

WOCRC

Bringing Care and

Community Together

ANNUAL
2023  **2024**
REPORT

Hollyer House

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Dear Western Ottawa Community,

As we reflect on our accomplishments this year, we find ourselves considering the resilience and strength of the communities that we serve. The Western Ottawa Community Resource Centre is dedicated to enhancing the well-being of individuals and families in our region.

At the heart of our mission are four guiding beliefs: Empowerment, Partnership, Innovation

and Equity; These principles serve as the cornerstone of our work, guiding us in everything we do.

We believe in empowering individuals to take control of their lives, advocate for their needs and realize their full potential. We provide a broad range of barrier-free programs, resources and supports fostering health and safety at a community level.

Partnership is at the core of our approach. We accomplish so much more together than we can alone. This year, we completed construction at Hollyer House, co-located with our partners at FAMSAC Food Cupboard and collaborated with our partners at the Anglican Diocese to create this newly built satellite space, with the addition of much needed social housing.

Innovation drives our efforts to find new and creative solutions to emerging challenges. Whether it's adapting our services to meet the evolving needs of our community, or developing innovative programs to address new issues, we are committed to continuous improvement and innovation. This year, we've embarked on a social prescribing pilot, collaborating with our Primary Care health partners to explore how we can respond to the needs of our rural residents.

Equity is fundamental to our work. We believe that everyone deserves access to the same opportunities and resources regardless of

their background and circumstances. This year we collaborated to enhance resident voices, supported advocacy efforts, sought community feedback and created opportunities for the sharing of lived experiences.

At the heart of our organization is our passionate and caring staff and volunteer team, who contribute to our mission and collective impact every day, driving positive change and fostering a sense of community and belonging in West Ottawa.

As we look to the future, we are filled with optimism and determination. Together we will adapt, innovate and collaborate to respond to the evolving needs of the communities that we serve. Together we can build a healthy, inclusive, vibrant community.



Leigh Couture
Executive Director



Mike Brown
Chair, Board of Directors



Our Vision

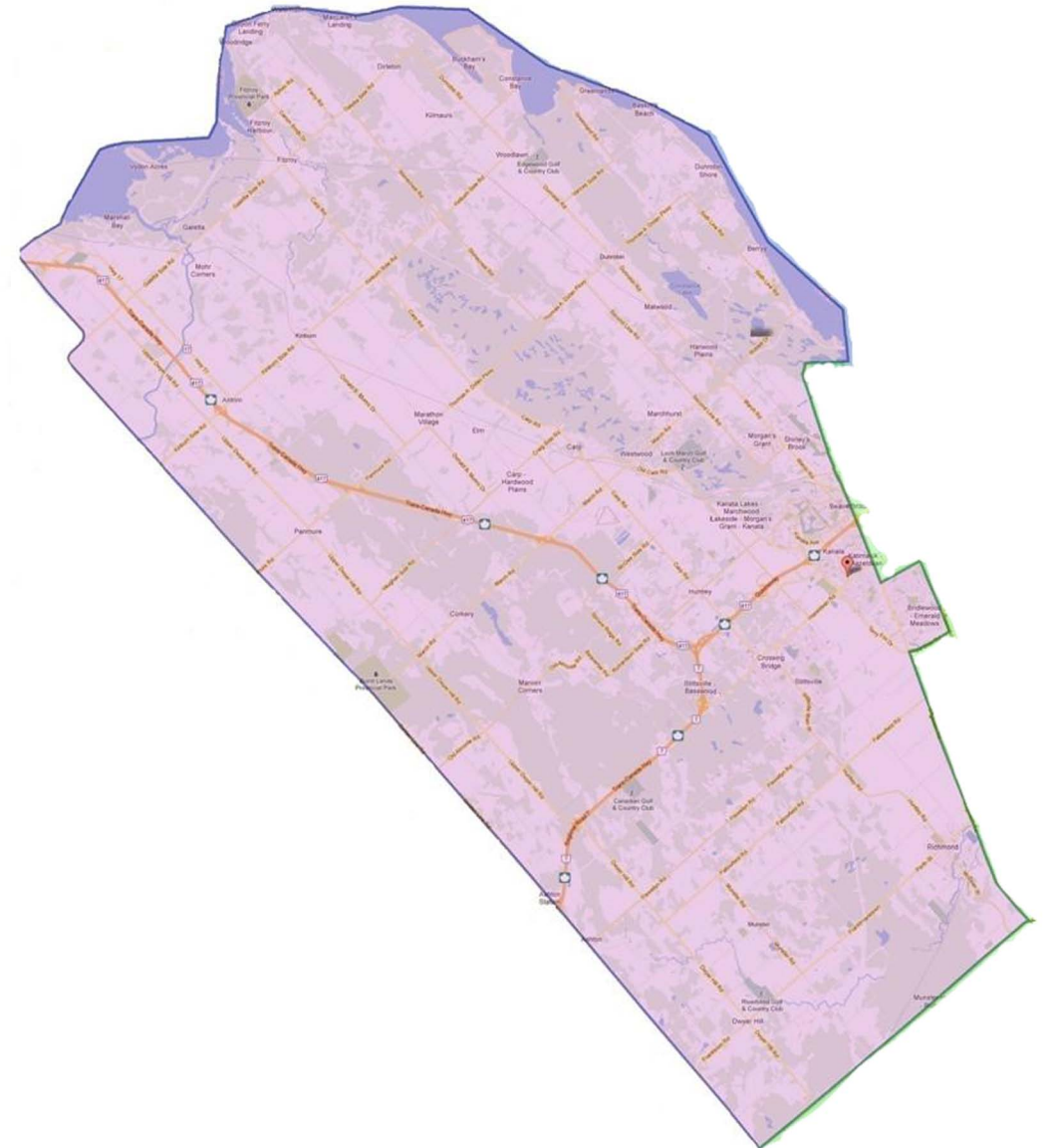
Healthy, inclusive, vibrant and resilient communities in Western Ottawa.

