

Quality Improvement Plan (QIP)

# Narrative for Health Care Organizations in Ontario

March 31, 2026

## OVERVIEW

Durham Community Health Centre continues to strengthen its commitment to equitable, person-centred care through its 2026–27 Quality Improvement Plan (QIP). Since 2019, Alliance for Health Communities members have aligned their efforts around a shared set of QIP indicators developed and approved by the membership, reflecting the core values of the Model of Health and Wellbeing, our collective quality improvement practices, and our Health Equity Charter.

For the upcoming cycle, members have reaffirmed five indicators that guide our improvement work: completing sociodemographic data collection, improving stratified cervical cancer screening rates, fostering a welcoming environment where clients feel comfortable, increasing the number of new clients served, and enhancing client perceptions of timely access to care. Together, these indicators support a sector wide focus on strengthening access, building trust, and ensuring culturally safe, responsive care.

At DCHC, we are particularly proud of our progress in expanding equitable data collection practices and using this information to better understand community needs and tailor our services. Improvements in screening participation, access, and client experience reflect ongoing efforts to reduce barriers and enhance quality across our programs.

Through the 2026–27 QIP, we will build on this progress by refining our practices, leveraging partnerships, and advancing measurable improvements that reinforce our mission: delivering high quality, inclusive care that meets the diverse and evolving needs of the communities we serve.

## ACCESS AND FLOW

Durham Community Health Centre continues to expand its capacity to deliver timely, coordinated primary care and community-based supports. Our work focuses on reducing barriers, improving care navigation, and creating responsive access points so clients can engage with care earlier and closer to home.

Over the past year, DCHC has implemented several initiatives that have strengthened access and flow across Durham Region. Expanded mobile clinic programming has increased primary care capacity by bringing services directly into high-needs neighbourhoods, reducing reliance on emergency departments. The launch of Black Health & Wellness programming has established a culturally safe, dedicated access point for communities that experience disproportionate barriers to timely care. In addition, expansion of the East Region Virtual Care Clinic has improved same-day and next-day access for urgent and episodic needs, helping alleviate pressure on local hospitals.

To further enhance coordinated, community-based care, DCHC is partnering with Lakeridge Health to implement the Sickle Cell Quality Standard. This collaboration aims to improve timely access to primary and specialist care, strengthen transitions between hospital and community services, and support culturally responsive, evidence-based care for clients living with Sickle Cell Disease. By aligning practices across sectors, this work supports better symptom management, improved continuity of care, and reduced avoidable hospital use for individuals with complex needs.

These initiatives complement ongoing improvements in internal scheduling, expanded same-day appointment availability, and

strengthened referral pathways to mental health, chronic disease, and social supports. Looking ahead, DCHC will continue refining access and flow through data-informed planning, expanded team-based care, and proactive outreach to clients with higher needs profiles, ensuring timely, appropriate, and coordinated care that supports both individual wellbeing and system sustainability.



## EQUITY AND INDIGENOUS HEALTH

At Durham Community Health Centre, we understand that Indigenous communities continue to experience the longstanding effects of colonialism, systemic discrimination, and persistent health inequities. Grounded in the principles of reconciliation, mutual respect, and collaboration, we are committed to advancing Indigenous health and wellness in ways that are culturally safe, trauma informed and led by community priorities. Our approach to equity is rooted in the Model of Health and Wellbeing and aligned

with the shared commitments of the Alliance for Healthier Communities.

At DCHC, a key focus of this work is improving access to culturally safe care. We partner closely with Indigenous organizations to ensure individuals and families can receive primary care, mental health supports, and wellness services that honour Indigenous cultures, traditions, and healing practices. We continue to strengthen relationships with Indigenous led organizations, Elders, and Knowledge Keepers, working together to design programs that reflect the needs and preferences of Indigenous people living in Durham Region. Our model emphasizes holistic wellness by acknowledging the interconnected physical, emotional, mental, and spiritual aspects of health, and by valuing both traditional healing and evidence-based practices.

