

HEALTH EQUITY PROJECT PROFILE:

North Lambton Community Health Centre



ABOUT THE CENTRE

North Lambton Community Health Centre is a non-profit, community-governed organization that provides primary health care, health promotion, and community development services to Lambton County in Southwestern Ontario. The centre's priority populations include: seniors, rural clients, Indigenous clients, people facing mental health issues, and children/youth.

ABOUT THE PROJECT

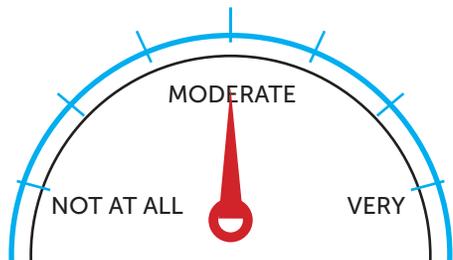
This is a profile of one of seven champion Community Health Centres of the Health Equity Project, an initiative led by Access Alliance Multicultural Health and Community Services. The project aims to build knowledge, commitment, and capacity at the champion organizational level to routinely use a health equity framework and evidence to overcome systemic inequities in healthcare access, healthcare quality, and health outcomes. This profile was built from a survey conducted at the start of the project, and presents the baseline capacity, unique needs, and opportunities around health equity work that exist with each champion.

WHERE THE CENTRE STARTED

Our Definition of Health Equity

A framework for program planning and approach with clients — recognizing that some individuals and communities need more support and a different approach than others.

Familiarity with Health Equity



Which indicators do we collect?

North Lambton collects all mandatory and required indicators, except insurance status and type of housing. Also collected are data on social isolation and sense of belonging. Missing data is highest for belonging, social isolation, and sexual orientation.

Indicators

Required Indicators (must collect):

- Sex
- Gender
- Insurance status
- Spoken language
- Preferred language

Mandatory Indicators (should collect):

- Country of origin
- Date of arrival to Canada
- Disabilities
- Education
- Household composition
- Household income
- # of persons supported by income
- Racial / ethnic group
- Sexual orientation
- Type of housing

Key Facts About North Lambton Community Health Centre



5 sites



5,500 active clients



More than 100 staff



Strengths

- Clear policies and processes already in place for data collection, handling, analysis
- Half of all staff have received training on health equity in the last three years
- The centre makes explicit reference to health equity in its vision, and its most recent strategic plan
- The centre has policies on harm reduction, anti-harassment, human rights, accommodation, and accessibility
- The centre regularly considers health equity when making decisions on programs and services, and has its eye on expanding the use of equity data to further improve the quality of and access to services, as well as evaluation processes



Challenges

- Levels of missing data are relatively high for some key indicators, and front-line challenges for collecting data are significant
- Current staff composition does not fully reflect populations being served
- No dedicated staff person in place to promote and lead the centre's health equity goals
- Client data rarely analyzed for insights into inequities between and within client groups
- No health equity policy and practice guidelines in place
- Not using Health Equity Impact Assessment (HEIA) tool for planning or evaluation



What We Want To Learn

Looking for tools and training to:

- Develop policies that routinize equity frameworks for planning and evaluation of programs and services
- Collect data in a more fulsome way and to ensure the data is of high quality, especially for sensitive indicators such as sexual orientation and income
- Better analyze equity data to be able to use evidence to improve planning and evaluation of all programs and services, and also specific health equity initiatives

Which Inequities Do We Discuss Often?

MOST OFTEN

Disability, gender, sexual orientation



LEAST OFTEN

Economic inequality, poverty



Where we're headed: Our Unique Health Equity Work

We proposed to work with a coach around .how to analyze data for strategic equity-focused planning purposes, using existing cancer screening data as stratified against client sociodemographic data, and for developing the framework for an equity charter.

WHAT'S NEXT

At the Champion level, this work contributes to building organizational level knowledge, commitment and capacity to routinely use a health equity framework and evidence geared at overcoming systemic inequities in healthcare access, healthcare quality and health outcomes.

And beyond...

Mobilizing a community of practice within the CHC sector and across sectors (e.g. settlement) to inspire shared visions and actions for advancing health equity.

To learn more about North Lambton's equity work, contact Leah Willemse, lwillemse@nlchc.com