



North End
**COMMUNITY
 HEALTH CENTRE**

Annual Report 2019/2020

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- Telus Health Partners with NECHC
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- Saying Farewell to Rose Fraser, RN
- Building Capacity to Provide Better Mental Health Services
- Facing COVID-19 in our Community
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Mission

Strong community,
healthy people

Vision

We support health and well being in our community through quality 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

Board of Directors 2019/2020

Rick Kelly, Board Chair
Elena Demidova
John Brophy
April Howe
Fred MacGillivray
Maggie Marwah
Michael Sherwood
Gail Sloane

Thank you to our outgoing
Board Members:
Lana MacLean
Marlene MacLellan
Alonzo Wright

A Message from our Board Chair and Executive Director

The work that we do every day at NECHC is grounded in the principle that good health for people and communities is possible when all have their basic needs met and have the ability to find stability. This year we grew our programs to meet the needs of the diverse communities we serve, many of whom face significant barriers to quality health care services. We enhanced access to dental care by increasing our outreach and partnerships within the community; expanded our mental health programming through our Pause Clinic and Youth Rapid Response Outreach; addressed social isolation by supporting low income families and seniors through increased food programming; intentionally assigned resources to our Social Justice Initiatives to address issues of diversity and inclusion; and raised the bar on our outreach health care through a partnership with Telus Health who gifted us a fully-equipped Mobile Health Clinic (please check out page 5 for our spotlight on this partnership).

Throughout the year we continued to find ways to increase our outreach to vulnerable individuals. We also focused on increasing our capacity around our harm reduction outreach services both in shelters and on the street. And, the team strengthened our partnerships to provide more specialized health care services to our community.

As you will see throughout the Annual Report, all of these initiatives were key to allowing us to pivot quickly and efficiently when, on March 20, 2020, the Premier of Nova Scotia declared a State of Emergency due to the COVID-19 pandemic. Our community needed us and we were there.

A significant strategic achievement this year was hosting a World Café in conjunction with last year's AGM. This led to a new, more fluid strategic plan that the Board has committed to reviewing annually. This document, we feel, positively positions NECHC to face the changes ahead. We are confident, with this as a guide, that we will continue to grow our programs to be responsive to the present and emerging needs of our clients and communities.

As we celebrate our successes, we cannot forget that this year has been challenging as we grieve the loss of clients/patients through addiction, COVID, and chronic illnesses. Daily, at our doorstep and in our communities, we see the impact of homelessness and lack of supportive and affordable housing for those suffering from substance use and/or living with mental health challenges. Through that, we remain vigilant and continue to honour the resiliency of the clients we serve and working with those in our communities who seek to advance the principles of equity and social justice.

All that we do would not be possible without the dedicated and committed staff at NECHC which includes teams within the Primary Care Clinic, MOSH, Housing First, dentistry, and programming. They bring an unwavering commitment to the clients and communities. This was never better displayed than throughout the COVID-19 pandemic. We take this opportunity to thank them for their dedication and service. And, of course, a huge thank you to our community, funders, donors, and partners for your continued support and belief in our work.

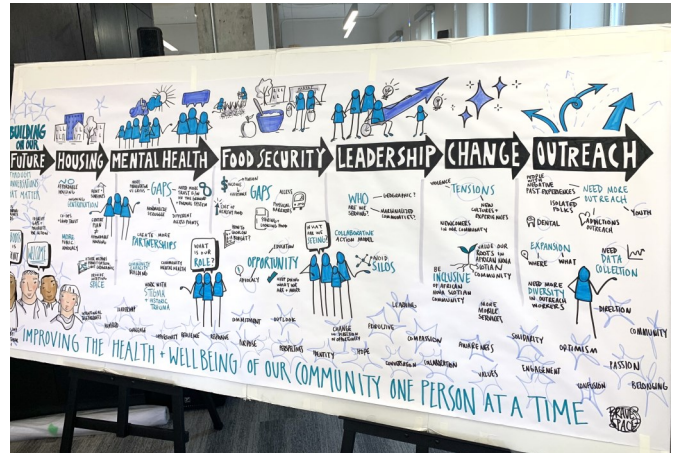
Rick Kelly
Chair, Board of Directors

Marie-France LeBlanc
Executive Director, NECHA

World Café Shapes our Direction

In 2019, NECHC hosted a World Café which brought together over forty passionate community partners who have an invested interest in the health and well-being of the community. The World Café, a format used around the world, creates an opportunity to garner collective insight and wisdom from community members and partners.

