



IDEAA Framework

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

2023 - 2026



**Rideau Community
Health Services**

Your Community Health Centre

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

The IDEAA framework will continue to guide our organization's work to advance IDEAA for our clients, families, caregivers, and communities.



RCHS IDEAA Committee Members

Rideau Community Health Services respectfully acknowledges that we are located on the traditional territory of the Algonquin Anishnaabeg Nation, which was never ceded or legally signed away to the Crown or to Canada.

We are committed to reflecting on the territories in which we have the privilege to live, work and play on and 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.

Definitions

- **Intersectionality:** Recognizing and addressing the intersectionality of various identities and experiences is fundamental. Individuals may face multiple forms of discrimination or oppression simultaneously based on race, gender, disability, and other factors. Anti-racist and anti-oppressive efforts should be inclusive and consider the diverse experiences of individuals.
- **Universal Design (Accessibility):** Accessibility and universal design principles aim to create environments, products, and services that can be used by as many people as possible, regardless of their abilities or disabilities. An anti-oppressive and anti-racist approach ensures that these designs consider the needs of marginalized communities, avoiding the reinforcement of discriminatory practices.
- **Representation:** Equity and diversity involve promoting fair representation and opportunities for all individuals. This includes ensuring that people from diverse backgrounds and abilities are represented in decision-making processes, policies, and practices related to accessibility.
- **Cultural Competence:** Anti-racist and anti-oppressive approaches emphasize cultural competence, understanding, and respect for different cultural backgrounds. This extends to considerations of accessibility, recognizing that different communities may have unique needs and preferences related to accessibility.
- **Barrier Removal:** Addressing barriers to access goes beyond physical accessibility. Anti-oppressive efforts involve identifying and dismantling systemic barriers that prevent certain groups from fully participating in various aspects of life, including education, employment, and community engagement.

- **Inclusive Language and Communication:** Language is a powerful tool that can either reinforce or challenge oppressive structures. Using inclusive and respectful language is essential in anti-racist and anti-oppressive work, and this includes ensuring that communication methods are accessible to all, considering diverse linguistic abilities and preferences.
- **Power Dynamics:** Anti-racist and anti-oppressive practices involve recognizing and challenging power imbalances. In the context of accessibility, this means ensuring that decision-making processes related to accessibility are inclusive and give voice to individuals with diverse experiences and abilities.
- **Training and Education:** Building awareness and understanding of the intersectionality of race, oppression, equity, diversity, and accessibility is crucial. Training and education programs should address these issues comprehensively to promote a more inclusive and accessible society.
- **Advocacy:** An umbrella that shelters many types of advocacy areas and methods (such as self-advocacy, individual advocacy, and systems advocacy). “Advocacy” refers to the organized efforts and activities undertaken to promote, protect, and advance the well-being of communities. This involves championing policies, practices, and initiatives that address health disparities, social determinants of health, and systemic barriers.

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



Our Principles

Inclusivity

A dynamic state of feeling, belonging, and operating in which diversity is leveraged and valued to create a fair, healthy, and high-performing organization or community. An inclusive culture and environment ensure equitable access to resources and opportunities for all. It also enables individuals and groups to feel safe, respected, heard, engaged, motivated, and valued for who they are.

Refers to the variety of similarities and differences among people, including, but not limited to: gender, sex, gender identity and expression, ethnicity, race, native or Indigenous identity/origin, age, generation, disability, sexual orientation, culture, religion, belief system, marital status, parental status, pregnancy, socio-economic status/ caste, appearance, language and accent, mental health, education, geography, nationality, work style, work experience, job role and function, thinking style, and personality type.

Diversity

Equity

It is about fairness and justice and taking deliberate actions to remove systemic, group, and individual barriers and obstacles that hinder opportunities and disrupt well-being. Equity is achieved through the identification and elimination of policies, practices, attitudes, and cultural messages that create and reinforce unfair outcomes.

