

ICHA

Inner City
Health Associates

ANNUAL REPORT

2017 - 2018

ABOUT US

WHO WE ARE

Inner City Health Associates (ICHA) is a group of more than 90 physicians working in 52 shelters and drop-ins across Toronto. ICHA provides primary, mental health and palliative care to those who do not otherwise have access to care. We serve people living on the street and in shelters as well as those who are precariously housed. ICHA is funded by the Ontario Ministry of Health and Long Term Care through an alternative payment plan.

OUR VISION

To help end chronic homelessness related to illness and disability in Toronto

OUR MISSION

- 1 To improve access to care for the homeless population in Toronto
- 2 To improve collaboration and coordination amongst service providers working with the homeless in Toronto
- 3 To prevent additional chronic homelessness related to illness and disability in Toronto
- 4 To set the standard of excellence in the provision of homeless health care

OUR BOARD OF DIRECTORS

Gary Bloch, Chair
Catherine Gaulton, Vice Chair
Chris Lawrence, Secretary-Treasurer
Judy Thompson
Dorian Deshauer
Adam Quastel

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59 ADELAIDE STREET EAST, 2ND FLOOR
TORONTO, ONTARIO M5C 1K6
TEL: 416-591-4411
FAX: 416 640 2072

MESSAGES FROM THE LEADERSHIP

DR. GARY BLOCH – CHAIR

ICHA is an organization that has gone through almost non-stop change since its inception 12 years ago. We have evolved from a small, ragtag group of 12 physicians working at a handful of sites in downtown Toronto, into a leading international force in homeless health care, with over 90 physicians working at over 50 homeless service sites right across the GTA. We have brought new meaning to the famous line from Field of Dreams: “If you build it, they will come ...” – in our case we built it, they came, we kept building, they kept coming, and we kept building.

Our clinical reach is immense: through the ongoing development of high-quality practice models with our partner sites, and the development of new and often novel, evidence-based, community-responsive initiatives, including our leadership in developing and funding the Journey Home Hospice. Our growth, however, is seen far beyond our clinical services: an education program that readies physicians to work with people experiencing homelessness and social marginalization; support for excellent and groundbreaking research; and the initiation and funding of a unique guidelines development project that will advance our understanding of best practices in homeless care. We also find ourselves at the centre of conversations among health system leaders about how to best provide health care for the homeless, in our powerful partnerships with St. Michael’s Hospital, the Ministry of Health and Long Term Care, and the City of Toronto among many other homeless service organizations.

These successes are built on the excellent foundation solidified by our former leadership team, led by Medical Director Leslie Shanks, Mental Health Lead Michaela Beder, and Primary Care Lead Andrew Bond. They guided us through a massive growth in our operations, and the development and focus on an ambitious and complex strategic plan. Their skill and dedication as leaders and managers enabled us to develop into a powerful, unique organization essential to the health fabric of Toronto. And we look to our new leadership team, Operations Director Shivane Nadarajah and Medical Director Andrew Bond, to lead us even closer to our vision of ending chronic homelessness related to illness and disability.

We have given ourselves a broad and ambitious mandate – not just to provide (and define) high quality clinical services, but to achieve excellence in health professional education, research, and in advocacy. As this annual report demonstrates, we have moved forward on all of these fronts. We truly believe we are contributing to an improvement in the health of people experiencing homelessness, and to efforts to end homelessness in our society. These goals are complex, but we hold a unique combination of expertise and the drive to realize them.

I am sad to be leaving the Board, but am excited to continue to grow with this organization. I truly believe it is without peer, and it constantly challenges me, and hopefully all of us, to navigate difficult and sometimes uncharted territory, drawing on the unique skills and knowledge that have positioned our community at the forefront of the conversation about how to address homelessness and its related health concerns, locally, across the country, and around the world.

