

*Somerset West Community
Health Centre*

CENTRE HIGHLIGHTS

JANUARY 2025



WHAT'S CHANGING?

This HART Hub will offer integrated, wraparound services designed to meet the complex needs of our community. Here's what it will include:

- Primary care services
- Addiction treatment and recovery programs
- Mental health supports
- Social services and employment assistance
- Highly supportive housing options

While the hub will not include safer supply or supervised drug consumption programs, the focus will be on recovery-centered care to address the root causes of addiction and homelessness.

HART HUB

We're excited to share that our site has been approved to transition into a Homelessness and Addiction Recovery Treatment (HART) Hub as part of Ontario's initiative to address homelessness and addiction. This transition is part of a province-wide plan supported by a \$378 million investment to create 19 HART Hubs. Recently, our Harm Reduction team held its first Community Engagement session, welcoming nearly 75 attendees, including local residents, business owners, and BIA representatives. It was a fantastic opportunity to introduce the HART Hub model and discuss how it will integrate into the community to provide crucial services for those in need. The feedback was overwhelmingly positive, and we're excited to build on this momentum as we plan future community engagements!

CSPC PANEL ON HOUSING

Somerset West CHC participated in a panel discussion on the opening day of the Canadian Science Policy Centre (CSPC) conference, hosted by the University of Ottawa. The panel featured insights from experts in academia, government, health, and community sectors, all focused on addressing Canada's housing and homelessness crisis. Our Executive Director shared valuable perspectives on the critical need for community engagement, political will, and sustained stakeholder support to effectively tackle these pressing societal issues. The session sparked rich exchanges and highlighted the collaborative approach necessary for lasting change in addressing the housing crisis.



ROOTED BIRTHWORK COLLECTIVE

We're thrilled to announce our partnership with Rooted Birthwork Collective (RBC), formerly known as the Rooted & Resilient Doula Program. This partnership reflects our shared commitment to increasing and improving support for Black families in our community through collaboration and culturally sensitive care. Founded in 2019 by Jessica Johnson in partnership with Black Ottawa Connect, RBC is a collective of Black birth workers who honor and celebrate the diverse experiences and traditions within Black communities. They offer culturally relevant, low to no-cost doula services, including support for birth, postpartum, pregnancy termination, infant feeding, and more. We are excited to work together to further empower and support Black families in the Ottawa-Gatineau region. To learn more about RBC and their important work, visit their website at <https://rootedandresilient.ca/>.

INDIGENOUS CULTURAL AWARENESS

We've now completed four editions of our Indigenous newsletter, and engagement continues to grow each month! One of the highlights is our Animal Tracks Challenge, where participants can win beautiful Indigenous notebooks for identifying the tracks correctly. It's been a wonderful way to connect with the community and celebrate our shared knowledge and traditions.

HOLIDAY OUTREACH

A few years ago, we made a promise to the community: **no matter how cold, how hot, or what time of year it was, we would be there for them**. We understand that the homeless community does not get to take breaks, so it's important for us to show up — especially on days like Christmas Eve and New Year's Eve. This holiday season, we were fortunate to partner with Shawna's Outreach and members of the community, to share warmth, kindness, and generosity with those who need it most. On Christmas Eve, we handed out 60 stockings filled with treats, along with 15 jackets, boots, and bags of food to help those in need get through the winter months. On New Year's Eve we distributed 90 backpacks packed with socks, hats, mitts, blankets, and tents, ensuring that many could start the year a little warmer and more prepared. It was a small but meaningful gesture; and by being present, we reaffirmed our commitment to standing with the community and keeping our promise to support them.

CIRCLE IN DECEMBER

Our 3rd annual Warm Clothing Giveaway was a heartwarming success, made possible by the incredible generosity and care of our community. Here are a few highlights that truly made the day special:

- Anne from Vet Outreach brought a tarp full of dog and cat food, ensuring even our furry friends were looked after.
- Shawna Thibodeau and Patrick went above and beyond, delivering carloads of essential items.
- Theo RedSky Paradis brought warmth to the day with drinks and uplifting energy at the park.
- AIDS Committee of Ottawa provided meals and necessities, bringing comfort and care to many.
- Tanya from the Community Engagement Team kept everything running smoothly with her incredible energy and attention to detail.
- Sharp Dopler, our firekeeper, created a welcoming atmosphere with warmth and song.
- SOS, a new group we partnered with, helped extend the reach of donated items to those in need.
- Amy and Tong from Centretown CHC contributed tables, food, and support, along with creating a fantastic flyer to spread the word.

This event wouldn't have been possible without these amazing partners, and we're deeply grateful for everyone's contributions.

