



Rideau Community Health Services

2023 ANNUAL REPORT

www.RideauCHS.ca



Rideau Community
Health Services

REFLECTIONS FROM OUR CHIEF EXECUTIVE OFFICER

Michele Bellows

It is my privilege as the Chief Executive Officer of Rideau Community Health Services (RCHS) to present our annual report.

The global pandemic has redefined many aspects of our lives – the way we live and work, how we feel, and how we think. It has also caused us to reflect on what matters most. This year has been a time of resetting; how we operate, how we are serving our communities, which program and services we offer, and an opportunity to reflect on what we have achieved in the past three years.

We continue to feel the community's support for our work, and we are privileged to be the recipients of their generosity. This generosity helps support our Food Cupboard Program at our Merrickville site and contributes to the health and well being our communities. This support inspires us to be innovative in creative ways, and to respond to the urgent needs of those who need us most.

Our ongoing commitment to our communities is evident as you read through our annual report - our teams continue to be energized and creative while developing and delivering programs and caring for our communities.

Our future will build on what we have learned in the last three years. These challenges have clearly shown us that what we do matters and is appreciated. We are so very grateful for your continued support of our work at RCHS.

Respectfully submitted,



Michele Bellows
Chief Executive Officer



Michele Bellows
Chief Executive Officer



The RCHS Leadership Team at the annual Board and Staff
Holiday Breakfast December 2022.

Report from the Board of Directors



Janet Cosier
Board Chair

In the fall of 2022, we welcomed four new directors to the Board of Directors – Sandy Mark, Juli Heney, Stefany Kawka, and Irv Mazurkiewicz. We are grateful to have them onboard! Detailed biographies on all of the board members can be viewed on the Rideau Community Health Services website.

During the year, the Board met seven times to carry out its oversight responsibilities. The Board enhanced its knowledge and understanding of community health programs and services by including an education session at each of its board meetings to learn more about the programs delivered by RCHS, and the programs delivered by community partners.

With the pandemic largely behind us, the Board held its first in-person retreat with the senior leadership to discuss topics central to the future sustainability of RCHS. On the topic of health systems transformation, Anna Greenberg, Chief Regional Officer, Ontario Health Toronto and East, shared with us the government's priorities to support the delivery of integrated health care, including "The Path Forward" for Ontario Health Teams.

A number of board governance policies were modernized to incorporate governance best practices. The board's recruitment and selection process was modified with the aim to build a more diverse board. Educational training opportunities were provided to board members to enhance the board's knowledge of diversity, inclusion, equity, and justice matters. One education session was devoted to a conflict of interest briefing. In addition, the board's new Capital Development Committee was actively engaged with management in the development of the business case for the proposed Integrated Health and Social Services Hub in Smiths Falls.

The Board would like to acknowledge the important contributions of Terry Gilhen who will retire from the Board after serving for 6 years. I will also be retiring having served on the board for 6 years with an one-year extension to support the smooth transition of the incoming Board Chair, Chris Cummings, and the two Vice-Chairs, Sandra Shaw and Don Palmer. The board is talented, experienced, and it is well-positioned to address the future strategic challenges and opportunities.

We would like to thank our engaged and committed board members, volunteers, leadership team and staff for their dedicated work over the past year. We are very grateful to staff for the quality of the services delivered to enhance the health and well-being of the communities we serve.

Respectfully submitted,

A handwritten signature in cursive script, reading "J. Cosier", with a horizontal line underneath.

Board of Directors 2022-2023

Janet Cosier, Chair
Chris Cummings, Vice Chair
Terry Gilhen, Vice Chair
Sandra Shaw, Secretary
Don Palmer, Director
Dorothy Thomson, Director
Jackie Lord, Director
Christine Joli-Coeur, Director
Sandy Mark, Director
Juli Heney, Director
Stefany Kawka, Director
Irv Mazurkiewicz, Director
Michele Bellows, CEO
Kristian Gundersen, Exec Asst.

Accountability

The Board of Rideau Community Health Services is not only accountable to itself, our staff, and our clients, but also our communities and the general public. Our Board prides itself on our ability to provide safe, accessible, and high quality programs and services in an efficient, effective, and financially responsible manner.

