

**ANNUAL REPORT**  
**2021 - 2022**

# Planting for the future.

**fhc**  
FLEMINGDON  
HEALTH CENTRE



# CEO and Board Chair Message



It was difficult to predict that in the year 2021-2022 we would still be in the throes of the global COVID-19 pandemic. However, if you were on the ground in North East Toronto this past year, you saw it first-hand. You saw the many neighbourhoods that were still disproportionately impacted by COVID-19. And simultaneously, you saw the public sympathy and former rallying behind those who keep our city running such as transit drivers, daycare staff or grocery store workers dwindle or disappear altogether. For those of us who were

hopeful that the pandemic would illuminate inequities that could not be forgotten, we began to doubt our fellow Torontonians commitment to their neighbours. In reading this report we hope it is a reminder of our shared responsibility to each other.

While overall the year was grim, we also saw glimmers of hope. And while we may not see the major shifts in public perception and policy that were once on the horizon, that did not stop FHC's communities and stakeholders from rolling up their sleeves and doing what needed doing... even while exceptionally tired and overwhelmed. In the pages that follow, you will hear of the difficult balance of managing an active pandemic and trying to address the gaps the pandemic was creating.

With this balance in mind, we chose to focus our 2021-2022 Annual Report on 'Planting for the Future.' We anticipate that the next phase of our work will include nurturing and supporting the regrowth and re-energizing of our staff, communities and other stakeholders. All of us will have a role in rebuilding our health care landscape and ensuring that the post pandemic world is one we are proud to call home.

We are grateful to all those who supported us to achieve the impacts we are so proud to share in the following pages. Successes include ongoing innovative COVID-19 supports through East Effort, a new Strategic Plan, a further commitment to quality and client experience and new programs including Flemo Farm, the Youth Voice Collective and the Sudanese Women's Group, to name a few. FHC staff also embraced further electronic health initiatives to better serve clients.

We want to give our sincere thanks to our staff, students and volunteers who made this last year exceptional. It is an honour to work alongside all of you and to celebrate you in this report.

Sincerely,



**Jen Quinlan**  
CEO



**Omar Ha-Redeye**  
President





# Strategic Plan

During this past year it was initially difficult to do anything beyond supporting our communities through the pandemic. But the longer it went on, the more we realized that we needed to look forward and make sure that the hard lessons of these tough times were put to good use in moving forward.

Our new Strategic Plan was developed with deep and thoughtful input from FHC staff, partner agencies, our Board of Directors, and 100 community members. Equipped

with questionnaires in eight different languages, five peer researchers collected these contributions from a wide range of community members. We are deeply appreciative of the thoughts that were shared and hope that everyone can see this reflected in the Strategic Plan.

This new plan is built around an ultimate impact of **equitable health outcomes for our communities**. This means FHC will be deepening our focus on providing care

and system leadership that ensures the communities we serve experience the same high level of health outcomes as the rest of Toronto. Our guiding document will be our new **Theory of Change**. This approach, shared on the next page, brings together how we will achieve our ultimate impact. We look forward to working with you, our communities, through our new priorities and outcomes.

**ULTIMATE IMPACT:** Equitable health outcomes for our communities.

**BY 2027:**

Equity deserving communities will have improved access to high quality primary health care and the supports, rights and dignities afforded to others.

**OUTCOMES**

Greater influence by community in the design and delivery of health services and supports

Stronger networks and relationships with the communities we serve

High impact relationships and collaborations that advance more equitable health outcomes

A measurable increase in access to health services and supports by equity deserving community members

Greater influence in shaping health systems and disrupting the status quo

A workplace culture of safety, wellbeing, and work-life balance

More effective advocacy on behalf of equity deserving communities

Collaborative and communicative cross-functional teams

A highly engaged workforce representative of the communities we serve

**PRIORITIES**

We prioritize equity deserving communities by:

Catalyzing community-driven care

Aligning collective capacity

Embodying health equity from the inside out

**VALUES**

We commit to:

Health equity  
Anti-racism & anti-oppression

Community engagement  
Accountability & transparency

Excellence  
Collaboration & partnerships

# COVID Vaccine Engagement and Community Health Ambassadors

FHC played a key role in supporting the Vaccine Engagement strategy and programs with the Ministry of Health, Ontario Health, North York Toronto Health Partners, East Toronto Health Partners and the City of Toronto. The success of these efforts was in large part thanks to a team of Community Health Ambassadors (CHAs) hired from the community and trained in community engagement. The focus of this work was to:

- Share updated, multi-language and culturally relevant health education through flyers, and video messages to combat misinformation.
- Reduce barriers by bringing pop up clinics directly to residential buildings and other community settings.
- Reach out to FHC clients who needed help booking vaccinations, with transportation to and from vaccination sites, with information about vaccination locations and to respond to questions

and concerns. This was often combined with providing support to families needing to isolate and still access food.