Our Mission

Western Ottawa Community Resource Centre promotes health, safety and wellness in our communities. We provide individuals and families with, and connect them to, community, social and health services across the region.



Western Ottawa Community Resource Centre's Catchment Area





WOCRC has four core deeply held beliefs, which guide our approach to serving our community and are demonstrated through our day-to-day interactions with clients, partners, volunteers, members, and staff.

Empowerment

We believe that people have the right to make their own choices, and take control, individually and collectively, of their lives.

Therefore, we are committed to providing information and resources, which will enable people to make informed decisions.

We are dedicated to creating an environment where people participate in activities that promote social change.

Equity

We believe that dignity, respect and justice are rights of all people regardless of age, language, race, ethnicity, culture, religion, ability, gender, gender identity, gender expression, income, geographical location or sexual orientation.

We acknowledge that there are systemic, social and cultural barriers that prevent people from having equal access to resources and opportunities.

Therefore, we are committed to recognizing and addressing barriers such as violence, poverty, isolation, exclusion, oppression and discrimination to enable people to reach their full potential.

Partnership

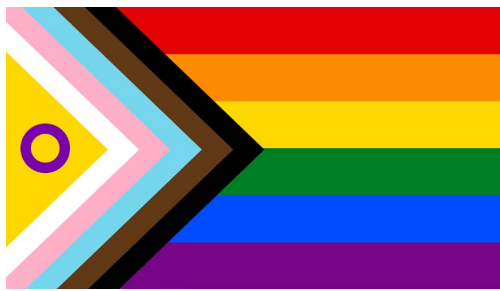
We believe that by working together we can achieve more than we can on our own.

Therefore, we are committed to creating partnerships with individuals and groups that build on equality, respect, integrity, accountability and responsibility. We will engage with others in a supportive, non-judgmental environment where everyone can share knowledge, experience, strengths, and skills.

Innovation

We believe that we will transform our vision into reality by developing innovative solutions to the complex and diverse issues facing our community.

Therefore, we are committed to creating a learning culture that is flexible, dynamic, embraces change and encourages evolutionary thinking. We are dedicated to sharing our learning, knowledge and best practices for the benefit of the people with whom we interact.





WOCRC offers health and social services, and programs to benefit individuals of all ages in far west Ottawa.

