting impact.



2017

Trailer CTS

A dramatic shift in the unregulated drug supply led to a surge in overdoses across Ottawa. In response, OICH provided around-the-clock support within shelter settings and successfully obtained a federal exemption to open Trailer. The site first opened in November 2017 in a renovated construction trailer and in September 2020 moved to a permanent location at Shepherds of Good Hope, ensuring continued access to life-saving harm reduction and health services. *Please see page 31 for details regarding the CTS closure.*

2018

Carruthers Residence

This site represents the next iteration of John Howard Society and OICH's Enhanced Supportive Housing program, offering safe accommodation and intensive on-site supports, including a low-barrier managed opioid program modelled on our MAP experience. The 36-unit building supports individuals who have experienced chronic homelessness, helping them improve their health, well-being, and housing stability.



2020

Richcraft Hope Residence

Developed in partnership with Shepherds of Good Hope, Richcraft Hope Residence was created to address the growing need for supportive housing, particularly for women and individuals in MAP. It provides housing, mental health and substance use supports, and individualized care for people with complex needs who experienced prolonged shelter stays due to limited housing options.



2020

Telus Health for Good Van

OICH partnered with TELUS Health for Good and community partners to launch the Health for Good Mobile Clinic, bringing healthcare directly to people experiencing homelessness and barriers to care. Today, OICH's TELUS Van continues this legacy through the Block Leader Program, serving as a vital outreach tool that connects community members to healthcare, housing, social supports, and other essential services.



2020

COVID-19 Isolation Unit

When COVID-19 began, OICH opened the Isolation Unit with the City of Ottawa and The Ottawa Hospital to support people experiencing homelessness and reduce pressure on hospitals. Grounded in harm reduction, it provided a safe space for shelter clients awaiting test results or recovering from COVID-19, playing a key role in Ottawa's pandemic response until closing in early 2021.



2022

New Head Office

As our organization grew, our office could no longer accommodate our expanding team. To maintain accessibility for staff and the community, we relocated to a former Caisse Populaire building purchased from the John Howard Society. Just a two-minute walk from our original office, the new space keeps us close to the downtown core and our many programs!



2022

Dr. Turnbull Honorary Degree

OICH founder Dr. Jeffrey Turnbull received an Honorary Degree from Western University's Schulich School of Medicine & Dentistry in recognition of his contributions to healthcare and humanitarian service. His commitment to compassionate and person-centred care alongside the belief that everyone deserves dignity, respect, and quality care continue to inspire OICH's work today!



2022

Leadership Transition

We said a bittersweet goodbye to our co-founder and Executive Director, Wendy Muckle, as she retired after more than two decades of visionary leadership. Wendy's innovation and unwavering commitment to our community helped shape OICH into the organization it is today. Wendy continues to remain involved with OICH, but her retirement marked the beginning of a new chapter. Rob Boyd stepped into the role of CEO, building on Wendy's incredible legacy and continuing our mission with the same dedication to compassionate and community-based care.



2023

Merivale Road Residence

Merivale Residence marked another step forward in supportive housing for individuals with complex mental health and substance use needs. Designed for people transitioning from shelters, the program provides intensive supports for mental health, substance use, and physical health concerns. Drawing on lessons learned from earlier housing programs, Merivale Residence offers a stable home and personalized care for residents with moderate to high-acuity needs.



2023

Wendy Muckle Order of Canada

Wendy Muckle was appointed to the Order of Canada, one of the country's highest civilian honours, in recognition of her visionary leadership and advocacy. Her dedication to dignity and equitable care has helped shape OICH and improve support systems for Ottawa's most vulnerable community members.



2023

Block Leaders

This initiative invests in community leadership through a "by us, for us" approach that strengthens positive street culture and reduces social disorder. Since July 2023, Block Leaders have been active seven days a week, providing support such as distributing water during extreme heat and cleaning up public spaces. At its core, the program is about building positive human connections through compassion and kindness, and its impact continues to grow across the community.



2026

Where we are Today!

As we celebrate 25 years of extraordinary work, we know the road ahead won't be easy, but it never has been. We always challenge the status quo, embrace innovation, and explore new ways to better serve our community. As we look to the future, we're energized by the opportunities ahead and remain committed to creating meaningful change!

Fostering Innovation



Fostering innovation involves developing flexible programming that can adapt to emerging trends. It also includes amplifying the voices of individuals with lived expertise in program design.



STRATEGIC

Caring for the Carers



Caring for the carers involves prioritizing a workplace environment that promotes safety, care, and proactive nurturing, while enhancing professional development by providing access to high-quality training. It also includes advocating for fair and adequate compensation for all staff, aligning with industry standards.



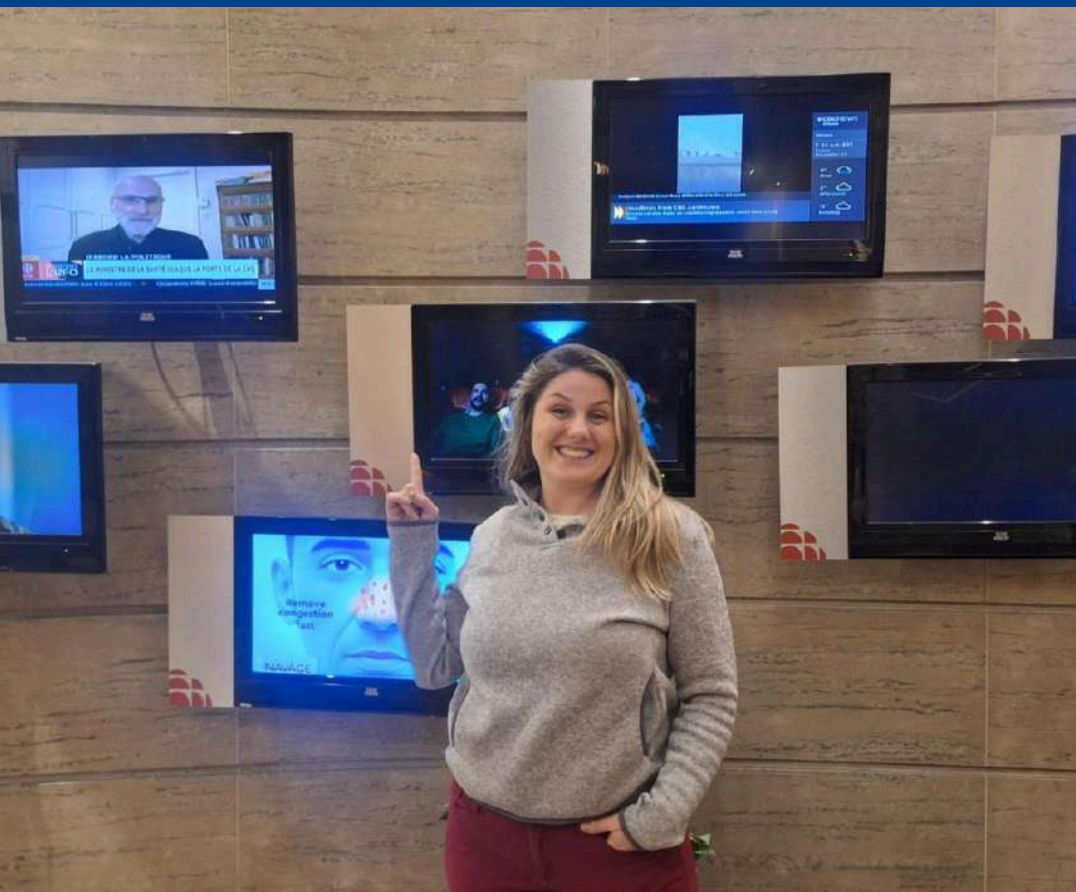
Building Connections



Building connections involves collaborating with policy influencers and funders to advance community impact while building inclusive and transparent decision-making processes with partner organizations. It also includes creating a culture of growth, excellence, and mutual respect, and developing systems that invite input and collaboration to align with shared goals.



