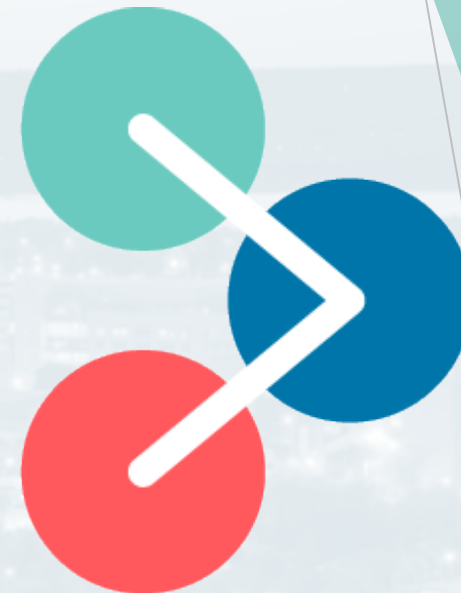


Greater Hamilton Health Network



Building Community Health Together

**Implementation of Women's Health Drop-in
Days with Local Health and Social Service
Partners for Homeless Individuals**

1

Presentation Prepared for: Canadian Alliance to End Homelessness Conference
November 4, 2022



Goal- to replicate Women's Health Drop-in Days

Objectives

- ▶ Learn about low barrier support to homeless women using a wrap around integrated care approach
- ▶ Hear lessons learned serving marginalized populations that do not use traditional access points in health and social care
- ▶ Understand the importance of peers and those with living experience in community events
- ▶ Understand the components of GHHN's Women's Health Drop-in Days

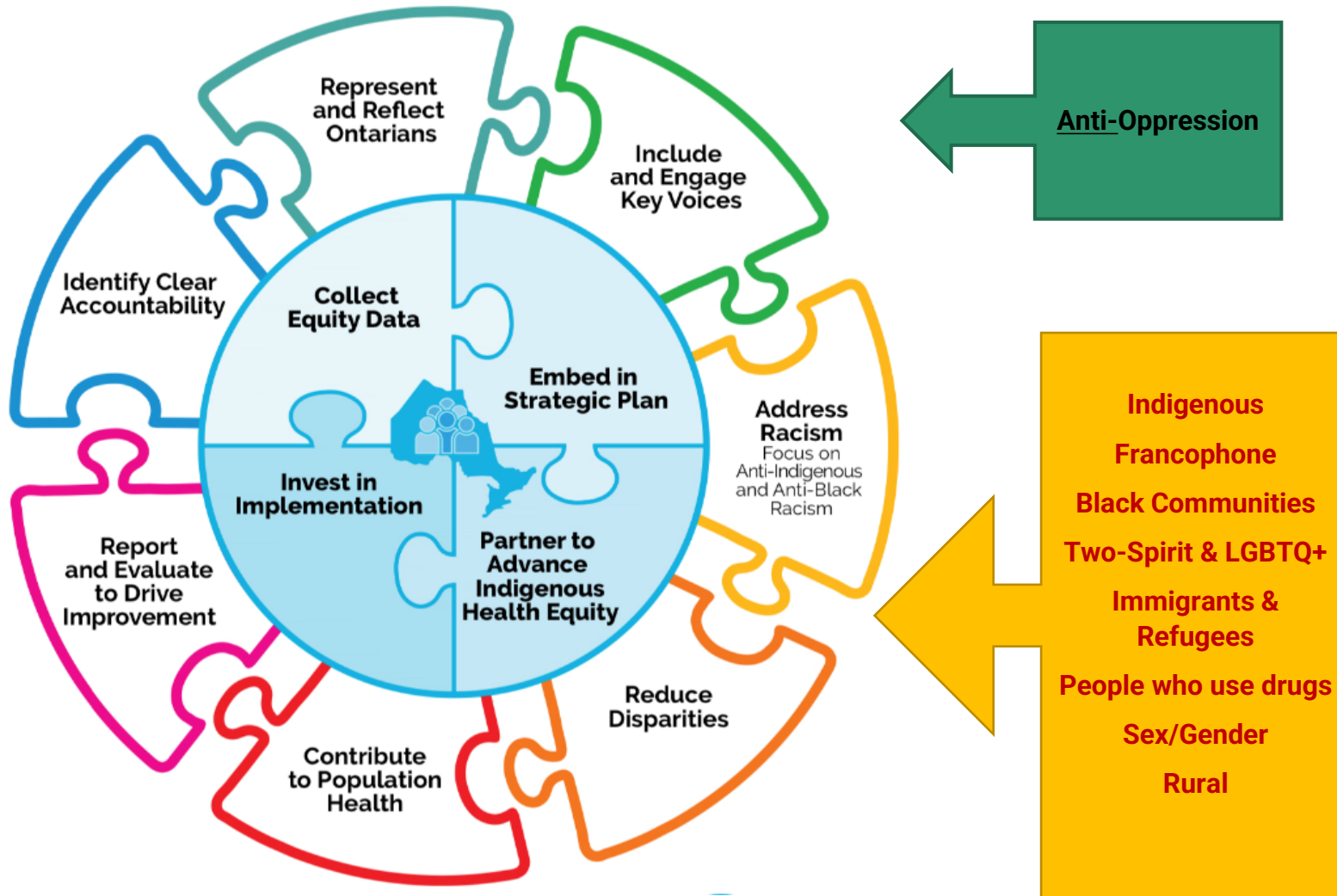
The Greater Hamilton Health Network is Proud to Serve Hamilton, Haldimand, Niagara North West and the many attributed populations and people who seek services in our areas.