Community Support Services (CSS)

The Community Support Services program is committed to helping older adults and adults with a disability live independent, active and meaningful lives. These services include Meals on Wheels, Transportation, Diners Club, Foot Care, Service Arrangement, Friendly Visiting, and Adult Day Program for adults with a confirmed diagnosis of dementia, and supports in the rural community.

Gender-Based Violence (GBV)

The Gender-Based Violence Program offers individual support, information and referrals, short-term/crisis counselling, transitional and housing support, advocacy and groups for women and gender-diverse individuals experiencing gender-based violence. The GBV program also provides individual and group support for children who have witnessed violence.

Chrysalis House (CH)

Chrysalis House is a safe and secure 25-bed shelter in Western Ottawa. It is a place where any self-identified woman or gender-diverse individual over the age of 16 can go to protect themselves and their dependents from violence and abuse. In this supportive environment, an individual can focus on their personal needs and choices, as well as on their dependents' needs. Chrysalis House offers a crisis phone line 24 hours/day at 613-591-5901.

Chrysalis House is pleased to provide services to cis and trans women, two-spirit, non-binary and gender-diverse people of diverse ages, cultures, races, sexual orientations and abilities. Chrysalis House is an accessible building and service.

Counselling Services Team (CST)

The Counselling Services Team provides practical support, ensuring equitable and inclusive access to essential community services. These services include free and confidential short-term counselling, crisis walk-in, phone support, information and referrals.

EarlyON Child and Family Centre

Our EarlyON Child and Family Centre Team provides a variety of free programs and services for children from birth to six years along with their parents and caregivers in Kanata, West Carleton, and Stittsville. Services include drop-in playgroups, workshops, toy libraries and special events. The EarlyON team also offers information and referral navigation services.

Community Development (CD)

Community Development is a key approach to health promotion, working in partnership across sectors and alongside coalitions, networks, and communities to identify and address local issues in the diverse areas of Western Ottawa with a particular focus on supporting our rural communities. Capacity Developers collaborate with staff, residents, and organizations to develop and advocate for services, policies and projects that seek to improve the social determinants of health, such as food security, access to transportation, early childhood development, housing, feeling safe, and being engaged.

Children, Youth and Families

WOCRC offers support to children, youth, and families with a wide range of programs that provide coping and learning skills, as well as an opportunity to socialize. Programs include The Zone Youth Drop-In, Queerios 2SLGBTQ+ Youth Drop-In and workshops for parents and community partners.



The EarlyON team enjoyed another year of growth in 2023, both as professionals and within our programs. In nearly every community, we saw an increased number of families joining our programs and workshops and many of these new clients were referred to us by a friend or family member. This word-of-mouth advertising has always been central to EarlyON's promotion strategy, but for our clients to be happy enough to ask their friends to join, or encourage their friends to explore our playgroups has us feeling happy and confident in the programs we're offering.

Two new programs - Story Stretchers and Little Movers - began this year in Glen Cairn and South March. These new programs not only offered different program styles, but also increased our reach within our catchment area.

With the growth of our communities and the increased numbers of clients using our programs, Family Resource Workers and our Family Navigator are seeing an increase in the number of clients with complex and concurrent needs. Family Navigation, especially, has seen an exponential increase in requests and referrals.

To meet these new demands, the team has explored several new strategies to ensure our clients are receiving the highest level of care we can offer.

Our major events like Family Fun Day and Family Literacy Day were incredibly well-attended and the feedback we have received from these events has been extremely positive. While a fun and exciting way for our clients to celebrate and enjoy enriching entertainment, these events also foster a sense of community connectiveness which has always been a goal for the EarlyON team.

Smaller events, like the Fitzroy Harbour Winter Carnival, and rural Family Fun Day were also successful, and we look forward to continuing these valuable moments of togetherness and support.



The EarlyON team 2023



Family Fun Day



The Counselling Support Team (CST) provides free, confidential and non-judgmental services in both French and English to children, youth and adults. The team strives to create a safe place for all, regardless of gender, race, age, ability, and sexual orientation.

