

25 Years in the Core



Stronger Together

Annual REPORT

2020 – 2021

Hamilton Urban Core
Community Health Centre

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About Us

Mission

Strong Core, Healthier Lives.

Values

A strong, innovative leader where marginalized people are first in the inner city.

Values and Beliefs

We believe that:

- All people have a right to be treated with dignity & respect.
- Primary healthcare and services must be accessible, available and appropriate, and be directed toward addressing the specific issues of people who experience barriers to access.
- All forms of oppression, including racism, sexism, ableism, heterosexism, ageism, classism, and economic oppression impact the health and well-being of individuals and communities.
- People essentially have an understanding of their own health and health needs, and have the right to make an informed choice.
- Focusing on the most disadvantaged will benefit everyone in the community and society.

Message from the Board of Chair

Our theme for the Annual General Meeting this year is “Moving Forward - Stronger Together”. This past year has seen significant change throughout the organization. Last year the sudden loss of our long time Executive Director, Denise Brooks was fresh on our minds. This was a major loss to the organization. The Board and staff stayed focused to ensure that Hamilton Urban Core Community Health Centre continued to be a leader in providing equitable care for members in the community. Through this tough period of transition, our unity and commitment to our mission and values, ensured that we stayed strong.

The hiring of a new Executive Director, was a top priority for the Board to ensure stability for the organization. The Board began the recruitment process for a permanent Executive Director in December of 2020. The Board hired a recruitment agency to engage in a search process to find a slate of suitable candidates. It was critical that we find someone who understands the landscape in Hamilton and can be an influential advocate when speaking on behalf of the community we serve.



After completing the rigorous recruitment process, there was overwhelming support to hire Nhlaloenhle 'Nala' Ndawana as the next Executive Director at Hamilton Urban Core CHC. During her short time as interim Executive Director, Nala impressed with her strong leadership skills and ability to be a person of influence when representing the clients we serve. As Nala embarks on her journey as the new Executive Director, we look forward to many great things to come from her.

Beyond hiring a new Executive Director, the Board really focused on our basic fundamental role to ensure stability. The Board was very active this year in regards to our governance. We worked diligently to conduct a full policy review, which brought about many changes that will improve the Board's governance process. The Board developed a matrix which will ensure future Board recruitment will have strong representation from all of the communities we serve. The Board has successfully refreshed its executive leadership, providing an opportunity for others to build capacity and gain governance experience. Our policy development saw a strong commitment to Anti-Black racism, which will ultimately address the barriers that create disparity in health in the Black community. The Board has been constantly monitoring the impact COVID-19 has had on service delivery and ensuring we are compliant with new government regulations. The Board has been closely monitoring the status of the capital project which continues to progress well. We will be moving to our interim sites in the coming months as we continue on our journey to our permanent site in 2023.

This year has seen positive changes as well as some disheartening

developments. There has been too many reminders of the challenging work that still lies ahead. This year the discovery of mass graves of Indigenous children, the hate crimes against our Asian and Islamic communities were other stark reminders of the need to stand strong together against all forms of hate and injustice that exist in our communities. As this organization moves forward with a refreshed Board and a new Executive Director, I can assure you we can expect this organization to continue blazing the trail towards social justice for all. We will continue to build on the legacy that has been built over the past twenty five years.

Paul Henry
Board Chair

"If it is necessary it is possible." ~Paul Henry

The Vision of our Future Centre (Architectural Illustration ATTR)



Message from the Executive Director

This past year has been one that has tested our organisations mission and values. It has focused on staying strong and continuing to be the strong, an innovative leader and where marginalized people are first in the inner city. Our primary goal continues to be focused on making a difference in the lives of people in our community by providing quality services, building capacity in communities and advocating with others for equity and inclusion.

Our dedicated staff have stayed true to our values and beliefs. During the height of the COVID-19 pandemic, the staff continued to show up and find innovative ways to support our clients during these unprecedented times. Creative and timely partnerships were developed and created with other community agencies and leaders to assist in breaking barriers to accessing COVID-19 vaccines.