PRIMARY CARE & REGIONAL PROGRAMS

PRIMARY HEALTH CARE

SMILES FOR SENIORS

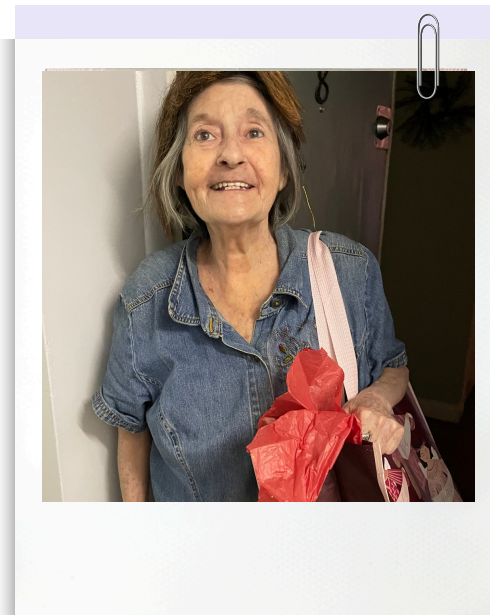
Santa's elves from Primary Health Care's Outreach team brought smiles to isolated seniors this past holiday season. Smiles for Seniors gives lonely and isolated seniors a gift from their "wish list". Once bought and wrapped, our team of elves delivered these gifts to 20 seniors, spreading joy this holiday season!

OFFSITE FLU & COVID VACCINE CLINIC

Primary Health Care's Seniors Outreach Nurses organized and led an offsite flu and COVID vaccine clinic for seniors living at the local Ottawa Community Housing building, KDS Village. More than 40 seniors benefited from receiving vaccinations. The success of the clinic was noted by the KDS board with a desire to have annual flu clinics in the future.

KIDS COME FIRST - RSV FOCUSED CLINICS

In partnership with the Kids Come First, Primary Health Care offered two vaccine clinics in December focused on administering Beyfortus, the monoclonal Antibody that offers protection against RSV this season. Due to the demand for Beyfortus, the team felt it was important to assist their community partners by providing these additional clinics.





FOOT CARE SEMINAR FOR VIETNAMESE SENIORS

Primary Health Care’s Vietnamese Seniors Outreach Nurse & Footcare Nurse, in collaboration with the Mental Health & Counselling team’s Vietnamese Seniors program organized a foot care seminar at our 55 Eccles location.

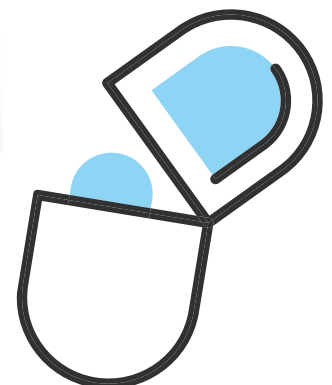
By attending the seminar, seniors were able to recognize their feet as an integral part of their everyday life! The session increased their awareness of the importance of foot care, and addressed common foot problems such as bunions, ingrown nails, fungal nails, etc. It also highlighted the importance of wearing proper-fitting shoes, preventive measures, the use of home remedies and when to seek medical advice.

For the 33 seniors that participated they each received an “Epson salt” gift bag. Given the success of the seminar, these programs will continue to collaborate to promote foot health and encourage self-care by the seniors.

OTTAWA NEWCOMER HEALTH CENTRE

The Ottawa Newcomer Health Centre’s Multicultural Health Navigator team organized a community event titled “The Changing Role of Pharmacists in the Community.” This event was designed to enhance staff understanding of the valuable resources’ pharmacists can offer to clients and to highlight how their expanding scope of practice can better support community members.

The event provided a day of learning and growth for everyone involved. Staff gained valuable insights into the evolving role of pharmacists, particularly in areas such as prescribing medications, administering vaccines, and providing consultations on chronic disease management. In addition, the event served as a unique opportunity for networking and collaboration, with various community partners in attendance. These connections helped foster stronger partnerships and opened the door for future initiatives aimed at improving access to healthcare for underserved populations.



FAMILY COMMUNITY HEALTH & HARM REDUCTION

COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT & DEVELOPMENT

COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT, VOLUNTEERS AND STUDENTS

This holiday season, we were proud to participate in the Christmas Exchange program, which provides food hampers or redeemable gift certificates to clients in need. With the support of our staff and three volunteers, a total of 428 clients received assistance. Among them, 403 clients were provided with redeemable gift certificates totaling \$15,479, and 25 clients received food hampers for their families. Through this initiative, we were able to support individuals and families in our community, helping to ensure they had the resources needed for a joyful holiday.

