

# Annual Report 2022-23



A vertical photograph on the left side of the page shows a lush green forest. In the upper part, there are evergreen trees. Below them, a waterfall cascades down a rocky ledge into a pool of water. The water then flows into a river that winds through the forest, with white rapids visible in the lower part of the image.

# Table Of Contents

**01**

**Letter from Leadership Council**

**02**

**Algoma Ontario Health Team  
Mandate and Transformation Office**

**03**

**The Year at a Glance**

**04 - 07**

**Strengthening Care in Algoma  
Healthy Aging  
Complex Chronic Diseases  
Mental Health and Addictions**

**08 - 09**

**Community Partnership and  
Engagement**

**10 - 12**

**Building a Foundation for  
Collaboration  
Digital Health  
Leadership and Governance  
Collaborative Quality Improvement  
Plan (cQIP)**

**13**

**A Year in Review**

# A Letter From Leadership Council

**On behalf of the Algoma Ontario Health Team's (AOHT) Leadership Council, we are pleased to present the 2022 - 2023 Annual Report.**

This year saw advancements in our population health management projects, unique co-design opportunities that brought the community perspective to the forefront of AOHT work, and new collaborations with partner organizations to tackle healthcare challenges across Algoma.

We are pleased to share that we have achieved many of our priority goals from our 2022-23 Annual Plan. We improved care for older adults by initiating frailty screening in primary care, completed the groundwork for coordinated access to geriatric services, and transferred the outpatient rehabilitation program to a partner organization. In February 2023, we hosted Caregiver Research Focus Groups to better understand what support caregivers in our region require. In the fall of 2022 and winter of 2023, we collaborated with various primary care organizations to host a series of cervical screening clinics for individuals without primary care providers. These are just a few initiatives we have undertaken this year.

We invite you to read this report and learn more about what we have accomplished over the past year. Our team recognizes that this work would not be possible without the support and dedication of our partner organizations, collaborators, advisors, volunteers, team members, both past and present, and Algoma residents. We are so grateful for your commitment to driving priority work forward, and our team will continue to work diligently to achieve integrated care for residents of Algoma.

*Leadership Council*



# Our Mandate

To work together as a team of local health professionals, organizations, and community members to create a network where citizens will have access to the right care, right team, and right care setting when they need it. We want individuals to experience seamless transitions throughout their care journey in a system that is understandable, digitally-enabled, and collaborative.

## Meet the Transformation Office

Our team mobilized work across organizations in its membership and beyond with support from the 2022-23 AOHT Transformation Office, which is responsible for supporting leadership, decision-making, and operations.

**Victoria Aceti Chlebus**  
Director, Integrated Care

**Roylene Bowden**  
Manager of Programs

**Michelle Courneene**  
Project Management  
Consultant

**Jeff Dorans**  
Quality Improvement Lead

**Erin Mulrone**  
Research Assistant

**Brianna Smith**  
Communications and  
Community Engagement  
Coordinator

**Cassandra Lepore**  
Project Coordinator

**Kendra Dumont**  
Analytics Coordinator

## Previous Members

We would like to express our gratitude to our former colleagues for their valuable contributions.

**Maria Torres**  
Digital Health Coordinator

**Sophia Myles**  
OHT Impact Fellow

**Gregory Wendt**  
Nursing Student

**Jayne Meser**  
Nursing Student



# The Year at a Glance

## Strengthening Care in Algoma

25

Patients enrolled in the Post-Fall Pathway program

11,800

Visits to the Community Wellness Bus from inception to March 31, 2023

81

Geriatric referral forms received over 16 weeks

## Patient Partnership and Engagement

29

Participants engaged in Caregiver Research Focus Groups

500

Caregivers onboarded into the Caregiver ID program

4

Advisors engaged in Healthy Aging and System Navigation

## Partnership and Collaboration

140

Individuals screened for cervical cancer through collaborative screening clinics

27

Organizations attended the Mental Health & Addictions Planning Session



# Strengthening Care in Algoma

## Healthy Aging

Over the past year, the AOHT has piloted projects to improve care for community-dwelling older adults and their caregivers, including increasing frailty identification and streamlining access to services.

### Post-Fall Pathway

This past year, the Post-Fall Pathway Project aimed to prevent secondary falls by identifying patients that have experienced a fall and standardizing the process of directing patients to Algoma's rehabilitative care services. The anticipated outcomes of the project included a common understanding of the patient's experience across organizations and the identification of opportunities to lessen functional decline in older adults who present to the emergency department (ED) and primary care with a fall.