DIRECTIONS



Telling our Story



Telling our story involves developing a compelling narrative of values supported by client stories and data. It also includes building meaningful connections and rapport with the most marginalized voices.

YEAR IN REVIEW: KEY HIGHLIGHTS

OICH has been involved in countless initiatives this past fiscal year. While it would be impossible to capture everything we have accomplished, we are excited to share some of the highlights. To reflect our Strategic Plan, we have organized these stories by strategic direction. However, it is important to recognize that no initiative fits neatly into a single category. With that in mind, here are some examples of how our strategic priorities came to life throughout the year!

FOSTERING INNOVATION

Block Leader Recreation Pilot

From February to March, three Block Leaders worked alongside staff to connect with community members through games, recreational activities, and group outings while gaining valuable paid employment experience. Developed through a partnership between Shepherds of Good Hope and OICH, Block Leaders completed required training, including CPR certification, and received ongoing mentorship and support. The pilot's success demonstrated the value of peer-led community engagement and laid the groundwork for a second phase, which will build on these early achievements and expand the program's impact!



Acudetox

Program Peers were trained in Acudetox, a simple wellness practice that uses a five-point ear acupuncture protocol to help reduce stress, promote relaxation, and support overall well-being. Following training, peers began offering individual and group sessions across programs. The initiative reflects our commitment to providing low-barrier supports and exploring novel ways to promote wellness and recovery alongside traditional approaches.

New Hospice Initiative

Through the work we do, our mission is to support everyone with compassion. We strive to see those who are often forgotten through a non-judgmental lens and meet people where they are in meaningful ways. Yet, some individuals still fall through the cracks, especially those nearing the end of life. This reality became deeply personal for one of our program peers, Dave Roy, when a hospice client passed away before they had the chance to spend more time together during the client's final days. That experience highlighted the importance of ensuring terminally ill clients are not alone and can pass with dignity, comfort, and support. In response, Dave has developed an initiative focused on end-of-life companionship, activities, and support.

Life Process Program (LPP)



LPP is a peer-led coaching program that helps participants make changes based on their own goals, values, and priorities. The program focuses on self-awareness, personal growth, and building confidence to make decisions that support the life participants want for themselves. 31 group sessions were held across five locations, reaching 48 participants, and 50 progress assessments were completed. Participants reported achievements such as setting healthier boundaries, making better choices, gaining confidence, improving their well-being, and developing a stronger sense of self.

Client Care Worker (CCW) App Rollout in TED

OICH successfully expanded its custom-built CCW application into the TED program. Originally developed for supportive housing programs, CCW streamlines charting, scheduling, communication, and other key functions. Staff worked closely to adapt workflows, develop training resources, and support implementation, resulting in improved documentation, consistency, and coordination of care across the program.

Merivale Peer Programming

Through City of Ottawa funding, OICH employs peer positions at Merivale Residence, including a dedicated Peer Worker role and several Residential Peers who support community building, resident engagement, advocacy, and connections to services. Funding also supported a resident-led cleaning cart program that helped maintain clean and welcoming shared spaces.



Crime Prevention Action Fund Recreation Pilot



OICH piloted a recreation-based initiative from January 28 to March 31, 2026, funded through the City of Ottawa's Crime Prevention Action Fund. The pilot created opportunities for clients to build connections and engage in recreation, cultural activities, and community participation. Activities included movies, bowling, museum visits, snowshoeing, drumming, crafts, Indigenous cultural programming, and shared meals. Participant feedback was overwhelmingly positive, highlighting the value of recreation in supporting well-being, social connection, and recovery.

Nurse Practitioner Encampment Outreach

In late January 2026, OICH partnered with The Salvation Army Outreach Team to pilot an initiative to provide primary care to people living in encampments and experiencing homelessness across Ottawa. Rather than expecting individuals to come to healthcare services, this initiative brings the health care services of a Nurse Practitioner directly to where people are, reducing barriers and building trust through consistent and relationship-based support.



By meeting people in their own spaces, the program has created opportunities to build genuine connections with individuals who are often isolated, disconnected from services, and experiencing mistrust of systems. Through these relationships, people can access primary health care, mental and physical health supports, and referrals to HART Hubs and other community services. As this is a very new initiative, we are excited to see how this program grows and the impact it will have in the coming year!

Brave Buttons

For several years, OICH has used Brave Buttons in supportive housing programs, allowing residents to quickly call for assistance for safety, medical emergencies, and situations where support is needed. This year, the program expanded to additional supportive housing sites, helping staff respond more quickly to resident needs and enhancing overall building safety.

What is Street Culture? - Well Worn Values



Block Leaders came together to discuss shared street values and what it meant to put them into practice every day. From these conversations emerged a series of messages printed on simple white shirts, intentionally designed to become “well worn” over time, just like the values they represented. More than slogans, they reflect a commitment to community, leading by example, and choosing connection, compassion, and respect in everyday interactions. The goal was for these values to be visible, lived, and truly well worn.

Recovery Oriented Outreach Framework

Following the provincial announcement to withdraw CTS funding, OICH developed the Recovery-Oriented Outreach Framework to help bridge the gap between street outreach and formal treatment. Grounded in trauma-informed care, the model focuses on building trust, strengthening community leadership, creating pathways to employment, providing meaningful recreational opportunities, and connecting people to housing and healthcare. The framework recognizes that recovery is a journey and aims to support people in making positive changes at their own pace while improving community well-being and safety.