We are actively expanding cultural healing and wellness initiatives grounded in Indigenous knowledge and land-based practices; enhancing access to Indigenous informed primary care, mental health, and addictions services; and deepening community driven engagement to shape program development and decision making.

We recognize that reconciliation is an ongoing process, and we remain committed to walking alongside Indigenous communities as partners in improving health, wellness, and equity for generations to come.

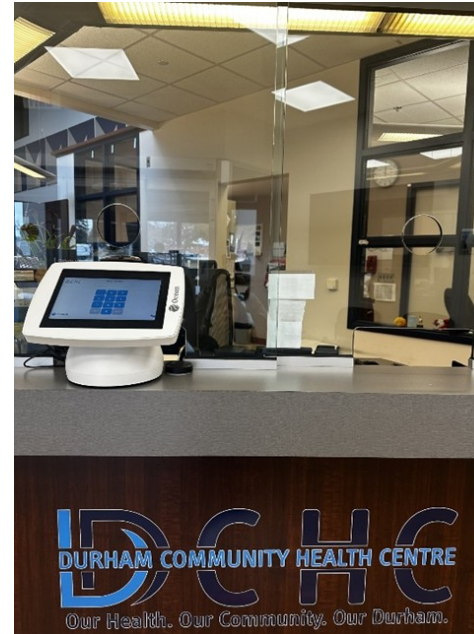


## PATIENT/CLIENT/RESIDENT EXPERIENCE

Durham Community Health Centre is committed to strengthening a culture of continuous learning by intentionally integrating client experience insights into our quality improvement activities. Each year, DCHC collects feedback through standardized Client Experience Surveys, program specific questionnaires, and real time feedback mechanisms embedded across our sites and mobile units. These tools help us understand how clients perceive access, communication, cultural safety, and overall comfort within our care environments.

A significant advancement in our engagement work for 2026–27 is the launch of DCHC’s Client and Family Advisory Committee (CFAC). This committee will serve as a formal, ongoing mechanism for clients, family members, and caregivers to partner with us in shaping program development, advising on service improvements, and codesigning solutions that reflect lived experience. The CFAC will play a pivotal role in strengthening accountability, improving experience outcomes, and ensuring that our quality improvement efforts remain person centred and community driven.

Looking ahead, DCHC will continue expanding survey options, increasing participation rates, and implementing a more structured feedback-to-action reporting loop so clients can clearly see how their voices contribute to meaningful change. Our goal is to ensure that all improvement activities are guided by those with lived experience, reinforcing trust and delivering care that is responsive, inclusive, and person-centered.



## PROVIDER EXPERIENCE

Durham Community Health Centre recognizes that the wellbeing, engagement, and professional fulfillment of our workforce are essential to delivering high quality, person-centered care. Over the past year, DCHC has advanced key initiatives to strengthen workplace culture, improve recruitment and retention, and ensure providers feel supported, valued, and connected.

To enhance staff experience, DCHC expanded the role of the Staff Engagement Committee, which leads initiatives focused on recognition, wellness, and continuous feedback. Our Town Hall format was redesigned to celebrate achievements, highlight innovations, and encourage cross team dialogue. Dedicated relationship building activities and an open Leadership Q&A segment have further improved transparency and organizational

cohesion.

DCHC has also enhanced its onboarding experience through structured orientation pathways and early check-ins that build confidence and belonging. Staff benefit from funded professional development opportunities, including Crisis Prevention and Intervention training, CPR/First Aid, a Professional Development stipend, and dedicated learning time.

In response to provider feedback, we strengthened psychological safety by promoting trauma informed leadership, integrating equity and antiracism education, and expanding opportunities for staff to shape organizational planning and quality improvement. Employees and their families also have access to the Employee and Family Assistance Program, offering immediate counselling support and comprehensive Life Smart Coaching for financial, legal, and lifestyle needs.

Looking ahead, DCHC will continue to invest in workforce stability through targeted recruitment, improved orientation resources, and strengthened recognition programs. Our commitment is to cultivate a workplace where providers feel supported, empowered, and able to thrive—ultimately improving the quality of care for our communities.



