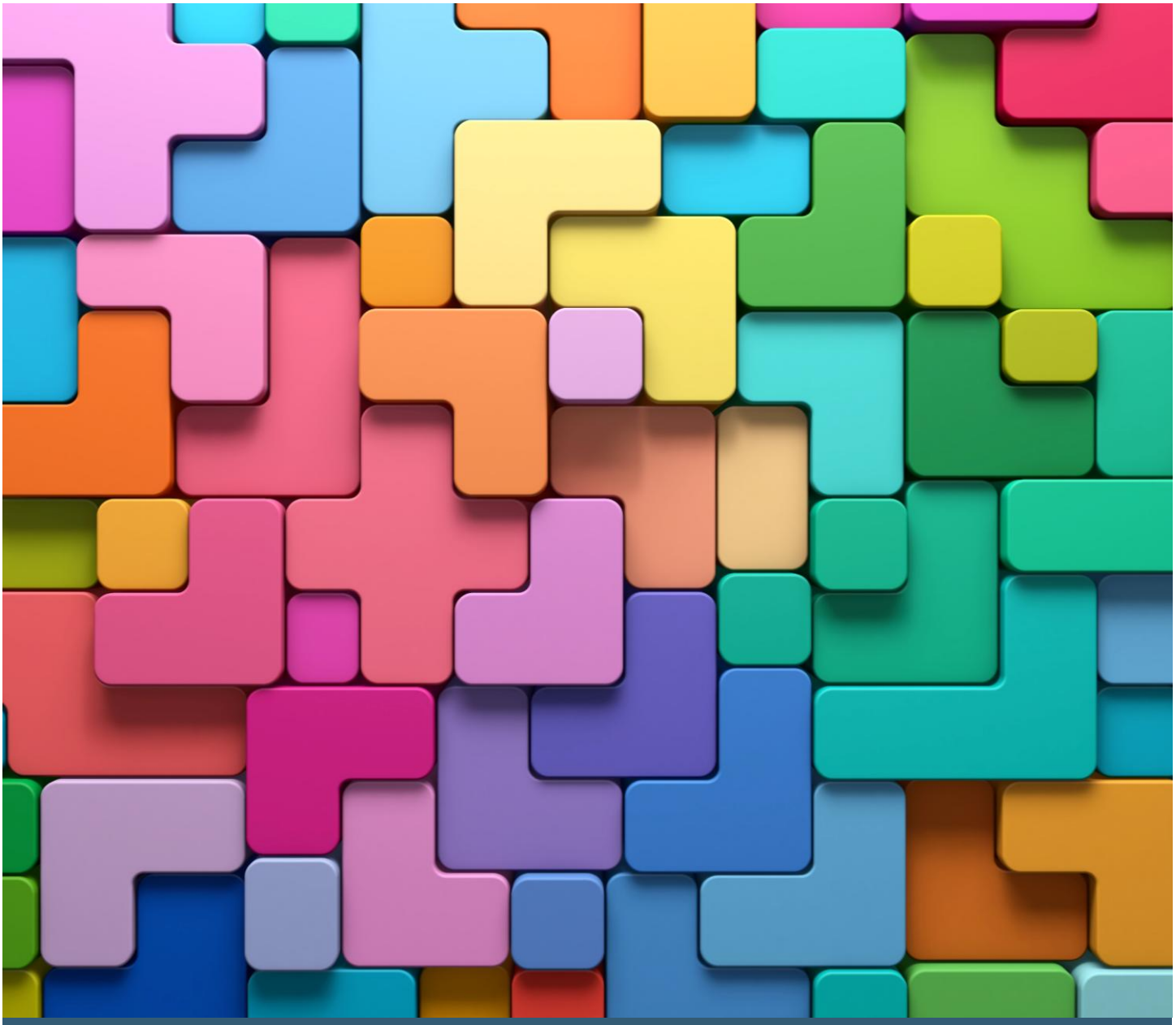


Your Gateway to Be Well, Get Well, Stay Well

A Report and Strategic Plan for Gateway Community Health Centre

Prepared by Work-Life Harmony Enterprises

July 17, 2025

Acknowledgments

In early 2025, Gateway Community Health Centre embarked on a strategic planning process with guidance and support from Work-Life Harmony Enterprises. The process required engagement, collaboration, and communication with various individuals, both internal and external to Gateway. As a result, the new Strategic Plan is informed and inspired by diverse perspectives, united in their commitment to the future of Gateway.