Our Consumption and Treatment Services did not miss a beat and continued to provide face to face Services to our clients without an outbreak ever being declared by Public Health at our Centre. With all the focus centred on the COVID-19 response, this left a huge gap that created huge challenges to individuals who use drugs and those that are precariously housed or homeless. Through the dedicated advocacy and adaptation of our staff and community partners, some of the gaps that were created by the diversion of services to respond to the pandemic we reduced, however, the negative impacts of this lapse is still being experienced to this day.

Our Primary Health Care Team continued to provide a hybrid model of both face to face and virtual clinical care to ensure that our clients received some care in within this environment. The issue of digital divide quickly presented itself as anticipated. Our marginalized communities faced and continue to face numerous barriers to care with this model. We continue to look for ways to break barriers and find resources and support that build capacity within the communities, provide opportunities for digital literacy and support as well as source electronic and human resources to ensure that they are not left behind in this current environment.

Our Community Health Team within its hybrid model, sought to support our clients in various creative ways and had to quickly learn new ways of supporting all our complex clients. They all quickly became avid community digital navigators, cultural navigators and access facilitators. Seeking to understand the new community resources that were available or not available to support our clients and community partners. They harnessed their expertise and existing

relationships to develop innovative and client centred approaches to help navigate the new barriers to care.

Our Administrative and Management Teams sought to provide support to all our teams. They continued to think outside the box and encourage staff to find meaningful supports, internally and externally, to support our clients and community partners. All this was done with the backdrop of the significant sudden loss of our long tenured Executive Director, Denise Brooks, ongoing changes in government regulations and various staff changes. The teams ensured that all staff remained supported to minimize burnout with all the new demands that had been created by the COVID-19 pandemic.

Below is a snap shot of services that were provided in the past year by our gifted and supportive staff. Details are outlined in our Annual Report.

Active Clients: 7501; Service Encounters: 23611; Unique Clients served: 4225; Group Program Participants: 4043 and Group Program Sessions: 317

As of December 6, 2021, Hamilton Urban Core will be moving and will continue to provide services at our two new interim locations at:

181 Main ST West will house our Primary Care, Community Health and Administration Teams

70 James Street South (St Paul's Church) will house the Consumption and Treatment Services.

It truly takes a village to support the clients that we serve and Hamilton Urban Core would like to especially thank the following for their continued support:

Alliance for Healthier Communities including Black Health Committee, Board Members- Hamilton Urban Core CHC – past and current members, Canadian Association for Community Health Centres, Catholic Children's Aids Society of Hamilton, Compass Community Health, Centre de santé communautaire Hamilton/Niagara, City of Hamilton, Capital Project Teams - Architects Tillmann Ruth Robinson, Colliers Project Leaders and Adrianna Tetley, De dwa da dehs nye>s Aboriginal Health Centre, Disability Justice Hamilton, Dr. Peter AIDS Foundation, Greater Hamilton Health Network, Hamilton Black Health Leaders Forum, Hamilton Centre for Civic Inclusion, Jason Farr – Ward 2 Councillor, McMaster University, Nrinder Nann – Ward 3 Councillor, Refuge Newcomer Hamilton, Simone Atungo – Consultant, Sonoma Homes, St. Paul's Presbyterian Church, The Aids Network, Wesley Urban Ministries and the downtown Hamilton community.

Without, their support, this transitional year would have been even more challenging. Thank you and I look forward to continuing to work with you all.

Nhlaloenhle 'Nala' Ndawana
Executive Director

Covid-19 Pandemic Response

Covid-19 pandemic started as a pocket of viral infection and continued like a wildfire affecting everyone in different ways. This pandemic took the world by surprise to adopt a new normal of living thereby enforcing most of the in-person community activities to run virtually. This led to significant changes in the way people access services and how some Community Health programs are facilitated.

