



Welcoming Kathy Peters

Our new GHHN Executive Director

The Greater Hamilton Health Network (GHHN) is pleased to announce that Kathy Peters has been appointed Executive Director, effective January 5, 2026. With more than 25 years of leadership experience in Ontario's health system, Kathy most recently served as Executive Director of the Burlington Ontario Health Team (BOHT). In that role, she led integrated-care planning, equity-driven co-design with patients, families and communities, and multi-sector partnership development. The BOHT was selected by the Ministry of Health as one of 12 Ontario Health Teams to move forward for accelerated designation.

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Our next Partnership meeting will take place Tuesday January 27th 2026 via Teams.



GHHN Blog

Check our newest Blog from GHHN Manager, Integrated Health Pathways and System Navigation, Heather Shaw, [here](#).



Welcoming Kathy Peters Continued

Kathy also led the Community Wellness Hub, a cross-ministerial model that brings together affordable housing, health and social services to improve access and outcomes. To learn more about Kathy please see our [press release](#).

We would like to extend a warm GHHN welcome to Kathy and look forward to continuing to Build Community Health Together across Hamilton, Haldimand, and Niagara Northwest.

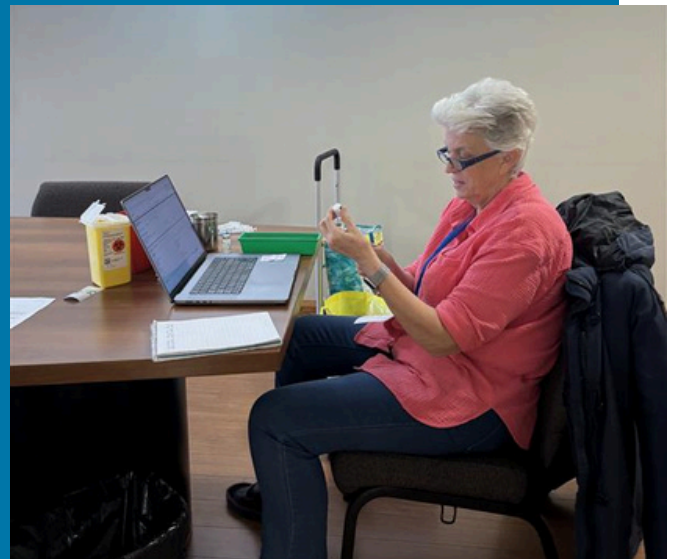
Record Breaking GHHN 16th Women's Health Days November 2025

In November, the GHHN hosted the 16th GHHN Women's Health Day at Good Shepherd Square. We saw a record number of participants, reaching a total 154 over the two day event. Individuals received 27 touch points with primary care physicians and midwives, over 10 PAPs, 9 mammograms, 35 vaccines, 90 naloxone kits and training, more than 60 testing and screenings, and countless mental health and addictions, wellness, housing, and other supports. Also distributed were 59 coats, 145 gift cards, and all participants were offer clothing and hygiene products, food, a warm place, and a friendly face.

A special thank you to Good Shepherd and their staff for hosting these days over the years.

Our next Women's Health Day will be offered in February with a date and location to be confirmed.

For more information, megan.lynch@ghhn.ca



International Social Prescribing Day

Canadian Red Cross

SAVE THE DATE: Social Prescribing Community Fair
Thursday, March 26, 2026

On International Social Prescribing Day, join the Hamilton community for their 2nd Annual Social Prescribing Community Fair. The community fair will:

- Showcase social prescribing initiatives in Hamilton
- Highlight members of the Social Prescribing Service Community Coordination Collective
- Celebrate recipients of Financially Assisted Social Prescribing, an initiative led by the Canadian Red Cross

Click here to register or save the date:
[International Social Prescribing Day – Fill out form](#)

For more information contact:
Leah.Fuller@redcross.ca



Ontario Opens New West Lincoln Memorial Hospital

The Ontario government is celebrating the grand opening of the new West Lincoln Memorial Hospital in Grimsby, which delivers on a key government promise to connect more people in West Niagara to more convenient, high-quality hospital care, closer to home. This project is one more way the government is delivering on its plan to protect the provincial health-care system by investing nearly \$60 billion in more than 50 major hospital projects across the province over the next 10 years. The government announced its support for the new hospital in November 2018, with shovels in the ground in May 2022.

