



**Sandy Hill**  
Community Health Centre

# ANNUAL REPORT

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2024 / 2025



# A WORD FROM OUR BOARD CHAIR AND EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

As we reflect on the past year, we are proud to share the progress and impact of our agency's work in advancing accessible, compassionate, and community-driven health care. Despite the rapidly evolving and extreme conditions that increasingly challenge the health care and community environment – from public health emergencies to economic uncertainty – our team has remained steadfast as a champion of accessible, inclusive, and community-focused care. This role that is more critical than ever as we respond to the growing and evolving needs of those we serve.

## ◆ *Community Impact*

This year, Sandy Hill Community Health Centre (SHCHC) provided health and social services to over **63,918** individuals across our geographic and population health-based communities. Our interdisciplinary approach allowed us to meet people where they are – physically, emotionally and culturally – ensuring that no one was left behind.

In 2024-25, our team of dedicated clinicians, community health workers and support staff delivered high-quality care in primary health, substance use and mental health, chronic disease management, health promotion and community development. Highlights include:

- ✦ Increased access to primary care for children 0 – 5 years old through the launch of the Thrive Clinic in partnership with the Vanier Community Service Centre.

- ✦ Continued support for supervised consumption services, which have proven essential in reducing harm, saving lives and connecting people with further care.
- ✦ Re-organization of team structures to optimize team-based, integrated care for people with complex health and social needs.

## ◆ *Diversity, Equity and Inclusion*

Equity remains central to our work. This year, we focused on foundational work including:

- ✦ A formal quality improvement initiative to increase the rate of completion for socio-demographic data. This data helps identify health disparities and barriers to care. Without it, vulnerable populations may remain invisible within the system, and systemic inequities may go unaddressed. Knowing who we serve allows us to tailor programming to meet specific community needs and deliver personalized, respectful and relevant care.
- ✦ An organizational audit of equity, diversity and inclusion practices. The audit results will form the basis for priority setting and workplan development for the upcoming year.



### ◆ *Community Partnerships and Collective Impact*

The challenges facing our community – including housing insecurity, food access and the opioid crisis – demand collaborative solutions. This year, the Centre supported multi-agency initiatives addressing homelessness and substance use, and we actively contributed to city-wide planning on poverty reduction, access to primary care and public health.

### ◆ *Financial Stewardship and Sustainability*

In 2024-25, we maintained a balanced budget and secured new grants to support increased access to primary care for preschool children, for community projects in Strathcona Heights and to ensure optimal air quality in the Consumption and Treatment Service (CTS) room. Fiscal responsibility and transparency continue to guide our operations, ensuring that every dollar is used to strengthen our impact.

### ◆ *Looking Ahead*

Our strategic plan visions SHCHC as a key player in a connected and effective health care system with a focus on increased access, services to people with complex health needs, health equity and inclusion. As we move into the coming year, our focus will be to set agency-wide foundations to be a strategic partner in the emerging provincial vision for a connected, equitable and responsive primary care system.

### ◆ *Gratitude*

To our incredible team, your dedication is the foundation of everything we do. To our community partners, your collaboration enables us to go further, together. And to our clients, thank you for trusting us. Your voices guide our vision.

Together, we are building a healthier, more just community.

SHCHC honours the territory upon which our staff and partners live, work, and play. We acknowledge that this is the traditional unceded, unsurrendered Territory of the Anishinaabe Algonquin Nation, who lived on this land since time immemorial. We are grateful to have the opportunity to live and work on this territory.

Robin McAndrew,  
Executive Director

Glen Barber,  
Board Chair

# CLIENT CARE

## ACCESS TO PRIMARY CARE

As part of an intensive planning process in December 2024, the new *Integrated Primary Care Team* has reviewed caseload, intake criteria and waitlist processes.

- ✦ Multiple wait list processes have been streamlined.
- ✦ Intake criteria have been renewed with a more explicit focus and prioritization of people with complex health needs. There is also a renewed focus on family practice, with intake including family members rather than just the individual.