MESSAGES FROM THE LEADERSHIP

DR. ANDREW BOND – MEDICAL DIRECTOR

With passion, dedication, and a vision of a more just society for those otherwise subjected to homelessness and its devastating health impacts, ICHA has grown since its inception into the largest homeless health organization in Canada. With informal communities of practice engaged in the care of the physical and mental health of homeless and precariously housed people at 52 sites across Toronto, we are collectively demonstrating daily what deep equity with impact looks like. It is my great privilege to have the opportunity to work with such an extraordinary team. While ICHA has accomplished so much already, there is still much to do to realize the impact of our collective abilities to drive the local health care system towards equity for people experiencing homelessness. Together we are creatively developing innovative models and setting standards for the care nationally and internationally while working to impact public policies at all levels of government that impinge upon peoples' ability to secure adequate, affordable, and healthy housing for themselves and their families.

ICHA has many exciting initiatives on the move! Journey Home Hospice is one example of a new beginning with a very big future and teams across Canada and beyond are paying close attention. The Indigenous and non-Indigenous Homeless Health Guidelines commissioned by ICHA are well underway and of unparalleled importance in ensuring that all clinicians have the opportunity to be guided by the best possible evidence. The continual development of collaborative care teams across many of ICHA's sites has supported our increased volumes and site efficiency over the last year. This intensification of our transitional health care services is being applied to our ongoing close engagement and planning for the George Street Revitalization process that will continue to require all of our ingenuity, commitment, and multi-sectoral collaboration.

Looking ahead, there is an historic opportunity unfolding to continue engagement with Canada's first National Housing Policy and we look forward to advocating for the rights of people experiencing homelessness as the fundamental priority of any Federal housing strategy. Another national concern facing us locally is the opioid crisis, about which it will be essential for us to reflect on our possible role as health care providers – we have significant expertise and a boundary-defying philosophy of care that has the potential to meaningfully engage people experiencing harmful substance use. We also have foundational obligations to Indigenous Peoples grounded in Treaties, Constitutional Law and International Law, many of which have been clearly laid out in the Truth and Reconciliation Commission's final report. As homelessness impacts Indigenous Peoples markedly disproportionately, it is essential that we bring cultural safety and allyship to all of our work.

All of us at ICHA are involved in a truly special organization devoted to a mission that strikes at the heart of one of the major causes of indignity within contemporary societies. With our collective experience, skills, drive, and passion, we have the ability to seriously improve the lives of people experiencing homelessness. I look forward to working closely with each and every one of you to support you in the wonderful work that you do every day and am eagerly awaiting hearing about your ideas, commitments and goals! Together with the Director of Operations and Operations Committee - I am honoured to be on this journey with you all.

MESSAGES FROM THE LEADERSHIP

SHIVANEE NADARAJAH – DIRECTOR OF OPERATIONS

After over a decade of working in the community health sector, I am delighted to join the leadership team at Inner City Health Associates as the Director of Operations. In my previous role, I was fortunate to have been able to interact and engage with many dedicated ICHA physicians all of whom share a passion for serving the most vulnerable citizens of our city. From the periphery, I was able to witness the growth of ICHA from a grassroots agency made up of a handful of physicians to a well-regarded organization made up of over 90 physicians serving over 50 sites. I feel tremendously fortunate to now be a part of ICHA as it continues on its trajectory towards becoming a leader in homeless health care at the local and regional level and beyond.

As we turn our gaze to the year ahead, I look forward to working closely with the Medical Director, the Operations Committee and the Board to support and strengthen ICHA's operational processes and policies so that we will be better positioned for future growth. I also look forward to representing ICHA at various planning tables and ensuring our collective voice is heard with regards to the impact of poverty and homelessness on health.

I would like to extend my sincere appreciation to the administrative team, the membership, and the Board for the warm welcome I received. I look forward to working with all of you as we continue to build on our successes and set the standard of excellence for homeless health care.



Dr. Gary Bloch
Chair



Dr. Andrew Bond
Medical Director



Shivaneer Nadarajah
Director of Operations

WHO WE SERVE

ICHA's mandate is to serve people experiencing or at risk of homelessness. We work in shelters, drop-in centres and in mobile teams. Since ICHA's beginning, we have served close to 34,000 unique individuals in Toronto.

Many of our clients are seen at multiple sites, reflecting the mobility of the population, while others are seen at one specific site. We know that the population we serve suffers disproportionately from both physical and mental health concerns. Many have had difficulty establishing ongoing relationships with health care providers.