CARING FOR THE CARERS

Staff Onboarding, Training and Development Improvements



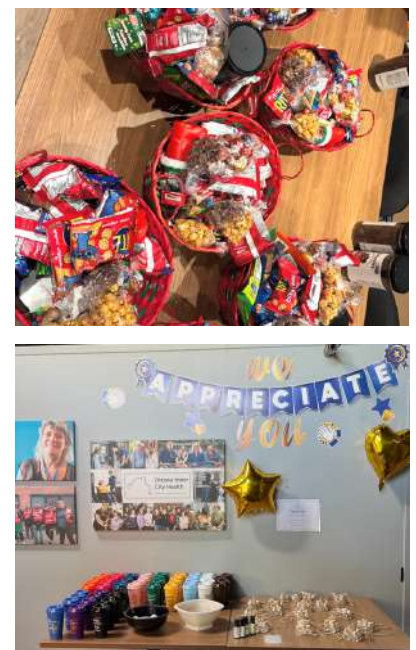
To support staff growth, we continued to strengthen our training and development initiatives. We updated our 58-page Trailer manual and expanded Moodle, our Learning Management System. Tailored onboarding included staff-led videos, overdose simulations, role-specific content, and administrative training. We also added A Stretch of Grass: Healing Roots of Indigenous Homelessness to our onboarding (see page 34). Beyond onboarding, staff participated in overdose response training, CPR, Basic Life Support, and Truth and Reconciliation training (see page 34), as well as conferences, workshops, and other professional development opportunities.

Supervision and Leadership Development

This year brought several leadership transitions and growth opportunities across OICH. Louise Beaudoin was promoted to Director of Clinical Services after years of dedicated service within the organization. In July 2026, Danny Lang joined OICH as Director of Strategic Operations and his work has helped turn our Strategic Plan into action. Andrew Campagna moved into the role of Hospice Supervisor, while Chad Bouthillier took on expanded responsibilities overseeing both Trailer and TED operations. Finally, Tim St. Pierre stepped into the Unit Coordinator role (see page 24). Together, these changes reflect OICH's commitment to developing internal talent and building strong leadership.

Staff Recognition

The work we do is deeply rewarding, while also being emotionally demanding at times. For this reason, we prioritize creating opportunities to have fun and show our appreciation for staff. Throughout the year, we celebrated occasions such as Physician Appreciation Day, Nursing Week, Harm Reduction and Peer Worker Day, PSW Day, and Administrative Professionals Day with gifts, activities, and recognition initiatives. We also celebrated staff across the organization through social media, staff anniversaries, and welcomes to new team members in our weekly newsletters. A special congratulations to those who marked five years with OICH during the past fiscal year: Tracy Barbe (RPN), Dave Roy (Program Peer), Tim St. Pierre (Unit Coordinator), Zach Jordan (RPN), and Dave Berkoh (RPN). Thank you for your dedication and commitment to our mission and vision.



Staff Activities and Events

Building connection and community is an important part of life at OICH. Throughout the year, staff had opportunities to come together, celebrate successes, and connect with colleagues from across the organization. Highlights included our annual Partner Softball Tournament, various staff appreciation events, a Halloween pumpkin decorating contest, our annual BBQ, a winter holiday Party, and Ice Cream Day.

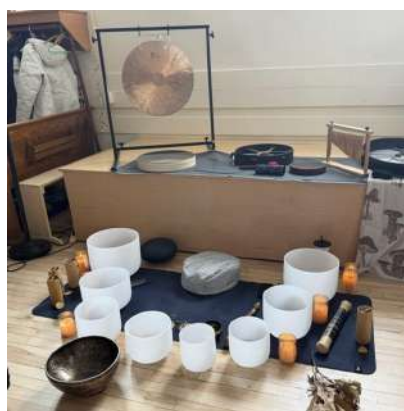


These events provided a chance to step away from day-to-day responsibilities, build relationships, and enjoy time together. They also helped strengthen the sense of teamwork and community that makes OICH a supportive and welcoming place to work!

Benefits Improvements

In partnership with The Ottawa Hospital, our employee benefits and pension offerings were enhanced to ensure they meet the evolving needs of our staff. Updates and resources were shared through our internal communication channels including the Staff Portal. By evaluating and improving our benefits program, we aim to centre staff well-being.

Soul Space Partnership



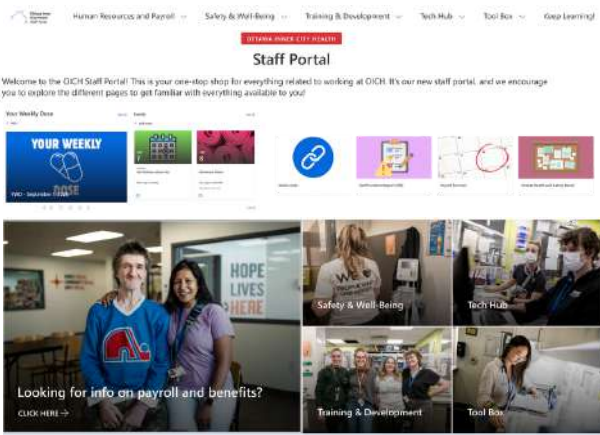
We have long partnered with Soul Space, a local collective dedicated to supporting the well-being of frontline street health, harm reduction, community, and social service workers through a variety of reflective and wellness-focused offerings. Over the past year, we continued to expand opportunities for OICH staff, including wellness sessions and a sound bath event. These initiatives provide dedicated space for rest and collective care, recognizing the unique challenges that come with frontline work within the work we do.

Introduction of New Frontline Roles

This year, we introduced two new roles to strengthen frontline and clinical support. The Trailer Shift Captain role provided six experienced staff with opportunities to take on leadership responsibilities while supporting communication, coordination, and day-to-day operations. We also transitioned Nora Cherner and Tammy Paterson into the new Resource Nurse Coordinator role. Drawing on their extensive frontline experience, they provide mentorship, support onboarding and training, and share best practice guidance.

Internal Communications

A major focus this past year was improving internal communication by creating more opportunities for staff to stay informed and connected. We launched our new Staff Portal, a SharePoint hub where staff can access policies, forms, resources, training materials, and organizational updates. Through the portal, we introduced Your Weekly Dose, a weekly newsletter that shares updates, celebrates achievements, welcomes new team members, recognizes anniversaries, and highlights upcoming events.

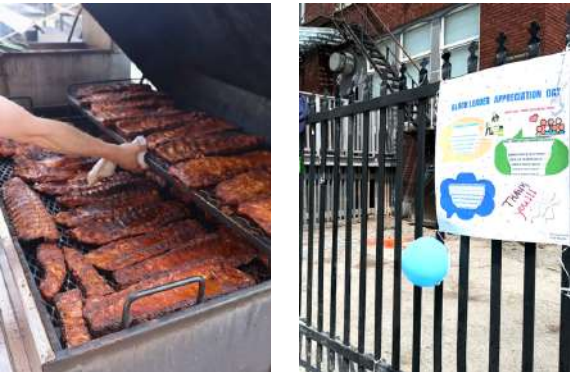


We also continued to strengthen Vital Signs, our quarterly newsletter for staff and partners, showcasing program successes, research, partnerships, and the innovative work happening across OICH. Another new initiative was Monday Moment, a weekly email message from our Directors of Strategic Operations and Clinical Services offering insights, timely information, and Motivational Interviewing tips. These reflections are archived on the Staff Portal.

Following the announcement of Trailer funding being withdrawn, we launched weekly CTS Updates, virtual meetings led by Rob Boyd that provided updates, answered questions, and created space for discussion during a period of change and uncertainty. These updates helped keep staff informed and connected as the situation evolved.