Work-Life Harmony Enterprises would like to acknowledge all those who made an invaluable contribution to the strategic planning process and informed this Report and the Strategic Plan:

- Gateway Strategic Planning Committee and Board of Directors for their leadership during the process.
- Gateway CEO Mayo Hawco for her commitment to the process and outcome.
- Gateway Senior Leadership Team for their insights and engagement in the process.
- Gateway Executive Assistant Shari Hackett for her responsiveness and support throughout the process.
- Gateway Staff for their passion and energy during the process.
- Community partners for their insights and support throughout the process.
- Gateway patients, clients, and community members for their engagement in the process.

This *Final Report* is the project capstone deliverable for the strategic planning process. It is intended for the current and future **Strategic Planning Committees**. It documents the process and key elements of the **2025-2030 Gateway Strategic Plan**. While this Report is not intended for public release, content for a future public-facing strategic planning document is included.

Work-Life Harmony ENTERPRISES

Report and Strategic Plan prepared by Work-Life Harmony Enterprises
July 17, 2025
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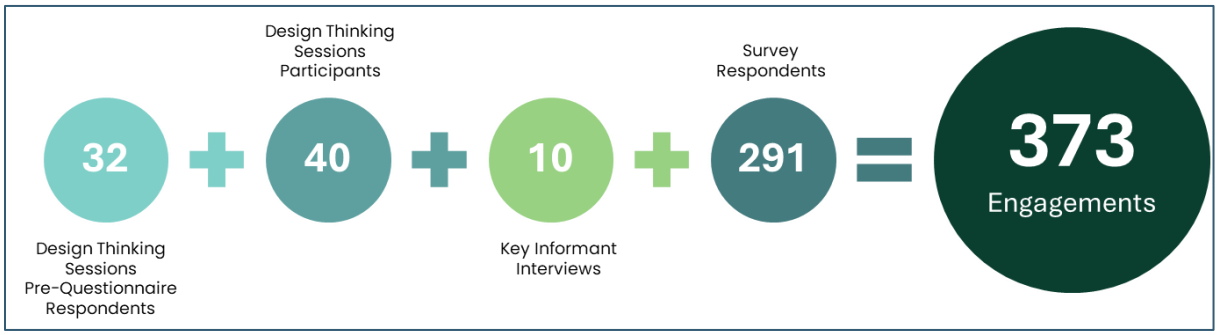
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Overview of the Strategic Planning Process

In January 2025, an iterative process began to develop Gateway's new Strategic Plan, including an updated mission, vision, and values. This process began with a comprehensive review of Gateway's internal documents to provide an in-depth understanding of Gateway, its history, its current state, and the community it serves, laying the foundation for a Strategic Plan that reflects what matters most to Gateway, its staff, patients, clients, and the community.

At the heart of the strategic planning process was engagement — talking to those who care about the future of Gateway, those who are inspired by what takes place every day at Gateway, and those who value Gateway as a leader and pillar in the community. The engagement phase focused on connecting with diverse stakeholders to share information, ideas, concerns, and insights.

Three **design thinking sessions** took place in late March 2025 with the Gateway staff, Senior Leadership Team, and Board of Directors. The design thinking sessions participants were invited to complete a pre-session questionnaire to gather initial insights into their thoughts, feelings, and ideas for the future. The questionnaire responses informed the structured yet flexible design thinking activities. Each session included similar activities from slightly different angles, providing a 360-degree view of Gateway. The sessions explored what matters most to patients/clients, staff, and Gateway as a whole to inspire a mission, vision, values, and strategic priorities that resonate with everyone who crosses paths with Gateway.