The World Café allowed us to reach out to our diverse communities to hear their voices and solicit their input to discover ways that NECHC could further meet the changing needs of those we serve. Joined by the NECHC Board of Directors, the Executive Director, and a number of staff members, the group brought to light incredible insight to what NECHC can do to better serve our population. This engagement helped us frame the new 2020 Strategic Plan (shown below).



Key Directions for NECHC





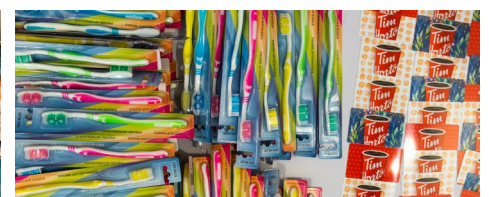
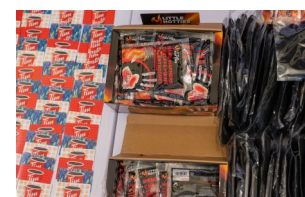
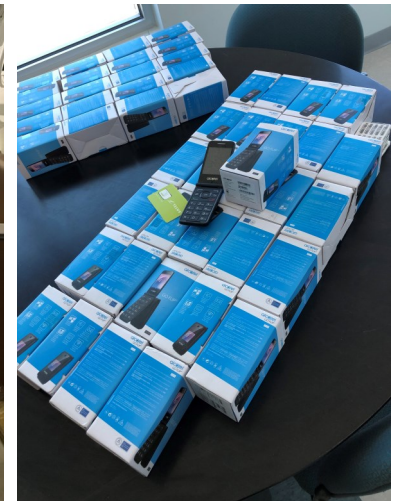
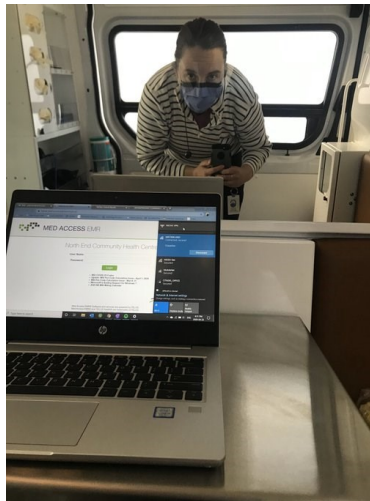
MOSH—10 Years and Growing

As the Mobile Outreach Street Health (MOSH) program celebrated its ten year anniversary last fall, to say that it has grown since its inception would be an understatement. In the early days, MOSH was a small team driving around in a red mini-van. Today, the team consists of a Team Lead, a nurse practitioner, two nurses, an occupational therapist, a physician, and an Intensive Case Manager. Our red van, with its vanity license plate, can still be found throughout the community but our health team is now providing its services out of our new full service state-of-the-art NECHC Mobile Health Clinic powered by Telus Health (profiled on the next page).

For our community experiencing homelessness or living in shelters, the arrival of a high-tech “clinic on

wheels” was a game-changer this year. The Mobile Clinic brought a new level of support to help address the intense need for primary health care among the city’s homeless population who, because of mental illness, substance use, poverty, and other circumstances, face barriers to accessing medical care that they cannot overcome on their own.

MOSH, throughout its ten years, has always been an amazing resource, however, it was never more obvious than during the early stages of the COVID-19 pandemic. Overnight, the team joined the front lines to provide health care and testing services for those most in need. It truly has been a 10th year that we will never forget.



State-of-the-art Mobile Health Clinic Rolls into Town

In early March, NECHC and Telus Health launched the new NECHC Mobile Health Clinic. This state-of-the-art clinic allows MOSH and the rest of the NECHC team to expand on the important work that MOSH has been doing over the years by bringing primary health care directly to people in need throughout our city. A specially-equipped clinic on wheels, the Mobile Clinic will provide essential primary medical and mental health care to underserved citizens in Halifax.

We thank Telus Health for their incredible support of our work, and belief that we are doing an exceptional job at caring for the communities we serve.



Patty Melanson's son-in-law, Andrew Ross, was gracious enough to help us design the artwork that is featured on the new Mobile Clinic.



Various dignitaries have visited the new clinic on wheels, including Mayor Mike Savage (pictured above with Marie-France LeBlanc, NECHC Executive Director).



The Mobile Clinic in action!



NECHC staff were thrilled with their new mobile clinic!