Block Leader Appreciation Day



This year, we celebrated Block Leader Appreciation Day with a variety of appreciation activities. To recognize the positive impact Block Leaders have in the ByWard Market and the broader community, we transformed the Shepherds of Good Hope parking lot into a summer ribfest complete with great food, karaoke, and time to connect. It was a small way of thanking our dedicated team members for the compassion, commitment, and community spirit they bring to their work every day!

First Collective Agreement

OICH's first Collective Agreement with the SEIU was completed following a lengthy bargaining process. This achievement reflects the collaborative efforts of all those involved and marks an important step in the growth of our organization.

BUILDING CONNECTIONS

Partnership with Carleton University School of Social Work



We began a partnership with Carleton University's School of Social Work focused on education, research, and knowledge sharing. The collaboration has included hosting students for site visits and experiential learning opportunities, giving future social workers a firsthand look at community mental health and homelessness services. We look forward to building on this partnership and sharing more about a joint research project in the coming fiscal year!

Drugs 101 and Overdose Response Training

Beyond providing this training to all new staff, OICH expanded this work over the past year by having members of the Program and Case Management Team deliver the training to community partners. This helped strengthen knowledge and capacity across organizations, supporting a more coordinated response to substance use and overdose prevention.

Consulting on HART Hubs

OICH and local HART Hub leaders travelled to Toronto and London, Ontario, to explore innovative approaches to addiction treatment, outreach, and recovery-oriented care. These visits provided an opportunity to learn from established programs, exchange ideas with community partners, and help inform the development of the Somerset West CHC HART Hub following the closure of their CTS. OICH has also continued to play an active role in supporting local HART Hubs, helping ensure services are responsive to the needs of people experiencing homelessness and substance use challenges in Ottawa.



Cannabis Substitution Project



OICH's CEO and Director of Clinical Services travelled to Vancouver to meet with organizations exploring the use of cannabis substitution within MAPs. Their visit coincided with the release of national evaluation findings, which showed promising results for cannabis substitution as a harm reduction approach. While outcomes vary from person to person, the findings highlight the potential of innovative and evidence-informed strategies to improve health and well-being for individuals participating in MAPs.

Providing Learning Opportunities and Hosting Students

As a teaching organization, OICH is committed to supporting the next generation of healthcare and social service professionals. Throughout the year, we welcomed students and trainees from a variety of disciplines. Learning opportunities included student placements, site visits and tours, a Social Medicine rotation in partnership with The Ottawa Hospital, and hosting Paramedic students from Algonquin College within our TED and Trailer programs.

Hosting Visits and Unit Tours



Throughout the year, OICH welcomes visits from community partners, healthcare leaders, researchers, policymakers, students, and organizations from across Canada and around the world. This year, we hosted numerous tours and learning sessions, providing opportunities to showcase our programs, share knowledge, and learn from others. We believe collaboration is essential to creating meaningful change. These visits help strengthen relationships, foster innovation, and support our strategic commitment to building connections that improve care for the communities we serve.

Piloting a Unit Coordinator Role

We piloted a new Unit Coordinator position at Rita Thompson Residence and Carruthers to strengthen collaboration across programs and partner organizations. Acting as a key liaison between OICH, Carefor's Home & Community Services, the John Howard Society, and other partners, the role enhances communication, coordination, and continuity of care, helping ensure residents receive high-quality, integrated 24-hour support.

Tabling at Events

OICH regularly tables at events, fairs, festivals, and outreach opportunities throughout the year. Whether connecting with students and job seekers at career fairs, participating in health and wellness events, or engaging in community education and advocacy initiatives, these opportunities help us build relationships and share our work with a broader audience. They also create space for meaningful conversations and strengthen connections with the communities we serve.



Regular Operational Meetings with Care Partners

The success of OICH is completely dependent on our strong corporate partners with whom our staff work side by side in their program space. This year we revised our formal affiliation agreements and established regular operational meetings with each unit to resolve issues and coordinate care planning with residents and guests.

TELLING OUR STORY

Block Leader Photovoice Project



Thanks to funding from the Ontario Trillium Foundation, OICH developed a Photovoice project that invited Block Leaders to capture Ottawa's downtown core through their own lens. Equipped with cameras, participants documented their experiences, perspectives, and connections to the community, creating a powerful collection of images that highlights the people, places, and relationships that shape our city. The project provided an opportunity to share stories in a creative and meaningful way, elevating voices that are often overlooked. Several of these photographs are featured on the front cover of this report.

This project demonstrated that people experiencing homelessness and people who use drugs are valued members of our community, finding meaning, connection, and belonging in the same spaces we all share. The photographs encourage us to see our city through a different lens and remind us that recognizing our shared humanity is the first step toward building stronger communities, fostering hope, and creating safety and inclusion for everyone.



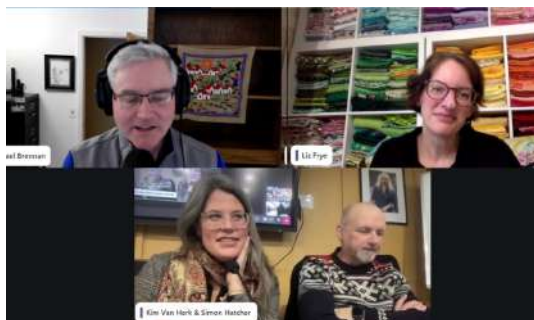
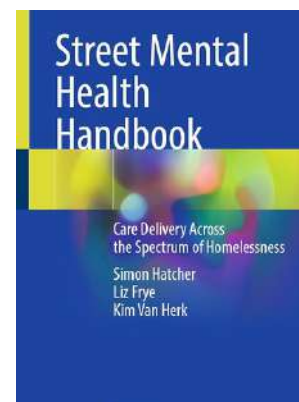
Community Needle Drop Box Art Project



Needle drop boxes are an important harm reduction tool, helping people safely dispose of used supplies and keeping public spaces safer for everyone. This past year, community members transformed a needle drop box outside the Trailer into a piece of public art, filling individual sections with their own drawings, messages, and designs. The project brought people together, sparked creativity, and added colour to a shared community space. It reflected a sense of shared responsibility and community pride.

The Street Mental Health Handbook

This year, OICH staff Kim Van Herk and Dr. Simon Hatcher co-authored The Street Mental Health Handbook with Liz Frye of the Street Medicine Institute. This practical guide draws on frontline experience, lived expertise, and trauma-informed care to support clinicians working with people experiencing homelessness and mental health challenges. The handbook reflects many of the lessons learned through OICH's work and offers practical strategies for delivering community care.



To mark the book's release, the authors participated in a webinar hosted by the Street Medicine Institute, which was later adapted into an episode of the Institute's Street Side podcast. The release of this book has helped share OICH's expertise with audiences across North America and contributed to broader conversations about mental health, homelessness, and street-based healthcare.