Anti-racism is a commitment to actively opposing and challenging racism in all its forms. It involves acknowledging and addressing systemic injustices, promoting equity, and advocating for policies and practices that foster equality and inclusivity across diverse racial and ethnic groups. This commitment also necessitates continuous self-reflection and education to better understand one's own biases, privileges, and the historical context of racism, fostering a lifelong dedication to dismantling prejudice and promoting genuine equality.

Anti-Racism

Anti- Oppression

Anti-oppression is a commitment to actively resist and confront various forms of oppression that systematically marginalize and disadvantage certain individuals or groups. It involves the examination and dismantling of oppressive systems, advocating for fairness, and endorsing policies that foster equality and inclusivity across diverse social identities. This commitment necessitates ongoing self-reflection and education to deepen awareness of personal biases, privileges, and the historical context of oppression. By doing so, it fosters an enduring dedication to dismantling discriminatory practices and cultivating authentic equity for all.

Our Shared Understanding

RCHS recognizes that there is systemically rooted power and privilege assigned to dominant groups in our society based on their gender, sexual orientation, race, economic status, language ability, religion preference, age, size, and ability (2024-2027 Accessibility Plan).

We recognize that the intersection of inclusivity, diversity, equity, anti-racism, anti-oppression (IDEAA) with accessibility is crucial in fostering inclusive environments that prioritize the needs and rights of all individuals, regardless of their background, abilities, or identities. Please reference RCHS's 2024-2027 Accessibility Plan for more information on how RCHS is committed to providing a respectful, accessible, and inclusive environment for all clients, staff, volunteers, and visitors.

Our commitment to IDEAA includes acknowledging the unique experiences and challenges faced by individuals of all abilities, and working towards dismantling systemic barriers that contribute to discrimination, exclusion, racism, and oppression. We aim to foster an environment that is inclusive of the voices of all individuals.

We know that systemic oppression is experienced by many individuals in our communities including our clients, staff members, and volunteers. This harm is perpetuated in barriers across social systems including education, employment, housing, social services, and within our own health care system.

RCHS acknowledges that differences in health outcomes can be traced to unequal economic and social conditions that are systemic and structural. These inequities are also influenced by systemic racism and oppression of cultural, religious, sexual, and equity seeking groups/populations.



Our Commitment

RCHS's commitment to IDEAA is part of our strategic plan and our annually updated operational plan - we strive to advance IDEAA in every aspect of our work and all that we do. As part of our commitment to supporting healthy people and healthy communities, we know that every individual must have access to the resources and support they need to thrive. Every person, whether they are living in our communities, involved in our programming, delivering our programming, or accessing the service we provide, all must be safe, respected, and able to achieve their full potential.

The advancement of IDEAA is a long-term commitment which requires hard work and challenging conversations. We will continue to work with our communities and staff to further develop meaningful relationships and support reconciliation in a meaningful way.

We encourage you to become familiar with the pillars of our framework which align with our values and when taken together, will have a meaningful and enduring impact for our communities, staff, volunteers, and those we serve.

Join us as we foster a compassionate, diverse, and future-ready workplace, and equity-focused programs and services.



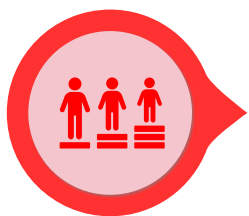
Our Achievements

Over the last few years, RCHS has focused on building foundations for IDEAA at our organization, while looking at education and training, issues related to discrimination, systemic racism, and health disparities, which we know were exacerbated during the pandemic. During this time, we have:

- Created an Inclusivity, Diversity, Equity, Anti-Racism, and Anti-Oppression (IDEAA) Committee.
- Initiated greater awareness and education at all levels of RCHS related to IDEAA, Indigenous, and 2SLGBTQI+ people. This includes a developing relationship with Centretown Community Health Centre to support the rural delivery of trans health programs, and healthcare focused on gender equity.
- Supported ongoing educational events and opportunities for staff.
- Partnered with the City for All Women's Initiative (CAWI) group out of the Ottawa Centre for Diversity to learn about and address unconscious biases in hiring, policy development, and human resource practices.
- Worked with the Alliance for Healthier Communities to develop a robust socio-demographic survey to establish a baseline understanding of the identities and diverse structure of the clients and communities we serve. The data collected will provide a baseline understanding of needs and gaps related to IDEAA at RCHS to identify where we need to act and make changes.
- Planned changes to the incident reporting process to include dimensions of diversity which will enable us to track identity-based complaints and the prevalence of diversity-related violence.
- Started to track data from clients about their experience with IDEAA so we can identify inequities at RCHS.
- Developed plans and began recruitment for an Engagement Council to ensure diverse client experience partners have a voice and can help inform the development of programs and services.
- Developed and implemented an IDEAA, multi-year workplan.
- Developed an advocacy framework and strategy to support our IDEAA work.