Ten **key informants** with unique perspectives participated in virtual interviews to share their reflections on Gateway's strengths, role in the community, and vision for the future.

An online **community survey** was conducted to gather information and insights from patients/clients, community partners, funders, donors, volunteers, and other stakeholders. To mitigate barriers to participation, paper copies of the survey were available at Gateway and promotional materials were shared throughout the community and on Gateway's online platforms.

These key elements of the process informed Gateway's new Strategic Plan.

"They think ahead, not just about tomorrow,
but they have a future vision of where they want to be."
~ Key Informant

Situational Analysis Summary

As a multidimensional organization, the **situational analysis** (comprehensive review) explored Gateway's internal documents, including but not limited to documents focused on:

- **Strategy** (e.g., the current strategic plan, strategic plan progress reports)
- **Governance** (e.g., By-laws, meeting minutes, Terms of Reference, Board work plan)
- **Financial** (e.g., financial statements)
- **Operations** (e.g., operational plan, HR manual, job descriptions, quality improvement plan)
- **Programs and Services** (e.g., description of programs and services)
- **Client and Community Demographics** (e.g., information on unattached individuals, current state assessment of primary care, census data)

Key observations made during the situational analysis include:

- Gateway has a solid understanding of governance and the roles and responsibilities of Directors and Committees vis-à-vis the CEO and day-to-day operations.
- Gateway has a profound understanding of the community it serves, the challenges it faces, the barriers to accessing care, and the social determinants of health.
- Gateway offers a range of diverse programs and services to meet the needs of its patients/clients and community throughout the life course.
- Gateway has an interdisciplinary team of medical professionals, community resource professionals, and administrative/operations staff.
- Gateway's financial situation has remained consistent in recent years, with no changes to its risk exposure.
- Gateway maintains a robust account of governance, strategic and operational activities.
- Gateway is committed to continuous quality improvement to care for patients/clients within and beyond their catchment area.
- Gateway is an employer of choice, as many staff members have been employed for 15 years or more.

The situational analysis provided a solid understanding of Gateway, informing the SOAR Analysis and Strategic Plan.

Insights from Engagements and Consultations

While the situational analysis provided information and context, engaging in meaningful dialogue about what lies at the heart of Gateway and its potential to achieve new heights was vital to develop the foundational elements of the Strategic Plan (i.e., vision, mission, values, strategic priorities).

The engagements and consultations sought to gather information and insights from stakeholders with varied perspectives, including (but not limited to) staff, patients/clients, Directors, community partners, donors, volunteers, funders, and community members. As the nature of their interactions with Gateway may differ, so did their views on what matters most to Gateway and future priorities.

Each stakeholder group includes diverse perspectives, as no two staff members, Directors, or patients/clients have the same experiences, needs, or vision. Each stakeholder who participated in the engagements and consultations was heard, valued and appreciated.

Pre-Design Thinking Sessions Questionnaire

In preparation for the design thinking sessions, the staff, Senior Leadership Team, and Board of Directors were invited to complete a brief questionnaire about achievements, strengths and assets, and areas for improvement. A total of 32 individuals completed the questionnaire.

Achievements

The questionnaire highlighted respondents' various professional, team, and organizational achievements within the past two years. Professional achievements included (but were not limited to) continued development and growth (e.g., learning new skills, new roles, academic achievements), pride in the optimal care provided to patients/clients, designing and developing new programs, being part of a supportive team, serving the community, modernizing Gateway's internal systems, recruiting new physicians, mentoring others, and contributing to Gateway's overall mission.

Team achievements included (but were not limited to) improving and streamlining processes, providing leadership in the Hastings Prince Edward Ontario Health Team (HPE OHT), successful recruitment efforts, offering a variety of programs to the community, working effectively as a team, advocating for a healthy work environment, serving the community as a team, leveraging each other's strengths, delivering quality care to patients/clients, increased collaboration amongst team members, and continuous learning.

