IDEAA Framework

Inclusivity, Diversity, Equity, Anti-Racism & Anti-Oppression

Rideau Community Health Services

Your Community Health Centre

Updated 2026

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We are excited to share Rideau Community Health Services' Inclusivity, Equity, Diversity, Anti-Racism & Anti-Oppression (IDEAA) Framework

The IDEAA framework will guide our organization's work to advance IDEAA for our staff, leadership, board, volunteers, students, clients, families, caregivers, partners, and communities.

RCHS IDEAA Committee Members

Land Acknowledgment

We respectfully acknowledge that Rideau Community Health Services is located on the traditional territory of the Anishnaabeg Algonquin and Haudenosaunee Nations, which were never ceded or legally signed away to the Crown or to Canada.

We are all invited to reflect on the territories in which we have the privilege to live, work and play on, and to commit ourselves to gaining knowledge, forging a new, culturally safe relationship, and contributing to reconciliation.

We recognize that First Nations, Métis, and Inuit are traditional cultures of knowledge sharing and we understand we have a lot to learn. Learning is the spirit in which we come together.

Our Shared Understanding

At RCHS, we recognize that people experience the world differently. Factors such as race, culture, disability, age, gender identity, sexual orientation, language, religion, and income can affect a person's opportunities, experiences, and access to services.

Understanding Barriers

We recognize that some people face barriers that make it harder to access the supports and opportunities they need. These barriers can exist in many areas of life, including health care, education, employment, housing, and community services.

As a community health centre, we understand that these barriers can affect health outcomes and overall wellbeing. We are committed to identifying and reducing barriers wherever possible.

Accessibility Matters

Accessibility is an important part of our IDEAA work. We believe everyone should be able to access our services, programs, information, and spaces with dignity, independence, and respect.

Our commitment to accessibility is guided by RCHS's Multi-Year Accessibility Plan, which outlines how we work to create welcoming, accessible, and inclusive environments for clients, staff, volunteers, learners, and visitors.

Listening to Diverse Experiences

We understand that barriers do not affect everyone in the same way. People's experiences are shaped by their identities, backgrounds, and lived experiences.

We are committed to listening to diverse voices, learning from different perspectives, and creating opportunities for meaningful participation and belonging.

Our Commitment to Action

At RCHS, our commitment to IDEAA is rooted in our mission to promote health and wellbeing and to create positive change in our communities.

We recognize that people do not always have the same access to opportunities, resources, and supports. Barriers such as discrimination, poverty, and stigma can affect health outcomes and people's ability to participate fully in their communities. As a community health centre, we have a responsibility to identify and address these barriers wherever possible.

Our commitment to IDEAA is reflected in our Strategic Plan, Operational Plan, programs, services, policies, and workplace practices. We strive to create environments where clients, staff, volunteers, students, and partners feel welcomed, respected, safe, and valued.

We understand that this work is ongoing. Meaningful change requires listening, learning, reflection, accountability, and action. We will continue to work alongside our communities to strengthen relationships, reduce barriers, and create opportunities for belonging.

The foundations of this framework guide our decisions, actions, and relationships. Together, they help us build a more inclusive, accessible, equitable, and responsive organization for everyone we serve.

RCHS is committed to championing inclusivity, diversity, equity, anti-racism & anti-oppression, as well as accessibility in our learning, work, and service environments.

Our Foundations

The principles that guide how we work, make decisions, and serve our communities.

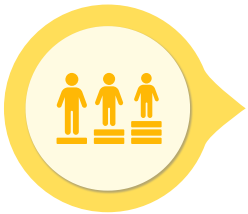
Advancing our work requires intentional and sustained effort. The foundations of this framework—Inclusion, Diversity, Equity, Anti-Racism, and Anti-Oppression—serve as guiding lenses through which we design services, support our workforce, strengthen governance, and engage with our communities. Together, they reflect our commitment to creating equitable systems where everyone can experience dignity, belonging, and opportunity.

INCLUSION

We will create environments where everyone feels welcomed, respected, valued, and empowered to participate fully. Inclusion fosters a sense of belonging by ensuring people can contribute authentically and have their voices heard.

DIVERSITY

We will recognize, value, and embrace the wide range of identities, experiences, perspectives, and backgrounds that enrich our organization and strengthen the communities we serve.



EQUITY

We will identify and address barriers so that people have access to the opportunities, resources, and supports they need to achieve equitable outcomes. Equity recognizes that fairness does not always mean treating everyone the same.

ANTI-RACISM & ANTI-OPPRESSION

We will take intentional action to identify, challenge, and dismantle racism, discrimination, and oppressive practices within our policies, systems, and everyday interactions. This work requires ongoing reflection, accountability, and a commitment to meaningful change.

