



North End
**COMMUNITY
HEALTH CENTRE**

Annual Report 2020/2021

Featuring:

- A Message from our Board Chair and Executive Director
- A year like no other - Our Pandemic Year
- Managed Alcohol Program
- Food Programming - Market Greens
- NECHC Clinic Update
- MOSH Update
- Housing First and New Housing
- Dentistry
- NECHC By the Numbers
- NECHC Financial Overview
- Thank you to our Supporters



Contact us:

902-420-0303
www.nehc.com
 2131 Gottingen Street, 5th floor
 Halifax, NS B3K 5Z7

A Message from our Board Chair and Executive Director

This year's Annual Report shines a spotlight on the incredible work the North End Community Health Centre (NECHC) has achieved in the 12 months leading to the end of March 2021. It is not only a testament to the work we do but to the community we serve and those who worked hard to support us - be they funders, donors, partners and/or friends.

We are grateful, that despite the additional challenges posed by the COVID-19 pandemic, we continued to receive support so that we could better serve our vulnerable community in Halifax. In many cases, the funding came from new sources. We want to thank all those who donated to the Atlantic Compassion Fund. Without your generosity we would not have been able to provide the level of service and support that was required.

And, just as importantly, thank you to all who supported our teams as they continued to deliver on the NECHC mission to provide services for those most in need. Our vocation began 50 years ago. As we get ready to mark this momentous occasion this Fall, we continue to be thankful for those that support us in our promise to provide health, housing and social supports to those who need it where they need it.

In this our 50th year, we also renew our commitment to advocate for changes and supports to address the root causes of the social issues facing our community. Issues like systemic racism, inadequate mental health supports, food insecurity, marginalization and lack of affordable housing. We know that together we can make a difference. As we start our second half-century as an organization, we are disheartened that these issues are still prevalent but we are inspired to work harder to try and find solutions.

Together we can make a difference. At NECHC we will continue to do our part. Thank you for doing yours.

-Marie-France LeBlanc, Executive Director
-Rick Kelly, Chair of the Board



NECHC is committed to:

Mission:

Strong
community,
healthy people.

Vision:

We support health and well-being in our community through primary health care, education, and advocacy in an environment in which people are treated with respect and dignity and there is equitable access to services and programs.

Values:

Respect
Community
Compassion
Excellence
Innovation



North End
COMMUNITY
HEALTH CENTRE
MOSH Housing First



North End
COMMUNITY
HEALTH CENTRE
MOSH



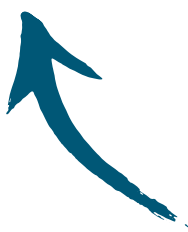
North End
COMMUNITY
HEALTH CENTRE
Clinic



North End
COMMUNITY
HEALTH CENTRE
Dental Clinic



North End
COMMUNITY
HEALTH CENTRE
Programs



North End
COMMUNITY
HEALTH CENTRE



A year like no other - Our Pandemic Year

As COVID-19 settled into Halifax (and around the world), the NECHC team worked tirelessly to adapt and continuously reorganize how, and what we did, to create new ways to support our community. In the early days, we tapped into the ingenuity and experience of our team to find solutions to continue to support our clients and patients while adapting to masks, PPE, and social and physical distancing.

At NECHC we did not miss a beat from the very beginning of COVID-19. We were nimble and creative, ensuring continuity of care for our community. Together, the team realigned and integrated our programs to meet the most pressing needs of the people we serve. Collaborating with our partners, Public Health and Nova Scotia Health on our response, we went into action to provide emergency supports.

While we ceased much of our regular programming during this past year, we replaced them with new programs that could adhere to social distancing and meet the new needs. Although we knew social distancing was necessary we also understood that physical distancing would be a very serious problem for the already vulnerable community we serve. Every decision we made during this time considered how to keep our staff safe while still maintaining the much needed supports and care for those in need.