Presenting at Conferences and Events



Part of telling our story involves sharing what we have learned with partners, researchers, policymakers, and service providers. Throughout the year, OICH staff presented at conferences and forums including the Law Enforcement and Public Health Conference, the International Street Medicine Symposium, the Alliance to End Homelessness Conference, and the Addictions and Mental Health Ontario Conference. Presentations focused on topics such as peer leadership, recovery coaching, supportive housing, homelessness, public safety, and street-based healthcare, drawing on lessons from our work in the community.

OICH also took part in local discussions and knowledge-sharing events, including the Community Conversation on Homelessness and Carleton University's Housing Affordability Symposium. These opportunities allowed us to share frontline perspectives, learn from others across the sector, and build new partnerships. They also helped bring the experiences and voices of the people we serve into conversations about housing, healthcare, and systems change.



What is Recovery?

As part of Recovery Month, OICH participated in the Working on Wellness Festival at the Royal Ottawa Mental Health Centre, where we introduced our new "What is Recovery?" framework. The framework challenges the idea that recovery is defined by a single outcome, such as abstinence or formal treatment, and instead recognizes recovery as a deeply personal journey that can involve many domains, including improvements in health, housing, relationships, purpose, culture, recreation, community connection, employment, and quality of life.



By understanding recovery in this context, the framework acknowledges that meaningful change can happen in many ways and at different paces for different people. It encourages a broader, more inclusive understanding of wellness and challenges traditional notions of both treatment and recovery.

External Communications Strategy

We launched a new communications strategy to transform OICH's social media presence into a platform for community engagement, education, and advocacy. The results exceeded expectations, with significant growth in reach and engagement, helping OICH become a more visible voice in conversations about homelessness, substance use, healthcare, recovery, and housing in Ottawa. Our growing online presence helped ensure the experiences of our clients remained part of the public conversation while expanding awareness of OICH's work and impact.

Just as importantly, this strategy laid the foundation for future advocacy efforts and strengthened OICH's ability to engage with community members, partners, and decision-makers. The value of this work became especially clear in the following fiscal year as OICH mobilized public awareness and advocacy efforts surrounding the closure of the Trailer CTS program. We look forward to sharing more about these efforts, and their impact, in next year's Annual Report!

First Month of Social Media Strategy (June 2025)		
Facebook	Instagram	LinkedIn
Views: 10,498	Views: 22,600	Views: 6,183
Likes: 389	Likes: 344	Likes: 180
Comments: 47	Comments: 21	Comments:
Shares: 25	Shares: 51	Shares: 6
Followers: 1822	Followers: 1066	Followers: 950

Most Recent Data Pull (March 2026)		
Facebook	Instagram	LinkedIn
Views: 53,616	Views: 42,210	Views: 13,149
Likes: 719	Likes: 899	Likes: 353
Comments: 111	Comments: 20	Comments: 12
Shares: 108	Shares: 304	Shares: 62
Followers: 2069	Followers: 1528	Followers: 1484

Media and Advocacy

Media was a large priority this year to tell our story. Throughout the year, OICH staff and leaders contributed to television news, radio interviews, podcasts, newspaper articles, online scientific journals, and community discussions that highlighted both the realities facing our community and the innovative work being done to address them.



OTTAWA CITIZEN

More adults with developmental disabilities ending up in homeless shelters

"We were the only and last option," says officials with Inner City Health who help Ottawa's shelter system.

By Elizabeth Payne
Published Feb 21, 2024 Last updated 3 days ago 5 minutes read

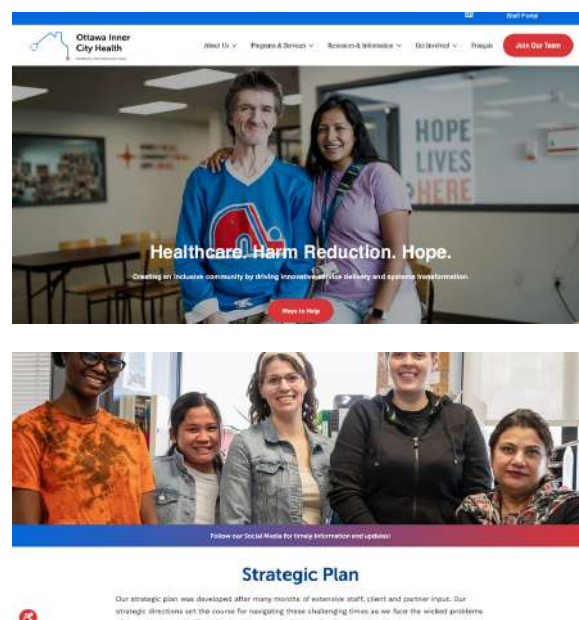


Ernie Cormier, left, Kim Vothek and Tereza Potvin, right, from Inner City Health see their colleagues and adults with developmental disabilities in Ottawa's shelter system because they have no where else to go. (PHOTO BY JEAN L'ENNE/POSTMEDIA)

Some focused more on general advocacy and current issues important to our work, while others showcased specific OICH programs, partnerships, and emerging approaches to care. By participating in these conversations, OICH helps raise awareness, challenge stigma, share evidence-informed perspectives, and ensure the voices and experiences of our clients remain part of the public dialogue. Media and advocacy efforts continued following the announcement that CTS funding would be withdrawn.

Website Overhaul and French Translation

We began refreshing our website to better reflect OICH today. Our site no longer captured the full scope of our programs, partnerships, and the amazing work happening across the organization. Throughout the year, we updated content and photos, removed outdated information, added a new page highlighting our Strategic Plan, and added information to better showcase our programs. This work is ongoing, and in the coming year we plan to further strengthen the site by highlighting more of OICH's research, partnerships, priorities, and the many accomplishments happening across our programs that often go unseen.



Another exciting milestone has been expanding the website's accessibility through translation. Core pages have already been translated into French, and as the website refresh continues, we are working to translate additional pages. We also hope to explore opportunities to add other languages, helping ensure more people can access information about OICH and the services we provide.

BY THE NUMBERS: A YEAR OF IMPACT

The following section highlights key areas of impact across OICH's programs and services during the fiscal year. While data provides an important part of the story, it cannot capture every interaction, outcome, or individual experience. These figures presented offer a snapshot of the reach and scope of our work, organized by strategic direction.

FOSTERING INNOVATION

Innovation starts with listening, trying new approaches, and adapting to the needs of our community. Throughout the year, we explored new ways to support the people we serve while also strengthening existing services. This included expanding peer-led work, developing new partnerships, introducing and enhancing technology, and creating and improving programs in response to emerging needs. The following highlights showcase some of the ways OICH continues to put innovation into practice.



84

NP Encampment
Outreach Encounters



1,183

Medical inquiries to
Nurse on Call Line



80%

Client Satisfaction Rate
in Supportive Housing



1500

Experiences for Crime
Prevention Pilot



18,244

TED Program
Admissions



74,312

Block Leader
Interactions

CARING FOR THE CARERS



Caring for the carers means supporting the people who make our impact possible. Throughout the year, OICH invested in staff well-being, leadership development, training, communication, and recognition to help create a workplace where people feel supported, valued, and equipped to do their best work. We remained committed to supporting the people who provide care and services every day. The following highlights showcase some of the ways we invested in our team during the year.