Some research findings showed that Black and other racialized communities were disproportionately impacted by Covid-19. The Hamilton Public Services reported that nearly half of all COVID-19 cases in Hamilton (47%) self-identify as a member of a racialized community but racialized people make up less than a quarter (19%) of Hamilton's total population.

As a result of this huge health concern, our organisation from the outset has continued to advocate for our vulnerable clients and marginalized communities to be prioritized in vaccine sequencing through continuous engagement with the Hamilton Public Services and active participation at the Hamilton Vaccine Readiness network table.

Subsequently, our Vaccine Confidence Team, which comprises of the Clinical and Non-Clinical Providers, completed client wellness checks, ran health promotion sessions and information sharing with our clients to build vaccine confidence, promote community vaccine booking, vaccine clinic navigation, cultural interpretation service, distributed of resources to reduce social barriers while addressing food insecurity through FoodShare at the Core program.

The majority of our Providers including the Physicians, Nurse Practitioners, Primary Health Care Nurses, Community Health Workers, and Health Settlement Counselors were deployed to support large scale vaccination clinics at Hamilton Health Sciences. Also, we were Staff supporting the Mobile pop-up pilot vaccine clinic run collaboratively by three Community Health Centres in Hamilton (Hamilton Urban Core, Compass CHC and Centre de Santé Communautaire). At the Hamilton Health sciences large scale vaccination clinic, our team members offered administrative support and completed covid-19 screening to 520 clients while 404 clients were vaccinated by our Providers at the clinic between December 2020 to March 2021. Our Providers were trained and enrolled to have COVAX access and use the provincial portal- Verto vaccine online booking system.

As we continued with clients and community engagement sessions, our team observed that the majority of our clients are experiencing some barriers such as:

- i. **Digital divide and digital literacy:** most of the clients do not have internet access, lack digital devices and will require training on how to use virtual platforms.
- ii. **Language barriers:** a majority of them do not speak English and will require cultural translational service.
- iii. **Long distrust with the Healthcare system** and high rate of vaccine Hesitancy among Black and other racialized communities /people of colour.

Therefore, as a result of the low uptake of the Covid-19 vaccine among our vulnerable clients' population, our Providers will continue to address any concerns related to Covid-19 vaccine hesitancy. Our main goals will be to build vaccine confidence, trust through information and knowledge sharing, answering questions to support informed choice, provide access to resources, increase home visits in a safe manner and participate in the targeted community vaccination clinic all year-round.



The Administration Team

The Administrative Team are a critical member of our Centre they are thorough, professional, and truly the "unsung heroes" of the Centre's response to COVID-19 pandemic. They operate largely behind the scenes, ensuring that the Centre runs smoothly and that client requests are addressed and Centre teams supported. Their consistent "can-do attitude" during these unique times has been nothing short of inspiring. We are fortunate to have them as part of our team!



THANK YOU, MADELINE, VICTOR AND JENNIFER

No One Left Behind

The COVID-19 pandemic impacted many of the lives of those living in Hamilton's downtown core. The pandemic especially impacted CTS clients as it increased barriers to accessing necessary supports. Many programs and services our clients accessed halted during the pandemic, which resulted in more frequent substance use.

Outreach was conducted to provide additional supports to CTS clients and other individuals struggling with housing and/or substance use. The team provided wellness checks, COVID-19 education and supplies, harm reduction education, snacks, clothing and referrals throughout the downtown core, including the First Ontario Centre, churches, shelters such as Willow's Place, and in parking lots, parks.



Client Feedback

"To all CTS staff: You are awesome, caring, resourceful, non-judgmental, compassionate, empathetic"

"Thank you so much for your support"

"Everybody trusts you"

"Stay happy and safe"

Statistics: April 2020 - March 2021

of visits: 23,065

of overdoses: 102

of calls to EMS: 19

Deaths: 0

Finances

Financial Information 2020-2021		
Expenses	2020	2021
General Operating	\$ 858,338	\$1,108,101
Amortization		
Salaries, Benefits, & Relief	\$3,010,622	\$3,270,154
Revenue	2020	2021
Hamilton Niagara Haldimand Brant Local Health Integration Network	\$3,512,604	\$4,074,212
Miscellaneous	\$ 371,374	\$ 318,693
Amortization	\$ -	\$ 8,807
Interest income	\$ -	\$ -