Statement of Operations 2022-2023

Year ended March 31, 2023 with comparative information for 2022

	2023	2022
Revenue:		
Ontario Health	\$ 9,647,617	\$ 8,940,850
Amortization of deferred capital contributions	206,257	218,128
Ministry of Children, Community and Social Services	249,946	228,946
Recoverables and other income	1,390,248	1,372,487
	11,494,068	10,760,411
Expenses:		
Compensation:		
Salaries	7,024,171	6,942,147
Benefits	1,577,645	1,399,599
Service cost:		
Rent and accommodation	725,637	645,765
Medical supplies	185,049	156,704
Contracted out	689,703	454,172
Equipment	95,936	17,831
Sundry	989,460	937,412
Amortization of capital assets	206,257	218,128
	11,493,858	10,771,758
Excess (deficiency) of revenue over expenses	\$ 210	\$ (11,347)

Your Community Health Centre



Our Vision

Working together building healthy communities.



Our Mission

We engage individuals, agencies, and partners to improve the health and wellbeing of our communities.



Our Values

Equity, Empathy, Respect, Collaboration, and Community

Our Care in 2022 - 2023

By the numbers...



36,576

Primary Care appointments



2,609

Foot care appointments



231

Group nutrition sessions



1,616

Counselling appointments



3,609

Dental appointments



10,406

Diabetes Education appointments



1,893

COPD / Asthma appointments



1,637

Health & Wellness appointments



1,539

Pharmacy appointments



1,756

Dietitian/Nutrition appointments



1,777

Client Support appointments



240

Chronic Disease Education group sessions



27 Volunteers

Contributing **1,100+** hours



90

Total employees



13 Students

Totalling **3,100+** hours



Rideau Community
Health Services

Our clients and the communities we serve are our top priority

Rideau Community Health Services (RCHS) is committed to the Model of Health and Wellbeing (MHWB) to guide the delivery of primary health care.



We are committed to service that is: anti-oppressive and culturally safe; accessible; inter-professional, integrated and coordinated; community-governed; based on the social determinants of health; grounded in a community development approach; population and needs-based; and accountable and efficient

Community Programs

Diabetes Education & Telemedicine Teams

The past year was a reset period for group programming within our diabetes program, as well as for our telemedicine services.

Our **diabetes group education** classes saw increasing attendance as the year progressed, with many people in our community looking for the “in person” experience and wanting to connect with others to talk about living well with diabetes. Although we offer a variety of formats for connecting with our clients (in person, phone calls, video visits, texting through an app-based program), our educators agree that sometimes the “old fashioned” approach of face-to-face is the best way. We are thrilled to have our education groups full again and to see so many people taking an active role in their health.

Our **telemedicine program** saw some renewal in 2022-2023, with some specialties coming back online to offer services through OTN (Ontario Telemedicine Network) and other virtual platforms.

We are happy to once again offer in person appointments for mental health, neurology and hematology. This past year also saw the re-opening of our satellite locations in Prescott and Portland which had been under utilized during the pandemic due to reduced demand.

Our telemedicine team also began conversations with partners within the Lanark, Leeds, and Grenville Ontario Health Team (LLG OHT) to explore a central intake model for virtual care referrals. As this work continues, the goals are:

- To reduce duplication of administrative functions amongst telemedicine programs in our OHT
- To streamline the referral and communication process for referring providers
- To increase advocacy for virtual specialist services within LLG.

Our Strategic Priorities for 2021 - 2026

- Working Together to Improve Health and Wellbeing
- Working Together to Support Innovation and Community Connection
- Working Together for Person and Community-Centred Care



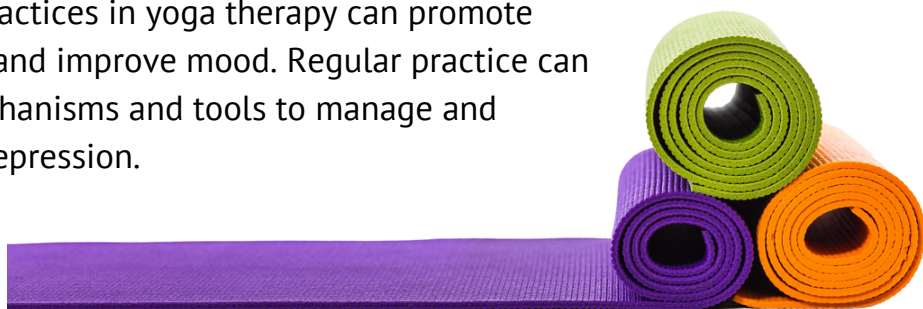


Treating PTSD with Yoga Therapy

Simon Wright, Social Worker & Tracy Birrell, Kinesiologist

Yoga therapy for Post-Traumatic Stress Disorder (PTSD) is a specialized approach that combines the practices of yoga with trauma-informed principles to address the unique needs of individuals with PTSD. Yoga therapy aims to regulate the nervous system, reduce symptoms of hyperarousal and anxiety, and promote a sense of safety and grounding. It helps individuals develop body awareness, rebuild a positive relationship with their bodies, and release stored tension and trauma. Through mindfulness and breathwork, individuals learn to manage distressing thoughts and emotions, cultivate present-moment awareness, and develop coping skills for emotional regulation. Here are some benefits of yoga therapy for individuals with PTSD:

- **Regulation of the Nervous System:** PTSD is associated with dysregulation of the nervous system, leading to heightened states of arousal, anxiety, and hypervigilance. Yoga therapy can help regulate the autonomic nervous system, calming the sympathetic (fight-or-flight) response and activating the parasympathetic (rest-and-digest) response. Practices like slow, mindful movements, deep breathing, and relaxation techniques can support individuals in managing and reducing the symptoms of hyperarousal.
- **Reduction of Anxiety and Depression:** Yoga therapy has been shown to be effective in reducing anxiety and depression symptoms, which commonly co-occur with PTSD. Mindful movement, breath awareness, and meditation practices in yoga therapy can promote relaxation, increase self-awareness, and improve mood. Regular practice can help individuals develop coping mechanisms and tools to manage and alleviate symptoms of anxiety and depression.



Yoga Therapy Continued...

- **Trauma-Informed Approach:** Trained yoga therapists who specialize in trauma-informed care can provide a safe and supportive environment for individuals with PTSD. They understand the unique challenges and sensitivities of trauma survivors and adapt yoga practices to ensure they feel empowered, respected, and in control of their experiences. A trauma-informed approach emphasizes choice, consent, and autonomy, allowing individuals to engage in yoga practices at their own pace and comfort level.
- **Body Awareness and Empowerment:** Trauma can often lead to disconnection from the body and feelings of powerlessness. Yoga therapy encourages individuals to develop a greater sense of body awareness, promoting a compassionate connection with their physical sensations and emotions. By cultivating a sense of empowerment over their own bodies and experiences, individuals with PTSD may regain a sense of control and agency in their healing process.
- **Mindfulness and Grounding:** Mindfulness is a key component of yoga therapy and involves bringing attention to the present moment without judgment. Mindfulness practices can help individuals with PTSD shift their focus away from intrusive thoughts, memories, or triggers, allowing them to develop a greater sense of present-moment awareness and emotional regulation. Grounding techniques, such as focusing on the breath or sensations in the body, can help individuals anchor themselves during moments of distress or dissociation.
- **Enhanced Self-Care and Coping Skills:** Yoga therapy encourages individuals to prioritize self-care and develop coping skills that can be applied both on and off the mat. Through yoga practices, individuals with PTSD can learn to identify and respond to their needs, cultivate self-compassion, and build resilience. The skills acquired in yoga therapy, such as relaxation techniques and breath control, can be utilized as tools to manage stress and regulate emotions in daily life.

Client Outcomes...

Clients that attended RCHS' Yoga Therapy program completed three screening tools prior to the start of this group and again after the final session. Of the clients that completed the course, there was an overall reduction in screening tool scores. PHQ9 (depression) scores dropped from an average of 15 (moderately severe) to 5 (mild), GAD 7 (anxiety) scores dropped from 14.5 (severe) to 6.5 (mild) and PCL5 (PTSD) dropped from 49.5 to 28 (with a 10 point drop being clinically significant). Clients also indicated improvements in emotion regulation, focus and mood in addition to being able to process their experience further during counselling sessions.

Client Experience Survey

2022-2023 Results



Rideau Community
Health Services

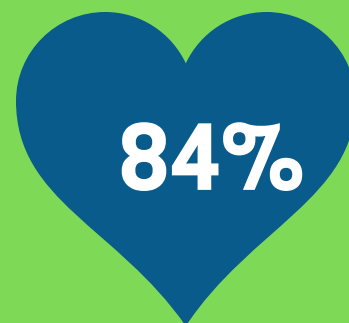
Purpose of the Survey

To gather baseline data to better understand our client's experience at Rideau Community Health Services for self-reflection and quality improvement.

Total Responses



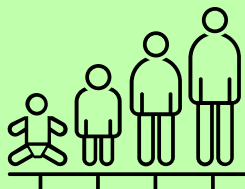
Experience with Provider



(rated excellent or very good)

Age Range

18 - 34 years: **5%**
35 - 49 years: **5%**
50 - 64 years: **27%**
65 and up: **63%**



Know how to
make a
suggestion or
complaint.