In 2022-23, 25 patients were enrolled in the post-fall pathway. Exploration occurred in early 2023 to expand this project to the community paramedicine program and North and East Algoma. Over the past year, work continued on a research study that aims to understand the experience of older adults who present to care after experiencing a fall.

### Early Frailty Identification

The Early Frailty Identification (ID) project aimed to increase the identification of frailty in the community by screening patients in a primary care setting. To identify frailty earlier, the AOHT set out to embed a frailty screening tool into the Electronic Medical Record (EMR) at a primary care site in Algoma.

In January, a frailty screening process was successfully implemented at the Algoma Nurse Practitioner-Led Clinic (ANPLC). Working with the Centre for Effective Practice, a frailty screening tool was embedded into the OceanMD platform, which was integrated into the EMR at the ANPLC. Using this tool, the clinic staff can screen patients for frailty and connect patients with the appropriate level of support in the community based on a more in-depth assessment with a Registered Nurse at the clinic.

## Coordinated Access to Geriatric Services

The Coordinated Access to Geriatric Services project aimed to improve access to specialized services across health and social services for frail older adults, improve coordination and collaboration of care, and leverage existing technologies to support seamless access to services.

This year saw the formation of the Coordinated Access to Geriatrics working group, which had representation from community partners and stakeholders from Algoma Geriatric Services. The working group provided direction for the creation of a common Sault Area Hospital (SAH) specialized geriatric services referral form, central fax number, and eReferral solution. The form was collaboratively developed to enable frontline workers to access geriatric services in a streamlined manner and improve provider satisfaction by eliminating duplicative forms. Keeping patient needs at the forefront, this form provided an opportunity to collect patient consent to share referrals amongst geriatric service clinicians to improve seamless access to services.

## Increasing Access to Outpatient Geriatric Services

The Outpatient Geriatric Rehabilitation (OGR) project aimed to increase the capacity of ambulatory geriatric interventions for older adults experiencing frailty. In the early fall of 2022, the project transitioned to Sault Area Hospital (SAH) to further develop and advance the operationalization of the program. This transition is beneficial because the project aligns with existing projects SAH was undertaking.

The alignment of this work and dedicated resources from SAH to advance this project allowed for the quick and efficient transition of the OGR working group to the SAH project team.



“I thought the form was user friendly and easy to fill out.”  
*Family Medicine Physician*

# Conditions Better Managed in the Community

## Complex Chronic Diseases

Our OHT continued to plan for work on chronic disease pathways outlined in the Ministry of Health (MOH) Guidance. We laid the foundation to begin this work by hiring a new Manager of Programs and accessing relevant data on the prevalence of chronic diseases to support these initiatives. In order to align our focus on the chronic disease pathways outlined in the MOH guidance, the AOHT committed to measuring the rate of hospitalizations for ambulatory care-sensitive conditions.

## Mental Health and Addictions

**In the spring of 2022, the AOHT, in partnership with the Canadian Mental Health Association (CMHA) Algoma, worked with our partners to develop a Mental Health and Addictions (MH&A) Report. This report identified strategic directions to improve care for residents and provided guidance for the AOHT.**

## Community Frontline Input Sessions

The AOHT completed 19 consultations with Community Wellness Bus (CWB) visitors, CMHA Clubhouse visitors, and frontline staff between July and August 2022 to understand barriers to access and challenges with continuity and consistency of health and social care. The findings were used during the Integrated Community-based Mental Health and Addictions planning session to ensure that the priorities were based on the input of people with lived experience and those closely involved in the work.

## Integrated Community-based Mental Health and Addictions Planning Session

In August 2022, as part of an environmental scan to advance the work in the MH&A Report, the AOHT welcomed 33 representatives from 27 organizations across Algoma for an in-person Integrated Community-based Mental Health and Addictions Planning Session. The planning session enabled leaders to connect and discuss opportunities to advance mental health and addictions planning and improve outcomes for Algoma residents. Following the session, a Mental Health and Addictions System Planning Committee was conceptualized and initiated by a group of leaders from CMHA Algoma, SAH, Algoma Family Services, and the District of Sault Ste. Marie Social Services Administration Board. The committee aims to establish a governance structure for mental health and addictions organizations and programs and to align initiatives and resources to reflect our community priorities.