> *"I am proud of my team as they are the most amazing people I ever met."*
> *~ Pre-design thinking session questionnaire response*

Organizational achievements included (but were not limited to) making healthcare accessible to the community, being a leader in the healthcare sector, physician recruitment, advocacy for employee compensation, the ability to adapt to change, implementing social prescribing, outreach in the community, receiving new grants for programs, navigating staffing changes (retirements, new hires), providing services during the COVID-19 pandemic, continuous growth to meet the needs of patients/clients and the community, the care and support staff provide to one another, and delivering exceptional care to improve health outcomes.

> *"Gateway is very community-based, very responsive to its community, has a good understanding of the social determinants of health and thinks about primary care in a much broader way."*
> *~ Key Informant*

Strengths and Assets

Questionnaire respondents shared thoughtful reflections on what Gateway does well, acknowledging the breadth and depth of the services Gateway provides, as well as the role they play in the broader community and healthcare ecosystem.[1]

Identified strengths included (but were not limited to) providing integrated client-centred care, going above and beyond for patients/clients, striving to meet the needs of the community, fostering strong trusting relationships with patients/clients and community partners, community outreach, advocating for the needs of the rural community, taking part in important discussions within the OHT, offering comprehensive medical and community programs, a strong frontline team, incredible compassion for the people they serve, and achieving so much despite financial constraints.

> *"Gateway is a special place that is the cornerstone of healthcare and social care in this community."*
> *~ Pre-design thinking session questionnaire response*

Regardless of perspective, when asked about Gateway's greatest asset, the majority of respondents (staff, Senior Leadership Team, and Board) spoke of the people — the dedicated interdisciplinary staff who possess a wealth of knowledge and skills, and deliver a range of vital services to patients/clients and the community. Other responses included (but were not limited to) clients, meeting the needs of the community, the dental clinic, the variety of services offered, a commitment to the community, and the leadership within the organization.

Areas for Improvement

Building on the strengths and assets, respondents reflected on potential areas for improvement as Gateway strives to be the best community health centre it can be while cultivating a culture of wellbeing.

The areas for improvement identified in the questionnaire included (but were not limited to) communication to the community about Gateway's programs and services, overhaul of the phone system, offering virtual and mobile care, improving care transitions, utilizing community partners to advocate for Gateway, staff acknowledgement and recognition, staff morale, transparency in decision-making, speed up the implementation of new ideas, staff compensation, staff and Senior Leadership Team communication and transparency, and participation in community events.

> *"It really is about how we do things and opportunities to perhaps do things differently that may be better."*
> *~ Key Informant*

[1] A healthcare ecosystem is a complex, interconnected network of individuals (e.g., healthcare professionals, funders, policy makers, patients), organizations (e.g., hospitals, primary care, allied health, community-based), government departments, regulators, pharmaceutical companies, technology companies, medical suppliers, and all other entities that work together to develop and deliver healthcare services.

Describe Gateway

The word cloud is comprised of the responses to the question, "How would you complete this sentence in one word, Gateway is?"



The size of the word in the word cloud is relative to the frequency of the response. Therefore, multiple respondents described Gateway as **welcoming**, **community**, and **caring**. Furthermore, Gateway was described as resilient, outstanding, compassionate, comprehensive, and excellent. Whether big or small, all the words used to describe Gateway provided insight into how respondents feel about Gateway.

Gateway's Role in the Community

The word cloud includes the responses to the question, "How would you complete this sentence in one word, Gateway's role in the community is?"



Respondents described Gateway's role as **vital** and one of **support**, while complemented by critical, leader, healthcare, connector, necessary, holistic, and essential. Various prominent words can be used interchangeably (i.e., vital, critical, necessary, essential), emphasizing the role Gateway plays as a pillar of healthcare and community support. The word cloud captures the essence of Gateway in the community — a fundamental resource to optimize wellbeing.

Design Thinking Sessions

On March 27, 2025, three design thinking sessions took place at Gateway. The sessions were designed to engage each participant and each group (staff, Senior Leadership Team, and Board of Directors) in activities exploring what matters most to patients/clients, staff, and the organization. Each session included structured yet flexible opportunities for reflection, discussions with peers, and envisioning the future.

