



Melissa Minutes

By **Melissa McCallum**
GHHN Director

As we come into the New Year, I reflect on all that has been done over 2022 and all of the pressures and stressors that remain. It has already been such a difficult and challenging Fall season, and we all know Winter is coming (which we know is not a relaxing time in health care to begin with!). I know messages of taking time off for the holidays is just not possible for many of you and work continues 24/7. I hope you find moments of down time to enjoy the joys of the festive season in any way that you can. As 2022 closes, I am again so grateful to work amongst the GHHN community and we are excited to take on 2023 with all of our partners. See you in the new year!

IN THIS ISSUE

Introducing New
Webpages

Digital Health Update

Women's Health
Drop-In Days

GHHN LTC Advisory
Update

Haldimand Paramedic
Dog Training



GHHN Blogs

Visit our [Blog](#) page and check out our recent releases! If you would like to be a contributor please email us at info@ghhn.ca to learn how.



Engage GHHN

EngageGHHN: Sign up today for our online engagement platform at EngageGHHN.ca

Introducing our NEW Webpages, Patient Booking and Find Services!

Launched December 1, 2022

As part of the Greater Hamilton Health Network's strategic plan, we are working to better connect our local populations to care by providing them with a single "Digital Front Door" to health care services.

To support better access to care, the GHHN and our partners have taken steps to expand access to digital and virtual care options through two new GHHN webpages. With Patient Booking patients can now access online appointment booking with their primary care physician, and with Find Services, people can search and find local and provincial services that are available; including 24/7 navigation services, Mental Health Services, Home and Community Care and more.

For Patient Booking, it is important to note that primary care physicians will continue to launch their online appointment booking tools in 2023, making the service available to their patients. Visit the Patient Booking webpage [here](#).



If you do not see your providers name currently listed on the GHHN website please know that as physicians launch their new online bookings sites they will be added to our webpage. This tool will also serve as a resource to family members, carepartners, and staff who support patients in booking their medical appointments.

Find Services offers patients, families and carepartners a quick and easy way to navigate and search local and provincial services. For example, Ontario 211, offers phone, text, chat and web options to search services across the province by topic, location or key words. Visit the Find Services webpage [here](#).

We want to help make finding the right service, at the right time, in the right place easier and more accessible. This is part of larger plan that also takes into consideration digital inequities and the need for other methods of service navigation.



Building community health together



Women's Health Drop-In Days

Megan Lynch

The Greater Hamilton Health Network in partnership with local health and social service agencies, have offered five Women's Health Days since August 2021 with over 300 women, trans, and gender diverse individuals experiencing homelessness in Hamilton.

There is a strong need for accessible health services for this population. There is a heightened prevalence of chronic conditions and mental health issues among this population, who often need frequent access to high quality, safe, and tailored healthcare services. In July of this year, Research Shop, in close collaboration with GHHN, conducted process and outcome evaluations of the Women's Health Day's fourth event. The event, similar to the past three, convened numerous health and social service agencies over two afternoons in a location familiar to these individuals. The process evaluation aimed to understand service use and satisfaction with the event. The outcome evaluation aimed to understand if the event enhanced participants' access to health care services and whether the services offered at the event met their health care needs.



Overall, the process and outcome evaluation demonstrated that event successfully engaged homeless women in Hamilton with a range of health and social services that were accessible, necessary, and satisfactory. This research also revealed opportunities for improving how health and social services could be provided to homeless women in Hamilton. The full report can be found [here](#).

The GHHN and partners look forward to implementing these recommendations at our sixth Women's Health Days in January 2023. For information, to volunteer or to donate contact Megan Lynch.

The McMaster Research Shop works with public, non-profit, and community organizations in Hamilton to provide plain-language answers to research questions. If your organization has questions or ideas that could benefit from research, get in touch. Please visit our [website](#) for more information or send us an [email](#).

Interested in learning more about the GHHN's Women's Health Days? Check it out on CHCH News [here](#)!





A Special Thank You to our Patient Advisors

Sarah Precious



As I take a moment to reflect on 2022, I want to give thanks. The GHHN Patient Family CarePartner Leadership Network is comprised of sixteen incredible individuals who are working with the GHHN to shape and transform healthcare. It has been a year since this newly formed group came together (some being with us much longer) to lead our patient engagement work, giving of their time, experience and expertise.

I would like to acknowledge that when you prioritize patient experience, you invite both lived and living experience, knowing that ongoing experience as a patient, as a family member, and as a carepartner continues and with that the highs and lows of life. Thank you for inviting us into your lives, for sharing those highs and lows with us, and for the learnings you offer to help shape healthcare.

I could not be more grateful for this group. For their kindness, dedication and the ideas and care they put into representing the ever-changing needs of our communities.