In addition to short-term crisis counselling, the team is responsible for an intentional community response to emerging needs. As such, last year the team participated in two campaigns in collaboration with the Caring and Sharing Exchange, a local charity that provides assistance to Ottawa families and individuals in need, specifically during the Christmas season and the back-to-school season. Within this partnership, the CST team offered a successful Christmas Hamper campaign, as well as a traditional back to school Backpack program.

The team was also excited to launch a social prescribing project in partnership with the Richmond Medical Centre, to provide mental health support and system navigation, and creating referral pathways between physicians and community partners.

Finally, WOCRC is an intake agency for Ontario Energy Board's Ontario Electricity Support Program (OESP) and Low-Income Energy Assistance Program (LEAP). The CST team is responsible for supporting community members experiencing financial insecurity in their application process. Last year, the team saw an unprecedented number of applications for subsidy, and this trend is expected to continue.



WOCRC has a dynamic and vibrant range of services to benefit youth ages 12-17 and their families.

From youth groups and workshops to counselling, clinics and presentations, the centre offers opportunities for youth to connect with peers, access support, learn new skills, build confidence, make lasting friendships and contribute positively to life in our community through volunteerism. In 2023, partnerships were the cornerstone of the program, creating networks of support that aligned with our guiding beliefs. Our outreach efforts, through our mailing list, helped us connect with hundreds of clients as we notified them of the array of programming offered throughout the year.

A higher level of engagement from community partners and schools resulted in more participation in community-based and school-related events. In 2023, the Child and Youth team's footprint expanded to include an active presence at events such as Stittsville Multicultural Festival, West Side Pride, Family Fun Day, Rural Family Fun Day, Summer Send-off, Richmond Mental Health and Resource Fair, Ottawa Pride, and more.

The Zone Kanata and Queerios provide clients a safe community space for youth to create their own connections. Both programs have seen a steady increase in program participation throughout the year as The Zone Kanata and Queerios continue to regain their pre-COVID levels of attendance. Responding to the evolving needs of our clientele, we reintroduced the Act One program, a structured theatre program, that welcomed both familiar faces and newcomers alike.

In the rural areas, we established three new school-based partnerships. In these programs, clients found avenues for physical activity, building life skills, and psychoeducational enrichment. Transportation is one of the challenges to rural participation, and school-based programs assist in overcoming transportation barriers. These programs have become a lifeline for our rural clients, offering weekly support that promote wellness and enriched their prospective futures.



The Gender-Based Violence (GBV) program at WOCRC offers vital support to women, gender-diverse individuals and children residing in Ottawa.

We serve women and gender-diverse individuals of any age, cultural background, religious affiliation, sexual orientation, and ability who have experienced violence, whether it be sexual, physical, emotional, or otherwise, from an intimate partner or significant other (could also include a caregiver or other immediate family/household member). Our dedicated team is comprised of a supportive Transitional Housing Support workers, and seasoned GBV counsellors who also provide a Children Who Witness program.

This year, the team was focused on advocacy and partnership building to support vulnerable women. The team participated in a number of awareness activities, such as:

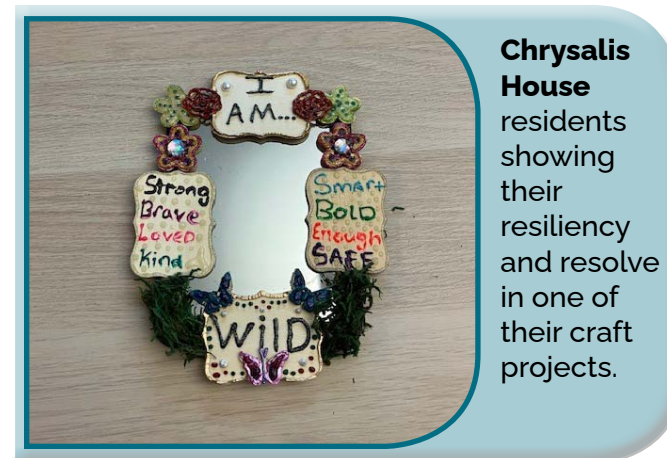
- Participating in the Ottawa Community Housing (OCH) Tenant Health and Wellness Resource Fair;
- Offering presentations to Nepean Housing and Hospice Care Ottawa staff, Ruddy-Shenkman Hospice staff, and the Westend Family Care Clinic, doctors, social workers and nurse practitioners; and a Gender-Based Violence presentation to Ottawa paramedics;
- Facilitating the Ottawa VAW/THSW committee and the Gender-Based Violence Housing Liaison Advisory Committee;
- Participating as members of the Rebuilding Trust Committee - Ottawa Police Service;
- Participating in the Ottawa Police's Domestic Violence Advocate Case Review (DVACR); and
- Providing a half-day Gender-Based Violence training session to members of the Mental Well-Being Response Team (MWRT) with the Ottawa Paramedics.