Bringing IDEAA to Life Through Our Values

At Rideau Community Health Services, our IDEAA Framework is strengthened by the values that guide how we work with one another, partner with communities, and deliver care. These values shape the choices we make every day and support our commitment to creating equitable, inclusive, and welcoming environments where everyone can thrive.

RESPECT

We honour the dignity, voice, and lived experience of every person

- Listening without judgment
- Providing culturally responsive care
- Valuing diverse perspectives
- Engaging in transparent and accountable decision-making

DEDICATION

We are committed to excellence, accountability, and continuous improvement

- Identifying and addressing inequities
- Monitoring outcomes and acting on what we learn
- Using evidence to improve programs and services
- Responding to community needs

INCLUSION

We create environments where everyone feels welcome, valued, and able to participate fully

- Reducing barriers to care
- Designing accessible spaces and services
- Supporting diverse voices and leadership
- Embedding equity into decision-making

SUPPORT

We strengthen individuals, families, and communities through compassionate and collaborative care

- Providing team-based, wraparound care
- Promoting staff wellness and sustainability
- Building partnerships across sectors
- Strengthening connections within communities

INNOVATION

We embrace thoughtful change to meet evolving community needs with creativity and courage

- Challenging outdated approaches
- Using technology to improve access
- Adapting based on outcomes and feedback
- Co-creating new solutions with communities

A Decision-Making Lens

When making decisions, we ask:

- Does this uphold dignity and demonstrate **respect**?
- Does it reflect our **dedication** to quality and accountability?
- Does it advance **inclusion** and belonging?
- Does it strengthen **support** for our communities and one another?
- Does it encourage **innovation** that improves equity and outcomes?

Our Advocacy Strategy

At Rideau Community Health Services, advocacy is an expression of our commitment to Inclusion, Diversity, Equity, Anti-Racism, and Anti-Oppression. IDEAA is not separate from advocacy; rather, it shapes how we understand issues, whose voices we elevate, and how we determine the role RCHS is best positioned to play.

As a community health centre, we recognize that inequities are often rooted in broader social, structural, and systemic factors. Guided by our mission, values, strategic priorities, and commitment to health equity, RCHS may choose to engage in advocacy in different ways depending on the issue, our expertise, organizational capacity, the presence of other leaders, and the potential opportunities and risks involved.

Advocacy is not a one-size-fits-all approach. Our approach to advocacy can be understood and measured through four levels of engagement:

Monitor	We remain informed about issues that intersect with our mission and the communities we serve. We seek to understand emerging evidence, lived experiences, and potential impacts, recognizing that awareness is itself an important component of equitable practice.
Support	We lend our voice to initiatives aligned with our values by sharing information, acknowledging the work of others, and contributing in ways that strengthen collective efforts without assuming a leadership role.
Amplify	We use our expertise, relationships, and influence to elevate issues, perspectives, and solutions that advance equity and inclusion. We intentionally create space for voices that may be underrepresented and contribute our knowledge to broader system conversations.
Lead	When appropriate, RCHS may convene, coordinate, and champion advocacy efforts where our leadership can meaningfully advance health equity and improve outcomes for the communities we serve.

The level of engagement RCHS chooses will differ based on context and may shift over time. Regardless of the role we assume, our approach is grounded in IDEAA principles: centering dignity and belonging, recognizing and addressing systemic barriers, valuing lived and living experience, promoting accessibility, and working toward equitable opportunities and outcomes for all.

By embedding IDEAA into our advocacy approach, we strengthen our ability to respond thoughtfully, act intentionally, and contribute to positive and lasting change in our communities.

Enabling our Success

Advancing IDEAA is an ongoing journey that requires commitment at every level of the organization. Through leadership, accountability, learning, collaboration, and continuos reflection, we will work to embed IDEAA principles into our policies, practices, relationships, and decision-making to create a more equitable and inclusive organization.

What does success look like?

- ✓ People feel welcomed, respected, and safe accessing our services.
- ✓ Staff, volunteers, and leaders foster a culture of belonging and accountability.
- ✓ Communities see themselves reflected in how we listen, partner, advocate, and respond.

While our actions may evolve over time, our commitment to advancing IDEAA remains constant.

Rideau Community Health Services (RCHS) is a non-profit, community-governed Community Health Centre that provides comprehensive primary care, health promotion and community development services.

RCHS works with partners to provide integrated health and wellness services for various communities throughout Lanark, Leeds & Grenville counties. An interdisciplinary team is supported by an administrative team providing primary care services for registered clients.

A wide range of health promotion and disease prevention programs are available to our communities such as: diabetes education, telemedicine, chiropody/foot care, dietetic consultation, oral health care, lung health, smoking cessation, mental health and wellbeing and exercise programs.

Rideau Community Health Services

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