

# EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR'S REPORT

*January 2023*

## PRIMARY HEALTHCARE

### SMILES FOR SENIORS

Santa's elves from Primary Health Care's Outreach team were busy this year delivering smiles to isolated seniors. Christmas Smiles for Seniors has been bringing smiles to lonely & isolated seniors since 2000, by giving them a personal and meaningful gift from their "wish list". Seniors in need created a wish list which our team of elves wrapped and delivered!

### WINTER CLOTHING GIVE-AWAY

Rooming House Outreach staff distributed winter clothing to clients living in local rooming houses in November and December. To keep our clients warm they gave out over \$18,000 worth of winter gear that included wool socks, gloves, hats, jackets and boots. These items were well received and appreciated making this year's give-away a success. Harm Reduction staff helped in giving out coats, hats and socks. Sock and hat distribution will continue through the winter!

### COVID-19 AND FLU VACCINE CLINICS

As levels of respiratory illnesses in the community remain high, primary health care continues to offer COVID-19 vaccines by way of the primary series to those 6 month and older as well as booster doses to those who are eligible. In addition, the team has been holding vaccine clinics for clients and community members to get their COVID vaccine as well the flu vaccine in efforts to protect one another and our loved ones.



Photo above: one of Santa's elves geared up & ready to deliver smiles to lonely & isolated seniors in our community.

## ONTARIO DISABILITY SUPPORT

In partnership with Centre 454 the primary health care team is excited to announce the return of onsite ODSP clinics for unattached clients of the Centre. The ODSP program is designed to help people with disabilities who are in financial need pay for living expenses, like food and housing (Income Support). These clinics can also help individuals who have been turned down or experienced reduced benefits, they can assist with the appeals process. This appointment-based clinic will be held the last Tuesday of each month at the Eccles branch from 1-4 PM.

## DR. RACHEL LI JOINS THE PRIMARY CARE TEAM!

Primary Health Care is delighted to announce Dr. Rachel Li will be joining the practice January 9th. At this time, she will be taking over Dr Fatima Uddin's practice. Dr. Li graduated from McMaster University in 2015. Following this she completed her family medicine residency and additional training in maternity and newborn care at Queen's University. After living and working as a physician in multiple provinces and territories across Canada, Dr. Li is overjoyed to settle down and once again call Ottawa her home.

## OTTAWA NEWCOMER HEALTH CENTRE (ONHC)

Our Integrated Mental Health Service (IMHS), Ottawa Language Access (OLA), and Multicultural Health Navigation (MHN) teams continue to provide an important element of our wraparound care to our newcomers and refugee clients.

## NEW PATIENT EXAMINATION ROOMS

Our two newly renovated patient examination rooms are now fully functional, and with new staffing we will be able to provide care to more clients/ patients at one time.

## COLLABORATIVE VACCINATION CLINICS

Ottawa Newcomer Health Centre continues to work with health care and settlement partners to address the health care needs of newly arrived government assisted refugees (GARs)

In our collaborative vaccine clinics with SEOCHC and CCI, we have now been able to administer vaccines to closer to 300 GARs, which is a 35% reduction in our waitlist of 900 GARs waiting for catchup immunizations. For reducing waitlist of 900 for initial medical assessment (IMA), we again changed our intake strategy from first come-first serve to bring in those GARs with urgent and immediate needs. With additional part time NPs and our existing primary care providers, we have been able to reduce the list by over 50 patients—now we have 850 waiting for IMAs. ONHC will continue to look for innovative ways to reduce to the waitlist.





# MENTAL HEALTH & COUNSELLING

## VIETNAMESE SUPPORT PROGRAM

The Vietnamese Support Program has restarted our weekly in person Wellness groups for Vietnamese Seniors are resuming via Zoom & in-person. Since January 2022 we have offered twice weekly zoom-based groups for Vietnamese Seniors, with 10 – 15 participants per week. After much request from our participants, we have re-started our in-person groups – offering once a week in person groups with varied wellness activities including cooking, exercise, and various guest speakers to address mental and physical health topics. The groups have been well received and well attended and we have continued a weekly zoom-based group to ensure accessibility for those who might need to stay home or reduce their in-person contacts.



Photos below: Vietnamese Lunar New Year Event on January 11th, 2023.