Chrysalis House is a safe and secure 25-bed shelter in Western Ottawa. It is a place where any self-identified woman or gender-diverse individual over the age of 16 can go to protect themselves and their dependents from violence and abuse. In this supportive environment, residents can prioritize their own well-being and decisions, while also tending to the needs of their dependents. Last year, Chrysalis House extended its shelter to over 55 residents and their families and supported an additional 646 clients over the phone, providing a vital sanctuary during times of crisis.

Over the past year, Chrysalis House's main focus has been on advocating for women and gender-diverse folks experiencing gender-based violence. Chrysalis House's manager, Erin Baydak, has taken an active role in furthering this mission by joining the Board of Directors of the Ontario Association of Interval and Transitional Houses (OAITH) as the East Region Representative. OAITH is dedicated to ending violence against all women through various means, including training, education, advocacy, public awareness campaigns, and government relations efforts.

At the operational level, the Chrysalis House team was deeply engaged in enhancing staff capacity to support clients in need. This included participating in trainings such as Non-Violent Crisis Intervention (NVC), Danger Assessment Certification and Applied Suicide Intervention Skills Training (ASIST) sessions, which empowered staff with essential skills to effectively assist and uplift clients in crisis situations.



Chrysalis House residents showing their resiliency and resolve in one of their craft projects.



The Adult Day Program (ADP) offers respite care for care partners by providing tailored activities and socialization opportunities for adults experiencing dementia-related disorders. Clients are referred through the Home and Community Care Support Services and must have a confirmed diagnosis of dementia.

The ADP's program coordinators navigate the client/care partner through Home and Community Care Support Services as well as admit the client into our Adult Day Program.

On a weekly basis, the ADP offers: day, evening, and weekend programs and services, in-person and virtual, to about 90 clients. These services are offered in two different communities, Kanata - from WOCRC's building, and Nepean - from Algonquin College.

We have a team of experienced employees who offer high-quality service to our clients and care partners, with the valuable support of volunteers, internship students, and our community partners. We regularly collaborate with other services (e.g., Daycare, EarlyON, and local entertainers), which brighten up our programs while offering a warm opportunity for intergenerational exchange. Clients and care partners are grateful for the services that are offered.

The ADP team stays up-to-date by participating in various trainings throughout the year, in order to use the most recent tools and approaches to further contribute to the well-being of our clients.

The Adult Day Program receives frequent feedback from care partners that our programs make a positive difference in both their and their loved ones' lives, and that they appreciate the opportunity for socialization and respite.

The following testimonial exemplifies this:

"First, I wanted to thank you and all the wonderful staff for contributing to the joy and improved health of my mother. Over the last six months, my mom is sleeping better, taking less medication and is far happier than she has been in a few years.

Despite moving in with me...you and the rest of the staff there have provided my mother with years of joy and happiness, a feeling that she belongs and the wonderful kindness and understanding you provide can only tell me that all of you have the most love, kindness and unique perspective for our aging population.

Please know I am truly grateful and so is my mom for everything you do to make her feel like she is still full of life despite her medical issues/aging. She absolutely looks forward to each Thursday and Friday with you.

Thank you for being such beautiful people.

Much Appreciation."



Musical entertainment at the **Adult Day Program**



Hollyer House

We were thrilled to receive an occupancy permit for the Hollyer House housing project. Hollyer House was built with the firm belief that everyone deserves a safe and affordable place to call home. In partnership with the Anglican Diocese of Ottawa and the FAMSAC Food Cupboard, Hollyer House was created to provide high-quality, affordable housing and a sense of community for its residents.