Each OHT across the province is responsible for an attributed population.

Attribution is a process for determining the Ontario residents that an Ontario Health Team (OHT) will be clinically and fiscally accountable for. The attributed population for an OHT refers to the total patient population of Network or Networks that best align to the OHT.



Grounded in Equity: The GHHN Health Equity Framework



Focusing on Women's Homelessness as a Priority Population

- ▶ Homelessness is a major issue, but we cannot solve everything at once
- ▶ Homeless pregnant women and homeless older women on the rise since pandemic
- ▶ Leverage the existing women's providers including shelters, day programs, drop-ins, women's services



Women Envisioning Supportive Housing project- Hamilton, April 2021(3):

All reported two or more disabilities/chronic health conditions

40% reported six or more disability/chronic health conditions

92% reported problems with substance use/addiction

84% reported psychiatric/mental health challenges

80% self-identified substance use/addiction and psychiatric/mental health challenges

64% reported pain-related concerns

40% reported mobility issues/disabilities

60% self-reported cognitive or intellectual disabilities, learning difficulties

24% self-reported brain injury

Powerful Stories

“I do remember a few times I had to sleep in a hospital waiting room, just pretending something was wrong with me so that I could stay warm”

“I was raped so many times I take drugs to numb me, I don't want to be addicted but it's where I am at”

“Last February I overdosed and was in the hospital for a month and a half. Not purposefully, but I was just sick of everything, and I couldn't deal with moving around all the time and not having my stuff”

“ Everything I own was stolen last night”

“We need a special doctor that is like a psychiatrist or something that like helps people, because so much of homelessness is like mental health right? It all revolves around mental health, I think”

“I have never had a pap smear” (works in the sex trade industry

“I don't want to be in a shelter near men, last time I was sexually assaulted by 5 men”

“I have no idea where I am going to sleep tonight, I have been kicked out of every shelter”

“I think I might have Hepatitis, but I am scared, do I want to know??”

“I don't want the covid vaccine, it does nothing, I am homeless I don't go anywhere anyways”

“If I want to stay indoors, I need to do drugs with my boyfriend and friends, then I need to sell for them too”

Local Data: *What we DO NOT know...*

- ▶ True numbers of women who are homeless
- ▶ Data on race, ethnicity, cultural needs, socio-demographic
- ▶ Primary care attachment rates

The risk in not knowing this information about women and gender diverse individuals makes it even more difficult to advocate for funding, policy reform and system change



The call to action: how to bring integrated care to homeless women

- ▶ Gender-based lens to homelessness
- ▶ Consider gender diversity, trans individuals - safety!
- ▶ Using research and the lived experiences, low barrier care is key
- ▶ Meet women where they are at (self-determination)
- ▶ Include a wide range of supports in one place (integrated health, social, well-being)
- ▶ Leverage multiple providers in on space



Integrated Initiative: Women's Health Drop In Days

The women's homelessness working group developed the concept of integrated low-barrier women's health drop in days