Supportive Housing for all

The Housing First team helps those experiencing homelessness into permanent housing and provides their clients with additional supports as needed. Those supports can include addictions counseling, access to health services, and help in navigating the social services and justice systems. 2019/2020 marked the fifth year of the program at NECHC.

Today, as it was in 2015, the underlying principle remains the same, that people are able to move forward in their lives once they have a place to live.

The struggle to find appropriate, affordable housing for those experiencing homelessness remains constant. This past year has been particularly challenging with vacancy rates in HRM hovering at 1%. We continue to build the team as we advocate for our clients and the homeless community at large. Over the past year, our team has seen a staffing increase to better support and advocate on behalf of African Nova Scotian's experiencing homelessness.



Housing First's Mynah and Ashton spend many hours a week on the road to meet with clients.

SPOTLIGHT: Ashton Stephenson, Intensive Case Manager, Housing First



The newest member of our Housing First team is Ashton Stephenson. As an Intensive Case Manager, Ashton works with the team to prioritize housing, with the main objective being to get clients housed regardless of their situation and work to continue to support them

after they are housed.

Prior to joining NECHC, Ashton was working in various HRM shelters, which made him want to become directly involved in working with individuals facing homelessness and overcoming barriers they face. "This position is extremely hands-on," says Ashton. "I get to help clients with housing issues but also support them in many other ways. It is about their overall well-being, not just housing."

On a day-to-day basis, Ashton finds himself doing anything from searching for housing vacancies, calling landlords and superintendents to schedule viewings, filling out applications for clients, and helping them find clothing or food. What he

enjoys most about his work is being one-on-one with Housing First clients, attending appointments, case management, and sitting down with a client so that "together we can determine what they want to accomplish, what they want to see in themselves, and then working to make these goals attainable."

Another aspect he enjoys is working with the older Clientele. Ashton finds them to be so respectful, and have a desire to change their lifestyle and health habits to better their well-being.

Originally from Ontario, Ashton attended Cape Breton University and graduated with a Bachelor of Arts and Community Studies degree with a Sociology concentration. Although he has been in Halifax for two years, he finds that he is continuously learning more and more about the community. "I love how much culture is embedded into the community. I love how educated people are about the history of their culture and community."

Beyond the job itself, Ashton says that the environment and dynamic of NECHC is welcoming to everyone—"I genuinely feel embraced when I walk through the doors."



Increasing Access for Patients

In our 48 years as a collaborative primary care clinic we have seen many changes, and this year has been no different. The lived experience of being three years in our new location allowed us to take a look at what more was needed to better serve our community. We found that our wait times had increased beyond our comfort-level. We also felt that our patients were struggling to get specialist appointments or get to those appointments. As such, we made a few changes.

We were thrilled to welcome Dr. Justin Quedado as a full-time physician to the Clinic, adding additional resources that allow for timelier appointments (see his profile below). We started a walk-in social work clinic that allowed clients/patients to meet with social workers to help them navigate the social services

system. This also allowed people to seek counsel without necessarily seeing their primary care provider.

Also, we now host, in partnership with Nova Scotia Health Authority (NSHA), a monthly Internal Medicine Clinic. All these initiatives have led to better and more timely care for our community.

As well, we increased our outreach services this year through a combination of community partnerships and additional programming. Some of the highlights include: providing dental hygiene and health promotion initiatives in elementary schools; providing weekly hot breakfasts at two elementary schools; and launching a weekly healthy snack program for families living in the North End of Halifax.

Dental Hygiene Outreach

We are thankful to the donors and funding organizations for their significant contributions that allow us to continue the important work of preventative dental care in our community:

- The Windsor Foundation
- NS Department of Communities, Culture, and Heritage—Building Vibrant Communities
- TELUS Atlantic Community Board

Community Pantry

Working to help combat food insecurity, which many of our community members face, is a barrier we work to help alleviate and continue to build programs for. The Community Pantry provides families with healthy snacks for kids, ways to prepare them, and recipes to help the parents.

The Good Food Box

The ever-popular Good Food Box continues to provide a variety of healthy fruits and vegetables to community members each month for the low cost of \$7.

SPOTLIGHT: Dr. Justin Quedado, Primary Care Physician



Dr. Justin Quedado, our newest Primary Care Physician, may look familiar to some of our clients. Dr. Quedado did some of his med school residency with NECHC. Because of this, he says the decision to work at NECHC was an easy one for him – he immediately identified

that the healthy and supportive team environment was one he wanted to be part of.