Desired results are to enhance client outcomes and access to care in an overburdened and under-resourced system. *Oasis* and *Health Services* teams have directed their focus to several priority projects to:

- ✦ enhance access to care and ensure the right service at the right time;
- ✦ enhance team-based care;
- ✦ ensure providers are working to their full scope of practice;
- ✦ enhance provider and team well-being.

As a result, the *Integrated Primary Care Team* has welcomed to their practice **55** new families with complex health needs.

INDIVIDUAL ENCOUNTERS - 29,161

UNIQUE INDIVIDUALS - 6,611

## CONSUMPTION AND TREATMENT SERVICES (CTS): SNAPSHOT OF RESULTS

SHCHC's CTS has significantly reduced overdoses and saved lives within the community. Since 2023:

- ✦ **52,375** visits to our CTS. **43,966** of those visits were for Supervised Consumption Services, and **1,719** resulted in an overdose.
- ✦ **1,719** overdoses, **164** resulted in calling the emergency services.
- ✦ **1,555** overdoses successfully treated within the CTS.
- ✦ **0** deaths.



# CLIENT CARE

"I feel SHCHC goes beyond expectations. My friend has language barriers and they still found creative ways to help her and make her feel comfortable."

- SHCHC Client

## ACCESS TO CONCURRENT DISORDER AND SUBSTANCE USE HEALTH SUPPORTS

In 2024-2025, the *Addictions and Mental Health Services (AMHS)* team successfully resolved a backlog of referrals and worked to improve processes to be able to offer a better client experience. Since the winter of 2025, AMHS providers have been taken on new clients with minimal wait times.

AMHS was also able to stabilize support for Counselling Connect by consistently adding availability to the Counselling Connect schedule. When caseloads fluctuate, are low, and/or when there are multiple cancellations, providers will be able to add one-time (1-3 sessions) counselling spots.



## ACCESS TO SERVICES IN 2024-2025

**63,918**

Total number of individual encounters

**8,305**

Total number of unique individual clients served

**4,215**

Number of clients receiving Primary Care services

**55**

Total number of group programs

# CLIENT CARE

## UNDERSTANDING CLIENT EXPERIENCE: KEY THEMES FROM THE 2024-2025 CLIENT EXPERIENCE SURVEY AND CLIENT FEEDBACK

Every year, SHCHC collects information on the experience of clients using our programs and services through the *Client Experience Survey*, as well as our *Client Feedback* process. This information is extremely valuable and helps us to learn where we are doing well and where improvements can be made.

In 2024/25, we focused on in-person administration of the *Client Experience Survey*. We received **187** responses with the majority of responses from clients using primary care, as well as health promotion and chiropody services. Overall:

- ✦ **89%** of respondents said they feel comfortable and welcome at SHCHC;
- ✦ **87%** of respondents felt that SHCHC is inclusive, respectful and welcoming to clients of diverse backgrounds, cultures, and/or identities;
- ✦ **92%** of respondents felt that SHCHC staff worked together well to care for them;
- ✦ **90%** of respondents felt that when they see their service provider, they are always or often involved as much as they would like to be in decisions about their care or treatment;
- ✦ **89%** of respondents felt that the services provided by SHCHC were of high quality.

We also receive and respond to all feedback provided by clients or community members through our *Client Feedback* process. Clients and community members can provide feedback via the feedback forms at all reception desks or through the online form on our website. In 2024/25, we received **31** feedback submissions from clients and community members. Overall:

- ✦ **45%** were complaints;
  - ✦ **6%** were compliments;
  - ✦ **32%** were requests for information;
  - ✦ **16%** were other general requests.
- ◆ *What We Are Doing Well:*
- ✦ Satisfaction with quality of primary care and services (time spent with client, knowledgeable, monitoring health, responsive, supportive).
  - ✦ Rapid access to and availability of care (timely appointments, walk-in services, after hours support, outreach).
  - ✦ Referrals and access to other internal/external services, specialists and groups for holistic care.
  - ✦ Inclusive, welcoming, compassionate, caring and friendly staff, approach and environment.
  - ✦ Appreciate communication practices and reception team (responsive, follow-ups, scheduling).

