

HEALTH EQUITY PROJECT PROFILE:

Somerset West Community Health Centre



ABOUT THE CENTRE

Somerset West Community Health Centre support people and communities to enjoy the best possible health and well-being. This is accomplished by providing primary health care and social services, and promoting access to the social conditions that influence health, such as housing, food security, employment and civic engagement. The centre aims to remove barriers to accessing services for people who are vulnerable because of their age, income, abilities, sexual orientation or gender identity, and language or culture.

ABOUT THE PROJECT

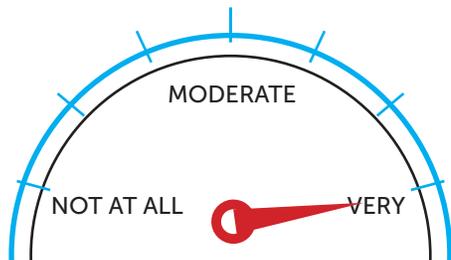
This is a profile of one of seven champion Community Health Centres of the Health Equity Project, an initiative led by Access Alliance Multicultural Health and Community Services. The project aims to build knowledge, commitment, and capacity at the champion organizational level to routinely use a health 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

Giving everyone the opportunity and resources they need to achieve their optimal health and well-being.

Familiarity with Health Equity



Which indicators do we collect?

Somerset West CHC collects all mandatory and required indicators except for disabilities, racial/ethnic groups, and type of housing. Missing data is highest for household income.

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 Somerset West Community Health Centre



5+ sites



13,916 active clients



100+ staff



Strengths

- Most staff have been trained on health equity in the past three years
- The board makes a conscious effort to use practices that intentionally reinforce equity, diversity and inclusion principles
- Health equity is explicitly referenced in the organization's vision, leading to the development of a strategic plan that addresses issues related to health equity, diversity and inclusion
- The centre has policies on human rights, anti-harassment, diversity, cultural competence, accommodation, anti-oppression and accessibility



Challenges

- There is a high percentage of missing socio-demographic data
- Challenges collecting socio-demographic data due to limited resources and clients unwilling to share personal information at group programming
- No health equity policy and practice guidelines
- Facing funding challenges at the operational level as well as stigma and discrimination at the societal level
- The centre has no dedicated staff or other positions that promote, lead or address health equity objectives



What We Want To Learn

Looking for tools and training to:

- Improve the cultural competency of board members and train all staff and board members on individual self-examination and self-determination
- 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
- Develop policies that routinize equity frameworks for planning and evaluation of programs and services
- Acquire an understanding of how a health equity framework can reduce health disparities and to know what an adequate health equity framework looks like in practice

Which Inequities Do We Discuss Often?

MOST OFTEN

Sexual orientation, poverty, economic inequalities



LEAST OFTEN

Disability, gender



Where we're headed: Our Unique Health Equity Work

We proposed to work with a coach around developing policies and procedures to routinize equity informed planning and evaluation and to test with our diabetes Foot Care program.

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 Somerset West CHC's equity work, contact Hector Addison, haddison@swchc.on.ca.