# FAMILY, COMMUNITY HEALTH & HARM REDUCTION

## COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT & DEVELOPMENT

### COMMUNITY HEALTH PROMOTION

Throughout November, the Community Engagement Team worked in partnership to facilitate Free Food Markets in two neighborhoods. These markets are supported by local food organizations including Parkdale Food Centre (two markets) and the Dalhousie Food Cupboard (one market). These markets play a role to address growing levels of food insecurity.



Photo above: Parkdale Food Market



## YET KEEN SENIORS DAY CENTRE

Yet Keen will host two events for this year's Christmas celebration - one on Zoom and one in-person, to include all seniors regardless of whether they prefer to stay home. This would be our first large gathering with indoor dining. 68 seniors attended the in-person gathering at 755 Somerset St W. There were games, food, performances, and Bingo. The Zoom Christmas celebration on December 13th, 2022 was also well attended by 31 seniors.



Photo above: Artist Don Kwan

Yet Keen launched a new project "Keen & Creative: A Celebration of Chinese Canadian Art with Yet Keen Seniors' Day Centre" in partnership with the Ottawa Art Gallery. The project is funded by the Seniors Community Grant Program. 44 seniors visited the Ottawa Art Gallery on November 24th, 2022 where artist Don Kwan gave a guided tour of his exhibition and exchanged with Yet Keen seniors about art making and Chinese Canadian history. It was the first time for many Yet Keen seniors to visit the Ottawa Art Gallery. Many were interested in returning to the Gallery on their own in the future. This project will offer 2 monthly art workshops (1 in-person and 1 on Zoom) until the end of March 2023. The first Zoom workshop on air dry clay took place on November 22nd featuring Markham-based artist XiaoJing Yan. Seniors who joined made their own busts (sculpture). Each of the following Zoom workshops will feature a Chinese Canadian artist. The in-person workshops will be taught by educators from the Ottawa Art Gallery inspired by the work of a Chinese Canadian artist. At the end of the project, seniors will be exhibiting their artwork at the Ottawa Art Gallery as well as at Yet Keen's main space.

In Summer/Fall 2022, Yet Keen organized a webinar series titled "Plan Ahead" where we invited Chinese speaking professionals to share knowledge on Wills and power of attorney, funeral services, and long term care home applications. Attendance count for this series is 63.

## **ROCHESTER HEIGHTS COMMUNITY HOUSE**

The Ottawa School of Arts is implementing Art workshops at the Community House After-school Program. The workshop will run every Wednesday from 16:00 to 18:00 from November 16, 2022, until March 8, 2023.

The Community House team has been supporting tenants affected by the two fires at 865 Gladstone. Working closely with OCH and Aging in Place, we have provided mental health support and assisted with the food delivery and resource information.

Working with Ottawa Public Health, our team outreach 133 households living in priority neighborhoods promoting information about vaccination, antivirals and access to community resources.

The Community House has restarted its Breakfast Program at the rooming house at 206 Bronson Ave. The Program runs every Tuesday morning from 9:00 to 10:30 am.

We continue doing weekly community wellness checks with Ottawa Community Housing and Ottawa Public Health teams in high-priority communities.

We supported the implementation of four-holiday parties in Ottawa Community Housing communities.

The Community House will receive support from the May Court of Ottawa to provide snacks for our After School Program.

We are supporting residents to apply for the Canada Housing Benefit.

## **ADVOCACY**

In November, the Stewards Table gathered to begin work on the development of a Community Benefits Framework for West Centretown. This is part of a partnership grant with the Ottawa Community Benefits Network, funded by the Ottawa Community Foundation. The framework will serve as a community driven tool to enable community benefit outcomes to be negotiated into WC development projects. Leading up to March 2024, the Stewards Table will be facilitating a series of themed conversations towards the development of targets.

SWCHC supported two advocacy campaigns related to Bill 23. The first was in partnership with the Coalition of Community Health and Resource Centres, highlighting the negative potential of the Bill related to reducing the capacity of municipalities to ensure deeply affordable housing to meet core housing need. The second was through the Ottawa Community Food Partnership, highlighting the potential negative impact on food systems and conservation.

## CHILDREN & YOUTH

We have spent the last month ensuring families are connected with Toy Mountain and The Christmas Exchange to receive toys, hampers or grocery vouchers over the winter holidays. We have expressed interest and will be working with the City of Ottawa towards enrolling in the 2022 Canada-Wide Early Learning and Child Care (CWELCC) System. This supports families who have parental fees associated with their child care, and more publicly known as 10\$ per day child care.