Goal: provide 2 days of drop-in services per season

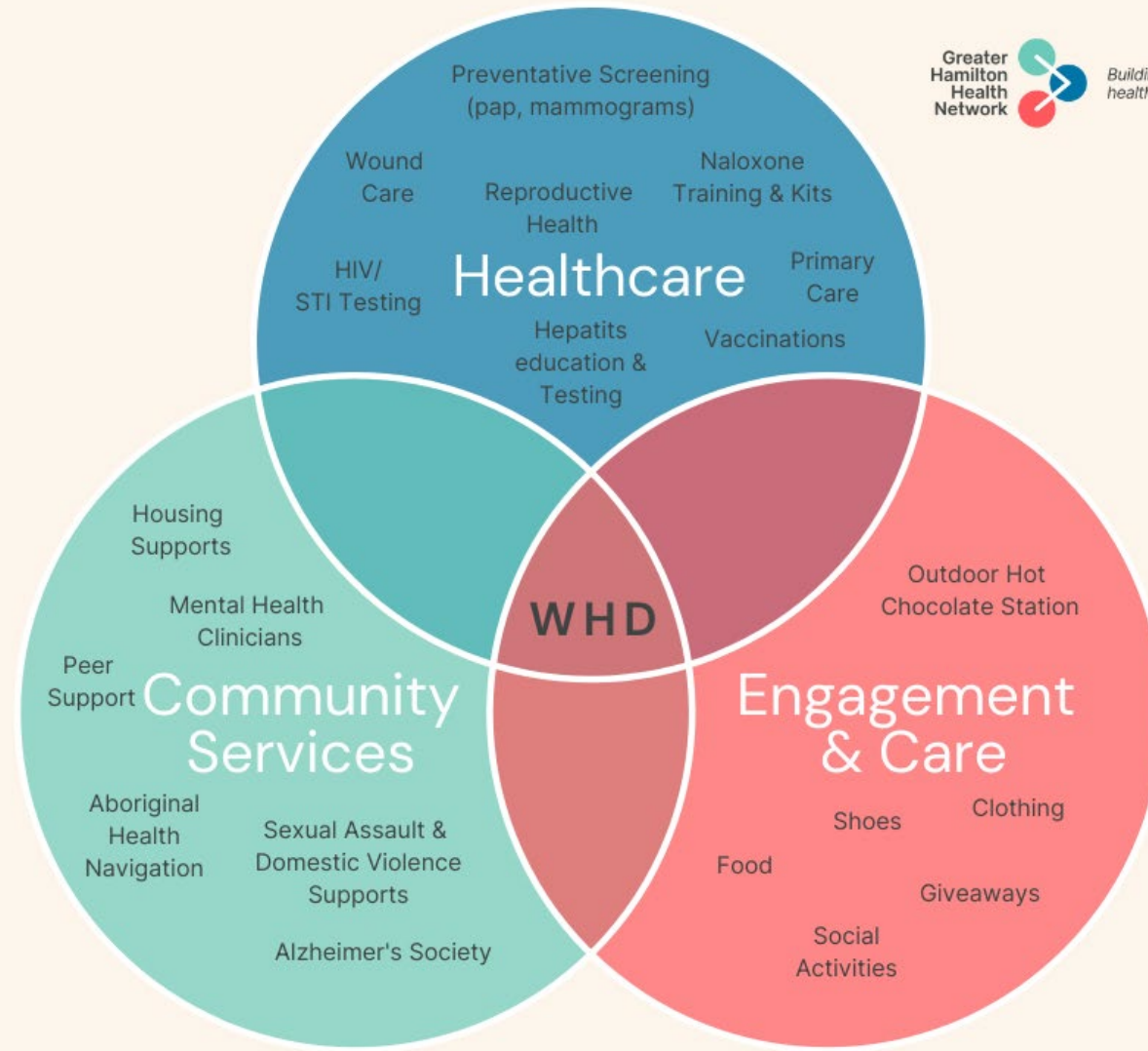
Offer multiple services and support, "one-stop shopping

Women's needs change as seasons change (food, clothing, medical care, housing supports)