# CLIENT CARE

## ◆ *What We Could Improve:*

- ✦ Concern with outer and front reception environment.
- ✦ Feeling unsafe accessing the Centre with people congregating/drug use occurring immediately outside.
- ✦ Reduce wait times and improve access to medical appointments (longer hours, weekend hours, more doctors).
- ✦ Extremely long wait times to get through via telephone to schedule appointment or to speak with reception.
- ✦ Improve appointment scheduling (i.e. through online booking) and have appointment reminders.
- ✦ More resources allocated to provide health information, increased access to primary care, and programs (i.e. after school and summer programs, virtual wellness groups, more family doctors).



## ◆ *Stuffed Socks Program*

In its 17<sup>th</sup> year, the annual sock program handed out this winter **100** warm socks stuffed with toiletries and food to some of our clients and community members. This annual initiative is possible thanks to the support of the local community and staff.



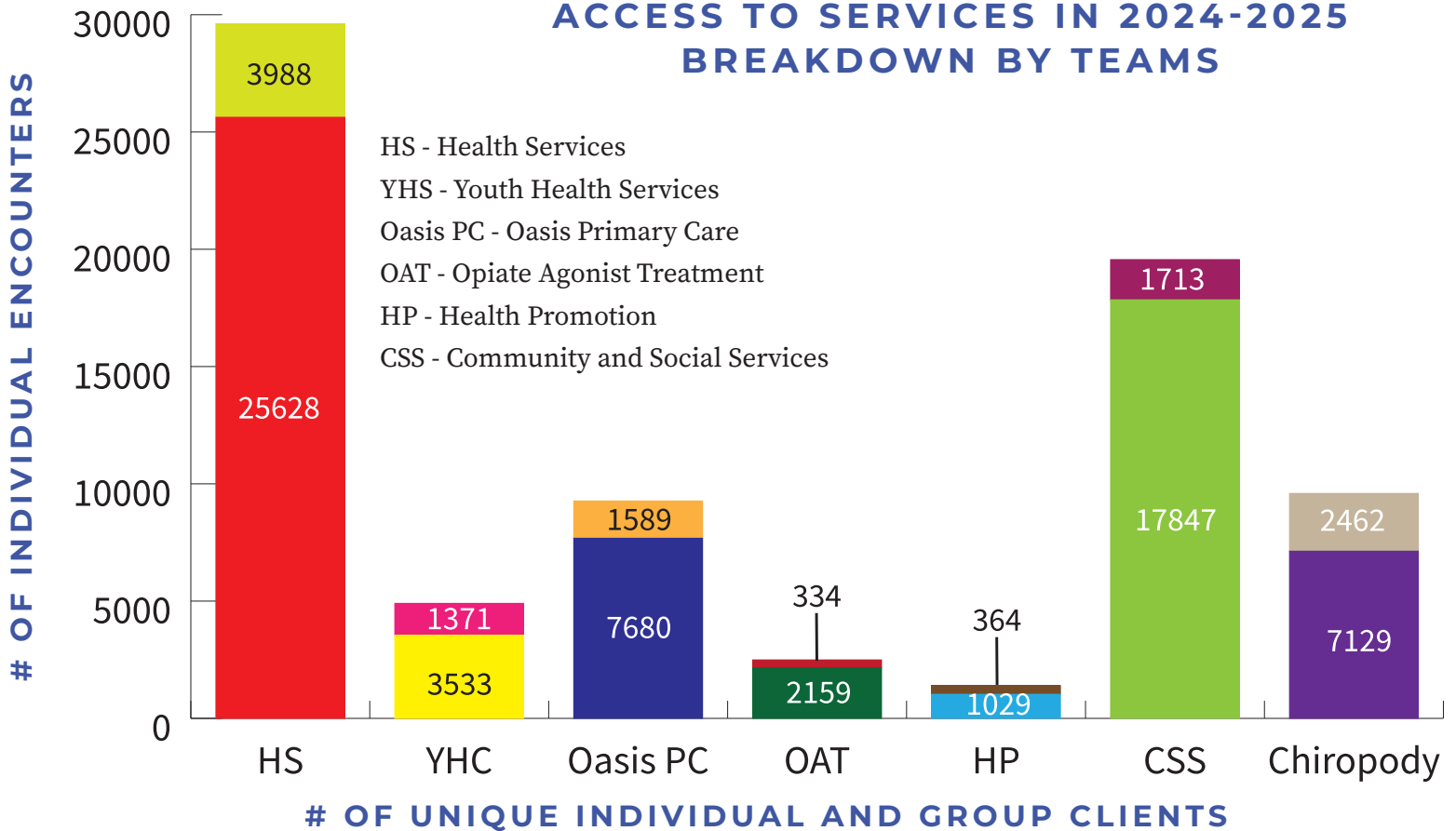
# CLIENT CARE

*"I hope every single person working there knows how important they are to the community and what a blessing they are to so many. I hope there is not a day go by where they do not know how much they are appreciated and needed and what incredible work they do."*

- SHCHC client



## ACCESS TO SERVICES IN 2024-2025 BREAKDOWN BY TEAMS



# COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT

Community development at SHCHC reflects an ongoing commitment to equitable partnerships between residents and organizations, grounded in the belief that sustainable change begins by shifting power into the hands of community members. When residents are supported to lead, advocate, and shape solutions based on their lived experiences, the result is lasting, meaningful impact. SHCHC has continued to champion this approach in Strathcona Heights, working closely with individuals who are passionate about strengthening their community.

In alignment with this vision, three key initiatives took place this year, each one reflecting the values of leadership development, community connection, and resident-led action.