This project took place in stages: the CSS team moved onsite, the community room and commercial kitchens were built, and now, finally, we are now looking forward to having families begin to occupy the residential units, including ten families from Chrysalis House and Cornerstone Family Shelter. Thank you to everyone who has been a part of this journey.

A Partnership with Metro

Last year, Community Support Services developed a new partnership with Metro to host a "Feed the Joy" program. As a community grocer, Metro recognizes the vital role food plays in fostering connection, and as an organization, WOCRC works tirelessly to address social isolation and food insecurity.

With these shared objectives, this free cooking program brought together seniors and members of the community to share holiday recipes, stories and traditions. The intergenerational event garnered media coverage with CTV. It was a huge success and received rave reviews from all who participated.

Happiness Habits

On Saturday, February 17th, WOCRC teammates Tamara and Colleen spearheaded a community-based Happiness Habits event. Happiness Habits, centered around the seven pillars of happiness, brings together community members for a series of uplifting activities.

The event, hosted at Christ Church Bells Corners adjacent to Hollyer House, was a resounding success. Volunteers from our community joined forces to prepare and serve a free meal, extending warm hospitality to all who wished to partake. Under Tamara's guidance, our dedicated volunteers prepared food onsite, serving nearly 40 individuals including the volunteers themselves, members of the community, and 12 Meals on Wheels clients. Meals were also provided to Chrysalis House and neighbours accessing the Parkdale Food Cupboard.



Each year, WOCRC accepts nominations for the Eva James Award, an award established to recognize a volunteer who best personifies the commitment exemplified by Eva James. Eva was a dedicated community volunteer who passed away suddenly in 1995. She enthusiastically volunteered in our community for over 15 years and was one of the key people who helped to create the Western Ottawa Community Resource Centre.

Mary Shoup

Mary has volunteered with the West Carleton Diners Club since 1999. She has now been volunteering with this program for an astounding 25 years! Mary has been a strong and very steady support to the West Carleton Diners Club. In her role, Mary deals directly with clients, staff and other volunteers. She provides outstanding service to clients who attend this program. Mary knows all of the clients by name and is very conscientious in all of her interactions. She takes time to ask how everyone is doing and shows the clients she cares about them.

Mary also loves to laugh and often brings in great jokes to share with the group. Everyone will find a friend in Mary as she is kind and helpful and loved by everyone!

Mary is always going the extra mile in her volunteer role.



Pictured from left to right: West Carleton Community Support Services Coordinator **Heidi Wieler**, Eva James Award Winner **Mary Shoup**, and Executive Director of the Western Ottawa Community Resource Centre **Leigh Couture**.



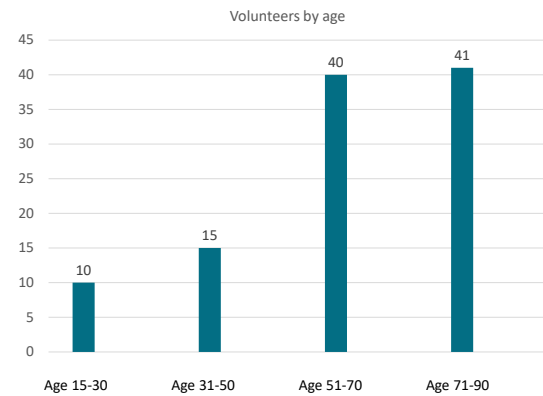
The Western Ottawa Community Resource Centre volunteers play a large role in the services we provide to our clients and community members. Our volunteers include:

- Community members that share a dedication to giving back to their community, helping where help is needed.
- Former staff members.
- Family members of those who have utilized our services in the past.
- Newcomers to the community that are looking for the Canadian Experience.

Volunteers bring a wide variety of personal skills and life experiences to our Centre, which enhances the quality of service our clients receive. Having a robust and vibrant volunteer program helps WOCRC to build capacity in our programs, which enables more people to access services. Our volunteers provide relief to family members, help clients retain their independence, enable social connection, provide friendly and timely service, and help to connect people to resources by having the knowledge of services available.