YET KEEN SENIORS' DAY CENTRE

Yet Keen recently celebrated a momentous occasion—Mrs. Lai Chung Wong's 100th birthday! As a co-founder and valued member of Yet Keen, Mrs. Wong was surrounded by members, staff, and special guests, including Don Kwan and Ed Kwan (China Doll), to mark this incredible milestone. The celebration was filled with heartfelt wishes for her continued good health and happiness, honoring her lifelong contributions and the impact she has had on our community.

Yet Keen recently partnered with the Chinese Community Building at 80 Florence to host another successful Laughter Yoga community workshop, attended by 25 seniors. This engaging session brought joy and wellness to participants, promoting both physical and mental health. We would like to extend our heartfelt thanks to the Ottawa Chinese Community Service Centre (OCCSC) for their generous venue support, which made this event possible.

Yet Keen organized its annual Christmas celebration, bringing together 90 seniors for a festive and memorable event. A highlight of the day was a successful DIY Christmas card workshop led by volunteer Christine, where participants got creative and crafted personalized cards. The celebration also featured a talent show, with over 20 seniors showcasing their amazing talents, adding an extra touch of joy to the occasion. It was a wonderful opportunity to connect, celebrate, and share in the holiday spirit.



HARM REDUCTION

For the second year in a row, Sewer Pool Production held a successful fundraiser in support of Somerset West CHCs Harm Reduction Department. Thanks to the generosity of donors, 100% of the funds raised went directly to providing essential items such as clothing, blankets, hand warmers, and water for those in need. The event featured a live band and an exciting pro wrestling match hosted by Dr. Bob, creating a fun and lively atmosphere while supporting a great cause. We are deeply grateful to everyone involved for their contributions and support!



ANONYMOUS HIV TESTING

We are so excited to announce our new partnership with MAX Ottawa – an incredible organization dedicated to improving the health and well-being for queer men and trans and non-binary people in the National Capital Region. This partnership is a step forward in ensuring meaningful engagement of those living with and affected by HIV in our community. Together, we look to raise awareness, create supportive spaces, and continue to advocate for better health outcomes.

WORLD AIDS DAY

Members of the Anonymous HIV team, and our Indigenous Cultural Facilitator, attended the World AIDS Day gathering hosted by the AIDS Committee of Ottawa on Parliament Hill. This was a meaningful opportunity to connect with allied organizations dedicated to advancing awareness about AIDS/HIV. The event featured powerful speeches and showcased the AIDS Memorial Quilt, which served as a poignant reminder of the lives affected by HIV.

In honor of Indigenous AIDS Awareness Week, our Indigenous Cultural Facilitator joined the AIDS Committee of Ottawa, Elder Louella Tobias, and Knowledge Keeper Theo from the Thunderbird Sisterhood to raise the flag; and played the Grandmother Drum in a powerful ceremony on Parliament Hill. Our team also took part in activities at the National Art Gallery later that day, and had the honor of performing a Bear Song to open the event. It was a day filled with meaningful connection, culture, and shared purpose.



OTTAWA BLACK MENTAL HEALTH COALITION

Ottawa Black Mental Health Coalition (OBMHC) representatives wrapped up the 21-day Coroner’s Inquest into the death of Abdirahman Abdi on December 17th. OBMHC was represented by Executive Board member and clinical supervisor, Kadra Good and OBMHC Coordinator Michelle James.

The Inquest was a public forum and proceedings were live streamed daily. OBMHC was granted standing representation and allowed to cross-examine witnesses, provide closing submissions and inform the recommendation process. In collaboration with 10 other parties including representation from the family of Mr. Abdi, Justice for Abdi Coalition, Black Legal Action Defence, and The Empowerment Council, 57 recommendations were put forward to the Jury and all 57 recommendations were adopted by the Jury. Additionally, the Jury found the manner of death was determined to be homicide, in agreement with the majority of the parties involved. See the CBC coverage of the Inquest here: <https://www.cbc.ca/news/canada/ottawa/the-abdirahman-abdi-inquest-a-day-by-day-guide-1.7392326>



Black Mental Health Week 2025 promotions launched on social media on December 23rd and registrations have begun for the seven in-person events. This year’s events include a women’s event, men’s event, Full day conference for professionals and Community Expo featuring more than 25 partners which will all run between March 2nd - 9th.

CHILDREN & YOUTH

Our Children and Youth programs were selected as recipients for a donation from the Bluesfest Green Team. The cheque presentation for this donation of \$4292.32 was held in December. This donation will support children and youth ages 11-18 years during skill-building programming and workshops. All of our programs and workshops are in an accessible location and free of charge; we will feed the participants a nutritious meal and provide all the required supplies needed to ensure there are no barriers to participation. This is programming such as: Babysitting Training and Youth Leadership Camp. These programs provide life skills training, increase employability and social-emotional development, and strengthen neighbourhood cohesion and pride through volunteerism.



THANK YOU!