

# 2022-23 ANNUAL REPORT

Reconnecting, Rebuilding and Restoring



Indigenous artist Red George signs his painting “Bear and Trees” now on display in the waiting room. According to Red, the bear brings healing, a fitting symbol for all who visit the GBACHC.



# Joint Board Chair and CEO Report

As the world navigates through the third year of the pandemic, there is a glimmer of hope for a post-COVID future. In the past year, the GBACHC provided a wide range of services, including medical appointments, vaccinations, COVID-19 assessment and testing, counselling, and support services for individuals with mental health issues. Health awareness was promoted through virtual and in-person groups and programs offered to everyone in the community.

Key initiatives this past year included the following:

**Expansion of Services:** The board of directors (Board) and management team are acutely aware of the need to increase access to care and the range of services offered at the GBACHC. They are currently actively engaged with Ontario Health to work toward expanding services to better meet community needs.

**Community Engagement:** As a community-governed health centre, the community's voice is paramount for gaining insight into healthcare requirements and preferences. Moving into the second year of a three-year strategic plan, feedback from the Community Advisory Council, annual patient/client satisfaction survey, program evaluations, and the patient/client relations process will be crucial in advancing the plan and implementing necessary adjustments and improvements.

**Human Resources:** Staffing at the GBACHC is regularly reviewed to ensure the recruitment and retention of qualified healthcare professionals to provide high-quality patient care. The Board and management team prioritized staff wellbeing and engagement through professional development, responsive supervision, and fun activities provided by the volunteer Wellness Committee. As of the writing of this report, the GBACHC is fully staffed!

**Technology Infrastructure:** The GBACHC is committed to improving its technology infrastructure to streamline processes, enhance patient care, and guarantee the security and confidentiality of health records. It also takes cybersecurity seriously and continually assesses its protection and performance.

**Financial Sustainability:** The GBACHC ensures long-term financial sustainability using standard accounting practices and annual financial audits. Additionally, the GBACHC must adhere to comprehensive Ministry of Health guidelines to

maintain its provincial funding. In 2022-23, the GBACHC successfully explored alternate revenue streams, including grants, and implemented cost-saving measures wherever possible. Grateful appreciation is extended to the Grand Bend Area Health Services Foundation for its funding support to ensure the GBACHC remains a vital resource in the community.

In closing, sincere thanks are extended to the community for the encouragement and support received this past year! Together with the Board and management team, the GBACHC will continue to provide high-quality healthcare services in a growing community for years to come.



**Mario Carcamo**  
Board Chair



**Chris Harris**  
CEO

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The Board thanks staff for their exceptional commitment to the community in 2022-23, providing vital healthcare services, counselling, and community engagement.

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# Welcome New Team Members



## Paige Baltessen - Primary Care Coordinator

The GBACHC is pleased to announce the appointment of Paige Baltessen as the new Primary Care Coordinator. With nearly four years of experience in various positions at the GBACHC, Paige has previously served as a registered practical nurse (RPN), system navigator, and accreditation coordinator. Her dedication and hard work have been recognized, and the GBACHC is thrilled that she will be continuing her career in this new role.



## Dr. Cael O'Reilly - Family Physician

In November 2022, Dr. O'Reilly became a member of the GBACHC team, bringing with him a wealth of knowledge and experience. He completed a bachelor's degree in psychology, specializing in Behavioural Neuroscience, and then attended medical school in Brisbane, Australia. Upon his return to Ontario, he completed his family medicine training at Western University. The GBACHC team is thrilled to have Dr. O'Reilly on board and looks forward to his contributions to the health and wellbeing of his patients.

## Staff Transitions

BEST *Wishes*



Heather Klopp (far right) is congratulated by (from left) retired physicians Dr. Deborah McNaughton and Dr. Peter Englert and long-time co-worker Joanne Moir.

## GBACHC Bids Farewell to Long-Standing Staff Member

The GBACHC recently bid farewell to a valued and long-standing staff member, Heather Klopp, who has decided to pursue a new job opportunity with the Huron Health System.

