



# Hope in the Core

H a m i l t o n   U r b a n  
C o r e   C o m m u n i t y  
H e a l t h   C e n t r e

2019-2020  
Annual Report

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## MESSAGE FROM THE CHAIR

What a year!

A year ago, we were talking about hate group and racist activity in Hamilton, and welcomed Ameil Joseph as our guest speaker on these issues. The growing inequities of poverty and racism became even more pronounced when the covid19 pandemic hit us in 2020, with government regulations which limited the ease for people to move around freely and access resources to keep families healthy. When George Floyd was killed in Minneapolis in May 2020, protests began in that city and across the continent. The Black Lives Matter movement and calls for anti-racist action and for defunding the police have gathered strength as never before. This has been a year of great hardship for many people, and also a year of people protesting in the streets, calling for action, and gathering strength to make change.

Our Board's most urgent priority remains ensuring quality health care services for those who need it most. We know that people living in poverty and social exclusion are in great need, and we are proud of the quality service that the Centre continues to provide year after year. We are now in our second year of operation of our Consumption and Treatment Site, the only one in Hamilton, and a vital part of the response to the opioid overdose crisis. Staff are continuing to provide as many services as possible even under the restrictions of the pandemic. We are also continuing with the capital building project, which is getting closer to the reality of a new building in our future new location.

***"We know that people living in poverty and social exclusion are in great need"***

In January we accepted the resignation of Suad Badri from the Board, and worked to recruit four new Board members: Lyndon George, Jim Clairmont, Nick Tomasic and Susan Johnston, who joined the Board this summer. We now have a Board of nine committed and dedicated members. In preparation for orienting and bringing new Board members on, we have recognized the need to strengthen the governance of Urban Core in three main areas. We are working on improving the operations and culture of the Board, leadership and succession planning, and adhering to the true model of policy governance. The policy governance model is forward thinking, future directed, and focused on what difference we make in the world.

On July 28, the sudden death of Denise Brooks hit us hard. We lost our Executive Director and also our friend, our mentor, our guiding light. Although the loss of Denise has been the culmination of a difficult year, we as a Board are determined to carry on Denise's work, her vision and her legacy, and take inspiration from her memory.

**Jane Mulkewich**  
Board Chair

***"If it's not in policy, the likelihood of it taking root, taking hold and making a change, is very slim."***  
Denise Brooks

## FINANCIAL INFORMATION

EXPENSES	2019	2020
General	\$ 773,860	\$ 891,422
Operating		
Salaries,	\$ 2,650,396	\$ 3,010,622
Benefits, &		
Relief		



REVENUE	2019	2020
Hamilton Niagara Brant Local Health Integration Network	\$3,047,767	\$3,535,257
Miscellaneous	\$ 348,135	\$ 377,545
Interest Income	\$ 4,002	\$ -

## PROGRAMS

The Centre's vibrant programs and services have continued to be integral within the Hamilton urban core. These include Health and Wellness, Therapeutic and Supportive Counselling, Client Education and Support, Population Health, Parenting and Family Support, Personal Development, Community Development Programs and Primary Health Care.



### Cooking at the Core

This program provides participants with basic cooking skills. It teaches them how to safely use kitchen utensils, how to prepare nutritious meals on a budget. It provides our vulnerable, homeless clients an opportunity to re-learn some of the cooking skills they may have lost and slowly gain the confidence to reintegrate into the kitchen as they transition to stable housing, this program is facilitated by our Community Health Worker.

***“We are aware that so many of the hurdles that are still remaining are yet to be climbed and for people yet to be understood”***

Denise Brooks



## Program Highlights



### Income Tax Clinic

Our free Income Tax Clinic, coordinated by our Administrative and client support staff, now in its fourth year!

This year we assisted 230 clients and saved them \$16,000. This is huge for our low income families. We attribute the success of this clinic to our dedicated volunteers.