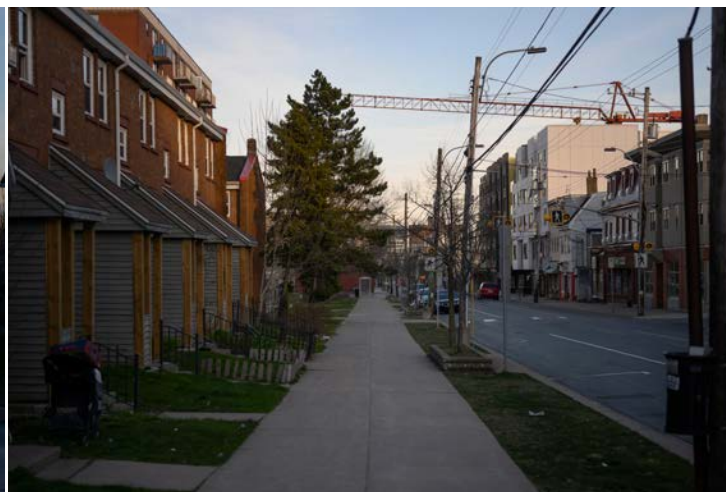


We embraced virtual care for some but maintained a team in the clinic to provide continuity of care. Nurses, doctors and social workers worked in small teams rotating through our physical space on Gottingen Street and in our new location on Albro Lake Road in Dartmouth. Housing Support Workers, Intensive Case Workers and outreach medical teams embraced PPE and outdoor spaces so they could continue to do their critical work. We added new harm reduction services including a scattered site Managed Alcohol Program. We supported testing in shelters and isolation sites while also conducting mobile testing clinics throughout HRM.

And, we continued emergency dental care until full dental services could be restored. All this was done while following all screening and masking protocols.

By continuing with our model of care throughout the pandemic, we rose to our commitment to those who needed us. While this year is a reflection of a year living with the COVID-19 pandemic, it is also a true depiction of the spirit of innovation, adaptation and commitment of the team at NECHC.

COVID-19 State of Emergency



Emergency Managed Alcohol Program



This new program was born from a need to stabilize patients with severe Alcohol Use Disorder (AUD), reinforce social isolation and to help mitigate risks for community members as related to COVID-19. These risks included regular use of non-beverage alcohol due to changes in alcohol access related to COVID-19; frequent use of emergency health services to manage withdrawal symptoms, and the need for harm reduction measures to help sustain public health guidelines for quarantining and social distancing.

The program operated with the support of the Department of Health, the NSLC and partner brewers and wineries. It was a great example of community and government coming together. Our scattered site model, the first in Canada, kept sometimes up to 50 people from consuming non-beverage alcohol or going into withdrawal.

Spotlight: Helen Rivers-Bowerman, RN

Meet Helen, she has been part of NECHC since 2017. First she started out as a MOSH nurse and then, she became the MAP nurse and manager.

Nursing wasn't a career Helen always saw herself in until she actually applied. "Before nursing I took a Bachelor of Arts". Although she didn't pursue nursing right away, she always knew the importance of health, which is what eventually led her to becoming a nurse. "I love how nursing provides you with a tangible set of skills."

Helen loves that there is always room for growth as a nurse. "At first, I wanted to do pediatrics but fell in love with harm reduction". Never having a traditional hospital job, community based harm reduction has always been her preferred area. As a MAP nurse "every day is different" which keeps Helen on her toes. When MAP began, Helen was instantly attracted to the program. She knew that, a newly developed program with potential for growth and a need to address a problem in our community, was for her.

Not only was the program appealing, the team was too. "The team behind MAP is what makes this program so wonderful. We share similar values, visions, and commitments. All are dedicated to reducing physical and social harm".

You may wonder what Helen does on a day-to-day basis as an RN and manager of MAP. "The team travels around our communities to do health assessments, schedule appointments and provide referrals. We deliver primary care needs to participants who may be over-intoxicated or going through withdrawals. We manage health issues and connect our clients to services". In short, the team provides support to keep their clients healthier and housed.

Helen says that "success with our clients and our community is varied. It can look different from one to another. But one thing that does not change is the difference we make in their lives"

Food Programming

As COVID-19 took hold and everything closed around the HRM, NECHC had to evaluate how best to serve those needing our support with food. What does food programming look like without cooking classes, school breakfasts or in-person food pick-ups? How do we provide not only sustenance but support and kindness during a time of social distancing?

Just as we did everywhere else, we adapted. In the earliest days we put a call out for freezers and set those up throughout our community. With the help of funders we filled those freezers with meals every week. We focused on those most in need and with complex medical, mental health and addiction needs. Over a three month period we provided over 2100 meals.

As we moved away from the emergency response and into the longer term, we once again pivoted. With more help from funders we began providing financial support to those in need through weekly gift cards for groceries and essentials. For those that could cook for themselves, we began providing meal bags as part of our Market Greens program.

Our dietician also stayed busy by doing weekly virtual cooking classes. This was a great way to have some socialization while sharing healthy and affordable cooking recipes and tips. While everything is not back to “normal”, we are excited that we are back to sharing food, ideas and recipes as we await what the new normal will bring.