Reflecting on Heather's 35 years of service to the GBACHC, the management team extends their heartfelt gratitude for her unwavering dedication and tireless effort, particularly during challenging times.

As Heather begins a new adventure, the GBACHC wishes her every success in her new role.

## COVID Update & Thank You

The COVID-19 pandemic declared by the World Health Organization on March 11, 2020, has been a significant healthcare emergency, affecting countless lives and livelihoods for over three years. Despite the challenges to healthcare, the GBACHC conducted over 15,000 COVID-19 tests for individuals from more than 180 postal codes while offering regular vaccinations. The GBACHC staff worked tirelessly to promote and maintain safety while slowing the spread of the COVID-19 infection, and they are proud to have served the Grand Bend community during this challenging time.

The GBACHC would like to thank the Grand Bend community for their kindness, support, and donations throughout the pandemic. At the onset of the pandemic, many residents generously donated their extra personal protective equipment, including masks, gowns, and hand sanitizers of all kinds. Community support also included the donated use of a trailer from Oke-Woodsmith, winter jackets from Home Hardware, and community fundraising to cover unfunded expenses. The GBACHC deeply appreciates everyone who contributed in large and small ways. Thank you to all!

# Huron Perth Area Ontario Health Team Update

PROUD MEMBER



*An Ontario Health Team (OHT) is a service delivery model designed to integrate care delivery and funding, enabling patients, families, communities, providers, and system leaders to better work together, innovate, and build on what is best in Ontario's healthcare system. The goal is to provide better, more connected care across the province.*

The Grand Bend Area Community Health Centre (GBACHC) is an active member of the Huron Perth Area Ontario Health Team (HPA-OHT), contributing to patient care transformation for identified populations in the following ways:

**Infection Prevention and Control (IPAC):** A GBACHC registered practical nurse is an HPA-OHT IPAC working

group member. Their involvement ensures the GBACHC upholds current practices and maintains consistent, standardized IPAC policies.

**Mental Health and Addictions:** A member of the GBACHC management team attends this working group to support people in the region who need coordinated social work services.

**Congestive Heart Failure:** The GBACHC Primary Care & Chronic Disease Director, also a registered nurse, is an active working group member. The group is working to improve system navigation and routing of patients who need more intensive treatment. The model developed will be used as a template for other chronic diseases.

**Communications:** The GBACHC participates in this working group to help ensure there is a common communication strategy throughout the HPA-OHT.

**Cybersecurity and Data Quality:** The GBACHC's Data Management & Information Technology Lead is a working group member providing cybersecurity tools to help educate staff and protect electronic systems. Additionally, the GBACHC is participating in integrated decision support (IDS), allowing provincial government funders access to the GBACHC's patient complexity overview.

## Accreditation

Accredited by  
**Canadian Centre  
for Accreditation**



Agréé par  
**Centre canadien  
de l'agrément**

The Grand Bend and Area Community Health Centre (GBACHC) has reached a remarkable milestone by achieving a five-year accreditation with the Canadian Centre for Accreditation. The GBACHC is grateful to all those who

contributed to this success, as it indicates their hard work and dedication to delivering outstanding services to patients/clients.

Accreditation ensures the GBACHC's credibility, heightened patient/client satisfaction, and opportunities for growth while striving for healthcare excellence. Over the next five years, the GBACHC will continue to build on its strengths and identify areas of improvement in all areas of operations.



# Community Advisory Council Report

Submitted by Co-Chairs, Sherry Seelen, Elke Ward, and Tara Oke



The past year presented numerous challenges for the Community Advisory Council (CAC) due to the ongoing COVID-19 pandemic. However, with unwavering support and encouragement from the GBACHC management team, the CAC persevered and played a vital role in ensuring the patient/client and caregiver's perspective was a priority in the following areas:

- Participation in creating the GBACHC strategic plan, a three-year plan focusing on the community's growing needs and the patient-centred model of care.
- Participation in the accreditation process, a significant undertaking to ensure high-quality patient care.
- Co-hosted a staff barbecue with the Board of Directors to support staff wellness and to show appreciation for staff dedication, skills, and successes.
- Provided content, suggestions, and a med-facts template for the Service Directory.
- Reviewed policies relevant to patient/client care.
- Developed a code of conduct for CAC volunteers.