- Organize information sessions and town halls in various languages where doctors and nurses could answer questions from members of our neighbourhoods.
- Support appointment accompaniment, system navigation, testing and later on distribution of Rapid Antigen Test kits.
- Distribute masks, sanitizers, sanitary supplies, food supports, and other Personal Protective Equipment.

We are very proud of the success in reducing the gaps in vaccination that previously existed between our neighbourhoods and the average city rates. Local knowledge, trust of the community through CHAs, great health care partnerships and the support of area buildings contributed to the success.





# FHC by the Numbers

This was our second year navigating the COVID-19 pandemic. The communities served by Flemington Health Centre were disproportionately impacted. However, community members and organizations like FHC continued to support and advocate for our communities. FHC maintained and adjusted service delivery to ensure our communities were supported, safe and strengthened throughout a time when it was needed most.



**36,741**

PRIMARY CARE SERVICE  
PROVIDER INTERACTIONS



**679**

FOOT CARE GROUP  
PARTICIPATION  
ATTENDANCES



**10,109**

POPULATION HEALTH  
AND WELLNESS GROUP  
PARTICIPANT ATTENDANCES



**11,221**

CLIENT SUPPORT SERVICES -  
GROUP PARTICIPANT  
ATTENDANCES



**4,092**

THERAPY & COUNSELLING  
SERVICE PROVIDER  
INTERACTIONS



**1,636**

NUTRITION PROGRAM -  
SERVICE PROVIDER  
INTERACTIONS

# Improving Care through Digital Health

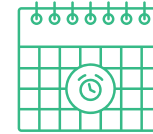
FHC is moving towards a digital health record that strongly supports collaboration between providers and new ways for clients to be involved in their care.

The following are the ways in which this improvement has been put into practice:



## **Virtual care**

We continued to provide clients with options for virtual visits based on their needs and preferences and using technology that is secure and easy-to-use.



## **Patient appointment reminders**

We can send automated email reminders to clients to remind them about upcoming appointments.



## **Secure client messaging**

We can send secure messages and attachments to our clients so they do not have to physically come in to the centre to pick them up. We can send forms to our clients so they can provide information even before they arrive for their appointment and their medical record is updated automatically.



## **Document sharing**

We can accept documents and images securely from clients directly into their medical record.



## **Specialist Scheduling**

We can send information about a specialist appointment directly to the client through a simple, automated message.

In 2022-2023 we are planning more improvements in our digital health services. You can learn more by visiting our [website and signing up for our newsletter](#).





# Quality and Client Experience

Despite the challenges of operating a Community Health Centre during a pandemic, FHC was committed to ensuring high quality care and focused our quality improvement work on six priorities:

- access to primary care
- measuring health equity
- cancer screening
- COVID vaccination rates
- client experience
- access to mental health support

This year, more than ever, we are proud to share that quality improvement changes were driven by front-line staff. Below are some highlights we are proud to share of our accomplishments from last year.

## Cancer Screening

FHC increased the percentage of clients offered cancer screening by 2-7% using three strategies:

1. We dedicated time and resources to catching up on the backlog resulting from the pandemic.
2. We provided cancer screening training to staff to increase their knowledge and confidence with respect to cancer screening guidelines and how people can access cancer screening in Ontario.
3. We shared more resources with clients on the benefits of cancer screening.

## COVID Vaccination

FHC decreased the percentage of clients who are fully unvaccinated (0 doses) from 39.2% to 33% by hosting in-house vaccine clinics, providing training to staff on how to address vaccine hesitancy, contacting clients as they became eligible for the vaccine to share how to get vaccinated and developing a process to give our clients and community residents priority access through vaccination cards.

## Equity

FHC increased the percentage of clients who completed socio-demographic information from 63% to 73% by training staff and improving the process to identify and survey clients.



## Client Experience

This year, FHC received feedback from approximately 400 clients across all three of our locations through our client experience survey. We held a community consultation to collect more qualitative feedback on how our clients experience care at FHC. Through this data collection, we heard from FHC clients that:

**95%**

stated they definitely or probably would recommend FHC to family/friends.

**95%**

rated overall cleanliness of the centre as Excellent, Very good or Good.

**92%**

rated the overall physical comfort of the centre as Excellent, Very good or Good.

**96%**

always felt comfortable and welcome at FHC.

**71%**

felt they were always or often involved as equal partners in making decisions about their care.