24%

Reduction in Staff
Turnover Rate



4

Leadership
Promotions



45

New Hires Across
our Programs



274

Training
Participations



18

Individuals Attended External
Training / Conferences



8+

Formal Staff Events
and Activities Held

BUILDING CONNECTIONS

Building connections is at the heart of OICH's work. Throughout the year, we collaborated with community partners, care providers, educators, researchers, and people with lived experience to share knowledge and advance common goals. As a teaching organization, we also continued to create meaningful learning opportunities for students and trainees. The following highlights reflect some of the ways we strengthened relationships and supported learning.



3

Social Work
Student Placements



8

Medical Students
and Residents



1

Nursing
Consignment



60

Paramedic
Students Hosted



24

Conferences /
Events Attended



7+

Tours and
Visits Hosted

TELLING OUR STORY



Telling our story is about ensuring the voices, experiences, and impact of our community are seen and heard. Throughout the year, OICH strengthened its communications efforts through media, social media, presentations, research, and community-based projects. By sharing knowledge and amplifying diverse perspectives, we continue to build understanding, challenge stigma, and increase awareness of our work. The following highlights reflect some of these efforts.



179%

Increase in Social
Media Views



115%

Increase in Social
Media Likes



90%

Increase in Social
Media Comments



478%

Increase in Social
Media Shares



32%

Increase in Social
Media Followers



5+

Media Participation
and Features

The stories and data shared throughout this report represent just a snapshot of the work taking place across OICH. Every day, staff, peers, and community members are building relationships, sharing ideas, creating opportunities, and responding to emerging needs in ways that cannot always be captured. As OICH continues to grow, we remain committed to improving how we collect and share information so we can better reflect the full scope and impact of this work in the years ahead!

KEY UPDATE: CTS FUNDING PULLED

On March 13, 2026, OICH received notification from the Ministry of Health that funding for Trailer 2.0 would end after 90 days. The Trailer first opened in November 2017 in response to a surge in toxic drug deaths during the preceding summer and the courageous actions of Overdose Prevention Ottawa, which established an unsanctioned site near what would become the Trailer's location and the epicentre of the crisis. The early days were challenging as staff and clients worked together to understand this new healthcare service and learn how to operate within an increasingly volatile and unregulated drug market. From the very beginning, this work was carried by people who simply showed up and did what needed to be done, even when there was no clear roadmap. Long before the Trailer existed, staff were already responding to overdoses wherever they could. As the service evolved, the Trailer became more than a healthcare program. It became a place people trusted, a place where they could walk through the door and know they would be met without judgment, where the small things mattered: a good morning, a conversation, or simply someone willing to listen.

Over the years, the Trailer, its clients, and staff continually created and recreated a space where community and connection could be maintained despite deadly shifts in the drug supply and the growing affordable housing crisis. The Trailer served not only as a demilitarized zone within the failed War on Drugs, but also as a place of acceptance, dignity, and belonging. It was a space where, after years of systemic stigma and rejection, a deeply marginalized community could be itself in the present while still imagining a different future. The work was never easy. It was messy, demanding, and often heartbreaking, marked by loss, crisis, and immense pressure, yet people kept showing up. Anyone who spent time at the Trailer knows it was also a beautiful place. A place of guitar singalongs, dance parties, recreation, art, sharing, laughter, tears, inside jokes, and unexpected moments of joy. Hundreds of people used the Trailer over the years. Many found recovery, many were lost, and many continue to fight on. Through it all, there was a connection and a sense of community that most people will never fully understand. There was also a great deal of love in the space. To everyone who was part of the Trailer, thank you. You have taught us invaluable lessons about resilience, and we remain committed to walking alongside you on your journey.





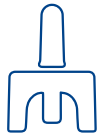
TRAILER: IN REVIEW

The following data provides a snapshot of Trailer activity since it opened for operations. These numbers represent the scale of service delivered and the critical role the Trailer continued to play in responding to the overdose crisis:



328,333

Visits for Supervised
Consumption



5,537

Overdoses
Reversed



287,460

Harm Reduction
Teachings



55,823

Referrals to Off
Site Services



1,713

Visits for
Primary Care



34,022

Visits for Mental and
Substance Use Health

Over the past year, Trailer continued to be a place of safety, acceptance, and connection. While the data tells part of the story, the true impact can be found in the relationships, trust, and shared experiences that developed within its walls.

The announcement of the loss of funding came in March 2026. The closure of Trailer was difficult for clients, staff, and the broader community, and its impact will continue to be felt in the months and years ahead. At the same time, it reinforced our commitment to advocating for people who use drugs and ensuring their voices remain at the centre of our work. As we look ahead, we remain committed to meeting the evolving needs of our community.



TRUTH AND RECONCILIATION

We recognize that our work takes place on the unceded, unsundered territory of the Algonquin Anishinaabe Nation and honour the knowledge, histories, cultures, and healing practices of Indigenous Peoples. As a healthcare organization, we acknowledge that the systems in which we operate have been shaped by colonial policies and structures that continue to impact Indigenous communities today. We remain committed to learning, listening, and taking meaningful action through staff education, relationship-building with Indigenous partners, and ongoing reflection on how we deliver care. We also recognize the importance of uplifting Indigenous voices, supporting culturally grounded approaches to wellness, and creating spaces where Indigenous clients feel respected, welcomed, and connected.

This past year, we have continued to strengthen our understanding of cultural safety, Indigenous perspectives on wellness and healing, and the role we can play in creating more equitable and inclusive services. This work has included opportunities for staff learning, community partnership, cultural programming, and supporting Indigenous-led initiatives across our organization. We know this work is ongoing, and that reconciliation is a responsibility that requires both action and accountability. Looking ahead, we are excited to continue building on this priority. Through new partnerships, learning opportunities, and organizational initiatives, we will continue working to decolonize our practices, challenge systemic barriers, and ensure our programs are welcoming, respectful, and responsive culturally safe care for indigenous clients. We are particularly excited about several new developments planned for the coming year that will further strengthen Indigenous programming, cultural supports, and opportunities for healing and connection. We remain committed to walking this path with humility, curiosity, and a willingness to grow.

Over the past year, these activities helped support healing, cultural connection, learning, and reconciliation across OICH programs:



47

Healing Circles Hosted
Across Supportive
Housing Programs



43

Culturally Responsive,
Trauma-Informed
Therapy Sessions



11

Energy, Spiritual, and
Traditional Healing
Sessions



2

Truth and
Reconciliation Staff
Training Sessions



11

Country Food
Gatherings Hosted with
the Ottawa Mission



RECONCILIATION KEY HIGHLIGHTS

Indigenous Peer Work

OICH is committed to ensuring clients have access to culturally appropriate and spiritually meaningful care. Indigenous Peer Workers play a vital role across our programs by providing cultural support, facilitating access to traditional teachings and ceremonies, leading healing circles, connecting clients with Indigenous community resources, and creating opportunities for healing, connection, and belonging. Their lived experience, cultural knowledge, and relationships help ensure Indigenous clients feel respected, supported, and connected to their culture throughout their care journey. As this work continues to grow, we are excited to build on these efforts in the coming year through new initiatives, strengthened partnerships, and expanded opportunities for culturally grounded care.