Supported by a provincial investment of nearly \$250 million, Hamilton Health Sciences' new West Lincoln Memorial Hospital is nearly 80 per cent larger than the facility it is replacing and is the first new hospital in Ontario to include all single-patient rooms.

View the full announcement [here](#).





HealthPathways Reminder

The GHHN is excited to offer HealthPathways, a free, clinician-designed tool that provides locally relevant, evidence-based guidance for healthcare providers. The pathways are designed primarily for general practice teams, but are also available to specialists, allied health professionals, and other health professionals in your region.

Learn more and register [here](#).

Welcome to the GHHN Team Digital Health Project Management

The GHHN is pleased to welcome Robert Steele as our new Digital Health Project Manager.

Robert Steele is a Senior Project Manager within Digital Solutions at St. Joseph's Healthcare Hamilton (SJHH). During his 8 years of experience in healthcare project management, Robert has led a number of transformational change initiatives, and has considerable experience in the design and implementation of digital health solutions. This includes the Ontario-wide AMPLIFI Project, SJHH's HIMSS EMRAM Stage 7 Accreditation, and numerous other hospital-wide implementations including EpicCare Ambulatory, Haiku & Canto, secure messaging, and patient entertainment devices. Robert holds an Honours BSc in Life Sciences and a Masters of Engineering Design from McMaster University, and has additional certifications including Prosci Change Practitioner, Certified ScrumMaster, and Leader of Digital Transformation in Healthcare.



Ethics Corner

Sun Drews

Ethics Fellow, Hamilton Health Sciences

What is Decision-Making Capacity?

Consider this scenario:

Ray, a 58-year-old accountant with poorly controlled diabetes, is advised by his family doctor to start insulin treatment. Ray refuses, saying they “don’t want needles” and will “manage with diet”. However, given the severity of Ray’s condition, diet alone is no longer a safe or effective option for controlling their blood sugar. The care team now faces an important question: Does Ray have the capacity to refuse this recommended treatment?

This is a familiar situation in community healthcare. In Ontario, the Health Care Consent Act (HCCA) provides clear guidance on decision-making capacity. Here’s what it says:

- Capacity means the ability to understand relevant information and appreciate the reasonably foreseeable consequences of a decision.
- A person must be capable with respect to decisions about specific treatment, admission to a care facility, or a personal assistance service.
- Presumption of capacity: Every person is presumed capable unless proven otherwise.
- Context matters: Capacity is specific to the decision, time, and situation.
- No minimum age: In Ontario, there is no age threshold for capacity.

In Ray’s case, the team must determine whether Ray understands what insulin therapy involves and appreciates the risk of refusing the treatment. If Ray demonstrates both, they are capable – even if the choice seems unwise.



Tips for Healthcare Providers:

- Support informed consent: Ensure clients have the information they need to make informed choices.
- Respect autonomy: Uphold each person’s right to make decisions aligned with their values and beliefs.
- Engage SDMs appropriately: Substitute Decision-Makers (SDMs) are only involved when a person is found incapable of making a specific care decision.
- Foster trust and communication. Approach capacity discussions with openness and empathy.
- Consult resources. Seek guidance internally from leadership or legal counsel. For general ethics information and education – reach out to the Office of Ethics. You may also contact the Consent and Capacity Board for external assistance.

Decision-making capacity is about understanding and appreciating – not agreeing with the care team. By ensuring informed consent and respecting autonomy we help clients make choices that reflect their values while ensuring that ethical and legal standards are met.