Together you have accomplished so much, from a comprehensive Engagement Strategy, to a pilot project to mobilize a standardized Patient Family CarePartner Declaration of Values, to having your work presented on an international stage in Denmark. Developing an Engagement 101 training, supporting the development of an Engagement Micro-credential at McMaster, to the countless presentations and many hours you have worked to support multiple GHHN secretariats and working groups.

Anna, myself and the GHHN Team thank you for all you do, and for being you. 2023 here we come!





GHHN Long Term Care Advisory

LEAP LTC was offered November 21-22 through the Division of Palliative Care, McMaster University and the Greater Hamilton Health Network LTC Advisory. These two days were taught by Dr. Sammy Winemaker, palliative care physician and Melissa Chadwick, Palliative Care Consultant, HCCSS. 18 physicians, nurse practitioners, RNs, and RPNs from some of the GHHN 36 LTCs homes, learned palliative care approaches for residents in their LTCs. LEAP (Learning Essential Approaches to Palliative and End of Life Care) is a nationally accredited program through Pallium Canada.

This course will be offered again on a Friday and Saturday in mid-January or early February. Registration information will be shared when confirmed. LTC LEAP offers 26.5 Certified Group Learning Credits under the Manipro+ system.



Digital Health Update

Ceara Holditch

Saegis Shield Cybersecurity Program:

Along with other OHTs in the West Region, the Greater Hamilton Health Network was offered a limited number of Saegis Shield product licenses at no-charge for FY22-23. This virtual cybersecurity training opportunity was directed to primary care providers, community specialists, and their office staff and coordinated through the eHealth Centre for Excellence. As of October 27, 365 licenses are in use and 92% have completed the training. The GHHN is in the top percentage of OHTs for our high completion rate!

Program Overview:

This cybersecurity program provides offices with virtual training on safe cybersecurity habits, password security, clinical cyber hygiene, and phishing awareness.

Program Features:

- Cyber-risk assessment survey
- Computer-based micro training modules
- Personalized dashboard with staff and clinic scores, exposure report and news feed
- Phishing challenges
- Privacy Officer Fundamental Training (this training module will be available for any user/staff that notes that they are a "Privacy Officer/Specialists" when signing up)
- Access to webinars and podcasts by privacy and security industry experts
- Resource Library that includes resource materials such as red flags checklists, templates, best practices, tips, and tricks for implementing cybersafe and privacy best practices.

Accreditation:

Saegis Shield is accredited with the CFPC for 7.5 Mainpro+ credits and with the RCPSC for 7.5 Section 3 credits.

Several license keys remain available. If interested in participating in this training opportunity, please contact [Ceara Holditch](#) by end of day December 16, 2022, with the name and email address of those that you would like registered.



ConnectMyHealth

Coming Soon

ConnectMyHealth is a digital health tool that provides you with an online, single access channel to view your health records from many healthcare facilities in Ontario. If you would like to learn more about the portal and register for an account, visit [ConnectMyHealth](#).



The Haldimand Community Paramedic Wellness Dogs

The Haldimand Community Paramedic Wellness Dogs support the health and wellbeing of clients, staff and the Haldimand community through the benefits of the human-animal bond, alongside medical care and advocacy. The K9 units provide Client Home Visits, Staff Support, Community Outreach, and Crisis Call-Out Support with the Police and Victim Services.

The Community Paramedic Wellness Dogs are trained, tested and certified to the highest standards to ensure that they are safe and suitable for the work they do. Animal Therapy has been scientifically proven to have both mental and physical benefits for all parties participating.

The Haldimand County Paramedic Service is the first in North America to fully integrate certified K9 Units into their Community Paramedic Programs to support their clients staff and community. The program is funded through Ontario Health and the Ministry of Health and Long-Term Care, with the service dogs generously donated by community partners. The County will be continuing to develop and maintain new and current partnerships to train and secure future dogs for the program. Read more about the program [here](#).





Tia Gayowsky

Project Coordinator, Green Initiative

Healthcare is one of the frontlines in climate change. It is a stage upon which we see climate change impacting human health and a major industry impacted by climate change (think interruption of supply chains or the inability to provide care due to natural disaster). Furthermore, healthcare activity produces waste and pollutants which contribute to climate change; in Canada, it contributes more greenhouse gas emissions than the national aviation industry. In the face of all this, the obligation healthcare workers can feel to improve planetary health is immense... and potentially crushing. To avoid being overwhelmed, I have started to learn the importance of a directed scope in climate action.