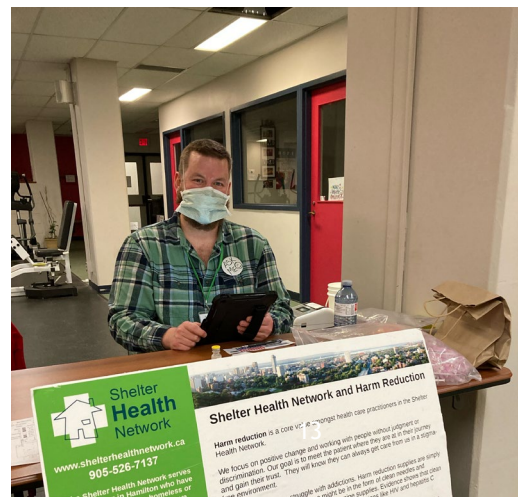
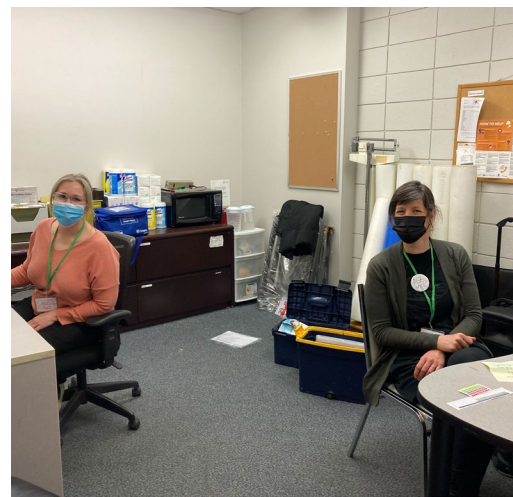
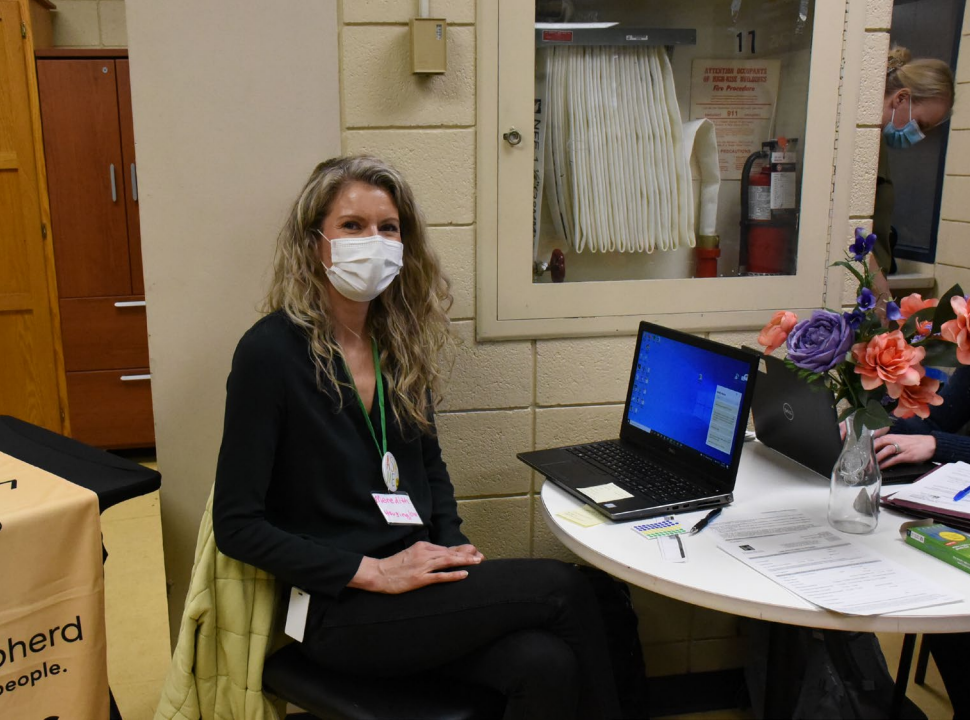
Build or restore trust in health care providers

