

*Somerset West Community
Health Centre*

EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR'S REPORT

February 2023

FAMILY, COMMUNITY HEALTH AND HARM REDUCTION

COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT & DEVELOPMENT

YET KEEN SENIORS DAY CENTRE

Yet Keen Yet Keen hosted its first in-person Chinese New Year celebration since the pandemic on January 25th, 2023 at Peking Duck Restaurant downtown. 60 seniors participated to celebrate the festival with staff and guests in a joyous atmosphere.



Photos above: Yet Keen Lunar New Year Lunch Celebration at Peking Duck Restaurant



An @OttawaArtG outreach program involves seniors in Ottawa's Chinese Community. The exhibition will open next month. @HallieCBC got a sneak peak, including Jean Ing's piece featuring Mr. Bean tumbling from a coconut tree.



Photo source: Twitter - February 2nd, 2023.

Yet Keen seniors who have been participating in the art workshop series "Keen & Creative: A Celebration of Chinese Canadian Art with Yet Keen Seniors' Day Centre", offered by the Ottawa Art Gallery, were interviewed by the CBC Radio program Ottawa Morning on February 2nd. The seniors discussed their artwork and their involvement in the project. These artwork will be exhibited at the Ottawa Art Gallery from February 25th to March 19th, 2023. The interview can be accessed here: <https://www.cbc.ca/listen/live-radio/1-100-ottawa-morning/clip/15963808-oag-reaches-local-chinese-community>

COMMUNITY HEALTH PROMOTION

Throughout 2022, 285 volunteers contributed 6389 hours supporting programs across the Centre! We are so fortunate to have such a dedicated, skilled, and caring volunteer team who have made an immense impact and help us in our mission of supporting people and communities to enjoy the best possible health and well-being.

Community Development Framework funds were secured to support community initiatives in Mechanicsville, LeBreton and Rochester Heights for 2023. Each neighbourhood has an action plan, and will be working to address neighbourhood priorities based on community strengths and needs.

The Advocacy Committee learned more about energy poverty and can now ensure that our affordable and livable housing advocacy incorporates messaging related to energy poverty and health impacts.

The Income Tax program applied and received a small grant from the Community Volunteer Income Tax Program (CVITP). The organization's participation in the CVITP, supports members of the community with filing their income tax and benefit returns. Registration for this year's Income Tax season will open this month.

ROCHESTER HEIGHTS COMMUNITY HOUSE

Community House staff continue to support clients by connecting them to services; assisting with applications for housing benefits, and accessing emergency food resources; and initiating a two-day-a-week learn to skate lessons at McNabb Park, and weekly art lessons as part of their Afterschool Programs.

Weekly community outreach to promote key messages of the Centre, Ottawa Public Health, and Ottawa Community Housing continue. Staff participated in the Coalition of Community Houses of Ottawa discussing strategies around food insecurity which is becoming a pressing issue.

CHILDREN & YOUTH

Somerset West CHC is partnering with the Ottawa Community Housing Foundation (OCH) for a Hop-on-Bikes event. This event will provide families in OCH communities in our area with new bikes and helmets for kids and will also provide road safety refresher activities.

HARM REDUCTION

ANONYMOUS HIV TESTING OUTREACH

The Anonymous HIV testing program is in action again, and our new outreach worker has been connecting with internal and external partners.

A rapid testing centre at the University of Ottawa has begun for the winter term.

ACB/HIV PREVENTION STRATEGY

We partnered with ACO Ottawa, Carleton University and the Umoja project and other community partners to kickstart the black history month with a community panel discussion on antidote to racism held at Carleton University with African performances.



Photo above: Harm Reduction team.

OTTAWA BLACK MENTAL HEALTH COALITION (OBMHC)

The Ottawa Black Mental Health Coalition members held their Q-4 All Members meeting via ZOOM. The agenda included a review of the Membership Package and Guidelines. Additionally the Executive Board met twice this month to discuss strategic planning and 2023 Board recruitment. Coalition partners participated in several in-person events centered around Black History Month promotion.



The Antidote to Racism featured musical performances and seven community leaders including Adrienne Coddett, Sarah Onyango, and Dr. Clyde Ledbetter Jr. Additionally OBMHC was represented at the Black History Month's Launch event at the National Art Gallery on January 28th. The Coalition had a table and provided information about supports and services available.



OBMHC representatives continue to collaborate with Ottawa Guiding Council partners and met with Ottawa Mayor Mark Sutcliffe to discuss mental health strategies for the city. Black Mental Health Week planning continues, including an in-person wellness expo at the Ron Kolbus Community Centre. You can register for Black Mental Health Week 2023 events here:

<https://www.eventbrite.ca/e/black-mental-health-week-2023-exploring-stigma-and-black-mental-health-tickets-519267431867>

PRIMARY HEALTHCARE

Somerset West has been working closely with the Kids Come First health team on a proposal to Ontario Health to support childhood vaccination and improve population health. This funding would support integrate immunization software that reports back to Ottawa Public Health as well as staffing supports to offer 3-4 vaccination clinics open to residents in Ottawa that have missed critical publicly funded vaccines during the Pandemic.

OTTAWA NEWCOMER HEALTH CENTRE

ONHC is a proud program of SWCHC serving newcomers and refugees with the combination of four services. In an interview with CBC Radio's Ottawa Morning, Manager Farouq Samim highlighted some of the challenges the centre has been facing due to the ongoing influx of refugees, shortage of ongoing primary care in the community, and some of its immediate needs. The interview can be accessed here: <https://www.cbc.ca/listen/live-radio/1-100/clip/15964101>

TOUR WITH DR. VERA ETCHES

The Medical Officer of Health, Dr. Vera Etches visited the Ottawa Newcomer Health Centre on February 15th to identify the key issues related to sustainable funding and space requirements.