The physicians, nurse practitioners and nurses have a wealth of knowledge to learn from, "I want to

become a better doctor by learning from people I respect. There is a lot to learn from this group of health care providers."

Spending his time working with clients at our clinic as well as some time with MOSH, for Justin, he focuses on the importance of using trust and mutual respect to solve his clients' health problems. He is always looking forward to get them into a better place. Working at NECHC allows him to develop a true relationship with his patients rather than a one-off appointment where no relationship is established.

"I enjoy building relationships with my patients, working with the same patients over and over to eventually develop a strong relationship with trust."



Saying Farewell and Best Wishes to Longtime Nurse, Rose Fraser

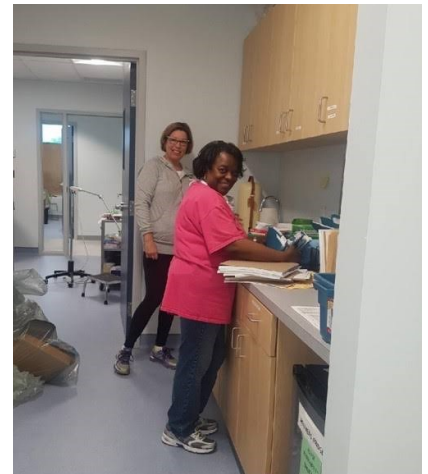
For 30 years, Rose Fraser has been a constant presence at NECHC, and now we wish her every bit of happiness as she heads into this new chapter of her life in well-deserved retirement.

It is through her unwavering commitment to serving her community that Rose has brought so much compassion to her nursing care, her colleagues, and the community. We have all been fortunate to witness this, and have taken that approach to heart.

With all the ups and downs that 30 years brings, Rose has continued to work with compassion and grace, mentoring young nurses, med students, and physicians alike. Many colleagues have said that Rose's guidance has changed the way they deliver care, and has redefined their outlook on life. She has been generous with her time, guidance, knowledge, insight, and sense of humor. We will all miss the laughing, joking, and singing that followed Rose everywhere.

The impact she has had on our organization and community has been nothing short of incredible. We have big shoes to fill, Rose!

Good luck, best wishes, and enjoy retirement!





Mental Health Services

Building capacity to provide better mental health services

It has been readily documented that in Nova Scotia, we have a mental health crisis, with little to no access to much needed services. Our community is no different, but the barriers make it so that the majority of our clients cannot access any treatment for mental health. At NECHC, we work diligently to provide the best possible mental health services to our clients, many of whom have faced significant trauma experiences. In addition to mental health struggles, members of our community are also trying to navigate housing, income support, and child rearing challenges. To address these issues, this year NECHC started two new walk-in clinics—Pause and Social Work. By offering these walk-in programs, we are able to provide support for our community.

But sometimes the community needs us more. This past year, NECHC launched our Rapid Response Youth Outreach in response to a tragedy in the community. This program allowed us to quickly establish a grief counselling clinic for youth living in our community in the wake of the murder of Tristan Reese, a young African Nova Scotian from the city. This type of immediate support allows us to be there when the community needs us.

The **Social Work Drop-In Clinic** was designed for clients of NECHC who need immediate support for things like helping with the Income Assistance process, getting prescription drug coverage, filling out CPP forms, housing referrals and applications, and completing immigration forms. By addressing these issues in the walk-in, it opens up regular appointments that provide long-term support to those who need it.

Pause: Mental Health Walk-In Clinic started late last spring and aimed to help those with mental-health issues who are marginalized, homeless or with addictions, or those who can't wait for help for lengthy periods of time within the existing system.

SPOTLIGHT: Tara Downey, Outreach Social Worker



Growing up in the North End, Tara Downey knew she wanted to come back and help those community members who are underserved. Tara started at NECHC in 2018 as a student and has since grown into her current role as Outreach Social Worker. With this role,

Tara gets to interact daily with her community.

Though everyday is different, Tara can usually expect to be reaching out and tracking down clients to preform check-ins, providing them with resources and assessing their needs, booking appointments for follow-up, delivering meals to

clients, helping purchase groceries for our more vulnerable clients, as well as leading the Pause Mental Health Clinic.

"My clients are so great," said Tara. "Being able to help people who society deem to be helpless is a great feeling."

Tara's role is serving individuals who identify as having an African ancestry and others who live in the North End community and HRM as a whole.

Having grown up in this community, Tara always knew about NECHC, but now working here, she has a much better sense of its impact and the incredible people she gets to work with side-by-side.