### ◆ *The Concentric Circle of Care Project:*

Funded by United Way, this project was a three-year collaboration between four Community Health and Resource Centers: Rideau-Rockcliffe CRC, Lowertown CRC, Pinecrest-Queensway CHC, and SHCHC. This city-wide initiative focused on empowering BIPOC (Black, Indigenous, or People of Color) youth across different catchment areas, and creating a unified task force to speak out against hate-based violence and systemic racism.



As the project concludes in 2025, a final opportunity emerged through a Spoken Word training facilitated by Ottawa Theatre School, where youth were equipped to use creative expression as a form of storytelling and advocacy. The closing celebration brought together participants from across the city to reflect on their experiences, celebrate accomplishments, and highlight the collective learning gained over the course of the project.

### ◆ *Creating the Change We Want Training:*

Delivered annually by the Community Development Framework of the City of Ottawa, this program supports residents and grassroots groups who are passionate about leading change in their communities. This year, SHCHC supported Lori Cere, a long-time resident of Strathcona Heights, through the training. Following her participation, Lori led a series of community-building events, including two community breakfasts, a paint night, and a game night. These events were designed to foster connection, promote inclusion, and create informal spaces for neighbors to engage with one another in meaningful ways.

# COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT

## ◆ *Peerspective Training:*

Similarly, through the Peerspective training developed by South-East Ottawa CHC and Britannia Woods Community House, residents from across the city were equipped with tools to support mental well-being within their communities. Lushanthi Peries, who also completed Creating the Change We Want, applied her combined training to develop two wellness-focused workshops in Strathcona Heights. She facilitated a Chair Yoga session for seniors, aimed at encouraging gentle movement and social connection, and a candle-making workshop that offered a creative and calming space for residents to reflect and engage with one another.

These initiatives demonstrated the value of peer-led mental health promotion and the importance of accessible, resident-driven wellness opportunities.