Our model of providing low barrier care in the community in partnership with trusted community agencies allows us to assist people already struggling with barriers in their lives to have access to primary and mental health care.

OVERVIEW

ICHA expanded its operations and was working at 52 sites across the city of Toronto at year-end, compared to 44 sites last year. New sites included Homes First Scarborough Shelter, St. Clair Church, Toronto Plaza Airport Hotel, Quality Suites Hotel Newcomer Program, Weston King Neighbourhood Centre, Horizons for Youth and LOFT's Transitional Age Youth Program. Two new mobile programs in St. Jamestown and at the Dan Harrison Complex serving high-risk areas and community housing buildings were also established. With these additional sites, ICHA served 5,685 clients, with a total number of 22,830 encounters, representing a 20% increase over the previous year. Primary care represented approximately 72% of these visits. Patient gender was recorded as 35% female, 65% male and <1% transgender. Thirty percent of patients seen were over the age of 50 years.

ICHA BY THE NUMBERS

OVERVIEW:

SITES		PHYSICIANS	
52		91	
TOTAL PATIENTS	VISITS	PRIMARY CARE	PSYCHIATRY
5,685	22,830	4,338 Patients	2,111 Patients

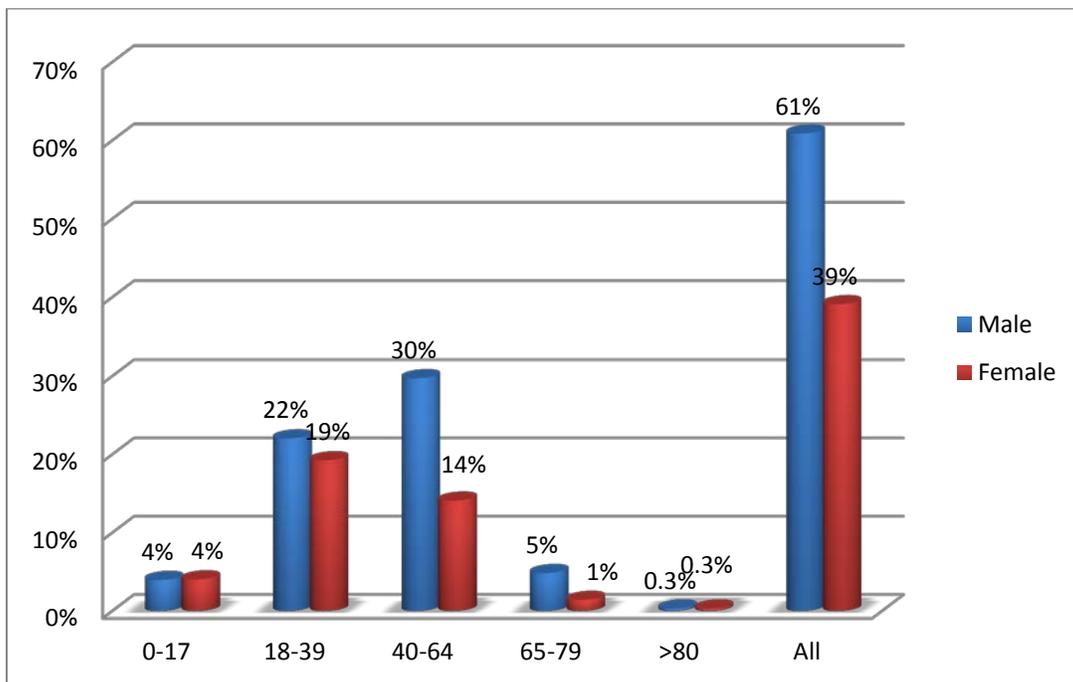
NUMBER OF VISITS:

Primary Care	Psychiatry	PEACH	Internal Medicine	TOTAL
16,799	5,534	239	201	22,830

NUMBER OF UNIQUE PATIENTS:

FY16	FY17	FY18
4,672	4,888	5,685

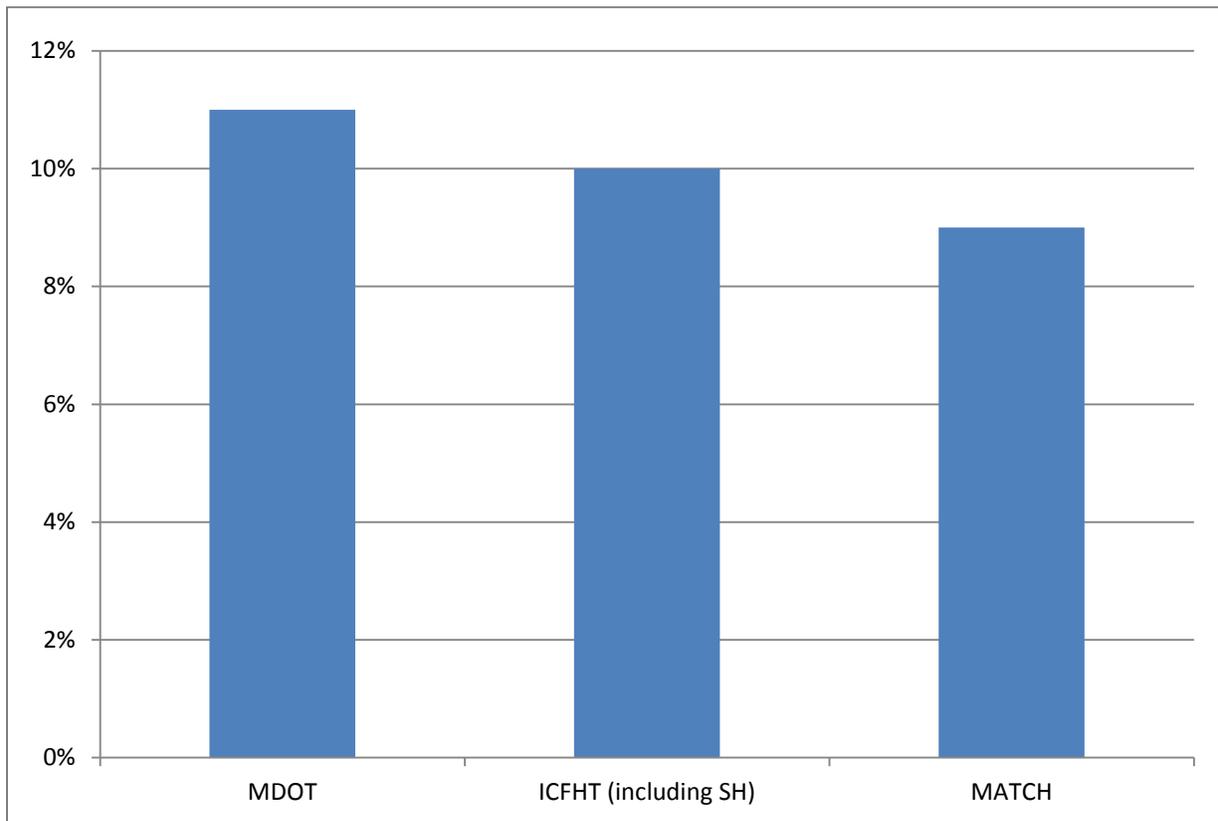
ICHA PATIENTS BY AGE and GENDER (N = 5,574):



PSYCHIATRY

Psychiatry services were provided at 35 sites (16 of which have co-located collaborative care primary care services) for a total 5,534 visits by 2,111 patients. 764 (36%) patients received both psychiatry services and primary care within collaborative care practices while 1347 (64%) received psychiatry services without additional ICHA provided primary care. New sites included Weston King Neighbourhood Centre and Horizons for youth as well as psychiatry support for the St. Jamestown Outreach Program and Streets to Homes Access and Referral Centre. The average number of visits per client was 2.6, which remained the same as 2016-17.

