



YEAR IN REVIEW 2024 2025

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A Message From the Executive Director

As I reflect on this past year with the Elgin Ontario Health Team, I feel incredibly grateful for the many people and partners who worked together to make meaningful change in our community.

This work is about more than services or programs. It's about strong relationships, showing up with courage and compassion, and recognizing the many different experiences and needs that make our community what it is.

This past year, we opened the doors to our new Elgin Community Health Hub, expanded access to mental health supports, and connected people more easily to the services they need - whether for housing, food, care for chronic health conditions, or culturally safe supports.

Our accomplishments are possible because of the dedication of many people across the system - community members, clinicians, staff, and leaders - who show up every day with a shared commitment to our community and a better system.

There is still so much more to do. In the year ahead, we'll keep working together to make care more accessible and connected. We'll continue improving access to primary care, mental health supports, and chronic disease care. And most importantly, we'll keep making sure the community guides the way.

Thank you for your trust, your ideas, and your commitment to building a healthier, more connected Elgin. It's truly a privilege to do this alongside all of you.



Deanna Huggett
Executive Director
Elgin Ontario Health Team

Our Members

The strength of the Elgin Ontario Health Team lies in the dedication and collaboration of our members. We are deeply grateful for the continued support, expertise and commitment our community members, health and social care providers, and organizations bring to improving health and well-being across St. Thomas and Elgin County. Together, we are building a more connected and compassionate health and care system - one that truly puts people and communities first.

Members:

- Alzheimer Society Southwest Partners
- CarePartners
- Central Community Health Centre
- Cheshire Independent Living Services
- City of St. Thomas
- Closing the Gap Healthcare Group
- CMHA Thames Valley Addiction and Mental Health Services
- County of Elgin
- Dale Brain Injury Services
- East Elgin Family Health Team
- Hospice of Elgin
- Mennonite Community Services
- Ontario Health atHome
- PHSS Medical and Complex Care in Community
- Regional HIV/AIDS Connection
- Southwestern Public Health
- St. Joseph's Health Care London
- St. Thomas & Elgin Medical Association
- St. Thomas Elgin General Hospital
- St. Thomas-Elgin Local Immigration Partnership
- Talbot Family Health Organization
- Thames Valley Family Health Team
- The INN St. Thomas-Elgin
- VON
- West Elgin Community Health Centre
- YWCA St. Thomas - Elgin



Our Priorities

Priority 1: Improve Care for Everyone in Our Community, Starting with Those with Chronic Obstructive Pulmonary Disease (COPD)

Priority 2: Help Everyone Access Services in the Community, No Matter Who or Where They Are

Priority 3: Strengthen Our Ability to Work Together as One Team



Improve Care for Everyone in Our Community, Starting with Those with COPD

This year, we focused on making care more accessible, inclusive, and coordinated - beginning with better support for people living with Chronic Obstructive Pulmonary Disease (COPD).

In this section, you'll find highlights of how we've improved early identification and management of chronic conditions, advanced culturally safe care, reduced barriers for equity-deserving populations, and strengthened connections across local and regional health and social services.

Improving Access

We improved access to care for people with COPD by:

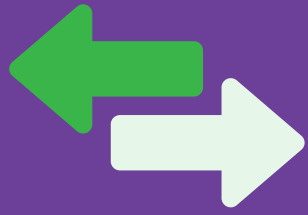
- ✓ Facilitating training for primary care clinics on earlier identification
- ✓ Initiating culturally safe testing in First Nations communities
- ✓ Providing enhanced support through the evidence-based Best Care program



Culturally Responsive Care

We supported **Indigenous-led planning and learning**, including workshops on Truth and Reconciliation, building culturally safe care pathways for chronic disease, and embedding cultural safety into planning for Elgin's new Hospice.

Community Support Services



We launched warm transfers from Community Support Services Central Intake to food, housing, and caregiver supports and resources.

1000+ PEOPLE

used the Central Intake service over the year, with **130+ people** connected to social supports in the first 3 months of this new offering.



Navigation Collaborative

We connected 68 system navigators from across Elgin, Middlesex London, and Oxford to share information and **enhance regional navigation**.

“We have appreciated the opportunity to be part of Navigation Collaboratives in several counties this year. These groups have provided forums in which we can build and strengthen relationships, which is so important in the work that we do together. Group members have shared very helpful information about existing and new initiatives and have been open to questions and suggestions to further improve services or access. We also appreciated the invitation to share information with the one of the groups about the intersection between Acquired Brain Injuries and Homelessness. I look forward to the work we will do together in the upcoming year!”