Each group actively participated in the design thinking activities, demonstrating their passion for their role, their commitment to the future of Gateway, and their pride in serving the needs of the community. Each session contributed to deepening our understanding of the essence of Gateway and what it means to be part of the Gateway team now and into the future.

Staff

At the staff design thinking session, we witnessed the passion and dedication of the staff. Whether sharing ideas or concerns, the staff demonstrated what it means to them to be part of the Gateway team, the sense of purpose they feel, and the profound impact they have on their patients/clients and the community. The importance of relationships was on full display as the staff rolled up their sleeves, spoke up, shared a smile or a laugh, and explored areas for improvement to make Gateway the best it can be for everyone.

> *"They are a group of dedicated volunteers and staff that really care about the community they're serving."*
> *~ Key Informant*

During the session, staff zoomed in on what they feel matters most to patients/clients, specifically being heard, care and support, the dysfunctional phone system and Gateway responsiveness, safety, and costs. The staff considered why each of these matters, with particular emphasis on building trust, inclusive care, advocating for patients/clients, positive relationships, the challenges with the phone system, mental wellness, illness prevention, and the costs of some Gateway services.

Senior Leadership Team

During the design thinking session, the Senior Leadership Team (SLT) considered essential resources required to serve the community, equitable access to care, staff and their families' wellbeing, relationships with others (their colleagues, patients/clients, and community), fair wages, staff appreciation, and challenges related to funding constraints.

They reflected on the staff's dedication to making a difference in the community, values and intrinsic motivators at a CHC, a sense of belonging, organizational culture, the call to service within the healthcare ecosystem, the essence of their work, and the importance of their wellbeing.

The SLT also spoke of Gateway's strengths, such as passion, skills and expertise, the richness of the connections with others (length, depth and number of connections with colleagues and patients/clients), local and regional partnerships, regional leadership, creative and innovative approaches to primary care, impact in the community, commitment to DEI, standing in allyship with diverse organizations, and reputation as a trusted and respected resource to others.

> *"Wouldn't it be great if... we could partner with other organizations in the area to ensure wellbeing for all."*
> *~ Design thinking session activity response*

Board of Directors

During the design thinking session, the Board of Directors considered Gateway as an organization, specifically community needs, patients/clients, financial stability, sustainability, accessibility, fairness and equity, inclusivity, service excellence, leadership, staff, and wellbeing. The Board emphasized how the community needs Gateway to access healthcare and fill service gaps, Gateway's role in providing essential services that contribute to the health and wellbeing of the community, and the importance of sustainability (funding, financial stability).

Key Informant Interviews

Ten virtual key informant interviews were conducted with individuals from Gateway's broad network, including, but not limited to, former staff, project partners and collaborators, and peers within the healthcare ecosystem. Key informants were primarily in leadership roles, including (but not limited to) individuals in both small and large healthcare, primary care, and wellbeing organizations, as well as those in urban and rural areas, who support diverse subgroups of the population and are dedicated to enabling change in healthcare to support Ontarians.

> *"Other communities look at Tweed and say we want what they have."*
> *~ Key Informant*

Using a semi-structured approach, each question prompted reflection and organic conversations. Key informants candidly shared their perspectives and experiences with Gateway and other healthcare organizations to provide further context as to the role Gateway currently plays and could play in the future.

While not everyone was familiar with the inner workings at Gateway, key informants provided valuable insights into opportunities for Gateway to provide leadership in the region, participate in advocacy efforts, and develop innovative solutions in partnership with others to address community needs and fill gaps in healthcare. Key informants spoke highly of Gateway, recognizing its value in the community and its potential to grow, expand services, reach more patients/clients, become a health hub, facilitate resource sharing, and provide ongoing leadership and mentorship.

Insights and themes from the key informant interviews informed the development of the community survey.