IDEAA Framework Pillars

Our team worked together to develop **organizational values** which are reflected in our IDEAA work. These five values, or “pillars” reflect who we are as an organization. Some actions are urgent and require immediate attention, and others will be addressed over a longer term and sustained for as long as needed to achieve our vision for an inclusive, diverse, equitable, anti-racist, and anti-oppressive workplace and environment.



EQUITY

We will transform the experience for clients, families, and the communities we serve by promoting a people-centered culture of care, including diverse voices in planning, and reducing disparities in access to services, quality of care, and outcomes.

Actions for Year 1 and 2:

- Continue to track our performance on the Quality Improvement Indicator for clients experience with health equity at RCHS. Our ideal target is 100% of clients reporting they feel comfortable and welcome at RCHS, with an initial target of greater than 90% for 2023/24.
- Optimize the foundational elements for the collection, use, and analysis of client-level equity data, a provincial and regional priority.
- Promote IDEAA through our framework, and work with partners including the LLG Ontario Health Team to advance health equity.



RESPECT

We will ensure fair and inclusive recruitment, retention, mentorship, performance, and talent management, as well as support other workplace programs to strengthen anti-violence and harassment related policies to foster respect and safety in the workplace. We will also recognize and honour important dates publicly through our corporate social media and website.

Actions for Year 1 and 2:

- Increase our collaboration with equity seeking populations.
- Review our recruitment strategy to expand the scope of our reach.
- Support organizational education to promote safety in the workplace.



COMMUNITY

We will reduce attitudinal barriers and increase safety through IDEAA education and training at all levels of RCHS.

Actions for Year 1 and 2:

- Integrate IDEAA into learning and development for staff from time of onboarding, through all stages of employment with RCHS. This includes leveraging resources and supports from the Canadian Centre for Diversity and Inclusion, and sustained training on anti-racism and anti-oppression.
- Implementing visible signs to support the 2SLGBTQI+ community including flags and signage with a goal to create a welcoming and comfortable space for all.
- Continue to focus on ensuring clients have a sense of belonging and to combat social isolation.



COLLABORATION

We will foster an environment where everyone feels included and safe through improving cultural competency, psychological safety and wellbeing, representation of equity-seeking groups, and clear accountability for IDEAA.

Actions for Year 1 and 2:

- Continue supporting the work of the IDEAA Working Group.
- Evaluate engagement and belonging from team members through RCHS Employee Engagement Survey.
- Create brave spaces across the organization.
- CEO to connect with team members across the organization to learn more about creating a more inclusive culture.
- Support all managers in completing the psychological safety in the workplace certificate.



EMPATHY

We will continuously track and assess the experiences of staff and those we serve related to IDEAA, identify opportunities to better reflect our community, and report on our progress.

Actions for Year 1 and ongoing:

- Implement a robust program to collect socio-demographic information with a goal to establish a baseline understanding of needs and issues related to IDEAA at RCHS and to identify priorities for action.
- Plan to increase representation of equity-seeking groups at all levels.
- Create a safe culture for incident reporting including complaints of identity-based discrimination and harassment.
- Continuously assess barriers and opportunities for improvement.

Enabling our Success

Everyone's voice matters and we will require meaningful input and involvement from everyone in our diverse teams and communities. We will work to further engage our communities to better understand the needs of the community and work within the programs and services that we currently undertake.





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 Leeds, Grenville and Lanark 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.



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Rideau Community Health Services
354 Read St. Merrickville, ON K0G 1N0



www.rideauchs.ca