Many Thanks to Our Donors

Alex Jovanovic
Ali Williams
Alliance for Healthier
Communities
Andrew Goorbarry
Barrett Centre, Good
Shepherd Centre
Bruce Reed
Catherine Bishop
Centre de Santé
Communautaire
Collective Arts Brewing
Colliers Project Leaders
Compass CHC
Doreen Stermann
Dillon's Small Batch
Distillers
Francis Wong
Gary Warner
Good Shepherd Venture

Centre
Heather Stewart
Grenfell Ministries
Immigrants Working
Centre
Ines Rios
Jacob Schmidtmeier
Jacqueline Perra Gomez
Janet Warren
Janie Brenner
JC Janitorial Services
Kelly Brazao
Kim Bernhardt
Kyle Saikaley
The Local Skate Shop
MacHealth DNA
Maritza Veliz
Mary and Ralph Budd
Mary C Stanton
Michelle Hurtubise

Monica Burton
Nadine Favics
Nicole LeDuc
Peter B Mcleod
Red Door Cucina
Robert Braley
Royal Bank of Canada
Shababa Bakht
Shelter Health Network
Starbucks, 112 King St.
E.
Tim Hortons, 2 King St
W.
Tim Hortons, 120 King
St. W.
The Toronto-Dominion
Bank
Victoria Brooks-Johnson
Wesley Urban Ministries
YWCA Hamilton

Annual Report Card

The Core provides primary healthcare, community health & harm reduction services as well as mental health & addictions counselling, meal programs and more. Our programs support clients to prevent disease and to manage chronic illness through a holistic approach to care.



Service Delivery

Active Clients: **7501**

Service Encounters: **23611**

Unique Client served: **4225**

Group Program Participants: **4043**

Group Program Session: **317**



Demographics

Female **46%**

Male **53%**

Unidentified **1%**

Children (0 to 14yrs) **10%**

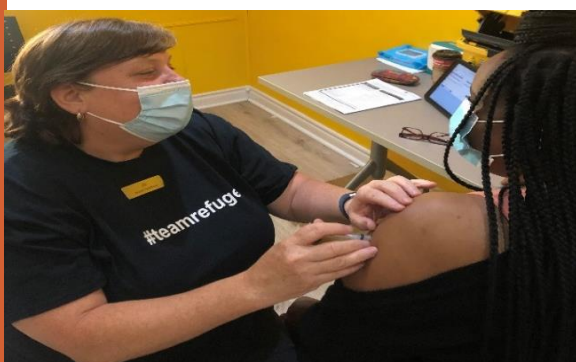
Youth (15 to 24yrs) **11%**

Adults (25 to 64) **68%**

Seniors (65 and Over) **11%**

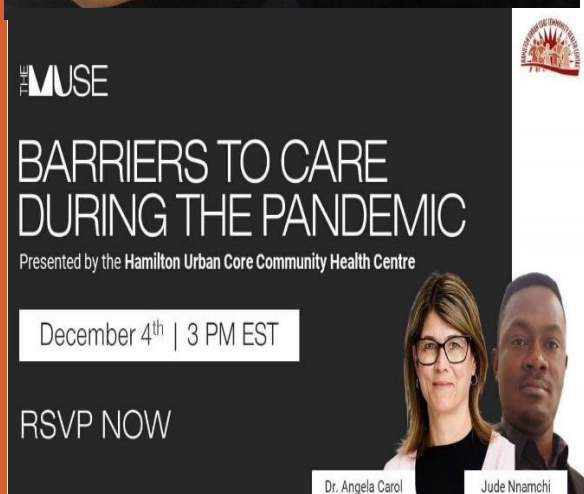
Programs and Services

As we navigate and move forward with the “new normal” We reflect on where we have been and the impact of our work as we continue to build on the good work done so far.



