

- T Alternate service delivery model, for City of Ottawa People Services
- T Leveraging resources for the community
- T Responding to local needs
- T Well-established and cost-effective

The City of Ottawa's new Human Services Plan has, as its main goal, the creation of strong, healthy, diverse, prosperous communities across this City. Investing in Community Health and Resource Centres (CH&RCs), with their record of stability, success and their deep roots in local communities, helps the City in the realization of this goal.

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### **Background:**

Fourteen CH&RCs serve neighbourhoods ranging from the inner city, through the suburbs, to the rural areas of the City of Ottawa. These Centres are run by Boards elected from the communities they serve. All of these Centres provide "one-stop" access to a variety of social services and community development programs; six are also community health centres offering primary health care, health promotion, nutrition and other programs.

The CH&RCs each receive funding from the City to provide equitable access to the following core services:

- Coordination and direction of Centre staff, Board and volunteers;
- Community development towards identification of community need and participation in related activities;
- Centre administration;
- Accessible and effective reception; and,
- Crisis intervention with clients.

The Coalition of Community Health and Resource Centres represents these 14 centres. The Coalition recognizes the importance of responding to the diversity of needs within local communities and pays particular attention to those members of the community who are most vulnerable and at risk. The Coalition acts as a catalyst to contribute to healthy communities within Ottawa by:

- Developing the capacity of communities to address local issues;
- Advocating and facilitating social action;
- Planning, designing, coordinating and providing specific health and social services; and
- To the Francophone, Anglophone and other cultural communities.

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## **CH&RCs leverage resources for the community:**

CH&RCs are well-established, with the oldest having been established about 30 years ago. They have proven themselves to be an effective way to leverage resources at the local, provincial and federal levels.

The City contributes an average of \$371,000 per year to each Centre (ranging from a low of \$47,000 to a high of over \$500,000). Based on this investment, each Centre provides the following returns:

- Access to the following core services for people living in the neighbourhood: crisis intervention, community development and administration;
- An average of 140 volunteers, providing an average of over 9,200 hours of time per Centre every year;
- An average of 69 partnerships with other groups and organizations, to provide services to the people they serve;
- An average of \$39,000/year in fundraising;
- An average of \$374,000 per year in small grants (under \$50,000) from a variety of funders (business, government, foundations);
- Hundreds of thousands of dollars committed to provide services mandated by the Province e.g., Early Years programs, community support services (for seniors and people with disabilities and chronic disease), diabetes education, children's mental health services, First Words, and
- Thousands of dollars from the federal government to provide services, e.g., employment services, youth crime prevention programs, Canadian prenatal nutrition programs, programs to prevent violence against women, immigrant integration, and prevention of elder abuse.

## **CH&RCs respond to local needs:**

The CH&RCs provide direct service to well over 100,000 people every year from the 14 Centres and many satellite locations in social housing, apartment buildings and neighbourhoods. The clientele is varied and includes all income and social groups in the City. The Centres are particularly effective in serving groups that often face barriers in accessing services, such as seniors, young families, youths, new Canadians, homeless men, women and families, isolated members of the GLBT (gay, bisexual, lesbian and transgendered) community, and people living on low incomes.

## **CH&RCs help the City achieve its Human Services Goals:**

- **Diversity and Inclusion:** CH&RCs know their communities. They are effective at developing the strategies and partnerships required to deliver services to, and to involve, members of the communities they serve. Some examples include:
  - **Support to the City's Advisory Committee on Poverty:** community developers facilitate local groups that provide broad input to the Advisory Committee;
  - **GLBT community:** outreach and building the capacity of agencies to work with the GLBT community; and
  - **New Canadians:** outreach to newcomers to assist them in integrating with services (e.g. LAZO, a health promotion program directed to Latin American women; programs serving our Somali community, e.g. health care, children's programs and parenting groups.

■ **Access to the basics:** CH&RCs have played a lead role in developing the following city-wide initiatives to decrease poverty and increase self-sufficiency. For example:

- **Good Food Box:** a bulk food-buying arrangement that enables anyone to buy fresh fruit and vegetables year-round at low prices;
- **Community Gardens:** a program to enable people to grow their own produce on community-organized plots;
- **Collective Kitchens:** a program that brings people together to buy and prepare food, saving money and decrease isolation; and
- **Housing:** providing assistance with securing permanent housing; interventions to prevent evictions through housing support programs; providing supports to new Canadians who are homeless (children's programs, ESL (English as a second language), health services, parenting support, crisis intervention).