# Community Wellness Bus: Moving Towards Sustainability



The 2022-2023 year marked two years of service for the CWB. Two years in, the CWB continued to rely solely on in-kind contributions from our collaborating partners. The CWB Executive Committee renewed the Partnership Agreement for the upcoming year, and they are committed to strengthening and expanding partnerships and broadening the scope of services, particularly surrounding primary care. As part of these efforts, planning began in March 2023 for a “Lunch and Learn” session where community partners learned about the project and how to get involved. The AOHT and CWB team published a manuscript in Healthcare Quarterly detailing the successes and challenges of implementing a partner-led mobile health clinic in Algoma.



Attendees listening to Annette Katajamaki, Executive Director of the CMHA Algoma, at the Lunch and Learn.



CWB staff members Amanda Bouchard and Christine Gigliotti receiving a donation from Kim Barrow on behalf of Your Neighbourhood Credit Union.



# Community Partnership and Engagement

Over the past year, we were committed to embedding community voices into every level of our project work and meeting the goals outlined in our Patient, Family, and Caregiver Partnership and Engagement Strategy.

## Co-Design with Community

As laid out by our Patient, Family, and Caregiver Partnership and Engagement Strategy, we engaged with various community partners at every level of project work, including Caregiver ID, Healthy Aging, and Complex Chronic Diseases. In the winter of 2023, the Community Partnership Toolkit (CPT), created in co-design with patient partners, partner organizations, and the community, was adopted by the Ministry of Health and is available on the RISE website.

## Patient, Family, and Caregivers Declaration of Values

Work began to develop guidelines to promote the adoption of the Patient, Family, and Caregiver Declaration of Values by our partner organizations. We continued to increase the uptake of this value set to ensure alignment with our partners in the work we do to better the lives of Algoma residents.



## Caregiver ID Phase 2

To launch Phase 2 of our Caregiver ID efforts, we reconvened the original planning team to propose our next undertaking: Caregiver Research Focus Groups. The goal was to learn what caregivers in Algoma need outside of Caregiver ID. This project was co-designed with two community partners who have been instrumental in project planning, execution, and evaluation. In February of 2023, we hosted seven focus groups and had a total of 29 participants. The findings were shared at the 2023 Northern Healthcare Research Conference.

# Committing to Equity, Diversity, and Inclusion

In addition to our priority area initiatives, which have an equity lens embedded within them, our team identified and planned for tangible steps to improve equity, diversity, and inclusion across all AOHT work.

## Indigenous Cultural Sensitivity Training

Since November 2022, the AOHT Transformation Office has participated in Indigenous Cultural Sensitivity Training hosted by SAH. By the end of 2023, several CWB staff and the entire AOHT Transformation Office will have completed the training.

## Social Equity Committee

The AOHT Transformation Office had representation on the Social Equity Committee to support the ongoing work of our partner organizations.

## French Translation

With guidance from the Réseau du mieux-être francophone du Nord de l'Ontario, we advertised a cervical screening clinic and our Primary Care Patient and Family Advisory Council application in French. Our team has also begun the process of completing the Active Offer training. Additionally, our official website is available in both French and English.

## Advancing Social Equity Learning Series

In the winter of 2023, the AOHT Transformation Office, along with partner members, completed the Centre for Social Accountability's Social Accountability Learning Health system workshop. This workshop was 12 weeks in length and supported advancing our understanding of health equity approaches in integrated care.

## Project Percolator

Every second month, the AOHT hosts a hybrid Project Percolator meeting that invites AOHT partners and community members to learn more about AOHT and projects happening in the community. In September 2022, Equity, Diversity, and Inclusion (EDI) were featured with presentations from the Social Equity Committee, Algoma Public Health (APH), and SAH.

## Fall Vaccine Initiatives

The AOHT continued to approach fall vaccine (COVID-19 and flu) clinics through an equity lens via the COVID-19 Booster Clinics at APH, the bivalent booster vaccines offered via drive-through model at SAH Assessment Centre, and the CWB which administered flu shots with the assistance of the mobile crisis team at SAH.





# Building a Foundation for Collaboration

## Digital Health

The AOHT achieved the objective of building a foundation for our digital health work by understanding the current environment, building relationships between organizations, and listening to patients and caregivers through the following eight activities:

- Drafted the AOHT's Digital Health Strategy and AOHT's Health Information Maturity Plan.
- Completed Virtual Care Maturity Model assessments and interviews.
- Reconvened the AOHT Digital Health Committee.
- Established the Privacy and Freedom of Information Officers' Community of Practice (CoP).
- Created a Privacy Toolkit Work Plan to drive the work of the Privacy and Freedom of Information Officers CoP.
- Supported organizational partners in their submission of online appointment booking funding proposals.
- Coordinated a regional design for the North East Episodic Access to Virtual Care.
- Incorporated digital health assets within our Healthy Aging projects
  - eReferral for Coordinated Access to Geriatric Services.
  - EMR eForm and tool integration for Frailty ID.