Vaccine Clinics

In collaboration with our partner's Centre staff participated in Vaccine Clinics throughout the City to ensure access to COVID-19



Health Equity

Staff discuss the impact of the COVID-19 pandemic on access to healthcare in Hamilton, with a particular focus on social inequities with McMaster students.

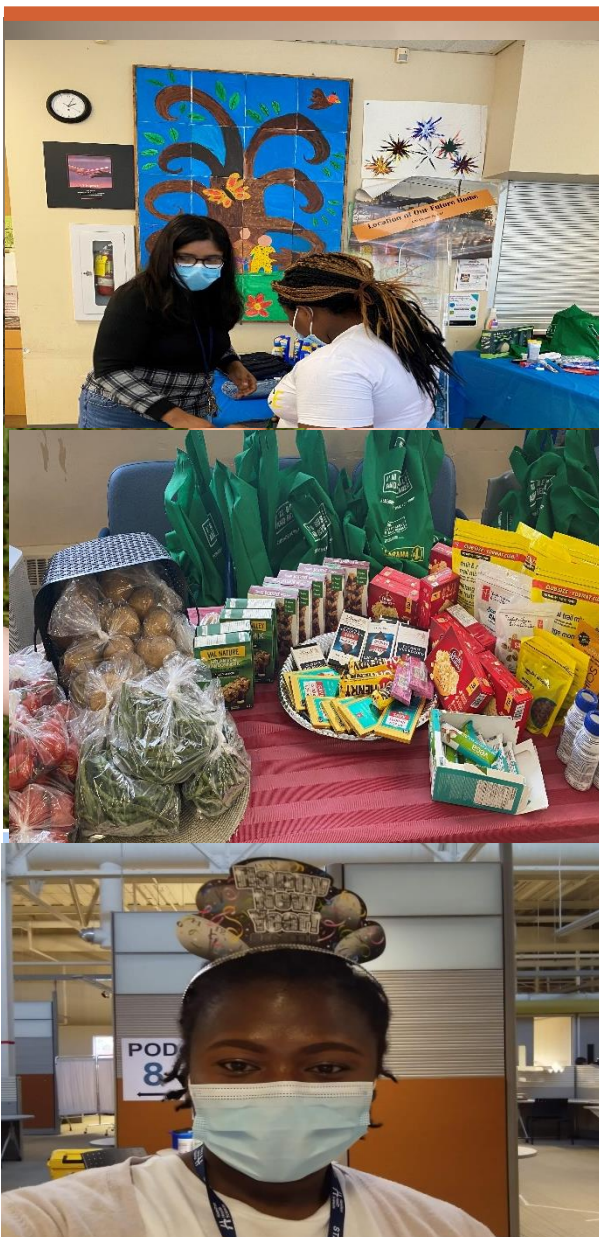


Naloxone Workshop

Workshops were facilitated by CTS staff to help people learn when somebody is overdosing, and how to respond with their Take Home Naloxone kit.

Programming in the New Normal

Our new normal has become a mixture of virtual online programming and appointments as well as in person connections in keeping with the COVID-19 guidelines.



Foodshare Program

The Street Drop-in program was modified to the FoodShare at the Core program.

The Food Share at the Core program addresses food insecurity issues that were exacerbated by the pandemic as well as promote healthy eating lifestyles. Community Health Workers organized a food drive to collect food donations such as baked goods, vegetables, and fresh produce, which they then redistribute to clients. Home drop off is also available for clients who are unable to make it to the Centre.

Moving Forward

Community health programs are offered in a hybrid model to ensure that no one is being left behind due to inequities such as the digital divide. We continue to provide one-on-one wellness checks and home visits to support vulnerable clients. Clinical services such as chiropody and dental health remain available in person.

"The COVID-19 pandemic has undoubtedly redefined what it means to be vulnerable in society" (Standing Up. Standing Out!)