## SAFETY

Durham Community Health Centre is committed to cultivating a proactive, resilient safety culture that moves beyond identifying past harm to focusing on real-time learning, system responsiveness, and continuous improvement. This approach aligns with sector guidance emphasizing that safety requires more than measuring the absence of harm and instead prioritizes practices that help teams anticipate risks and respond effectively to emerging challenges time learning, system responsiveness, and continuous improvement.

Over the past year, DCHC has strengthened its safety practices by expanding incident monitoring processes, improving communication channels, and equipping teams with tools that support early identification of safety concerns. Lessons from near misses and client feedback are incorporated into team discussions to ensure continuous learning and preventive action monitoring processes.

DCHC is also advancing its work in resilience-based safety by embedding trauma-informed leadership practices and equity-focused approaches into day-to-day operations. These practices help create an environment where staff feel psychologically safe to report concerns, participate in problem solving, and contribute to system-level improvements. Enhanced digital tracking of safety events supports trend analysis and early escalation of risks, allowing teams to take timely corrective action based safety.

Looking ahead, DCHC will further enhance its safety culture through expanded staff training, strengthened real-time monitoring processes, and deeper engagement of both clients and providers in co-designing safety improvements. Our goal is to build a system

that consistently anticipates risk, responds with agility, and fosters trust across all care environments.

## PALLIATIVE CARE

Durham Community Health Centre is committed to supporting high quality, person centred palliative care across the client journey to enhance the quality of life for clients and families. Guided by Ontario's Quality Standard for Palliative Care and the Palliative Care Health Services Delivery Framework, DCHC ensures primary care supports individualized planning, clear communication, and coordinated support.

A key focus of our approach is early, collaborative care planning. Providers work with clients, caregivers, and community partners to develop care plans grounded in each individual's values, goals, and preferences. Documentation processes ensure that advance care plans, communication notes, and care preferences follow clients across programs, supporting consistent and seamless care.

DCHC also supports culturally appropriate, trauma informed palliative care. Partnerships with community and cultural organizations help ensure that services honour diverse identities, traditions, and beliefs. Looking ahead, DCHC will continue advancing care closer to home pathways to ensure clients can receive palliative care in their preferred setting, supported by coordinated, culturally safe, and responsive services.

## POPULATION HEALTH MANAGEMENT

Durham Community Health Centre uses a population health management approach to proactively identify and address the

health and social needs of our communities. Using sociodemographic data, community-level indicators, and client feedback, we have identified seven equity-based priority populations and tailor services to reduce inequities and improve access.

DCHC's Mobile Health Program provides primary care, chronic disease management, and harm reduction supports in high-needs neighbourhoods identified through population-level data. Our HART Hub supports clients with complex medical and social needs through rapid-response navigation, psychosocial supports, and coordinated care planning that reduces acute care use.

The Black Health & Wellness Program was co-designed with community input to address barriers to culturally safe, timely care for ACB (African, Caribbean, and Black) community members in Durham. The program is informed by stratified data and community advisory feedback. Our chronic disease pathways use screening and risk stratification data to connect clients to multidisciplinary care earlier in their health journey.

DCHC's Youth Wellness Hub enhances access for young people by providing integrated walk-in mental health, primary care, and social supports in a youth-friendly environment. Service design and outreach are informed by youth-identified priorities, local data, and school- and community-based partnerships.

DCHC will continue strengthening data partnerships and cross-sector collaboration to ensure proactive, equitable, and integrated care for the populations we serve.





## CONTACT INFORMATION/DESIGNATED LEAD

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## SIGN-OFF

It is recommended that the following individuals review and sign-off on your organization's Quality Improvement Plan (where applicable):

I have reviewed and approved our organization's Quality Improvement Plan on **March 31, 2026**

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**Ivano Labricciosa**, Board Chair

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**Diana Macdonald**, Quality Committee Chair or delegate

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**Syed Sarwar**, Executive Director/Administrative Lead

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**Francis Garwe**, Other leadership as appropriate

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