## ◆ *Summer Camp in Strathcona Heights:*

From mid-July to early August last year, SHCHC offered a 3-week half day camp at Viscount Alexander Public School in partnership with MASC, the Ottawa School of Art, OCDSB and Prezidential Basketball. With limited funding, the camp was smaller, welcoming only **30** participants. Each week, a specific activity took place supported by various instructors.



## ◆ *After-School Program:*

Since 2014, Mr. George Gaty has been a private donor to SHCHC with his financial contribution going towards the After-School program in Strathcona Heights. We are grateful for his support which allows us to hire staff and provide the After-School program to **30** registered children who reside in Strathcona Heights and attend a variety of schools within the surrounding area. The After-School program offers a space for participants to receive homework help, increase socialization and take part in other activities such as: I Love to Dance, Awesome Arts, Christie Lake Kids, Ottawa School of Art instruction.

## ◆ *Bilan Iftar Assaim 2025:*

Iftar is the fast-breaking evening meal of Muslims during the holy month of Ramadan which, this year, was celebrated from March 1<sup>st</sup> to March 31<sup>st</sup>. SHCHC partnered again with the Algerian Association to offer four Iftars where a minimum of **80** students came each Friday. There were **343** meals distributed by **8** volunteers who, on a weekly basis, ensured there was a friendly environment. Meals were comprised of bread, milk, dates, water, soft drinks, chorba, Boureks and a tajine dish.

# COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT

## ◆ *Capture and Confront: Our Neighbourhoods through Our Eyes and Words*

The exhibition entitled *Capture and Confront* showcased photography done by BIPOC youth participating in the Photovoice Project last June of last year. The Photovoice Project is an initiative of a larger project, the *Concentric Circles of Care*, which aims to increase equity, social inclusion, and cohesion for BIPOC residents in various parts of the city of Ottawa.

The Photovoice Project was designed to empower and amplify the voices of BIPOC youth through the transformative art of photography. This project encompasses a multifaceted approach to community engagement, skill development, and youth narratives, with a central focus on addressing health disparities and social justice issues within BIPOC communities. Approximately **55** BIPOC youths across four diverse communities were recruited to engage in photography training where they captured their neighbourhoods using the skills learned in the program.

Our Community Development and Engagement team has supported one of 4 Photovoice projects in priority neighbourhoods intended to give voice to BIPOC youth. A vernissage of their photography was held last June at the Ottawa Art Gallery, and the exhibit ran until July.

## ◆ *National Day for Truth and Reconciliation*

The National Day for Truth and Reconciliation on September 30<sup>th</sup> is a time to honour survivors of residential schools and their families, acknowledge the legacy of the system, and promote reconciliation. Commemoration can involve various actions like wearing an orange shirt, learning about Indigenous history, attending events, supporting Indigenous organizations, and engaging in reconciliation efforts.

SHCHC honoured the National Day for Truth and Reconciliation with many inputs:

- ✦ Holding an education event for all staff led by Weaving Wellness Centre on September 26, 2024.
- ✦ making orange t-shirts with art logo designed by our clients.
- ✦ Raising the Reconciliation flag.
- ✦ Creating a “Reflections on Truth and Reconciliation” banner in the Board room. The banner was intended to be a vector for self-expression and for raising awareness, and to create a space for staff to express themselves in the context of Truth and Reconciliation Day by leaving a message, poem, artwork or something they felt was appropriate.