## What surveyed clients said about FHC:

**“As a newcomer I think this is the best place to get the care for all your family members under one roof. Easy access. Best doctors and health practitioners overall best client satisfaction”**

**“The online programs helped me to meet with friends, during COVID-19 locked down.”**

**“always they are just family to me. and all the departments doing excellent jobs.”**



# Growing the Next Generation of Physicians



Flemingdon Health Centre has a long-standing tradition as a teaching centre that began in 1972. Every year we welcome student placements and residents for MD programs from our partner universities. Below are two stories reflecting the learning experience at FHC.

Being a medical student at Health Access Thorncliffe Park has been a truly informative and valuable learning experience. In a community of marginalized and vulnerable patients, this clinic is where medicine and advocacy intersect. In this unique experience, we are reminded of the profound impact one's social determinants of health have on all aspect of one's well-being – including both physical and mental. The patients at this clinic welcomed me, a new student at the clinic, with open arms and allowed me to participate in their care. I was able to experience how all individuals of the healthcare team work collaboratively to ensure that their patients are receiving adequate health care despite the many barriers that they face. I will definitely be bringing back the many lessons and skills that I learned, in particular cultural competency, to future rotations.



**Shakiba Ardestani**, BMSc.  
MD Candidate | Class of 2T3  
University of Toronto

While sharing a shift with Dr. Vairavanathan, who works at FHC and Michael Garron Hospital, Falah AlMarzooqi first heard about FHC and quickly realized he had only seen part of the patient population in Toronto. He wanted to understand the issues immigrant populations and people with low socio-economic backgrounds face and learn how to support and advocate for them.

In 2022 he started his month-long elective at FHC. At many appointments, he found himself filling out forms patients needed to access medication, personal support workers or special diet allowance. In his own words “working here changed my mindset. I need to think about whether my patient can afford the medication, the resources available, and ensure they can access them without restrictions. The form has to be correct... and many times you need to figure out what is available for your clients”.

What was going to be one elective turned into three. Falah kept coming back for his electives because he connected with the community. Being an immigrant himself, with Filipino and Arab lineage, he feels he can relate to patients well, overcome cultural barriers and some language barriers too. He finds joy in making patients comfortable, using images to communicate and ultimately building relationships with patients. When asked what his future plans are, without hesitation he says: “Family medicine! I want to work at FHC. Family medicine here has been very rewarding, and that’s what I want to do in the future.”



**Falah Almarzooqi**, Mbchb Family  
Medicine Resident (2019-2022)  
University of Toronto

# Flemo Farm



Flemo Farm was initiated as a Community Engagement and Entrepreneurial Development (CEED) project. Flemo Farm is a pilot for the use of Hydro Corridors and is a community-owned and community-developed initiative. To accurately capture the needs and wishes of the Flemington Park community, consultations were held at the Flemington Health Centre in the fall and winter of 2015-2016, with a final project reveal in March 2016. This project was initiated by the City of Toronto, FoodShare Toronto, Toronto Urban Growers, Toronto Community Housing and Flemington Health Centre. At Flemo Farm local residents have been consistently coming from the community to visit, learn, volunteer, attend workshops and events and see sustainable food growing. The entrepreneurs are the six community farmers that are paid for their work. The goal is to work towards food sovereignty, food justice and food security.

It took over five years to finalize agreements with the City of Toronto and Hydro One to secure the permits for access to the land. Another year to secure permits

for all the infrastructure to establish and operate a farm and community project of this scale. Challenges were faced and overcome in installing the 900-foot perimeter fence, water connection and drip irrigation system, 360 square foot storage space, and a 560 cubic foot walk-in cooler.

A Steering Committee was established to guide the project based on initial community consultations and recommendations. Six Community Farmers were provided capacity-building support for becoming community leaders in ecologically sustainable urban food production. Twenty-four volunteers were recruited to provide support with connecting the community to the farm. More than 150 visitors and volunteers welcomed to the farm in the first season.

A beautiful farm growing 600+ plants native to Ontario, 60+ different types of vegetables, herbs and pollinator plants was established in the heart of Flemington Park. A Farmer's Market was also established to achieve the goal of providing easy access to healthy food.

In the first year, 15 markets were held every Saturday with 130-300 customers each week; \$31,000 worth of vegetables sold by Community Farmers; \$21,000+ worth of vegetables were donated to a nearby food distribution centre and to a seniors' building.

A community compost exchange initiative was also launched by setting up six composting bins. Thirty households were screened for participating with a goal of recruiting 100 participant households from the nearby tower buildings. Over 1,000 pounds of food waste was collected in four months to produce local compost for the farm.

Partnerships were established with local high school Marc Garneau Collegiate Institute to use their greenhouse to grow seedlings for the upcoming season. The students were also engaged to help and learn through the process. An end of season harvest event was held to gather the community and all the partners to celebrate a successful harvest season and the amazing work done by all those who were involved.