- Recruited and vetted CAC applicants with an eye to succession planning and leadership renewal.
- Reviewed the Main Reception Renovation draft plans and toured facilities in London and Sarnia to provide recommendations on accessibility, privacy, and patient/client ease of use.

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The CAC played an important role in GBACHC's strategic plan, accreditation, staff wellness, and patient care policies.

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# Social Prescribing to Promote Health Equity



The Grand Bend and Area Community Health Centre (GBACHC) promotes health equity for all groups of people, particularly those who experience health disparities caused by the social determinants of health.

At the GBACHC, individuals can access support in various aspects of life, such as mental health, physical health, nutritional support, chronic disease management, and social support. To provide equitable, people-centered, and community-based healthcare, the GBACHC recognizes that social determinants of health drive 80-90% of health outcomes. Therefore, to achieve optimal wellbeing, people require appropriate clinical care, material support, meaningful social support, and a connected community where they feel a sense of belonging.

The GBACHC uses social prescribing as a healthcare tool to connect individuals with non-clinical programs and services that promote their overall health and wellbeing. Social prescribing addresses social needs by providing access to community programs and services that align with patients'

interests and goals while complementing their clinical care journey. The GBACHC is proud to have been one of 28 organizations selected to receive funding from the Public Health Agency of Canada for the Social Prescribing for Better Mental Health Project, launched by the Alliance for Healthier Communities. This project marks Canada's first social prescribing initiative.

Social prescribing effectively improves mental health, reduces loneliness, and increases a sense of community belonging. This approach helps individuals manage their health and reduces repeat healthcare visits.

To lead the implementation of social prescribing, the GBACHC has hired a Community Navigator. The navigator aims to meet the increasing demand for mental health services through a coordinated, collaborative, community-based approach. By aligning community resources with the care provided, the GBACHC seeks to expand the community's capacity and foster well-being and belonging.



**GBACHC Community Navigator,  
Grace Bonnett**

*Grace is excited to join the GBACHC as a Community Navigator for the Social Prescribing for Better Mental Health initiative. Grace looks forward to continuing to support communities in the region where she was raised.*

## Access to Primary Care

The GBACHC welcomed 162 new patients to primary care in 2022-23. A streamlined patient intake process and the addition of a new physician contributed to this success.

There continued to be immense pressure on access to primary care, with an average of 97 new patient applications per quarter, most of which do not have a family doctor.

Even though the healthcare system is under strain, the GBACHC remains committed to ensuring all people in the area have access to primary healthcare when they need it.

# 2022-23 Patient-Client Satisfaction Survey

98% said their provider involved them in decisions about their care and treatment.

96% said their overall experience and sense of being welcomed were good to excellent.

90% said their provider was very good to excellent at listening to their concerns and answering their questions.

89% who had a virtual appointment felt safe and comfortable with the experience.

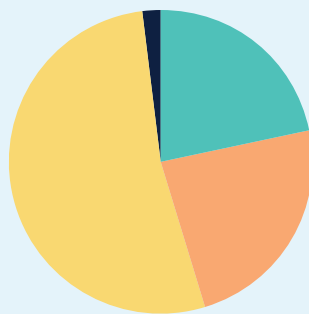
89% said they got an appointment in a timely manner the last time they were sick.

65% said virtual appointments were more convenient and saved them time and money.

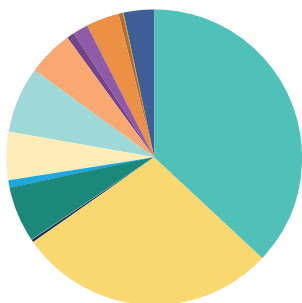
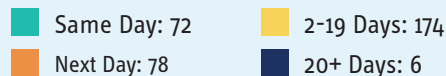
64% reported coming to the GBACHC three or more times a year for care.