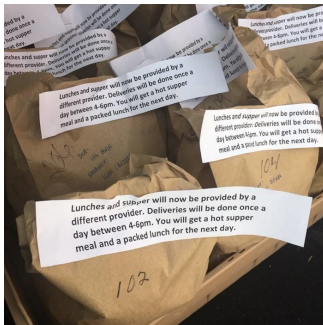


Facing COVID-19 in our Community

On March 22, 2020, the Premier of Nova Scotia declared a State of Emergency in response to the COVID-19 pandemic which had spread to our province. Immediately, NECHC pivoted our services to focus on protecting our vulnerable clients and the wider Halifax community in the wake of this unprecedented virus and the shut down of many relied-upon services. It was imperative for us to continue providing primary care to our patients; get the most at-risk, immune-compromised people safely housed; get food and other supplies to those in need; and offer testing for everyone. Overnight, NECHC, MOSH, Housing First and our Mobile Health Clinic joined the frontline against COVID-19, working with our partners in health care and community services. Here is our journey in pictures . . .



Facing COVID-19 in our Community



2019/20 Financial Snapshot

Statement of operations—Year ending March 31, 2020

	Budget	Actual
Revenue	\$3,927,759.00	\$4,060,398.00
Expense	\$3,927,759.00	\$4,048,663.00

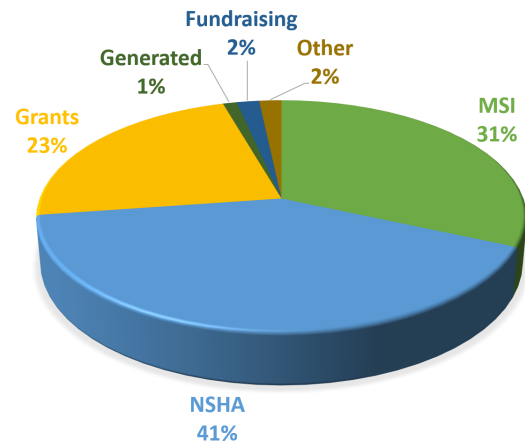
Revenue by type

MSI	1,284,061.00
Nova Scotia Health Authority	1,668,793.00
Grants	925,676.00
Generated	43,148.00
Fundraising	69,787.00
Other	68,933.00
	\$4,060,398.00

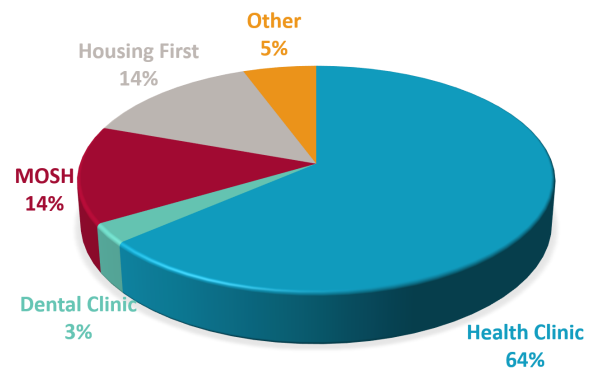
Expenses by project

Health Clinic	2,580,271.82
Dental Clinic	115,143.93
MOSH	562,052.22
Housing First	561,925.81
Other	229,269.22
	\$4,048,663.00

REVENUE



EXPENSES



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 to create a strong, healthy community.

3M

AbelDent

Adsum for Women and Children

Affordable Housing Association of
Nova Scotia

African Nova Scotian Affairs

Ark Outreach

Brunswick Street Mission

Community Food Centres of Canada

Community Foundation of Nova Scotia

Daily Bread

Dalhousie University, Faculty of
Dentistry

Direction 180 Methadone Clinic

Downtown Dartmouth Business
Commission—Navigator Program

Feeding Others of Dartmouth

The Gordon Foundation for Children
and Youth

Halifax Youth Foundation

Halifax Visiting Dispensary

Henry Schein Inc.

Hope Cottage

IWK Health Centre

Mainline Needle Exchange

Mi'kmaw Native Friendship Centre

North End Business Association

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

Out of the Cold Shelter

Salvation Army

Shelter Nova Scotia

Spring Garden Road Navigator Program

Steele Auto Group

Stepping Stones

Sunday Supper

Telus Health

Twist & Bits

United Way

United Way—Atlantic Compassion Fund

Welcome Housing

The Windsor Foundation