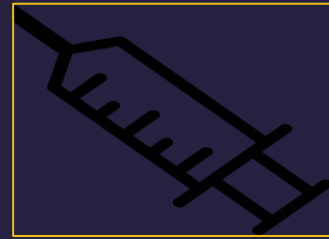
A special mention to volunteer extraordinaire, Dale Wyngaart, for his continued support and invaluable contributions



### Client & Community Engagement

Outreach is at the heart of the Centre's mandate. It ensures that we remain relevant, engaged, that we understand the community needs so as to better respond and adapt.

During the year, staff engaged in more than 75 community and client engagement activities that addressed population based needs. They sought to provide resources and minimize barriers and promote health and wellbeing.



### Consumption & Treatment Services

This service provides integrated wrap-around services that connect clients who use drugs to primary care, mental health counseling, addiction support, housing, ID Services, food security programs and drug supplies.

We continue to work collaboratively with our community partners that provide ongoing service partnerships. A big thank you to them as we approach our 1 year CTS milestone!

# Programs & Services



# ANNUAL REPORT CARD



## Statistics

- ✓ Active Clients **7395**
- ✓ Service Encounters **17870**
- ✓ Group Program Participants **15590**
- ✓ Group Program sessions **719**



## Demographics

- Female 48 & Male 51% Unidentified 1%
- Citizens 45%
- Permanent Residents 24%
- Refugee Claimants 11%
- Status Unknown 20%

## What are our clients saying....



- ✓ **67%** of those responding reported that they can get to see the provider within one day when they are sick or have a health concern and 32% of participants stated that they can see their provider within 2-7 days when they are sick or have a health concern.
- ✓ **80%** of respondents indicated that providers go to great length to ensure that they understand their situation.
- ✓ **92%** of respondents indicated that they are involved in decisions related to their health to the degree they want to be.
- ✓ **89%** of respondents indicated that they are encouraged by the providers to ask questions and seek clarification
- ✓ **92%** felt that the providers dedicate enough time to spend with them.
- ✓ **90%** Of participants indicated that they get the services they need at Urban Core and 81% indicated that they know whom to talk to if they are not satisfied with the service they received.



Celebrating

# Denise Brooks

Executive Director

January 2, 1998 – July 28, 2020

Denise has been our dynamic and inspirational and efficacious leader of Hamilton Urban Core for more than two decades. Her guidance has been an essential part of our success story over the years. She has a great love for our Centre, our Community and our great potential to affect change in the most marginalized neighbours, friends and family. Denise knew that healthcare must be approached holistically, inter-professionally, utilizing the talents and skills over a multidisciplinary team of staff and volunteers. Focused on the root causes of illness and the prevention of disease by addressing the social determinants and health inequalities e.g. poverty; social exclusion and isolation; race and racism, access. Denise knew that as health providers and allied health professional we must consider the mind, body and spirit of every member in our community.

She saw that healthcare as one of the most influential and powerful sectors across the globe. That has the power to address poverty, racism, inequality and marginalization. That through advocacy, political lobbying, ensure that policies are changed. She understood that providing people with resources, tools and information they need to make informed decisions about their health and wellbeing, they have the ability to live meaningful and healthy lives.

As a black woman, building an organization was no easy task. Denise faced racism on a daily basis. She tirelessly fought for over fifteen years to get approval for a new building for the Centre. As the current location literally crumbled around her. Never defeated, she stayed the course and continued to work on her vision. She had the knowledge, expertise and authenticity to garner the support, respect and trust of those who needed to join the fight.