47% said their stress level was moderate, while 18% said it was high or very high.

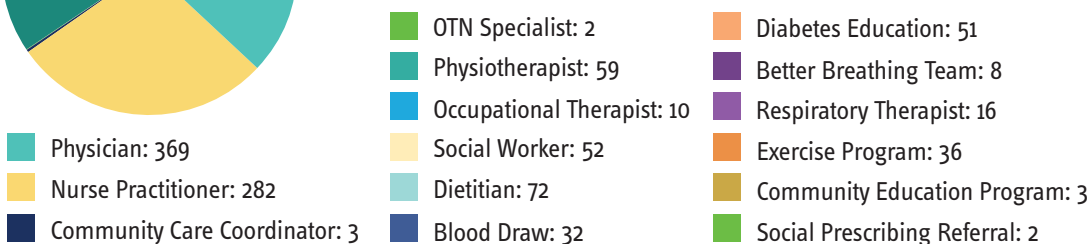
“ Quick scheduling and very caring staff. Super happy with all aspects of the whole place! ”



The last time you needed urgent care, how many days did it take from the appointment request to the appointment day?

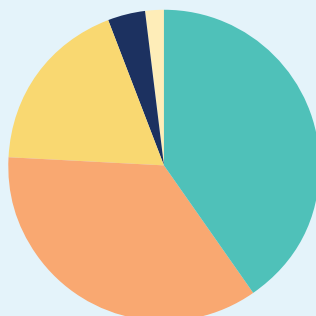


In the past year, with which health care provider(s) or program did you have an appointment(s) or session?



“ Really appreciate having nurse practitioners available when physician appointments are not readily available. ”

“ The GBACHC is good at creating a safe space for marginalized communities...and not making us feel like a burden. ”



Do you feel uncomfortable or out of place in your community?







# Strategic Plan

In November 2021, the GBACHC Board of Directors undertook a comprehensive strategic planning process. The process involved conducting

an environmental scan and gathering feedback from patients, volunteer staff, community partners, and residents of the Grand Bend area. The feedback was used to create a planning discovery report, which was the basis for developing three-year strategic directions.

During the first year of the three-year plan, the GBACHC made significant progress toward enhancing team-based care, strengthening and expanding partnerships, and investing in its team, facilities, and resources. Moving into the second year of the strategic plan, the GBACHC remains committed to the plan as it continues to provide quality care to its patients/clients.

## Year-One Strategic Direction Progress

### Team-Based Care

The GBACHC is balancing onboarding new patients while ensuring access for existing patients with same-day

availability. A review of the top reasons for visiting the GBACHC was conducted to improve the social prescribing strategy, found on page 6.

### Strengthen & Grow Partnerships

Over the past year, the GBACHC has maintained an active presence within the community, demonstrating its commitment to community engagement through frequent presentations to various organizations. Contributions to developing specific programs have been particularly noteworthy, including participating in multiple HPA-OHT committees. These committees cover essential topics, including Addictions and Mental Health, Communications, Congestive Heart Failure, Digital Advisory, and Health Equity and Inclusion.

### Invest in the Team, Facilities & Resources

With the continued backing of the community and the Grand Bend Health Services Foundation, the GBACHC has made significant progress in refurbishing its physical infrastructure. Thanks to the support received over the last year, necessary repairs and equipment replacements have been carried out. While the Ministry of Health provides operational funding, it does not cover ongoing maintenance costs for the building or patient care equipment.



**Grand Bend Area  
Community Health Centre**

### Vision

Health and wellbeing for all.

### Mission

Empower the health and wellbeing for the people in our communities – together.

### Our Core Values

#### People Centred

Individuals are empowered to be in control of their health.

#### Respect and Inclusion

#### Compassionate Care

Individuals are empowered to be in control of their health.

#### Interconnectedness

Building connections at all levels to provide comprehensive care.

#### Integrity and Responsibility

Accountable for what we say and do.

## Grand Bend

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## Hensall

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