Our Team

Leadership

Nhlalolenhle Ndawana, Executive Director (Interim)
 Brandon Kober, Registered Nurse, Co-Manager CTS*
 Dick Passmore, Manager CTS*
 Jayne Caldwell, PHC Manager*
 Jude Nnamchi, Primary Health Care Manager
 Lloyd Bowers, CHP Manager*
 Maggie Lau, Financial Administrator
 Sandra Ezepue, Community Health Programs Manager
 Vikas Sood, Data Information System Analyst*

Administration

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

Community Health Team

Bill Gahirwa, COVID-19 Screener
 Deepthi George, Health in Settlement Counselor
 Edna Apeakorang, Social Worker
 Gavin Badyal, Chiroprapist
 Ghanima Haji, COVID-19 Screener
 John Infanti, Chiroprapist
 Haidar Farran, Community Oral Health Specialist

Ibrahim Al'Hares, COVID-19 Screener

Jad Farran, Youth Wellness Counselor*

Juan Carlos Veliz, Community Health Worker

Myrna Rivera, Health in Settlement Counselor

Nokwanda Nokomo, Wellness Counselor

Patience Simbanegavi, Community Health Worker

Rehuda Jack- Cesar, Administrative and Client Support*

Sherri Case, Early Childhood Development Specialist

Tibor Lukacs, Counselor, Refugee Services

Consumption and Treatment Services Team

Amanda Nemec-Bakk, Registered Nurse (Relief)

Andray Harrison, Harm Reduction Counselor

Brianne James, Harm Reduction Counselor (Relief)

Chamagne McCarthy, Peer Support Worker

Chandan Preet, Harm Reduction Counselor (Relief)

Destanee Bucko, Harm Reduction Counselor

Elise Nagy, Registered Nurse*

Eunice Kontoh, Registered Nurse

Greg Melnik, Registered Nurse (Relief)

Our Team

Jessica Allen- Murray, Harm Reduction Counselor
Jessica Laskowski, Registered Nurse (Relief)
Josephine Zorn, Registered Nurse*
Julie Horvath, Harm Reduction Counselor*
Lacey Sevier, Peer Support Worker
Lori Sweezey, Peer Support Worker (Relief)
Melissa Ricci, Registered Nurse (Relief)*
Mike Paterson, Peer Support Worker
Miklos Favics, Harm Reduction Counselor
Monika Abdelmaseh, Administrative Support
Salako Oluwaseun, Harm Reduction Counselor
Oman Huhad, Registered Nurse
Raymond Bryan, Harm Reduction Counselor

Robyn Currie, Harm Reduction Counselor*

Cultural Interpretation Team

Bashriya Mustafa
Fred Ng
Ibrahim Al' Hares
Jie Zhao
Maritza Veliz

Primary Health Team

Angela Carol, Physician
Ashraf Sefin, Physician
Janet Warren, Physician
Nga Tran, Physician Assistant
Amandeep Kaur, Nurse Practitioner
Jo Savelli, Nurse Practitioner
Katie Kralouski, Nurse Practitioner
Liz Kinka, Nurse Practitioner
Monica Chiwara, Nurse Practitioner
Eunice Kontoh, Primary Health Care Nurse
Olivia Flaherty, Primary Health Care Nurse

** left during the year*



Our Board of Directors

Angel Hrabowiak, Board Member*

Ike Agbassi, Board Member

Jane Mulkewich, Board Member*

Jim Clairmont, Board Member*

Lyndon George, Board Member*

Maxine Carter, Board Member

Nick Tomasic, Board Member*

Paul Henry, Chair

Robert Braley, Board Member*

Sceon Leslie, Board Member

Seth Waterman, Board Member

Sherwin Steele, Secretary /Treasurer

Susan Johnston, Board Member*

* (left during the year)

Volunteers Are the Heart of "the Core"

Behind every successful event, project, program or initiative there is an extraordinary volunteer. Thank you for your professionalism, timely assistance, creativity and innovation and exceptional organization skills. Thank you for a job well done. Our many praises and deepest gratitude to our volunteers! We couldn't have done this without you.



CONTACT

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