Location: in the core, reduce need for transportation, low-barrier

Location: known to women- shelter, drop-in centre







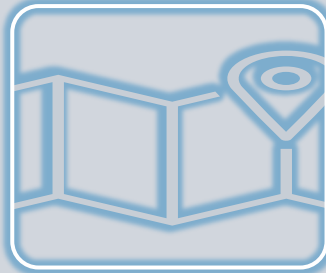


WOMEN'S HEALTH DAYS





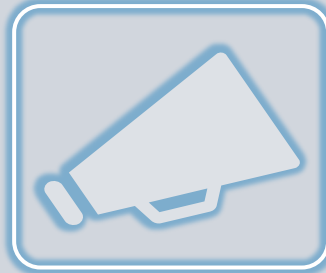
Providers



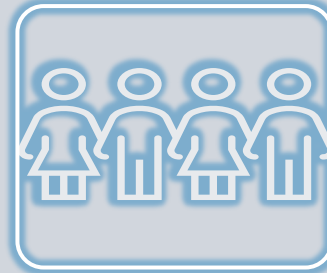
Location



Services
and
supports



Promotion



Peer
supports

Partners Involved

- ▶ Good Shepherd
- ▶ Shelter Health Network
- ▶ HAMSMaRT
- ▶ Keeping Six
- ▶ McMaster University
- ▶ YWCA
- ▶ Mission Services
- ▶ De dwa da dehs nye>s
- ▶ Canadian Mental Health Association
- ▶ Hamilton City Housing
- ▶ Alzheimer's Society
- ▶ Aids Network
- ▶ Marchese Pharmacy and Shoppers Drug Mart
- ▶ Primary Care
- ▶ Hamilton Public Health



The Space

- ▶ Remember: low barrier!
- ▶ Utilize spaces in new ways
- ▶ Be mindful of where women already congregate
- ▶ Nothing needs to be perfect
- ▶ Locations used:
 - ▶ drop-in day program,
 - ▶ women's shelter/community space
 - ▶ YWCA





The Services


- ▶ Different types of services offered at each event
- ▶ Health-based services
 - Pap Smear testing, STI/HIV testing, HEP C testing, COVID and flu vaccines, mental health & addictions, contraceptive counselling, wound care, foot care, smoking cessation
- ▶ Community and social services
 - food, donations, housing services, community mental health, addictions and recreation services, Alzheimer's Society, ODSP application

Donations and Giveaways



- ▶ Clothing and shoes- changes seasonally
- ▶ Socks, underwear, hats, mitts
- ▶ Feminine and other hygiene products
- ▶ First aid kits
- ▶ Food, snacks, water to go
- ▶ Gift cards for grocery stores

Promotion



WOMEN'S HEALTH DROP-IN DAY

A FREE event to support women, trans and gender diverse persons experiencing homelessness in Hamilton




DROP-IN FOR

- Food
- Clinical Services
 - testing
 - contraceptives
- Vaccines
- Medicine Bundles
- Community booths
- Giveaways

LOCATION

Sex Workers' Action Program of Hamilton
771 Barton Street St. E
Hamilton, ON

**WEDNESDAY
NOV 16TH
1-4PM**



SAVE THE DATE

Women's Health Drop-In Days

HEALTH SERVICES . FOOD . ACTIVITIES . GIVEAWAYS
JOIN US ON
JULY 13TH & 14TH, 2022
1-4 PM

**GOOD SHEPHERD-COMMUNITY
SUPPORT SERVICES**
30 PEARL STREET NORTH



Peer Support



- ▶ Peer support was integral in design and execution
- ▶ Safety, conversation, trust
- ▶ Peers knew some of the women in the community, brought them
- ▶ Role: attend testing with women, show participants around, engagement