I work as the project manager of the Hamilton Family Health Team's Green Initiative, which generates evidence-based educational and clinical tools for healthcare providers to decrease the environmental footprint of clinics and ill-health (through health promotion). In this project, we have often discussed what more we could be doing; educating about fossil fuel divestment, advocating for land conservation, or helping to improve research around calculating clinic's carbon footprints, to name a few. Though these aims are both valid and beneficial, we help establish direction in our work by asking if new initiatives are serving our mission statement. By staying true to our goal of helping primary care providers deliver care that benefits patient and planetary health, we have been able to make greater change in that direction, are more able to track our impact, and are more motivated to continue the work that could have otherwise flattened us. This has changed the way I think about environmental action in my personal life, too.

GHHN Environmental Sustainability Corner



*A space to learn,
share and work
towards greener
healthcare.*

I reflect on my own greatest impacts, and work to reduce these while influencing my social circle to do the same. Action should be celebrated, and it is incredibly heartening what people can do when they are both motivated and directed in their efforts, environmental and otherwise.

No matter where you start your environmental journey, or on which fronts you decide to act, know that you can't do everything, but you can do something. If that front is primary care, we would love to hear from you at green.team@hamiltonfht.ca. For more information, read our [green initiative!](#)



Safe Supply and Harm Reduction Working Group Launch

Marijke Jurriaans

To quickly recap, earlier this year, the Mental Health and Addictions (MHA) Secretariat ranked priority areas to focus on for 2022-2023 as follows:

1. Access to care for those with an opiate addiction
2. Housing needs/models for those with mental health and addictions
3. Access to community care for mood and anxiety disorders
4. Access to care for those with alcohol use disorder
5. Access to care for those with a serious mental illness, including schizophrenia

To address the top area of focus, the MHA Secretariat established the GHHN Safe Supply and Harm Reduction (SSHR) Working Group, chaired by Dr. Robin Lennox (Co-Head of Service, Inpatient Addiction Medicine) and Marcie McIlveen (HAMSMaRT). A small advisory group met in July 2022 to identify the SSHR Working Group's purpose and priorities:

1. Mapping existing harm reduction services, including identifying services focused on priority populations
2. Using infrastructure to increase access to harm reduction approaches and safer supply, with suggestion to enhance capacity in primary care
3. Provide an implementation-focused series for harm reduction practices in high-risk settings (shelters and supportive housing and hospitals)

In November 2022, the SSHR Working Group met for the first time and is happy to report that action plans are being developed to tackle the above priorities. Additionally, as drug overdose is the leading cause of death among the Hamilton homeless population, the SSHR Working Group is going to be dedicating the next phase of their work to harm reduction in shelters.

If you are interested in joining this work or want to learn more, please email Marijke.Jurriaans@GHHN.ca.

FROM THE CANADIAN ASSOCIATION OF PEOPLE WHO USE DRUGS:

WHAT IS HARM REDUCTION?

Harm reduction is a set of practical strategies and ideas aimed at reducing negative consequences associated with drug use. Harm Reduction is also a movement for social justice built on a belief in, and respect for, the rights of people who use drugs.

WHAT IS SAFER SUPPLY?

Safer supply refers to a legal and regulated supply of drugs with mind/body altering properties that traditionally have been accessible only through the illicit drug market.



Haldimand Corner

Barbara Klassen

The GHHN Haldimand Stakeholder Council continues to do foundational work to expand participation at the Council table. We welcome Sue Wilkins and Anita Gombos Hill as patient advisors to our Council. Sue and Anita will assist in providing a patient perspective to our discussions and decision making. Over the past month, we have sent out invitations to key stakeholders within Haldimand inviting them to join us at the GHHN Haldimand Stakeholder Council. As we continue to work towards developing a comprehensive and responsive system of care for the people of Haldimand, organizations that deliver services in our community are encouraged to provide Haldimand represented across all aspects of the GHHN planning tables.

At this time, a number of core issues continue to occupy providers and organizations in the county. Most importantly is the issue of physician, staff and volunteer recruitment and retention continuing to be an area of major concern in Haldimand County and beyond. We are actively working on strategies to address shortages in the community.

Finally, I would like to take this opportunity to wish everyone a happy and safe holiday season. I hope that you stay well and are able to find time to decompress from a challenging healthcare environment with family and friends.

Stay Connected!



[greaterhamiltonhealthnetwork.ca](https://www.greaterhamiltonhealthnetwork.ca)



info@ghhn.ca



[@greaterhamiltonhealthnetwork](https://www.instagram.com/greaterhamiltonhealthnetwork)



[@greaterhamiltonhealthnetwork](https://www.facebook.com/greaterhamiltonhealthnetwork)



[@GHHN_TheNetwork](https://twitter.com/GHHN_TheNetwork)



<https://www.linkedin.com/company/greater-hamilton-healthnetwork>