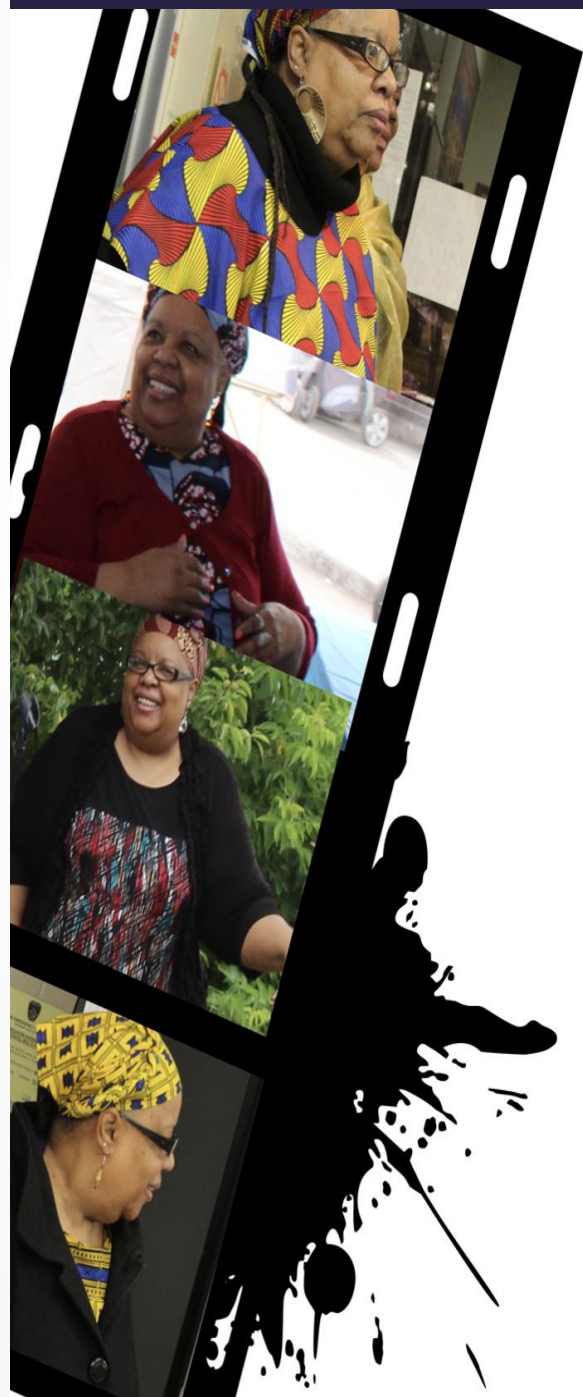
Denise Brooks was a pioneer, but above all, she was a change maker. Everyone she met has been touched by her, even those that she had not met. For those that were touched by her work and those who had the pleasure and honor to work closely with her, knew she was a friend for life.

Sadly, Denise will not be able to have her "cup of tea" in the new Centre when it is completed. She passed away on July 28, 2020.

Still devastated by our collective loss, we proudly look back on a career of substantial achievement as our Executive Director and colleague and friend. We are all determined to ensure that your legacy is not lost and that your vision of "Everyone's Centre" is fueled by the eternal flame you tasked us all to carry on and pass forward into the future. **Thank you, Denise, for your service. Thank you for your passion. Thank you for your endless contributions to our beloved Centre, our clients and the community health sector!**

*"Poverty is an unacceptable human condition. We can change that. We can agree that no one deserves to live in poverty. We can agree that everyone has the right to a life with dignity and hope. We can agree to challenge ignorance and take action."*

Denise Brooks



## STAFF TEAM

### Leadership Team

Denise Brooks, *Executive Director*  
 Vikas Sood, *Data Information System Analyst*  
 Maggie Lau, *Financial Administrator*  
 Juan Carlos Veliz, *Interim Community Health Programs Manager*  
 Jayne Caldwell, *Primary Health Care Manager*  
 Oman Huhad, *Registered Nurse Co-Manager CTS*  
 Brandon Kober, *Registered Nurse, Co-Manager CTS*

### Administration Team

Nadine Favics, *Office Administrator / Corporate Support*  
 Jennifer Black, *Receptionist / Secretary*  
 Victor Halinski, *Receptionist / Secretary*  
 Madeline George, *Medical Secretary*

### Community Health Programs Team

Edna Apeakorang, *Social Worker*  
 Gavin Badyal, *Chiroprapist*  
 John Infanti, *Chiroprapist*  
 Haidar Farran, *Community Oral Health Specialist*  
 Jude Nnamchi, *Community Health Worker*  
 Deepthi George, *Health in Settlement Counselor*  
 Myrna Riveria, *Health in Settlement Counselor*  
 Sherri Case, *Early Childhood Development Specialist*  
 Rehuda Jack- Cesar, *Administrative and Client Support*  
 Tibor Lukacs, *Counselor, Refugee Services*  
 Jad Farran, *Youth Wellness Counselor*  
 Nokwanda Nokomo, *Wellness Counselor*  
 Patience Simbanegavi, *Access Facilitator*