# QUALITY AND INNOVATION

## PRIMARY CARE QUALITY IMPROVEMENT INITIATIVES

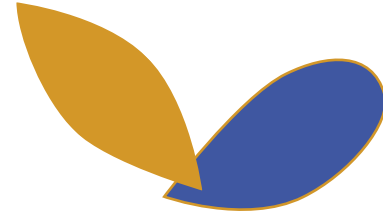
- ✦ Early Access Appointments resulting in clients seeing their own primary care provider for any urgent needs within 24-48 hours.
- ✦ Collaboration with The Ottawa Hospital Cancer Care to ensure unattached clients in the area have access to cancer screening.
- ✦ Prioritization of at-risk transitional youth with complex care needs for transition to the integrated Primary Care Team, when they no longer meet the age criteria for the Youth Health Clinic.
- ✦ Enhancements to the Nurse Led Assessment Clinic, based on feedback from the Client Experience Survey.
- ✦ A pilot project with The Royal, The Ottawa Hospital, and other community partners to enhance the coordination of access to addictions medicine in the Ottawa region. In the future, we hope to add more nursing, social work, and peer resources to support our Rapid Access to Addiction Medicine (RAAM) Clinic and to the Oasis primary care clinic.
- ✦ Partnership with Inner City Health that will support additional physician resources to provide services in both the Oasis and Health Services primary care through to the end of March 2026.

## CTS NEW INITIATIVES IN 2024-2025

- ✦ Expanded drop-in services: we added morning groups to increase recovery options; we offer:
  - A music group: CTS partnered with local musicians to teach clients how to play instruments and participate in jam sessions.
  - A storytelling group: focused on expression through stories and poetry.
- ✦ Holiday drop-in services:
  - The drop-in center was open to provide safe indoor spaces for clients.
- ✦ Daily community clean-up: the Centre secured **\$30,000** to hire four individuals with lived experience and one community worker to clean the neighborhood daily.



# QUALITY AND INNOVATION



- ✦ Urban art projects:
  - Collaborating with Ottawa Police Service, St. Paul's University and local landlords to create urban artwork, reducing tagging and improving aesthetics.
  - Exploring future opportunities for urban art spaces in collaboration with the City of Ottawa.
- ✦ HIV and LGBTQ+ support: applied for funding to host a weekly LGBTQ+ group focusing on HIV education and stigma reduction.
- ✦ Community outreach: submitted four funding applications for expanded outreach programs.

## QUALITY IMPROVEMENT PROJECT: COMPLETION OF SOCIODEMOGRAPHIC DATA COLLECTION

In 2024-2025, we committed to improving the completion of sociodemographic data collection for our clients. This information helps us to better understand the clients we serve, so we can ensure all clients of SHCHC receive equitable, safe, and appropriate care that meets their needs and preferences.

Through the collaborative efforts of our reception team members, we were able to increase the sociodemographic data completion rate from **44%** in December 2024, to **52%** as of April 2025, surpassing our target of **50%**. Integrating front-line

knowledge from team members at all three reception desks at SHCHC allowed us to successfully reach our target, while also building relationships between the three teams and quality improvement capacity amongst the team members.

Based on the small tests of change (called *Plan, Do, Study, Act* or PDSA cycles) that were done over the winter and spring of 2025, we learned that having reception staff check to see if clients have completed sociodemographic data during phone interactions and then, if needed, sending them the questions using *Ocean* (a secure client communication portal) was a successful approach. This approach will be implemented with all reception staff in the summer of 2025.

In the coming year, we will continue our work to reach our new target of **60%** completion by the end of 2025-2026. We will build on the learnings and new processes developed over the past year and also test some new change ideas, such as using *Ocean* tablets at our reception desks to further support data collection, supporting staff and client education, training and mentorship around how and why we collect this data, as well as tailoring the approach for collection of this data at our Oasis reception desk, so it meets the unique needs of Oasis clients.

# QUALITY AND INNOVATION

## HEALTH CARD ASSISTANCE PROGRAM

Expanded walk-in hours for the Health Card Assistance Program to accommodate more clients and reduce the number of no-shows. We also continue to offer weekly booked appointments. The Health Card Assistance / ID Clinic assists clients who are experiencing homelessness and clients on ODSP in obtaining their OHIP cards. The worker may support the client in obtaining their birth certificate or replacement citizenship certificate to obtain their OHIP card.

The program also offers support to Indigenous clients who require identification to apply for their status card. The program offers ID safekeeping services so clients can store their ID in a secure area and access it as needed.