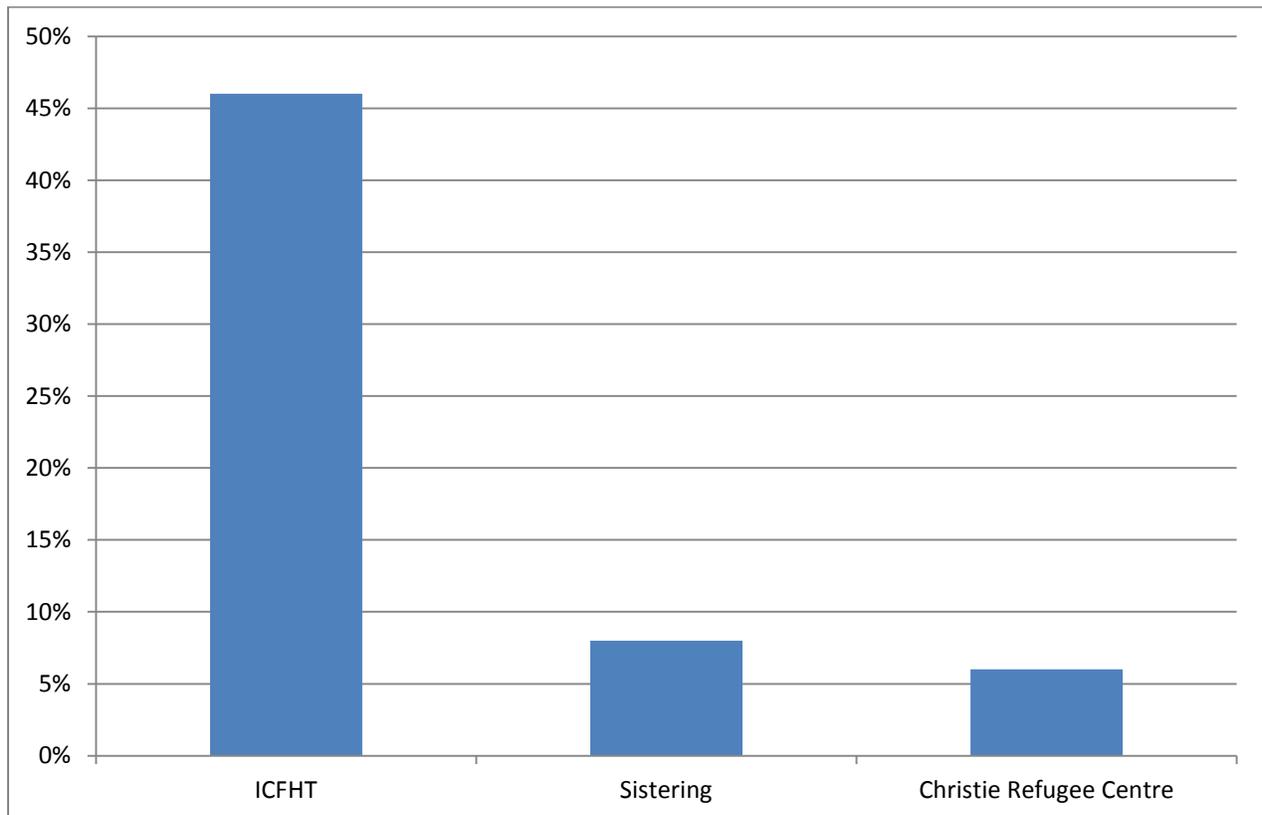
SITES WITH THE HIGHEST VOLUMES (N = 5,534):



PRIMARY CARE

Primary care services were provided at 35 sites (16 of which were co-located with ICHA psychiatry services) for a total 16,779 visits by 4,338 patients. 764 (18%) patients received care within collaborative care practices and 3,574 (82%) patients received only primary care services. New primary care sites included the Toronto Plaza Hotel Newcomer Program, COSTI/Quality Suites Newcomer Program, Homes First Scarborough and Women’s Shelter, St. Jamestown Outreach Program (STOP), and the Dan Harrison/George St Outreach Programs. The average number of visits per client was 3.9, which has increased from 3.8 in 2016-7.

SITES WITH THE HIGHEST VOLUMES (N = 16,799):



PEACH

ICHA's mobile Palliative Education and Care for the Homeless (PEACH) program also saw an increase in the number of clients seen in this fiscal year. The team served 76 patients referred from within ICHA and externally, representing a 40% increase from last year. The PEACH team continues to work tirelessly in providing population specific education and advocating for improved access to palliative care for clients experiencing homelessness.