Spotlight: Marlin Unger, Market Greens

Meet Marlin, one of our Market Greens program participants. Marlin has been a part of our program for the past twelve weeks. In a recent phone interview, he touches on how he benefits from the program. "Market Greens allows me to have a much healthier breakfast. I can just grab a piece of fruit, no preparation required. Before Market Greens I would've just had a chocolate bar for breakfast. The fresh fruit is definitely my favorite". We asked Marlin what his go-to meal is to make. "I love putting potatoes, onions, carrots, green beans and zucchini all together in my slow cooker with seasoning. Tastes great".

Since joining Market Greens, Marlin now meets the required amounts of fruits and vegetables on Canada's Food Guide. Participants in the program also receive a \$25 grocery store gift card to get extra items they need. Marlin tends to spend his gift card on \$5 lunch specials, like sandwiches and potato wedges. "I really benefit from the program. Overall I feel healthier and I want to thank the staff for everything they do".



NECHC Clinic



Our medical and counselling services remained open and available throughout most of the year except for a small shut-down in the first couple of weeks as we got our bearings. We prioritized those most in need and managed all others through virtual care. Our team of health care specialists supported clients in many ways. We added phone lines to our Pause Mental Health Walk-in clinic. We added a Pause United clinic specifically targeted to African Nova Scotians across the province.

We also provided many of our clients with cell phones to ensure they remained connected during this very difficult time. These phones, provided by TELUS Good for Health, were instrumental in keeping our most vulnerable connected to medical care.

In the end, it became clear that our community needed continuity of care and that is what we provided. We quickly reopened our specialized clinics, blood collection and pre-and post-natal care. These services looked different but they were available and well received for those who most needed them.



MOSH



A mere two weeks before the pandemic sent the whole world in lockdown, we had taken possession of our new MOSH Health Clinic powered by TELUS Health. To say the timing was impeccable is an understatement. As a direct result of having this great Mobile Health Clinic, we were able to offer supports to the most vulnerable without skipping a beat. We were able to continue to provide primary care and implement additional Harm Reduction work – which included: our Emergency Managed Alcohol Program; needle exchanges, as well as nicotine and drug replacements – and provide COVID-19 specific care like testing and vaccination. Our Mobile Clinic was truly used to the best of its ability. We even started hosting parking lot drop-in clinics.



These clinics allowed those in need to pop in for a friendly hello, a COVID-19 test or for a medical consult. We were there for whoever needed us.

MOSH and the Health Clinic team worked as one during this time to better coordinate our efforts and help those most in need. Whether in the clinic or on the streets or in the shelters our nurses, social workers and admin staff all rolled up their PPE covered sleeves and did whatever was needed to ensure our community remained safe. It is telling that the shelter system never experienced an outbreak throughout the whole year. There were two exposures however they were caught early. We are grateful to the community and all our partners who worked together and made accommodations to keep everyone safe.



Housing First and Housing



Our three housing programs helped transition over 100 people out of homelessness last year using an intensive support system of case managers, addiction specialists, nurses, physicians, nurse practitioners and social workers. The path to housing is not always an easy one. As COVID-19 hit, we worked to ensure that our housed clients felt safe and supported. Additionally, we leased the former International Hostel in Halifax to provide additional housing as HRM faced a housing crisis.

house for African Nova Scotians, and have leased a 26 unit building to provide additional housing support for those in need.

Our Housing team, like all others, certainly faced a unique set of barriers. Engaging in creative ways to provide services and cultivate connections was a full-time job. During a time where isolation was mandated, the team worked hard to maintain contact and break down barriers created by the pandemic.



Since then we have begun renovations on a new 11 unit

Spotlight: Ty Silver, Housing First Co-Team Lead

Meet Ty, Co-Team Lead of Housing First and an Intensive Case Manager. Ty always knew they wanted to help underprivileged individuals. Right off the bat, Ty studied Criminology and Psychology, focusing on addiction counselling. After working at a shelter for homeless youth, Ty knew harm reduction was for them. "Seeing people struggle in a world where not all resources available suit their needs made me want to work in this field. I want to give people the dignity they deserve, no matter what they're doing with their life".

An 'average' day doesn't exist for Ty, although each day they

have the same goal to provide community members with support. "Every morning I prioritize clients needs based on urgency and then I go about my day". Usually their day involves checking in with clients, discussing their needs and finding solutions. Ty will attend appointments with their clients, whether it be court, probation or doctors appointments. Ty is there to advocate for their clients.

We asked Ty what the best part about their job is. "Working with awesome clients. Folks often say they're lucky to have us, but I flip it and say how lucky we're to have them... We learn so much from them".

Some of Ty's clients have been with them for six to seven years. Recently, Ty got to celebrate one of their clients 40th birthday. A milestone for all parties involved. "It's just all about being there for people when they need us".