- Dale Brain Injury Services, Partner Participant

Reducing Barriers

We trained 15 volunteers from our local Low German speaking community in **interpreter ethics and medical terminology** - so they can be more confident in helping their friends and family members understand medical information provided in English.



We offered **interpretation** services to all local primary care clinics, so clients can receive care in a language that is comfortable for them.

We also made sure an accessible van stayed on the road to help people get where they need to go safely and comfortably.



“Access to on-demand interpretation service has been such a benefit to the interactions that I have with patients in my practice. Removing language barriers not only increases the accuracy and thoroughness of our interactions, assessment and interventions, it strengthens the therapeutic relationship. The appointment flows well as the patient can express their concerns and I, as the provider, can provide more meaningful questioning, assessment and intervention. This service is practice-changing.”

— Tracy Nancekivell, Nurse Practitioner



We **subsidized** the distribution of 600 food boxes and enhanced food pantry access to address food insecurity.

We helped
1189 PEOPLE

access their personal health information through the **ConnectMyHealth** portal, empowering the community with information to help manage their own health (info.connectmyhealth.ca).

We trained
75 LOCAL STAFF AND LEADERS

in trauma-informed care to improve safety, responsiveness, and quality of services.

Help Everyone Access Services in the Community, No Matter Who or Where They Are

We're improving how people connect to care - whether through new clinics, digital tools, or services offered in community spaces. This section highlights how we're making it easier for everyone to find and access the support they need, with a focus on reaching people who are often underserved or face additional barriers to care.

The Elgin Community Health Hub



3000+

people without a Family Doctor or Primary Care Nurse Practitioner accessed team-based care through the new **Elgin Community Health Hub** between September 2024 and March 2025.

Mental Health, Substance Use Health, and Addictions

We launched a **Primary Care Mental Health & Addictions Navigator**, designed to help improve referral pathways and re-imagine system access for community members.

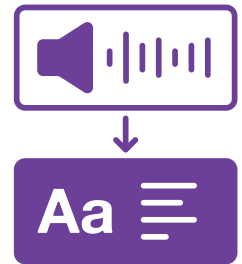
250+ PEOPLE

trained to date in Mental Health First Aid to support peers, clients, and neighbours.



Digital Health Tools

We piloted new tools to support care teams, including a secure messaging platform called **Hypercare**, and **AI Scribe** technology to improve care team communication and reduce the impact of administrative tasks for providers.



“As a health care provider with dyslexia and neurodivergence, the introduction of AI into my workflow [using AI Scribe technology] has been nothing short of revolutionary. What previously consumed hours of my weekends has been reduced to mere minutes of review time. AI has allowed me to focus more on my clients who need to see my face rather than the top of my head. This is particularly valuable when working with neurodivergent clients, including those with autism. Introducing this technology has significantly improved both my professional practice and personal confidence.”

– Local Health Care Provider

We enabled nearly
10,000 PEOPLE
to book their primary care appointments **online**, improving convenience and access.



Increased Access

We enhanced services in the community by establishing **formal clinical spaces** at the local shelter (The INN) and **Social Services** building in St. Thomas, improving privacy, dignity and quality of care.

“It is great to see the impact the OHT has had on our community in such a short time. The leadership they showed in bringing together a working group that made a deep analysis of services, and a forward-looking outlook on where we could be in three years. They were able to bring together key stakeholders to share data, engage in robust discussions, and be open about system changes that we could all work together on. These conversations continue to grow and build an optimistic outlook for system changes.”

– Brian Elliot, Director, The INN, regarding coming together to plan around health and homelessness

Strengthen Our Ability to Work Together as One Team

Stronger collaboration means better care. This section highlights how we brought together community members, clinicians, and organizations to shape decisions, share leadership, and build a more connected health system across Elgin.

Community Voices

This year, we engaged community voices in decision-making by ensuring we had active members on all OHT committees and a dedicated Community Council guiding engagement. We also participated in multiple community events.



Primary Care Leadership

We partnered with the Elgin Primary Care Alliance, engaging inter-professional primary care team members in OHT planning and education, and building towards a formal Primary Care Network connected to the OHT.

Clinical Education

In collaboration with the Elgin Primary Care Alliance, we hosted a half day clinical education session attended by 43 clinicians.

5

new member organizations joined the OHT this year.



Stay Connected:



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www.elginoht.ca

Follow us!



Elgin Ontario Health Team

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