Next in Ethics Corner: How do we assess capacity?

Questions about Capacity and Informed Consent? Email officeofethics@hhsc.ca



Haldimand Corner

Barbara Klassen, Co-Chair

The Haldimand Health Council welcomes Pamela Maddalena as the new co-chair! Pam brings enthusiasm and a wealth of experience to the co-chair role. As Director Community Services at Thrive Group, she offers a good perspective of broader regional work that is taking place and how this may inform the work that Haldimand actions. Pam is one of the founding members of the original Haldimand Health (in-development OHT) and has been involved in development of the GHHN Haldimand Health Council that it is today.

HQO Quality Standards Educational Sessions

Ryan Janssen, GHHN Manager of Mental Health and Addictions

From September to December 2025, CMHA Hamilton, with support from the Greater Hamilton Health Network (GHHN), held six educational sessions focused on the Health Quality Ontario (HQO) Quality Standards for Anxiety Disorders and Major Depressive Disorder: focusing on 1) Assessment and Care Planning, 2) Treatment, and 3) Relapse Prevention & Ongoing Care.

- 160 unique registrants for full educational series
- 102 unique registrants for anxiety and major depressive disorder series
- 23 unique health/social services participating in full series
- 6 sessions delivered

Feedback was highly positive and centered around the practical value of the skills and tools presented. Many comments requested support around more complex topics such as trauma, personality disorder, or concurrent disorder. Some said they found the material difficult and wished for more time, while others said they found the material introductory; a testament to the variation in knowledge, skill, and care delivery that exists across the system.

Inaugural Community Collaboration Above & Beyond Certificate

The GHHN would like to recognize the Good Shepherd with the inaugural 2025 GHHN Community Collaboration Above & Beyond Certificate! We thank you for your many years of support with our Women's Health days and so much more. We look forward to Building Community Health Together.





Marijke Ljogar

Project Manager,
Environmental
Sustainability

Weathering the storm: Sustainability in Healthcare

As climate change accelerates, healthcare systems are increasingly vulnerable to extreme weather events – locally we're prone to floods, heatwaves, ice storms and more – that can disrupt care and compromise patient safety. COP30 recently shared that one in twelve hospitals is at risk of a climate-related shutdown. Here in Ontario, we've already seen how severe storms and power outages can pose major challenges for hospitals, primary care clinics, and beyond.

Earlier this year, a severe storm left over 2,000 homes and businesses in Hamilton without power, including healthcare facilities! These outages underscore why climate resilience, through backup power, energy-efficient systems, and emergency planning, is critical for maintaining continuity of care. Building climate resilience isn't just about emergency preparedness – it's about sustainability.

Energy-efficient infrastructure, renewable energy sources, and robust backup systems reduce both carbon emissions and operational risks. For example, hospitals in our area are exploring upgrades to HVAC systems and emergency power to ensure continuity of care during outages. These investments also align with Canada's commitment to achieve net-zero emissions by 2050.

GHHN Environmental Sustainability Corner



Climate resilience is not a distant goal: it's a necessity for safeguarding health in an unpredictable future. By acting now, we can ensure that our healthcare system remains strong, sustainable, and ready to serve – no matter what challenges come our way. In future Green Corners, we would love to share projects and work that partners are doing around building a resilient healthcare system!

If you would like to submit a feature, please email Marijke.Ljogar@GHHN.ca.



GHHN 2025/26 Annual Business Plan

The Greater Hamilton Health Network's 2025/26 Annual Business Plan reflects our continued commitment to strengthening primary care access, advancing integrated clinical initiatives, and building the capacity of our Ontario Health Team.

View the new plan [here](#).

Building Community Health Event Celebrating Leadership Award Winners



The GHHN held their annual Building Community Health Event on Thursday November 27th from 12:00pm – 1:30pm. We highlighted Primary Care, HealthPathways and GHHN work ahead.