Participant passports

Women's Health Drop-In Days Passport

PAP/
Exam

Contra-
ception

Covid
19

STI/
HIV

Survey

Art

Nalxone

Aboriginal
Health

Counse-
lling

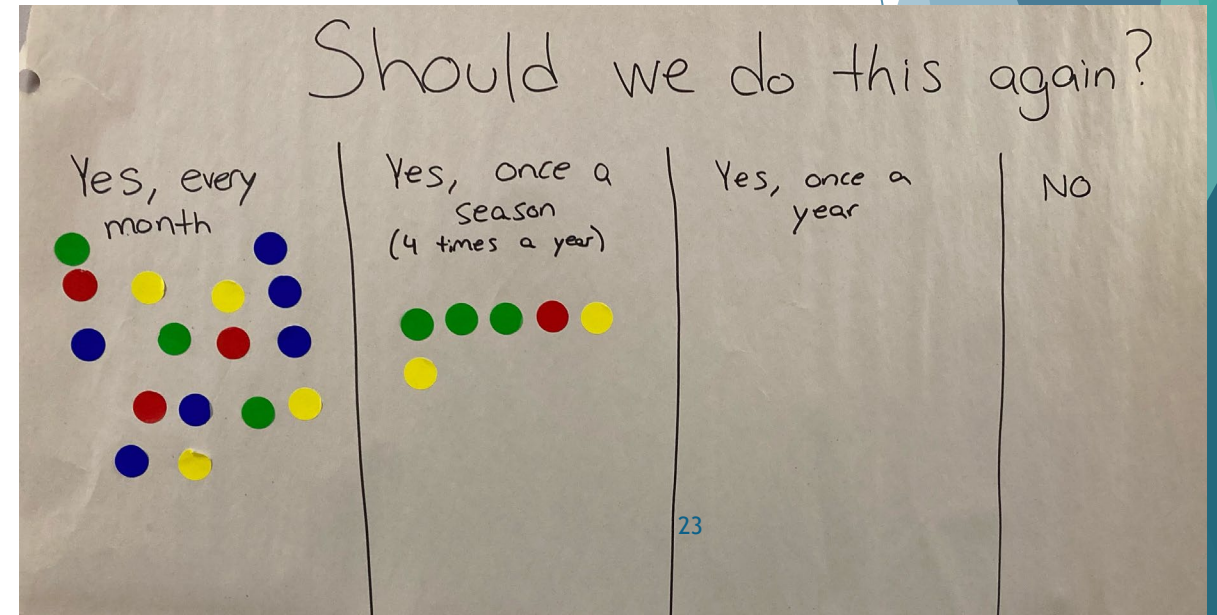
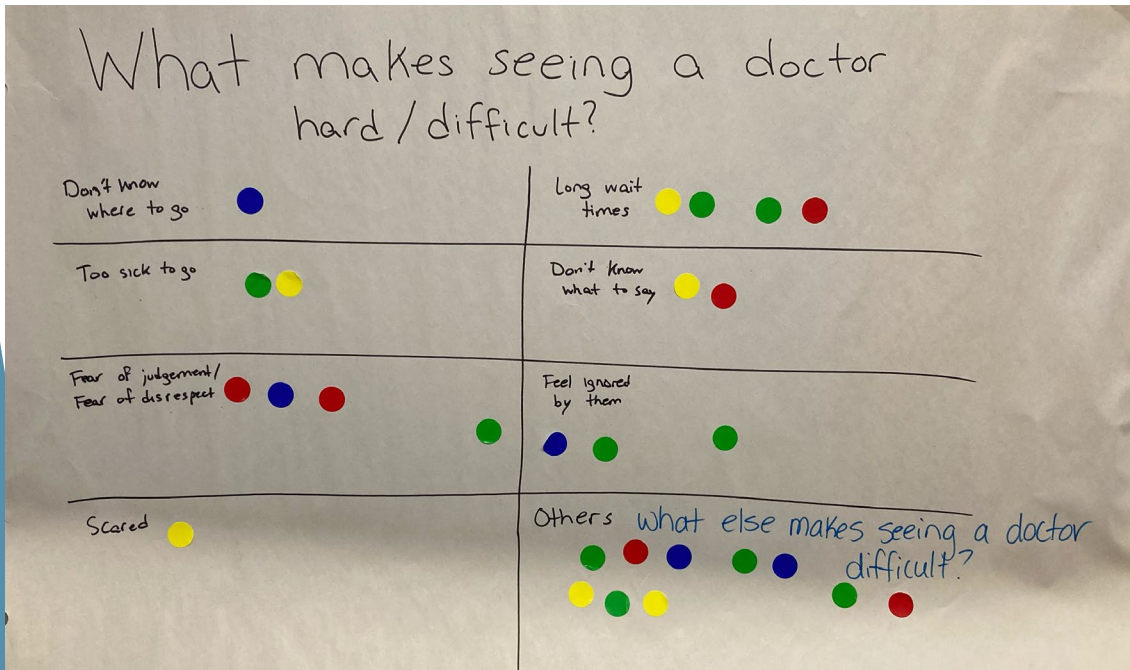
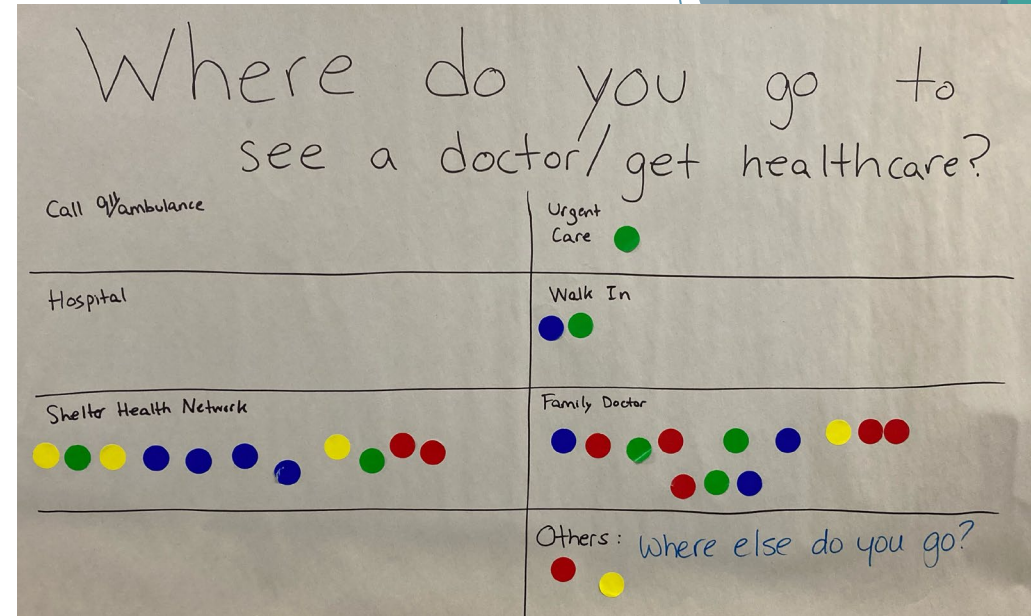
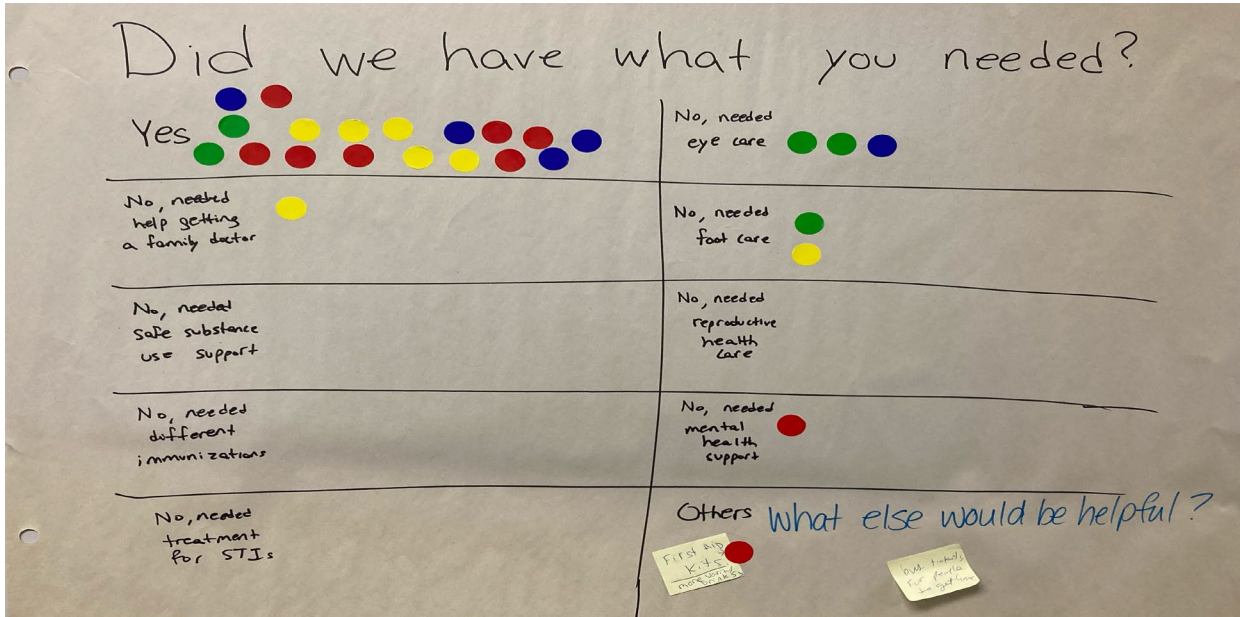
Housing/
Shelter