One of those farmers is Anishinaabe chef Charles Catchpole. This past year, on his farm Gitigaanes (Ojibway for “Little Farm”), he grew heirloom tomatoes, hot and sweet peppers, potatoes, beans and the Three Sisters vegetables (beans, corn and squash) in the traditional way of planting them, close together in mounds instead of in long, narrow beds.

“I don’t think there’s any farmers’ market as diverse as Flemo’s – and it’s only 100 meters away from where everything’s grown,” says Catchpole, who says the unique location also shows the opportunities of urban agriculture in Toronto. “[The farm] is beside a basketball court and a kids’ splash pad, and you can hear the rumble of the DVP.”

The Flemo Farm is sustained with support from the City of Toronto, Weston Family Foundation, Park People, Live Green, and the Scheinberg Foundation.



# Community Engagement

## Sudanese Women's Group

A rich and vibrant emerging population within our catchment identify as the Sudanese Women's Group (SWG). This is a group that has been historically underserved and were seeking opportunities to better access programs and services offered by FHC. By connecting with Community Health Worker, Clotilda Joseph, progress was being made.

Group members shared their experiences of health risks due to a socio-economic environment, which was impacted by the dominant culture and contributed to the conditions such as marginalization or underappreciation of their languages and cultures and the lack of access to culturally-relevant health care and services.

This resilient group of newcomer women were forging new linkages to foundational services like access to public library resources, resettlement resources, primary care, nutrition and mental health services, among others. Working closely with the Population Health Team, SWG co-designed community-based programming

that included open conversations around COVID-19 and its effects on their community's health, and the precarity of their essential workforce status. Working with staff, this group opened up in wide-ranging discussions around, prenatal and perinatal health, post-partum support, and birth control. Based on consultations with families that were part of this community, FHC offered targeted workshops on accessing FHC's hybrid COVID response community programs and resources, mental health, self-esteem, personal care, and mindfulness initiatives. The mothers in this community created safe spaces to discuss schooling and their children navigating experiences of discrimination and bullying, newcomer transitions, hands-on skills, and hobbies. Some of their cultural hobby-based initiatives, included embroidery, jewelry, crafts, sports programs, and cultural cooking. The group worked together to help build skills around personal finances, banking, safely navigating social media, and developing health relationships with cultural food traditions. This unique group shared life







experiences, parenting skills, and the beauty and benefit of nature. They did this by bridging their ancestors' lifestyles with today's style. Overall, this journey was very positive. These women, with their amazing personalities, is what makes the world beautiful.

### Youth Programs

Youth-centred engagement activities start with meeting youth where they are at, symbolically and physically. Physically, finding out where youth are, on what days, and at what times is so important. This approach decreased barriers for those who are disconnected. Symbolically, each youth you meet will be at a different 'spot' in their life and development - which is often influenced by systemic inequities. Identifying what their reality looks like, and what supports they may need or could benefit from clarifies the impact that you can have. Youth are the experts in their

own lives. While the pandemic continued to present considerable challenges around bringing to life youth-centered community engagement, FHC's Youth Team responded by consistently being present in spaces where youth congregate, advocating on their behalf with institutions and municipal stakeholders and opening up opportunities for those who still wanted to connect virtually. Another important facet of this work included the *Youth Voice Collective*, a Youth Violence Prevention Project funded by the City of Toronto. Guided by the Collective Impact and the Community Engagement frameworks, this project team developed and successfully implemented a first of its kind youth virtual forum that saw 67 youth across Thorncliffe and Flemingdon Park neighbourhoods participate. By utilizing learnings from this, FHC was better positioned to serve youth across our neighbourhoods.





# Summarized Financial Statements

Deferred capital contributions	958,280
Net Assets (including restricted and unrestricted)	1,096,649
<b>Total Liabilities &amp; Net Assets</b>	<b>7,594,728</b>

## REVENUES

TC-LHIN grants	14,594,922
Amortization of deferred capital contributions	129,535
Interest	37,910
Other	576,964
<b>Total Revenues</b>	<b>15,339,331</b>

## EXPENSES

Salaries and benefits	10,598,813
Rent	1,311,271
General operating	3,091,795
Medical and office supplies	125,043
Amortization of property and equipment	129,535
<b>Total Expenses</b>	<b>15,256,457</b>

Excess of Revenue over Expenses before undernoted item	82,874
Amount Payable to TC- LHIN	82,948
<b>Excess of revenues over expenses for the year</b>	<b>(74)</b>

Audited financial statements by BDO Canada LLP are available at the health centre.



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Health Toronto



FHC is a proud member of the  
Alliance for Healthier Communities  
[www.allianceon.org](http://www.allianceon.org)