*"The Centre is an amazing place! Been here since I was a youth on the street and now I'm OK. It has serviced me and my kids well. Thank you for being so amazing."*

- SHCHC client



## ACCREDITATION

Last November, SHCHC formally launched the process and preparation for the December 2025 accreditation review. While just over a year away, the magnitude of the review requires 12 – 18 months of preparation. The Quality and Performance Committee oversees the accreditation process and receives regular updates.

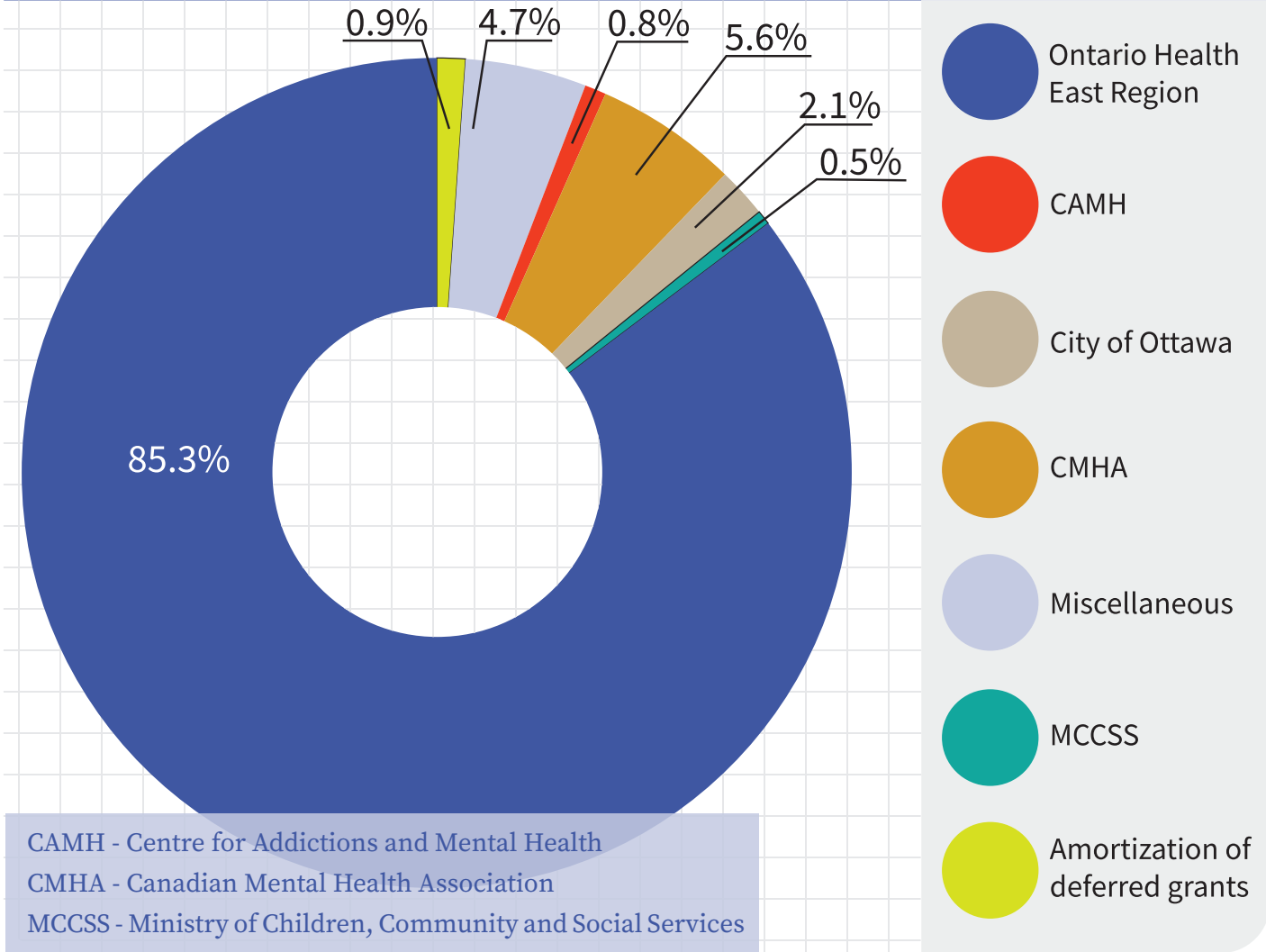
The Nominations and Governance Committee of the Board launched their review of relevant standards in early January. The committee plays a leading role in shepherding work on accreditation standards that relate to governance. There are several new standards which will require Board attention in the new fiscal year.