### Primary Health Care Team

Angela Carol, *Physician*  
 Ashraf Sefin, *Locum Physician*  
 Janet Warren, *Locum Physician*  
 Sherif Mikhail, *Physician\**  
 Nga Tran, *Physician Assistant*  
 Jo Savelli, *Nurse Practitioner*  
 Liz Kinka, *Nurse Practitioner*  
 Katie Kralouski, *Nurse Practitioner*  
 Monica Chiwara, *Nurse Practitioner*  
 Chigoziri Anumba, *Primary Health Care Nurse\**  
 Olivia Flaherty, *Primary Health Care Nurse*

### Consumption and Treatment Services Team

Andray Harrison, *Harm Reduction Counselor*  
 Chamagne McCarthy, *Peer Support Worker*  
 Chandan Preet, *Harm Reduction Counselor (Relief)*  
 Destanee Bucko, *Peer Support Worker*  
 Diane Smith, *Harm Reduction Counselor (Relief)*  
 Elise Nagy, *Registered Nurse*  
 Greg Melinik, *Registered Nurse (Relief)*  
 Jessica Allen- Murray, *Harm Reduction Counselor*  
 Jessica Laskowski, *Registered Nurse (Relief)*  
 Julie Horvath, *Harm Reduction Counselor*  
 Lacey Sevier, *Peer Support Worker*  
 Len Vaness, *Registered Nurse\**  
 Lori Sweezey, *Peer Support Worker (Relief)*  
 Melissa Ricci, *Registered Nurse (Relief)*  
 Mike Paterson, *Peer Support Worker*  
 Miklos Favics, *Harm Reduction Counselor*  
 Raymond Bryan, *Harm Reduction Counselor*  
 Rebecca Morris Miller, *Peer Support Worker (Relief)*  
 Robert Pental, *Registered Nurse\**  
 Robyn Currie, *Harm Reduction Counselor*  
 Sabrina Raposa, *Peer Support Worker\**  
 Sarah Norbert, *Peer Support Worker\**  
 Sherif Marzouk, *Support Worker and Coordinator\**

\*Resigned during the fiscal year

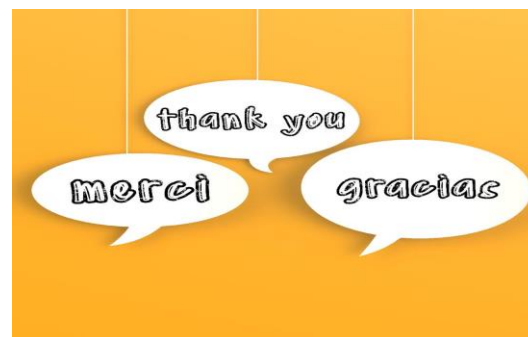
### Cultural Interpretation Team

A'la Alhares  
 Alexis Abigail  
 Bashriya Mustafa  
 Oscar Benjamin  
 Fred Ng  
 Ibrahim Alhares  
 Jie Zhao  
 Kiara DeMedeiros  
 Lee Choo Kew  
 Maritza Veliz  
 Noor Mohammad\*

## Board of Directors

Jane Mulkewich, Chair  
 Paul Henry, Vice Chair  
 Sherwin Steele, Secretary/ Treasurer  
 Robert Braley, Member  
 Angel Hrabowiak  
 Kayonne Christy, Member\*  
 Suad Badri, Member \*

A big THANK YOU to all those who were generous with their talents and time. All who made donations and continue wishing us well and supporting us, Thank You!!



## Contact Information

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Cover Page: Street Art installation at Hamilton Urban Core CHC as part of Concrete Canvas Festival. Art by Clear Eyes Collective  
 @cleareyescollective @concretecanvasfest