A Stretch of Grass: Healing Roots of Indigenous Homelessness

OICH partnered with Kublacom Productions (Danielle Rolfe and Ed Kucerak) and Indigenous healer Jenny Sâwanohk (Red Stone Snake Woman) to create *A Stretch of Grass: Healing Roots of Indigenous Homelessness*, a documentary exploring the experiences of Indigenous clients and the importance of culturally grounded healing. The film highlights Indigenous approaches to care and shares powerful stories of resilience, connection, and recovery. It premiered on September 24, 2025, as part of OICH's National Day for Truth and Reconciliation events, followed by a discussion and Q&A with Jenny and the filmmakers. The documentary has been incorporated into OICH's onboarding process, helping deepen understanding of the impacts of colonization and the importance of culturally safe care.

Improving Palliative Approaches to Care for Urban Inuit Project

As part of the IPACUI project, OICH participated in a Journey Mapping Day focused on understanding what palliative care looks like for Inuit communities. The session explored cultural perspectives on end-of-life care and highlighted the importance of culturally grounded approaches. A second gathering brought together healthcare providers to discuss the unique needs of Inuit clients and the barriers they face when accessing palliative care. These conversations are an important step toward creating more inclusive, culturally safe care for Inuit experiencing life-limiting illness.

Country Food Feasts

To celebrate Inuit culture and traditions, OICH hosts the Northern Country Food Feast at The Ottawa Mission on the third Friday of each month, with smaller feasts held across other programs and units. Featuring culturally significant foods such as bannock, caribou stew, Arctic char, and maaqtaaq (whale), the gathering provides an opportunity for community members to connect, share traditions, and celebrate Inuit culture in a welcoming and inclusive environment.



GRIEF AND LOSS

Honouring those we have lost is an important part of OICH's work and for our community. While grief and loss are realities many of the people we serve experience, so too are remembrance and connection. This section recognizes the individuals who are no longer with us while also highlighting the activities and opportunities for reflection that support community members through loss.

World Overdose Awareness Day

Every year, OICH participates in International Overdose Awareness Day, joining community members, partners, advocates, and people with lived and living experience to remember those we have lost and reaffirm our commitment to those still with us. The event is both a time of remembrance and a reminder that recovery is possible when people are provided with hope, support, and opportunities to heal.



Hospice Art Show

In partnership with OICH and The Ottawa Mission, the Hospice Expressive Arts Program provided a space for palliative clients and staff to explore grief, loss, and other complex emotions through creative expression. Guided by a registered psychotherapist and expressive arts therapist, the program used painting, drawing, and other art forms to foster healing, reflection, and connection. This year, participants' work was featured in a public art exhibition that celebrated resilience, honoured personal journeys, and highlighted the important role creativity can play in processing grief and finding meaning.

Collective Grief Initiative (CGI)

CGI is a unique collaboration of Ottawa organizations that support many of the same community members. It was born out of the COVID-19 pandemic, when opportunities to come together and mourn were disrupted even as the number of losses in our community continued to grow. Recognizing the need for collective healing, partner organizations joined together to create quarterly memorial gatherings that honour the lives of those who have died and ensure they are remembered with dignity. Hosted by different community partners throughout the year, these events provide a space for remembrance, reflection, and connection while bringing together friends, loved ones, service providers, and community members. This initiative also helps shine a light on the disproportionate loss of life among people experiencing homelessness, particularly as a result of the ongoing toxic drug crisis, while reinforcing the message that every life matters and every loss is felt.



IN MEMORIAM

Every year, our community experiences the loss of cherished friends, peers, clients, and staff. While words can never fully capture the impact these individuals had on those around them, we take this opportunity to honour their lives and the contributions they made to our community. Each person remembered here brought their own strengths, stories, and spirit. They taught us lessons in resilience, kindness, courage, and connection. Their presence enriched our community, and their absence is deeply felt. We remember not only the challenges they faced, but also the laughter they shared, the relationships they built, and the moments of joy they gave to others. Their lives mattered, and their memories continue to inspire us in our work and in our commitment to creating a community where everyone is valued and respected. As we reflect on those we have lost, we also acknowledge that this list may not capture every individual who passed during the year. If names have been unintentionally omitted, we offer our sincere apologies. We remember all members of our community who are no longer with us. Their impact remains, their memories endure, and they will not be forgotten.

Abigail Cliche

Alain Gordon

Alazar Abed

Artem Kizeev

Brandon Vitali

Cassidy Ellefsen (formerly

James Ward-Freidl)

Chelsey North

Clayton Yackobeck

Craig Vaudry

Daniel Diego Lalonde

David John Daigle

David Leccese

Diane Pfeiffer

Diane Presseault

Dyane Shorten-Gagnyon

Evgeni Kotev

Francine Larabee

George Feenstra

Glen Donald Keuhl

James Patrice Halliwell

Hibo Hassan

Hla Min

Irene Akariza

Irwin Windsor

James (Jim) Stewart

James Badour

James Coffey

James Phalen

Jamie Girling

Jean Denis

Jean Istead

Jenna Tina

John Leblanc

John Szlauko

Johnie Akpilujuk Aqpik

Kane "Myles" Inutiq

Karen Atagootsiak

Logan Stevens

Louis-Olivier Belanger

Luc Barrette

Marie France Mineault

Matthew Moir

Michael Kelly

Monty James (Formerly

David Ansis)

Nelson Wesley Getson

Pavel Doulov

Penelope Klees

Pitseolak Arnaquq

Raven Melsted

Richard Hutt

Ron 'Junior' Dube

Sanura Oonga (aka

Joamie Nooveya)