# Leadership and Governance

Over the past year, the AOHT has advanced our goals of strengthening the foundation of our OHT through renewed governance structures, quality improvement, and increased involvement and communication with key collaborators.

In May 2022, the AOHT formed a governance sub-committee composed of Leadership Council members and leaders from organizations across our geography. The sub-committee worked over the year to renew the Terms of Reference for the Leadership Council, develop a work plan spanning from short to long-term milestones, and moved towards a strengthened organizational model and membership for the future of the OHT. As we awaited further guidance from Ontario Health following the release of the OHT Path Forward, our OHT remained steadfast in our work to create a network where patients will have access to the right care, the right team, and the right care setting when they need it. Shortly after forming our governance sub-committee, our partners reaffirmed their commitment to the AOHT by signing a renewed Memorandum of Understanding. The collective dedication of our current partners allowed us to continue working across organizations as one large team to improve the care journey in Algoma.

This past year, we invited additional district partners to attend our Leadership Council meetings, and continued to build relationships through various levels of engagement on projects, working groups, and more. We remain committed to expanding partnerships across North and East Algoma. Additionally, the formation of the Maamwesying Ontario Health Team (MOHT) brought an opportunity to form an OHT-to-OHT partnership that will benefit our region.

## Collaborative Quality Improvement Plan (cQIP)

Throughout 2022-23, the AOHT worked on developing a collaborative Quality Improvement Plan (cQIP). The development of the cQIP led AOHT partner organizations to come together to create a plan that focused on measuring the impact and improvement of AOHT initiatives across a number of indicators. Furthermore, the AOHT developed a performance dashboard to review and discuss the mandatory and supplementary quality improvement indicators on a regular basis as the data becomes available.

**140 PATIENTS  
SCREENED  
FOR  
CERVICAL  
CANCER**

## Cervical Screening for Unattached Patients

Using the data released from Health System Performance Network to inform the AOHT's inaugural cQIP, the AOHT identified cervical screening as a priority area for Algoma. To reach our target population, the team engaged with various community organizations serving equity-deserving populations to raise awareness about the clinics. The AOHT, in partnership with three primary care partners (Algoma Nurse Practitioner Led Clinic, Superior Family Health Team, and Group Health Centre) and our local public health unit (APH), hosted a series of three Cervical Screening Clinics.

# System Navigation

The AOHT was committed to improving supports for healthcare system navigation and facilitating better coordination between organizations and providers across the system. Based on the Phase 1 Patient Navigation Report completed at the end of March 2022, the AOHT explored opportunities to provide 24/7 navigation support to our attributed population.

## MH&A Roadmap and Resource Guide

In March 2023, this working group, consisting of frontline staff, community advisors, and senior leadership, was created. This group aimed to improve patient and provider-facing navigation tools on mental health and addiction-related services. In the coming year, the working group will determine the project scope for the initial phase.

## 24/7 Navigation Supports

Using a website banner, the AOHT embedded a link to the provincial 'digital front door' Health811 and a link to 24/7 caregiver support via the Ontario Caregiver Organization. Work continued on redesigning the AOHT's website to facilitate more seamless navigation of local and provincial health services and resources. In addition, the AOHT continued to develop a patient-facing resource - the Aging in Algoma Resource Guide - which intends to improve health literacy and increase awareness of services. This guide is currently under review by local subject matter experts, clinicians, and patient advisors.



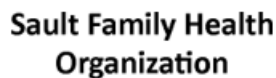
# A Year in Review

Looking back, we are incredibly proud of all of our successes in the past year.

Building on the achievements of our first two full years as an OHT, we will continue to focus on initiatives that prioritize the needs of Algoma residents. Based on MoH guidance, we anticipate this year will bring significant changes as we move closer to maturity.

The collaborative spirit of all partners has created momentum within the community to improve access to care for the residents of Algoma. Over the last year, we have had the opportunity to learn from innovative tests of change and strengthened our capacity to implement integrated care projects.

We look ahead to the future with optimism and reaffirm our commitment to continue working with the community to achieve our shared mission of achieving integrated care in Algoma.



## Connect with us!



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