We would like to celebrate our 2025 GHHN Leadership Award Winners, Kathy Allan-Fleet and Melissa McCallum, and the GHHN Patient, Family, CarePartner Leadership Award Winner, Murray Walz!

We also awarded our Inaugural 2025 GHHN Community Collaboration Above & Beyond Certificate to the Good Shepherd!

Thank you to our guest speakers for sharing their expertise, and attendees for joining us. We look forward to seeing you all next year. Wishing you all a warm holiday season!





GHHN Engagement Corner

Patient, Family, CarePartner Leadership Co - Chairs Murray Walz & Janice Duda - Kosar

Welcome to the new GHHN Engagement Corner! Engagement is an ongoing process that meaningfully engages patients, families, and care partners as active partners and decision-makers in their own care, and at the organizational and system levels.

The GHHN Patient Family CarePartner Leadership Network, meets monthly to provide updates on engagement work across all priorities and discuss new projects and ideas. Currently, we are working on completing our Engagement Evaluation, Essential Care Partner Project, creating a GHHN Engagement In – Service for secretariats, and continuing our work around the Caring for Me Handbook. We are excited to share that in 2026, we will be refreshing the GHHN’s engagement strategy and holding a GHHN Website User Experience session. We look forward to continuing to share about the exciting engagement work taking place across the GHHN!

What does Engagement mean to you?



**Janice
Duda - Kosar**

“I became a Patient and Family Advisor with the GHHN because I believe that the voices of patients, families and care providers are essential to co-designing a healthcare system that will truly meet the diverse needs of the people it serves. Engagement, for me, is more than participating. It is partnership, trust and the belief that everyone deserves a role in making decisions that affect their health and well-being.”



**Murray
Walz**

“Engagement and empathy in the care of patients will help reduce costs and free up emergency room visits. This is why I joined the engagement platform of the GHHN. We can make a difference and our stories will be the basis for improvements in the health care system. Remember, we will all be patients one day and the better the system the better our care.”



Canadian Alliance for Ending Homelessness Montreal 2025

GHHN Senior Manager, Megan Lynch, and Good Shepherd Hamilton co presented in Montreal this past November. Together they highlighted a spectrum of services from encampment to care, to housing including the GHHN Women's Health Days and Good Shepherd's Health on Wheels.

Palliative Care Portal Reminder

Palliative care is specialized medical care for people living with a serious illness. This type of care is focused on providing relief from the symptoms and stress of the illness. The goal is to improve quality of life for both the patient and the family. Palliative care is provided by a specially-trained team of doctors, nurses and other specialists who work together with a patient's other doctors to provide an extra layer of support. Palliative care is based on the needs of the patient, not on the patient's prognosis. It is appropriate at any age and at any stage in a serious illness, and it can be provided along

The Palliative Portal is an online directory that connects individuals, families, caregivers, and professionals to end-of-life care and grief resources across the Greater Hamilton area. Our goal is to make it easier to find the right support, when and where they're needed most.

Visit the Portal here: palliativeportal.ca





Thank you to our Board Members

Thank you to the GHHN Board Members for your ongoing leadership and dedication to the Greater Hamilton Health Network with special thanks and welcome to our new Board Chair, France Vaillancourt. Our Board remains committed to culturally safe care, strong governance practices, and meaningful engagement with patients, families, carepartners, and community partners.



France Vaillancourt



Omar Aboeela



Rashed Afif



Kathy Allan-Fleet



John Fleming



Anita Gombos-Hill



Genevieve Hladysz



Gloria Jordan



Barbara Klassen



Tracey MacArthur



Grace Mater



Clare Mitchell



Sharon Moore



Dr. Elizabeth Richardson



Dr. Cathy Risdon



Steve Sherrer



Medora Uppal

**Greater
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ONTARIO HEALTH TEAM



*Building community
health together.*

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