■ **Safe and Healthy Communities:** CH&RCs are focal points for their neighbourhoods. They provide a place for community groups and organizations to meet and help communities come together to address common issues. For example:

- **Safety:** centres have worked with community groups and the police to undertake community safety audits; programs designed in low-income communities to assist in creating 'safe communities' for the residents, prevention programs in partnership with schools;
- **Recreation:** CH&RCs work with the City and other partners such as the YMCA-YWCA to enhance access to recreation programs for low income and new Canadians;
- **Youth:** programs to support youth in many different languages, opportunities to develop leadership skills, recreation, homework assistance, job search skills; and
- **Seniors:** initiatives to prevent falls and promote winter sidewalk safety.

■ **Focus on prevention:** Prevention of health and social problems is at the core of the mandate of the CH&RCs. For example:

- **Health Promotion (offered by six Community Health Centres):** CHCs offer a variety of programs including primary health care, immunization, well-baby clinics, nutrition counselling, smoking cessation, education on how to manage conditions such as arthritis and diabetes, as well as needle exchange and anonymous HIV testing;
- **Crisis Intervention:** all centres offer this service, which also provides important support for the City's Home Management Program;
- **Early Years:** CH&RCs are heavily involved in the Early Years program to provide support to young children and their families, either coordinating these programs, or being involved as partners;
- **Seniors:** CH&RCs offer a variety of initiatives, such as walking and exercise programs, to help seniors to continue to manage in their own homes for as long as possible.

■ **A working city:** CH&RCs have developed a wide variety of initiatives to assist people in finding—and keeping—jobs. They have been particularly effective in developing programs for people facing significant barriers to employment. For example:

- **Employment Centres:** three full-service centres provide a wide range of programs on issues ranging from employment preparation to job-finding;
- **Employment initiatives:** CH&RCs have developed employment initiatives designed to address the needs of specific groups, including street-involved youth, new Canadians and others; and
- **Millennium Learning Centres:** CH&RCs provide internet access to thousands of people every year through the MLC initiative—an important tool to facilitate job searches.

### **CH&RCs provide a base to build on:**

CH&RCs are already an established, credible presence in many neighbourhoods. In addition to their core services, they provide a stable base from which to offer a wide variety of other City programs, such as the Homemaking program, in addition to specialized provincial programs such as the First Words speech and language development program, the Addictions and Problem Gambling Service of Ottawa, and the Early Years program.

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DE RESSOURCES ET DE SANTÉ  
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COALITION OF  
COMMUNITY HEALTH AND  
RESOURCE CENTRES OF OTTAWA

[www.coalitionottawa.ca](http://www.coalitionottawa.ca)



**Carlington Community & Health Services**  
900 Merivale Road  
Ottawa, Ontario K1Z 5Z8



**Overbrook-Forbes Community Resource Centre**  
225 Donald Street, Unit 120  
Ottawa, ON K1K 1N1



**Centretown Community Health Centre**  
420 Cooper St.  
Ottawa, Ontario K2P 2N6



**Pinecrest-Queensway Health & Community Services**  
1365 Richmond Road, 2nd Floor  
Ottawa, Ontario K2B 6R7



**Cumberland Community Resource Centre**  
210 Centrum Blvd., Suite 211  
Ottawa (Orléans) Ontario K1E 3V7



**Sandy Hill Community Health Centre**  
221 Nelson St.  
Ottawa, Ontario K1N 1C7



**Gloucester Centre for Community Resources**  
2339 Ogilvie Road, 2nd Floor  
Ottawa (Gloucester) Ontario K1J 8M6



**Somerset West Community Health Centre**  
55 Eccles Street  
Ottawa, Ontario K1R 6S3



**Hunt Club-Riverside Community Services Centre**  
3310 McCarthy Road  
Ottawa, Ontario K1V 9S1



**South East Ottawa Centre for a Healthy Community**  
1355 Bank Street, Suite 600  
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**Lowertown Community Resource Centre**  
40 Cobourg St.  
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**Vanier Community Services Centre**  
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Ottawa (Vanier) Ontario K1L 1A2



**Nepean Community Resource Centre**  
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**Western Ottawa Community Resource Centre**  
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