ICHA's vision of a new hospice for our community of clients was realized this year with the launch of Journey Home Hospice, a partnership with Saint Elizabeth Foundation, Hospice Toronto and ICHA. A four bed hospice is currently housed in a pilot site location provided by Home's First Society at 90 Shuter Street with a goal of opening a single site 10 bed hospice in two years.

EDUCATION

ICHA continues to be committed to the providing the opportunity for learners to develop their knowledge of homeless health and their clinical skills, and to learn about the agencies working with the homeless population in Toronto. During this fiscal year, 13 residents worked with our physicians spending time at various ICHA sites across the city. In addition to student training, ICHA held 3 Continuing Medical Education events and forums on relevant topics including Substance Use Disorder and Indigenous Homelessness. Looking forward to the upcoming year, with a goal of improving learning opportunities, we are in the midst of developing e-module training on homeless health for all ICHA members.

WHERE WE WORKED in 2017/18

PRIMARY CARE		
Agincourt Community Services	Fred Victor Centre	Robertson House
Birchmount Residence	Gateway Shelter	Sanctuary
Christie Refugee Centre	Good Shepherd	Seventh Generation Midwives
COSTI – Edwards Hotel	Homes First Scarborough Shelter	St. Simons
Cummer Avenue United Church	Homes First Women’s Interim Program	Toronto Plaza Airport Hotel
Dan Harrison Building (TCH)	Jessie’s – The June Callwood Centre	
Downsview Dells	Reconnect	

PRIMARY CARE and PSYCHIATRY		
CATCH Good Shepherd	Eva’s Satellite	Sistering
Christie Refugee Centre	Evergreen	Sound Times
CMHA Toronto Branch	FCJ Refugee Centre	St. Stephen’s
Covenant House	Inner City Family Health Team (ICFHT)	Women’s Residence
Eva’s Place	NaMaRes	YWCA
	Seaton House	

PSYCHIATRY		
At Home/Chez Soi Project	LOFT – Transitional Age Youth Program	Streets To Homes
Canadian Centre for victims of Torture	Margaret’s	Toronto Community Addiction Team
Elizabeth Fry	MATCH	Toronto North Support Services
Evangeline	Maxwell Meighen Shelter	Youth Without Shelter
Good Shepherd Non-Profit Homes	Multi-Disciplinary Outreach Team	Weston King Neighbourhood Centre
HOPE Ontario Works Scarborough Site	Street Haven	
Horizon’s for Youth	St. Felix	

WHAT OUR PATIENTS HAVE TO SAY

"I find my new doctors are good for me."

"Wonderful treatment! Thank you."

"Everything here including all the health professionals are tremendously helpful and have a sense of endearment and care doing their job. They provide exceptional service and a comfortable environment."

"If its not broke, don't fix it. Everything works well!"

"Doing fine. Love how they work with me."

INCOMING AND OUTGOING PHYSICIANS

A very big thank you to our departing ICHA physicians:

DR. ALI CHARLEBOIS

DR. VIVIEN PARKER

We are pleased to welcome the following new ICHA physician members:

Primary Care

DR. JANETTE SPEARE

DR. BEN TREPANIER

DR. NANKY RAI

DR. NIKKI BOZINOFF

DR. STEFAN BARAL

DR. WARDA IQBAL

DR. VANESSA REDDITT

Psychiatry

DR. CRYSTAL PINTO

DR. NICOLE KOZLOFF

ICHA'S TEAM

Andrew Bond
Medical Director

Shivaneer Nadarajah
Director of Operations

Deborah Pink
Education Lead

Priya Vasa
Population Health Lead

Kirsten Dixon
Seaton House Lead

Naheed Dosani
PEACH Lead

Janice Campbell
Privacy Specialist

Alena Ravestein
Community and Clinical Services Coordinator

Sasha Hill
Community Nurse and PEACH Coordinator

Shannon Hirsch
Administrative Assistant

Alexandra Pinto (on leave)
Outreach Coordinator