

# The Eight Attributes Of Ontario's Community Health Centres

## Comprehensive

CHCs provide comprehensive, coordinated, primary health care encompassing primary care, illness prevention and health promotion, in one-to-one service, personal-development groups and community-level interventions.

## Accessible

CHCs are designed to improve access to appropriate health care services through the optimal location and design of facilities, carefully planned programs and 24-hour on-call services. CHCs have expertise in ensuring access for people who encounter a diverse range of social, cultural or geographic barriers or who are at risk of developing health problems. This would include, for example, the provision of service by staff with cultural knowledge and language skills suited to the community.

## Client- and community-centred

CHCs are continuously adapting and refining their ability to reach and to serve their clients and communities. CHCs base their planning on population health needs and develop best practices for serving those needs. CHCs strive to provide client-centred care.

## Interdisciplinary

CHCs build interdisciplinary teams working in collaborative practice. In these teams, salaried professionals work together in a coordinated approach to address the health needs of their clients. Depending on the actual programs and services offered. CHC interdisciplinary teams may include physicians, nurse practitioners, dietitians, physiotherapists, occupational therapists, social workers, health promoter, community development workers, administrative staff and others.

## Integrated

CHCs develop strong connections with both formal-health-system partners and community partners to ensure the integration of CHC services with the delivery of other health and social services. Integration improves client care through the provision of timely services, appropriate referrals and the delivery of seamless care. Integration also leads to system efficiencies and effectiveness.

## Community-Governed

CHCs are not-for-profit organizations, governed by community boards. Community boards and committees provide a mechanism for centres to be responsive to the needs of their respective communities, and for communities to develop and sense of ownership of "their" centres. Boards also build important relationships of trust in the community.

## Inclusive of the social determinants of health

The health of individuals and populations is affected by social factors. CHCs strive for improvements in the social support and conditions that affect the long-term health of their clients and community, through participation in multi-sector partnerships and the development of health public policy within a population health framework.

## Grounded in a community-development approach

CHC services and programs are tailored to local needs, and they build on community infrastructure, supporting the delivery of a range of community-based services and other responses to community health concerns. Both the direct service and the infrastructure-enhancement aspects of CHCs increase the capacity of communities to improve community and individual health outcomes.