Volunteering also helps to strengthen and add vibrancy to our community by reducing social isolation, creating community and connection and through building lifelong friendships for volunteers and clients alike.

Our volunteers range from 15 to 90 years of age with a range of volunteer service from zero to over 25 years.



Our volunteers also bring many language skills to our organization, including: Dutch, Mandarin, Cantonese, Yoruba, German, Italian, Spanish, Arabic, Hindi, and Turkish.

The WOCRC volunteers participate in a variety of programs including:

- Early Child Development through our EarlyON Child and Family Centre.
- Food Insecurity by participating in our Food Distribution Program, which includes Meals ON Wheels, Grocery Delivery, and frozen meal delivery.
- Transportation programs. Social support networks - participating in our Community Support programs, virtual programs, Diners Clubs, and Telephone Assurance.
- Board of Directors.
- Adult Day Program.

| # of Volunteers by Program: | |
|---------------------------------|-----------|
| Board of Directors | 13 |
| Child and Youth | 2 |
| Community Support Services | 89 |
| EarlyON Child and Family Centre | 16 |

The direct support we receive from our volunteers helps us with our goal to fulfill our vision of a healthy, inclusive, vibrant, and resilient community.



A few of our volunteer drivers helping out with food delivery in our community kitchen at **Hollyer House**



Capacity Development has a suburban/urban/rural focus, serving all ages from newborns to older adults incorporating Social Determinants of Health, Equity, and Inclusion.

Our work consists of identifying community issues and working with partners and community members to develop strategies to address these issues by deepening networks, strengthening trust, and fostering higher levels of community engagement, which helps to improve community health, wellness, and connectedness.

Some of the highlights of the work include:

Several Community Conversations were hosted with community partners/residents in both Kanata and West Carleton with over 60 participants as well as stakeholder and resident interviews and meetings. Many themes and needs were identified, including mental health and the importance of outreach in rural communities, communication, and collaboration, and strengthening referral pathways. We have completed an inventory of events, programs, and services for West Carleton to support this. The Capacity Developers also participated in the Constance Bay Fall Festival with over 50 attendees.

The Capacity Developers hosted a Kanata Community Forum with over 30 community partners and residents involved. Key priorities included mental health under 25, mental health over 25, housing affordability, education gaps, and rising rates of poverty/food insecurity. A steering committee has been created with key stakeholders to develop an information/resource hub, and implement community plans to address each priority area identified. A Housing Forum was also hosted to address the issue of affordable housing.



Ten monthly Richmond Community Table meetings were led with partners, including WOCRC, Ottawa Public Library (OPL), Legal Aid, Community Employment Resource Centre (CERC), and Cityview EarlyON, City of Ottawa, Richmond Medical Clinic, Richmond Village Association (RVA), etc. Capacity Development supported an OPL Community Appreciation Event in Richmond with over 50 community members and partners. Capacity Development also successfully led the submission of the Emerging Community Need Funding proposal from City of Ottawa in partnership with the Richmond Medical Centre. Our social prescribing pilot project was launched in March 2024 in Richmond.

The Capacity Development team convened a session to build resident capacity in suicide prevention. Safe Talk trainings were conducted in partnership with Ottawa Public Health, the Constance and Buckham's Bay Community Association and the Lions hosted two successful Safe Talk events in West Carleton. We now have over 40 Suicide Alert Helpers in the community!



Kanata Community Forum



Community Support Services

There were 628 drives from West Carleton supporting 43 clients.



Community Support Services

674 Footcare appointments were completed.



Chrysalis House

54 women and 48 dependents received shelter.



Adult Day Program

There were 3,563 attendances at our Adult Day Program.



Community Development

There were 520 contacts made by our Community Development team.



Community Support Services

387 unique clients were served Meals on Wheels.



Community Support Services

26,097 meals were delivered.



EarlyON

There were 5,144 visits by children and 4,514 visits by adults.



Community Support Services

There were 4,937 one-way drives (not including rural transportation).



Counselling Services Team

There were 1,006 contacts made by our Counselling Services Team.