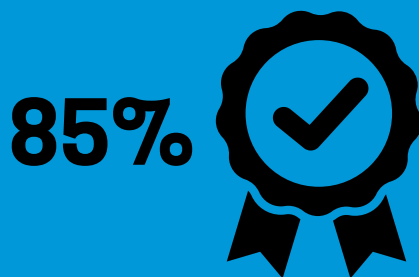
- **Listened** to my concerns and were **sensitive** to my needs and preferences
- **Explained** things in a way that was **easy** to understand
- Treated me with **dignity** and **respect**
- Involved me **as much as I wanted** in decisions about my care and treatment
- Overall **experience**


Feel Comfortable
and Welcome



Quality of Care

very good or excellent



95% 
Of clients would refer a
family member or
friend to RCHS.



of clients
agree RCHS
buildings are
accessible.

Thank you for
participating and
helping us become a
better team-based
collaborative health
service provider.



We are committed to building a strong collaborative community of care that is focused on equity, empathy and respect for all

New Social Prescribing Program

Health Promotion Team

Rideau Community Health Services was awarded a grant to begin a social prescribing program through the Alliance for Healthier Communities in early 2023. Social Prescribing is a holistic approach to healthcare that brings together the social and medical models of health and wellness. It provides a formal pathway for health providers to address the diverse determinants of health, using the familiar and trusted process of writing a prescription.

Social prescribing bridges the gap between clinical and social care by referring clients to local, non-clinical services that are chosen according to the client's interests, goals, and gifts. It allows doctors, nurse practitioners, and interprofessional health providers to formally refer clients through to community-based programs. It empowers clients to improve their health by developing new skills participating in meaningful activities and becoming more connected to their communities. What does a social prescription look like? It could be participating in an exercise group, taking an art or dance class, joining a bereavement network, getting one's hands dirty in a community garden, exploring a local hiking trail with a group of peers, volunteering to visit older adults in the communities and much more.

Health equity is a cornerstone of effective social prescribing. It is not enough to simply refer a client to a recreational program or encourage them to visit an art gallery. Successfully implementing a social prescribing program means removing the barriers clients experience to doing these things. These barriers may be economic, geographical, interpersonal, or psychological. Social prescribing is about listening deeply, providing necessary supports, and empowering people to be co-creators in improving their own health and wellbeing.

Since it began, the Social Prescribing Program at RCHS has connected people by funding gym/pool/exercise class passes, offering space for the Sharing Table community meal in Merrickville, connecting seniors to a local social club in Smiths Falls, providing cell phones with data plans through our device lending program, and building partnerships with local organizations to offer new programming.

How does Social Prescribing Work?

A Primary Care or Allied Health Provider sees a need and refers the client to the CHW (Community Health Worker).



The CHW connects with the individual to understand their needs and interests.



The CHW connects the client to a wide range of community supports and follows up.



Type 2 diabetes

Risk factors and complications

Type 2 diabetes can put you at risk for many life-threatening health problems. Some risk factors and complications of type 2 diabetes may be more visible and easier to detect, while others may be lurking under the surface.



Did you know? Type 2 diabetes puts you at greater risk of heart disease and stroke. People with diabetes may develop heart disease earlier than those without diabetes, and 1 in 2 people with type 2 diabetes die due to heart disease.

Diabetes can lead to kidney disease, which can lead to dialysis or a kidney transplant. Diabetes can lead to foot problems, which can lead to amputation.

Diabetes can lead to eye damage, which can lead to blindness. Diabetes can lead to nerve damage, which can lead to pain and numbness.

Diabetes can lead to skin problems, which can lead to infections. Diabetes can lead to hearing loss.

Diabetes can lead to dental problems, which can lead to tooth loss. Diabetes can lead to depression.

Diabetes can lead to sleep apnea, which can lead to daytime fatigue. Diabetes can lead to osteoporosis.

Diabetes can lead to Alzheimer's disease. Diabetes can lead to Parkinson's disease.

Diabetes can lead to cancer. Diabetes can lead to liver disease.

Diabetes can lead to fatty liver disease. Diabetes can lead to non-alcoholic fatty liver disease.

Diabetes can lead to heart failure. Diabetes can lead to chronic heart failure.

Diabetes can lead to peripheral artery disease. Diabetes can lead to atherosclerosis.

Diabetes can lead to stroke. Diabetes can lead to transient ischemic attack (TIA).