# ACCOUNTABILITY

## SOURCES OF REVENUE

2024-2025



Community Foundation of Ottawa

We would like to gratefully acknowledge the continuous support of our funders, community partners, Mr. George Gaty and family, and other private donors. For complete details, please refer to the audited financial statements and notes available on the Centre's website.

We are proud to be part of the Coalition of Community Health and Resource Centres of Ottawa.



www.coalitionottawa.ca



Sandy Hill CHC



@SandyHillCHC



Sandy Hill Community Health Centre

# OUR MISSION

To deliver excellence in person-centred primary care, social services, and community well-being.

*For 50 years, the Sandy Hill Community Health Centre has been dedicated to meeting the health needs of a diverse community that is rich in terms of people, culture and heritage. We are grateful for the strength of commitment of our Board of Directors, the dedication of our staff and volunteers and the allegiance of our corporate supporters. Most of all, we are grateful for what we learn from our clients, who work so hard to find success and make a healthy life for themselves, their families and for their community.*

# OUR VISION

Everyone in our community will have equitable access to health and well-being.



## LEADERSHIP TEAM

- Robin McAndrew • Executive Director
- Matthew Garrison • Director of Human Resources, Administration and Information Technology
- Louise Goodman <sup>(R)</sup> • Director of CTS
- Kendra Jones • Director of Quality Improvement and Performance Management
- Kailyn Pasma <sup>(R)</sup> • Director of Health Services and Health Promotion and Chronic Disease Management
- Michelle Spencer • Director of Finance
- Wendy Stewart • Director of Integrated Primary Care Services (Health Services and Oasis)
- Derrick St John <sup>(R)</sup> • Acting Director of CTS
- Julie Tessier • Director of Addictions and Mental Health Services, Client Access Team, and Intensive Case Management

**PROGRAM MANAGERS** • Stefan Amyotte • Annabelle Finucan • Shelley Reid • Derrick St John <sup>(R)</sup>

**TEAM LEADERS** • Alphadyo Balde • Marie-Elise Blais • Emily Clark • Deborah Dew • Gerald Dragon • Marc-darline Dorsainvil • Josée Anne Gauthier • Amanda Gunn • Terra Larence • Sandra Nivyabandi • Christian Prevost <sup>(R)</sup> • Pascal Saturne • Yasmany Torres Leon

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<sup>(R)</sup> - Resigned

## BOARD OF DIRECTORS

- Glen Barber • Board Chair
- David Clements • Vice-Chair
- Elizabeth Sanderson • Vice-Chair
- Hubert Paulmer • Treasurer
- Karen Capen • Board Secretary
- Chantal Rioux • Francophone Officer
- Yvan Albert <sup>(EOT)</sup> • Board Director
- Letitia Charbonneau <sup>(EOT)</sup> • Board Director
- Sonia Granzer • Board Director
- Noor Hameed • Board Director
- Nives Ilic • Board Director
- Gayatri Jayaraman • Board Director
- Hélène Laperrière • Board Director
- Aynsley Morris • Board Director
- Stéphanie Pelletier • Board Director
- Kyle Robinson • Board Director
- Alexandre Silas <sup>(R)</sup> • Board Director
- Rodney Stehr • Board Director
- Swapna Stephen • Board Director
- Annette Traynor <sup>(R)</sup> • Board Director
- Jessica Menard • Employee Representative
- Banks Zero • Employee Representative

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<sup>(EOT)</sup> - End of Term

<sup>(R)</sup> - Resigned