Gender-Based Violence Team

322 women received GBV counselling support.



Children and Youth Services

783 contacts were made by our Child and Youth team.



Seniors and Adults with a physical disability

There were 265 unique individuals served by Service Arrangement.



Funders



WOCRC receives funding from numerous sources. This funding, along with the generous contributions from donors, allows us to continue the work of serving the communities in far west Ottawa.

Municipal

City of Ottawa



Provincial

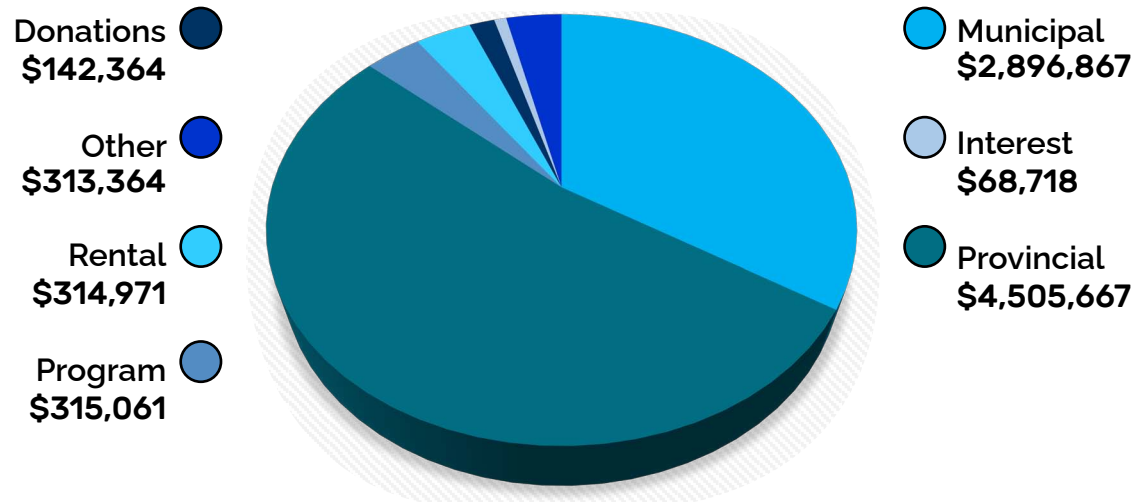
Ontario Health East

Ministry of Children, Community and Social Services

Ministry of Agriculture, Food and Rural Affairs



2023 - 2024 Funding



Total Funding: \$8,557,012

Thank you!



Supporters

Bells Corners United Church
Bethel St. Andrews United Church
Campbell Chiropractic Health Centre
Glen Cairn Public School
Huntley Centennial Public School
Hydro Ottawa
Royal Canadian Legion Branch #638
St. Michael Catholic School

Sponsors

Big Rig Brewery
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Desjardins Capital Markets
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IODE Walter Baker Chapter
Kanata Community Christian Reformed Church
Knights of Columbus Council
Metro Ontario Inc.
Rotary Club of Ottawa-Stittsville
Tim Hortons
Walter and Friedl Stenger Foundation

Patrons

ORR Motors
Shoppers Foundation for Women's Health

Benefactors

Royal Lepage Shelter Foundation
The SJ Foundation



"This is a great service offered to women in the community and I'm grateful that I found it and went through the program."

A Gender-Based Violence (GBV) client

"The service by all the staff including front desk greeters, walk-in counsellor, ongoing counsellor, and support group counsellors was all very respectful, friendly, compassionate, knowledgeable, and helpful. I always felt cared for and important. I appreciated their support immensely."

A Counselling Services Team (CST) client

"I take my son to drop-in program and he really enjoys it! The place is amazing: big, a lot of toys and games and very organized."

An EarlyON client

"I am new to Ontario, and WOCRC was one of the first places I called. The staff there are PHENOMENAL. Marie, who helps me with transportation is just a gem, as are Lynn and Nurse Jamie. I am so grateful for all the help they have given me. I'm very, very, very impressed with all of them! It a wonderful Resource Centre for those that are new to Ontario, and even those that are not! It's just great!"

A Community Support Services (CSS) client