Community Survey

While there was no set benchmark as to the ideal number of survey responses, promotional materials distributed throughout the community, online posts (Gateway website and social media), email outreach, and word-of-mouth resulted in nearly 300 surveys (260 online and 31 paper copies completed at Gateway). Highlights from the survey, including aggregate data, are provided below, demonstrating the wealth of information and insights gathered from the survey.

Survey Demographics

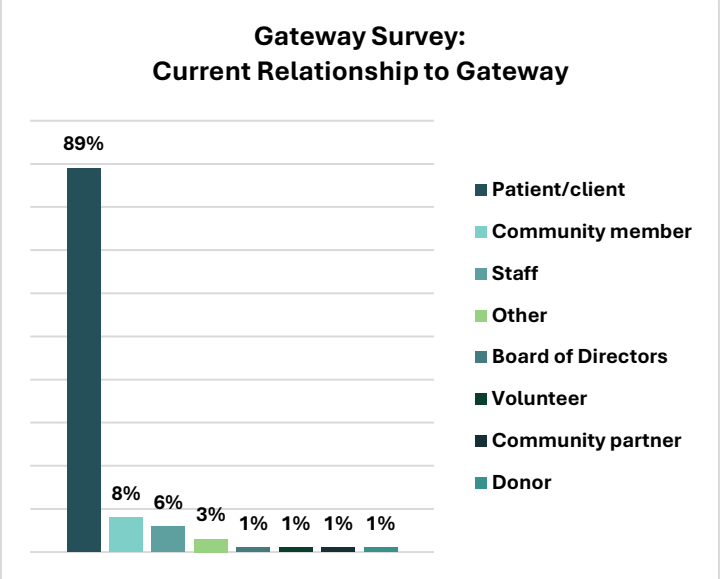
To respect the privacy and confidentiality of all survey respondents, the survey was anonymous, with only three demographic questions about the respondents' current relationship to Gateway, their place of residence, and their identities.

Current Relationship to Gateway

While the survey provided an opportunity for staff and Board to further engage in the strategic planning process (in addition to their participation in the design thinking sessions), the survey sought to engage other stakeholders, particularly patients/clients who receive various health and wellbeing services and support from Gateway.

Survey respondents could identify more than one relationship to Gateway, with 89% identifying as patients/clients, followed by community members (8%) and staff (6%). All other relationships (Board of Directors, volunteers, community partners, donors) accounted for 1% each, respectively. Only one respondent identified as a funder.

Three percent (3%) of respondents identified as "Other," which included (but was not limited to) former patients, participants in community programs, and those on a waiting list for a primary care provider.

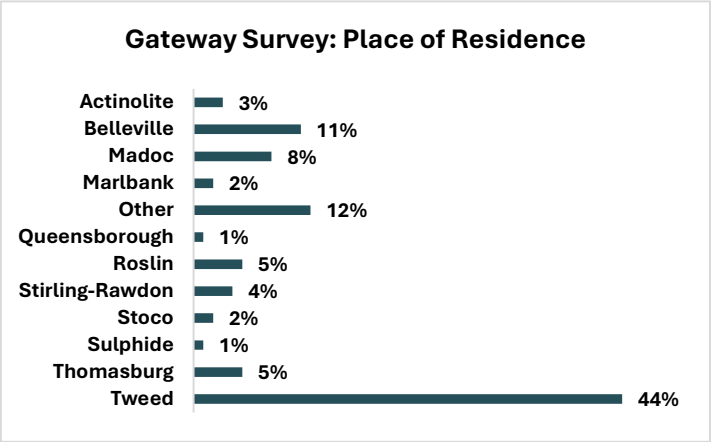


Place of Residence

The survey included a list of 13 locations. Each location was selected by at least one survey respondent, demonstrating the survey's reach and Gateway's network.[2]