## HARM REDUCTION

This past month we welcomed several new Team Leads on an interim basis: Meagan MacQuatt, Callan Pepper and Seema Mahmud. The team really held things together over the holiday period in which we were proud to provide services every day!

Our Safe Supply program has been undergoing some prescriber transitions and has been limited in its recruiting ability by our short term funding. Our partners at Recovery Care have stepped in to offer virtual care, and our team has really rallied to make this transition as smooth as possible for our clients.

Our COVID relief funding will be coming to an end at the end of March, which will impact a number of our services. We continue to actively pursue a funding extension for our Drug Overdose Prevention and Education Team, which also comes to an end at the end of March.

### CONSUMPTION AND TREATMENT SERVICE

Primary care proposal: looking to increase access by having unattached on weekend, including evening hours, physician support at black hub. \$1.3M in revenue from ONT Health.

### ACB/HIV PREVENTION STRATEGY

We started a weekend morning coffee with our Peer Equity Navigators where we pick different topics around ACB and wellbeing and discuss it. Also, we had the blkgurl all night party this month where we were able to initiate black women about taking action to protect their overall wellbeing especially those that have experienced marital violence, SWCHC services including the anonymous HIV testing and shared condoms.

### ACB/HIV PREVENTION STRATEGY

OBMHC Executive Board held a brief planning session in preparation for 2023 strategic planning, which will be conducted with the wider group of stakeholders. OBMHC was also well represented at the The Royal Ottawa's Women in Mind conference on November 4th. OBMHC's Coordinator moderated the day-long conference which included attendees from SWCHC's ACB Mental Health Programs, and featured a fireside chat with OBMHC founding member Suzanne Obiorah.

On November 9th, representatives from the Coalition and SWCHC presented training for the Ottawa Paramedic's Mental Wellness Response Teams (MWRT). The MWRT requested customized training to support the teams when responding to calls from ACB residents. Training included a 4-hour in-person session and package of referral information for ACB supports in Ottawa.

Several promotional and marketing opportunities in November include the development of two video promotion videos for Counseling Connect and Black Mental Health Week.

Additionally, OBMHC was featured in the second half of the November 5th episode of Black on Black, hosted by Sarah Onyango on CHUO FM. <https://chuo.fm/show/black-on-black/#frame>

Currently in development in partnership with multiple stakeholders, OBMHC staff are working on the following upcoming events:

- Anti-dote to Racism: Anti-racist Antidote: Finding Resilience in our Histories, January 21, 2023: This event will be focused on providing the chance for our community to share about how we can find mental wellbeing and strength from understanding our history and drawing strength from our own narratives.
- Join us as we discuss our past and look ahead to Black History Month. Black Mental Health Week March 1-7, 2023



**OBMHC**  
**Member Capacity Building 2023**

Join Gina Leslie in person for a half-day training that is custom designed to support the organizations of the Ottawa Black Mental Health Coalition. This training is ideal for leaders and decision makers!

**January 27, 2023**  
9:00 - 1:00 PM  
Location to be confirmed



**GINA LESLIE**  
FACILITATOR

**WORKSHOP 1**  
In this workshop, you will:

- Gain a deeper understanding of the different funding options available
- Know how to successfully apply for and sustain that funding
- Learn how collaboration and strong governance can strengthen your organization's reputation with current and prospective funders
- Know how to collaborate to increase your organization's operational and financial sustainability
- Know how to identify and fill gaps that could negatively impact your growth potential

**REGISTER**  
By email: [info@obmhc.ca](mailto:info@obmhc.ca)



January 21st, 2023 1:00 - 3:00 PM

**ANTIDOTE TO RACISM**  
**Finding Resilience in our Histories**

**Saturday, January 21**  
**1:00 - 3:00 PM via ZOOM**

African, Caribbean, and Black (ACB) people have a longstanding tradition of radical resistance and joy.

- What has this history of resistance looked like in Ottawa?
- How do we foster wellness and joy in our own communities?
- How can we find strength from our narrative in the midst of anti-Black racism?

This event will be focused on providing the chance for our community to share about how we can find mental wellbeing and strength from understanding our history and drawing strength from our own narratives. Join SWCHC and partners on January 21st, 2023 from 1:00 - 3:00 PM as we discuss our past and look ahead to Black History Month.

REGISTER ONLINE: <https://www.eventbrite.ca/e/antidote-to-racism-finding-resilience-in-our-histories-tickets-48884478487>