Diabetes can lead to heart attack. Diabetes can lead to myocardial infarction.

Diabetes can lead to angina. Diabetes can lead to coronary artery disease.

Diabetes can lead to hypertension. Diabetes can lead to high blood pressure.

Diabetes can lead to low blood pressure. Diabetes can lead to hypotension.

Diabetes can lead to dizziness. Diabetes can lead to lightheadedness.



Rideau Community Health Services

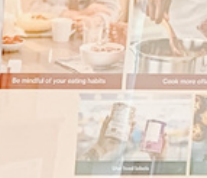
Canada's food guide

Eat

Eat a variety

Have plenty of vegetables and fruits

Healthy eating is



Discover Canada's



Rideau Community Health Services is committed to building a strong collaborative community of care that is focused on equity, empathy and respect for all



The RCHS Oral Health Team at the annual Staff & Board Holiday Breakfast in December 2022.

Oral Health Program

The RCHS Dental team had a busy and productive year providing dental care at our sites in Brockville, Smiths Falls, Westport and Lanark. The team was glad to see the pandemic fallow time restrictions lifted in 2022 which enabled us to increase the number of appointments each day. Many clients are now receiving routine care which has resulted in fewer emergency calls. In addition, our team welcomed a new dental hygienist allowing more clients to be seen regularly for preventive care and a new dentist to support the Brockville and Westport offices. Our denture funding was enhanced in 2022 and we were able to provide an additional 25 sets of dentures for our clients across the region. The wait list for dentures is significant so RCHS continues to create partnerships with our local denturists and seek creative ways to enhance funding.

Respiratory & Acute Episodic Clinics

Primary Care Team

In response to increasing pressure on the local Emergency Departments (EDs), and increased respiratory illnesses related to Covid-19, RCHS implemented same-day, dedicated Respiratory/Acute Episodic Clinics daily at both our Smiths Falls and Merrickville sites. This initiative greatly reduced ED visits and provided increased access and care to our clients. From November 2022 May 2023, RCHS held 140 clinics and provided assessments to 605 clients. These clients may have otherwise presented to the ED without the support of our Nurses, Nurse Practitioners, Physicians, and Pharmacists.

Along with this initiative we held several Covid-19 and Flu clinics, administering vaccines to over 250 clients. Our Pharmacy team supported and provided calls to clients who were eligible for Paxlovid, an antiviral medication that can reduce the risk of hospitalization or death in clients that are at higher risk of serious illness due to Covid-19. Nursing and Providers provided additional support for health teaching and providing Rapid Antigen Swabbing for those clients that were concerned they were ill with Covid-19 or had been exposed to someone who was Covid-19 positive.

Nursing and the Health Admin Team managed many calls from clients with Covid-19, vaccine, or screening related questions, and these clients were able to access same day Respiratory Assessments if needed. The availability of these clinics often assisted clients return to work or school in a much quicker timeline than had they presented to the Emergency Department.

Both clients and colleagues at the Perth & Smiths Falls District Hospital Emergency Department expressed their gratitude for this initiative. In cases where clients were directed to the Emergency Department, the preliminary assessment and client information RCHS was able to provide to the Hospital directly lessened the workload for the Hospital staff who have been burning the candle at both ends.

RCHS' own Dr. Nadeau commented on some feedback received after the implementation of the same-day clinics: "I was told it felt good to know community healthcare workers were trying to help take some of the pressure off [the hospital staff's] shoulders and that they appreciate how well RCHS manages our (often complex) clients!"



THE TABLE COMMUNITY FOOD CENTRE

The Board of Directors and staff of Rideau Community Health Services (RCHS) are pleased to announce that The Table Community Food Centre is this year's recipient of our annual Community Recognition Award. This award, which was created in 2017, recognizes an individual or group who makes significant contributions to the communities we serve.

With diverse community programs and services, The Table Community Food Centre is building a healthier, more connected community. Their dedicated staff and volunteers provide food access and food literacy programs, as well as gardening, community navigation, social justice education, and advocacy programs.

The core operations of Table Community Food Centre occur at their building in Perth but they are increasingly working across Lanark County and especially in Smiths Falls. Working with community partners including RCHS they are developing new programs in Smiths Falls and are looking to develop a new home for The Falls Food Hub.

The Table and RCHS collaborate on a produce prescription program that provides free, fresh produce boxes to low-income individuals with chronic health issues. The Table also played a lead role in coordinating the local community services in response to the pandemic, and is an active participant in a variety of networks and initiatives including Foodcore LGL and the Lanark Child and Youth Services Collaborative.