"This is my dream job. I feel very privileged and lucky to work for an organization that is open to diversity and inclusion". As our organization grows, Ty is excited to be here to contribute.

Dentistry



Our dental program has continued to provide this vital service free of charge. In some cases, during COVID-19, we shifted to a virtual service following up on those who needed it. Once restrictions were alleviated, we were able to once again provide a full complement of services to our clients. We look forward to getting back into the schools soon to continue to provide oral health education to kids.

Spotlight:



Nada (right) and Mya (left) Haider, Dentistry Volunteers

Meet Dr. Nada Haider, volunteer Dentist at NECHC, who's been practicing dentistry for 24 years.

What Nada loves most about working at NECHC is that she gets to use her advanced dental skills. Compared to her personal

practice, where she sees more routine based clients, she tends to see more complicated issues at NECHC. Volunteering with this complex community allows her to stay up-to-date on pharmaceuticals, extractions, fillings, prescriptions and advice. "Overall, I love this work. I feel like I'm truly making a difference for my clients".

Nada's motivation to help service underprivileged individuals stems from her Daughter, Mya. Mya is going into her fourth year at Dalhousie University where she is studying Sciences. She is passionate about dentistry, and hopes to follow in her mom's footsteps by becoming a dentist. In 2018, Mya came to her Mom suggesting they join Global Brigades, an international non-profit that helps communities all over the world improve their health and economy. Mya had previously gone to Honduras without her Mother, but knew the two of them had to go back as a team. Their experience had them wondering, how could they do this work back home. Mya and Nada jumped on the opportunity to volunteer at NECHC when they heard about it. For the last 3 years, you can find Mya at NECHC doing administrative work alongside her Mom.

Nada's advice for anyone who is considering volunteering here is to "absolutely do it. You feel useful and reinvigorated. The very least you can do is offer your services to people who can't afford it". At NECHC, we are grateful for volunteers like Nada and Mya. Without them, we could not do as much as we do.

NECHC by the Numbers



TOTAL PPE USED



What's next for NECHC?

This past year has been one for the books. We have been through a deeply collaborative and intense experience. We have had to draw on all our empathy, compassion, understanding, ingenuity, adaptability and commitment. We have learned that together, there is nothing that we cannot figure out. We can tackle tough health and social issues moving from crisis to wellness and from challenge to change.

With COVID-19 slowing down and vaccinations in full swing we can now start looking to the future. At NECHC we are looking forward to: celebrating our 50th Anniversary; starting our new Supportive Housing Program affectionately known as "The Blue House"; and continuing our work in Harm Reduction through our MAP program and our outreach and supportive housing ventures.

We look forward to reporting back next year.

Thank you to our Supporters

The North End Community Health Centre is grateful to the donors and funders who make our work possible. On behalf of the community we serve, THANK YOU! We are proud to partner with the following organizations.

- AbelDent
- Adsum for Women and Children
- Affordable Housing Association of Nova Scotia
- Bell Mental Health - Lets Talk
- Bell Canada
- Community Foundation of Nova Scotia
- Community Food Centres of Canada
- Dalhousie University, Faculty of Dentistry
- Dalhousie University Nursing Society
- The Gordon Foundation for Children and Youth
- Halifax Youth Foundation
- Henry Schein Inc.
- IWK Health Centre
- Mi'kmaw Native Friendship Centre
- Nova Scotia health Authority - Community Wellness Fund
- Nova Scotia Health Authority
- NS department of Communities, Culture and Heritage
- NS Department of Community Services
- NS Department of Justice Correctional Services
- NS Department of Municipal Affairs and Housing
- Shelter Nova Scotia
- Telus Health
- United Way
- United Way - Atlantic Compassion Fund
- Welcome Housing
- The Windsor Foundation
- John Allen Brewing Company

NECHC Financials



Statement of Operations

	Budget	Actual
Revenue	\$ 4,538,755.00	\$ 4,817,357.00
Expense	\$ 4,464,121.00	\$ 4,706,110.00

Revenue by Type

MSI funding	\$1,298,327.00
DHW, Core Operations	\$1,828,961.00
Grants	\$ 1,539,140.00
Donations	\$ 49,308.00
Generated Revenue	\$ 40,746.00
Rental Income	\$ 15,789.00
Interest & Investment Income	\$ 9,734.00
Other Income	\$ 35,351.00
Total	\$ 4,817,357.00

Expenses by Project

Health Clinic	\$ 2,625,522.00
Dental Clinic	\$ 128,770.00
MOSH	\$ 577,173.00
Housing	\$ 643,615.00
Other	\$ 73,109.00
Total	\$ 4,706,110.00