Sarah Kathleen Gilis

Scott Adams

Stephen Lagroix

Suzanne Kobe

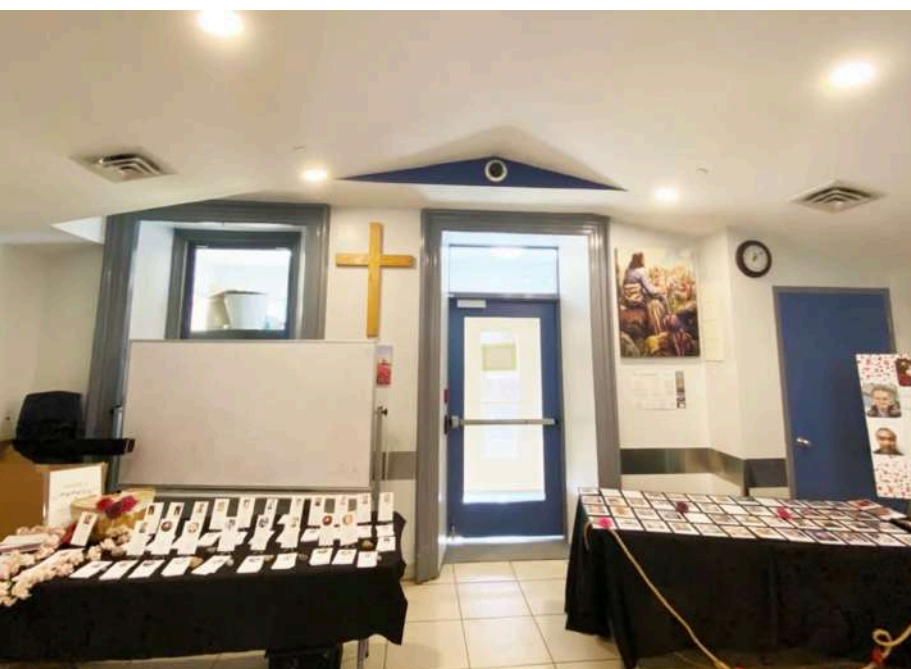
Tara Finnessy

Thomas Bissell

Todd Annand

Valerie Heron

Violet Kakekapetum



ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

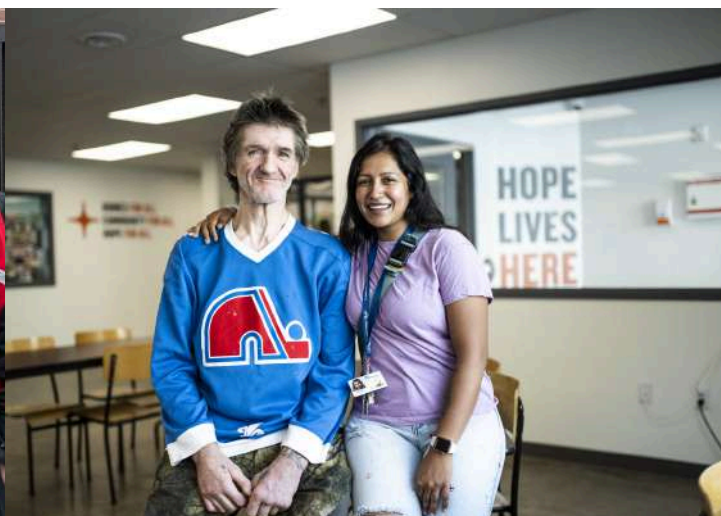
We are incredibly grateful to the funders and donors whose support makes our work possible. Quite simply, we could not do what we do without them. Their generosity allows us to continue providing care, support, and essential services to some of the community's most vulnerable individuals. Every program we deliver, every person we support, and every success we celebrate is made possible in part through their commitment and belief in our mission. We are deeply thankful for their partnership and the trust they place in us, and we remain inspired by their shared dedication to our community. With sincere appreciation, we acknowledge the following funders whose support helped make this work possible:



In addition to the support received from our funders, we were fortunate to receive generous contributions from individual donors throughout the year. Thanks to the support of nearly 70 individuals, we raised more than \$46,000 through one-time and recurring donations.

How You Can Help

There are many ways to support OICH and the people we serve. Donations of essential items such as pet supplies, clothing, books, and toiletries help meet immediate needs of our clients. You can also support our work by learning about the issues facing our community, sharing our stories, and helping raise awareness. If you shop online using PayPal, you can select OICH as your chosen charitable organization and add as little as \$1.00 to your purchase. To learn more about our programs, current needs, and ways to get involved, please visit our website.



COMMUNITY VOICES

The following testimonials were shared by individuals who were connected with OICH and later reached out through social media to share their experiences and express their appreciation. Their words reflect the impact of our programs, services, and staff, and offer valuable insight into the experiences of those we serve. These testimonials are shared with permission and have been lightly edited for clarity and brevity.

“

“Peer Support Workers, Mental Health Nurses and Counsellors at Trailer helped save my life. They held hope for me when I had none left, living on the streets and at shelters, consumed by addiction. It was their support and encouragement that gave me the strength to follow through with housing, and then get clean. That was in 2021. I am now 4.5 years clean and sober, have maintained my housing, and I am now a Peer Support Worker in mental health and substance use health. Words can't ever adequately express my gratitude for these amazing humans. I'm heartbroken about Trailer and the other safe consumption sites that have closed. I hope that there is indeed a way to get these services reinstated and to help support people in the meantime. Thank you so much for everything.” - Anonymous Former Service User

“I was a long-time IV drug user and experienced homelessness in Ottawa from 2016-2020. During that time, I relied on TED, Trailer, and local shelters. The staff at TED and Trailer treated people with kindness, dignity, and compassion, and I will always be grateful. They saved my life many times through overdose interventions, wound care, and support accessing Hepatitis C treatment, identification documents, and other essential services. It felt like a family and a safe place to turn. Keep up the incredible work you do. I am deeply saddened by the loss of funding for safe injection sites. As the drug supply becomes more toxic, I fear more preventable deaths. These sites provide far more than supervision. They offer medical care, overdose response, and connections to vital supports. I am living proof that these services save lives. They helped me reach recovery, and some of the nurses and staff were among the best healthcare professionals I have ever encountered. We do recover.” - Anonymous Former Service User





THAT'S ALL FOR THIS YEAR!

Thank you for taking the time to read our Annual Report. This year, we wanted to do something special to celebrate and showcase the incredible work OICH has been doing for the past 25 years. Even more, we wanted to take the opportunity to give a fuller picture of the amazing work happening across our organization every day.

It is impossible to capture everything we do, and all the lives touched by our programs and services, within the pages of a single report, but we certainly tried.

We invite you to stay connected with us beyond these pages by following us on social media, where we regularly share updates, celebrations, and stories from across our programs and community. Thank you for being part of our journey and for supporting our mission.

CONNECT WITH US!

📞 613-562-4500

✉️ inquiry@oich.ca

📘 Ottawa Inner City Health

📷 @ottawainnercityhealth

🌐 Ottawa Inner City Health

🌐 ottawainnercityhealth.ca

"Success is not measured by what you accomplish, but by the opposition you have encountered, and the courage with which you have maintained the struggle against overwhelming odds". - Orison Swett Marden

"The world may be broken but hope is not crazy". - John Green





HEALTHCARE HARM REDUCTION HOPE

Built on 25 years of resilience and resistance, we will continue to stand strong.

2001 DIANE MORRISON HOSPICE
2001 MEN'S SPECIAL CARE UNIT
2001 MANAGED ALCOHOL PROGRAM
2007 NP-LED WALK IN PRIMARY CARE
2008 WOMEN'S SPECIAL CARE UNIT
2010 THE OAKS RESIDENCE
2011 BOOTH RESIDENCE
2013 PEER WORKER PROGRAM
2014 TARGETED ENGAGEMENT & DIVERSION

2015 RITA THOMPSON RESIDENCE
2017 THE TRAILER
2018 CARRUTHERS RESIDENCE
2020 RICHCRAFT HOPE RESIDENCE
2020 TELUS HEALTH FOR GOOD VAN
2020 COVID-19 ISOLATION UNIT
2023 MERIVALE ROAD RESIDENCE
2023 BLOCK LEADERS



Healthcare. Harm Reduction. Hope.