Cancer
Screen

Birth-
mark



Dotmocracy



What we have accomplished in 1 year with 4 Events

300 women served
over 8 days

42 pap smears

88 COVID vaccines +
23 flu vaccines

> 80 Mental Health
and Addictions
consults

115 Naloxone kits
distributed

78 women tested for
STI/HIV/POC HEP C

2 individuals
supported for trans
health care

10 wound care

15 peer support
workers

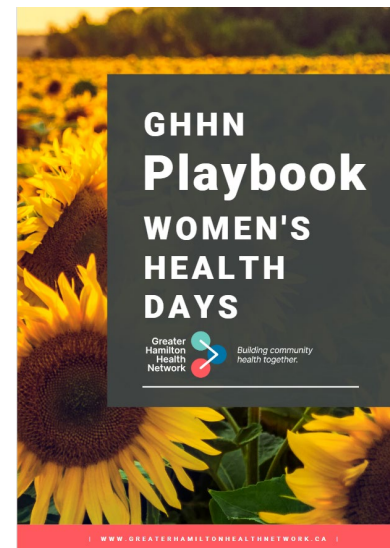
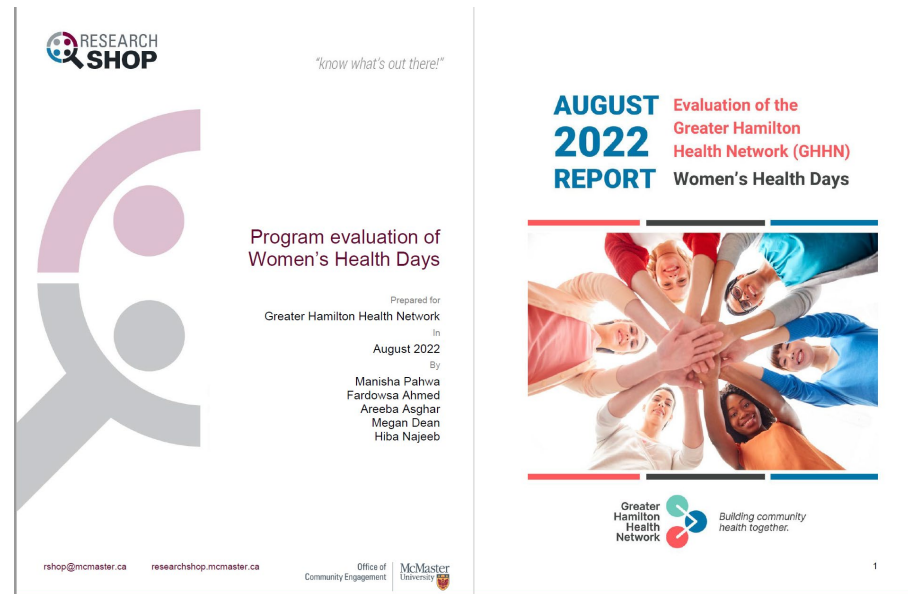
40 NRT kits
distributed +
smoking cessation
education

28 contraception
consults

Giveaways: food,
gift cards, medicine
bundles, clothing,
feminine hygiene
products

Future Reading

- ▶ Evaluation- Partnered with McMaster University Research Shop for a program evaluation of Women's Health Days
- ▶ Playbook- Partnered with YWCA, McMaster University to create a playbook as a guide for organizations to plan and execute Women's Health Days in their communities
- ▶ Available on our website greaterhamiltonhealthnetwork.ca



Stories of Hope

- ▶ “Can you come back next week?”
- ▶ “You are all angels”
- ▶ “I have never had these things all in one place”
- ▶ “Thank you for caring about us”
- ▶ “Today I got a pap, HIV testing, naloxone and a meal, I wish you were here every day”
- ▶ “I have never had a pap test, or have anyone ask me about one”



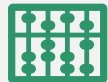
Building Community Health Together



Never underestimate the value of a 1:1 conversation



Person-centered approach in collaboration with providers



Address the multidimensional needs



COMPASSION AND CARE



Reflection Questions

How does your health and social system look after vulnerable women?

When was the last time you heard the stories of women living on the streets?

Who is doing the work with vulnerable populations and how can integrated efforts be leveraged?

We can act now to help; we do not need to wait for system change to care



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Questions/Comments/Closing



Stay Connected!



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