Previous recipients of the Community Recognition Award include:

- Rideau Bridge to Canada
- Adult Learning & Training Centre
- Grenville Federation of Agriculture
- Merrickville Lions Club
- Together Smiths Falls
- Merrickville Nursery School



Volunteer Appreciation!

RCHS has a dedicated team of volunteers who support our staff to carry out our mission and make the biggest difference possible in the lives of those we serve in our communities. Volunteers commit their time to make an impact at RCHS by helping at the food cupboard program in Merrickville, delivering meals or food baskets to clients, participating in our newly established social prescribing program, or in many other ways, RCHS is extremely grateful for the donation of their valuable time.



Some of our wonderful volunteers who attended our volunteer appreciation event in April 2023 for National Volunteer Week.

Volunteerism is one of the most selfless acts that one can become involved in. To show our appreciation we held a volunteer appreciation event in April 2023 for National Volunteer Week with a great turn out. Thank you from the bottom of our hearts.

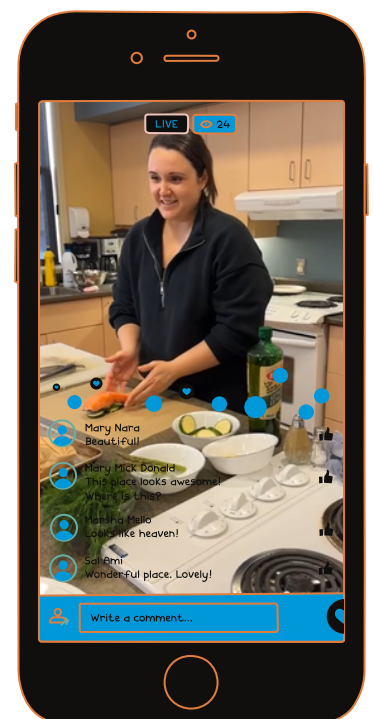
Volunteering is an act of heroism on a grand scale. And it matters profoundly. It does more than help people beat the odds; it changes the odds.

- William J. Clinton

Nutrition Team Goes Live on Facebook!

In January 2023, the RCHS Nutrition Team went live for the first time on Facebook! Our Dietitian, Ashley, and Diabetes RN, Ildie, hosted a live cooking demo with great feedback. Many people chose to tune in to learn how to cook healthy, budget-friendly meals from the comfort of their own homes! As the first event was a great success, the team went live again in March 2023. Watch our website and social media closely for information on our next live events!

Dietitians empower people to embrace food, to understand it, and to enjoy it. They translate the science of nutrition into terms everyone can understand to support healthy living for all community members. RCHS has several nutrition related services anyone can access, without a referral. Please visit our website for more details and upcoming group programming!



Equity, Diversity, Inclusion, and Justice

An organizational approach to anti-racism and anti-oppression

The RCHS Equity, Diversity, Inclusion, and Justice Committee (or EDIJ for short) entered into its second year of work in 2022-23. The group was founded with the shared understanding that systemic oppression is affecting many of our clients and employees. The harm that this oppression perpetuates is seen through barriers across social systems including education, employment, housing, social services, and within our own health care system. Early work included developing a set of principles, and taking an organization-wide stance on this important issue.

Into 2022-23, the group refreshed its multi-year work plan, which focuses on small steps towards shifting perceptions, beliefs, and biases. The work of this group dovetails well with the work of our Health Promotion Team.

Staff education continues to be a priority for the organization. Staff were provided multiple education sessions on providing safe and inclusive transgender health care, training opportunities related to cultural sensitivity, opportunities to participate in traditional smudging ceremonies, and various other virtual learning opportunities.

Some major successes were achieved this year in terms of transforming our spaces to ensure everyone feels safe and welcome. Some examples include:

- Making gender pronoun pins available in all waiting rooms, and encouraging staff and clients to wear them if comfortable.
- Ensuring there is an "all-gender" or "gender-neutral" washroom available at all sites.
- Installing pride/inclusion flag decals on all entrances.
- Posters in all waiting rooms with information on gender identity and gender pronouns.
- Coffee & snack stations in the waiting rooms for clients and community members who may not have had a meal.
- Purchasing artwork from a local indigenous artist to display in our community spaces.

The group is excited to continue the work in 2023-2024 and making a difference in the lives of our clients, staff, and communities.



The EDIJ Committee at the RCHS All Staff Day in May 2023



Rideau Community
Health Services

Working together building healthy communities

Annual Report 2023

www.rideauchs.ca

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