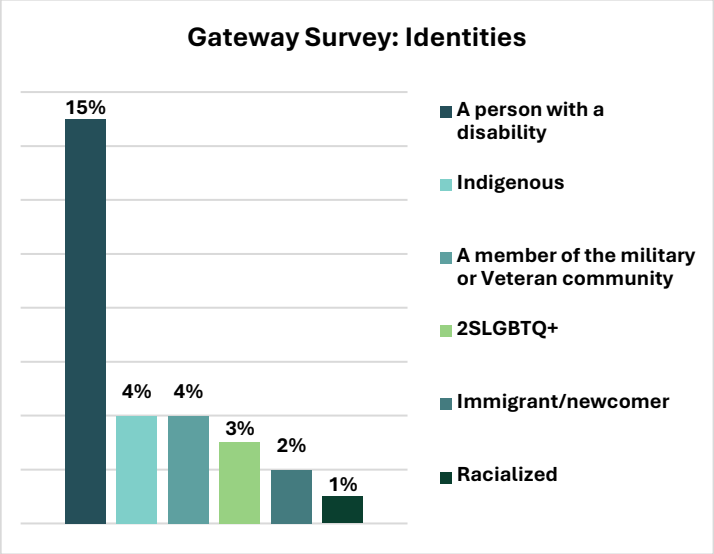
[2] At least one respondent indicated they reside in Flinton and Mamora and Lake (and are not represented in the graph).

Over half of survey respondents stated that they live in Tweed (44%), Belleville (11%), or Madoc (8%). Another 31% of respondents were within Gateway's broader catchment area and 12% indicated they live in "Other" locations, including Arden, Bancroft, Bath, Bogart, Campbellford, Frankford, Gilmour, Highway 7, in between Tweed and Marlbank, Iroquois, Ivanhoe, Larkins, Moira/West Huntingdon Station, Napanee, Northbrook, northeast of Tweed, Odessa, Parham, Peterborough, Picton, Plainfield, Quinte West, Smiths Falls, Tamworth, Trenton, Wooler Cloyne, and a former resident of Marlbank.



Identities

Survey respondents confirmed their identities by selecting one or more of the listed identities. Seventy percent (70%) did not identify with any of the listed identities, while 15% identified as a person with a disability, 4% as Indigenous, 4% as a member of the military or Veteran community, 3% as 2SLGBTQ+, 2% as immigrant/newcomer (including refugee), and 1% as racialized (non-white and non-Indigenous).



Survey respondents who identified as "Other" included self-defined identities such as senior, white, Jehovah's Witness, local resident of Tweed, white immigrant, Canadian-born, female, straight, and neurodivergent.

What Matters to Gateway

The survey asked respondents to envision Gateway's future and to indicate what they felt was most important to Gateway. Respondents were provided with lists of words that were generated based on common words currently used in strategic plans and priorities among peer organizations in the OHT. The words selected most frequently by respondents included:

- client-centred approach
- service excellence
- accessibility
- professionalism
- communication
- teamwork
- community
- trust
- compassion

Future Priorities

The survey data revealed many ideas regarding Gateway's priorities for the future. Several of the ideas were operational (e.g., same-day appointments, hiring more doctors, increasing services) while others provided valuable insight to inform Gateway's new Strategic Plan.

In addition to questions on the survey specific to future priorities, respondents were asked to complete the phrase, *Wouldn't it be great if*. Similarly, responses included ideas related to operations, yet many provided strategic direction focused on ways Gateway could enhance the wellbeing of staff, patients/clients, and the community. For example, ideas for future priorities identified by survey respondents included (but were not limited to):

- advocacy for diverse populations, staff compensation, and increased funding
- continuous learning opportunities for staff to enhance knowledge of leading practices and alternative medicine
- organizational culture of support, trust and transparency
- fostering inclusion for all
- serving the community
- improving technology, including the phone system and equipment
- physical *and* mental health
- community outreach, including awareness of Gateway services and health prevention
- whole-person, client-centred care
- understanding of changing demographics, including the social, economic, and health needs of the community
- increased collaboration among partners in Centre Hastings

Suggestions from the survey were considered and incorporated into the Strategic Priorities with careful consideration of how Gateway could operationalize each one to fulfill its new mission, strive for its vision, and live its values.

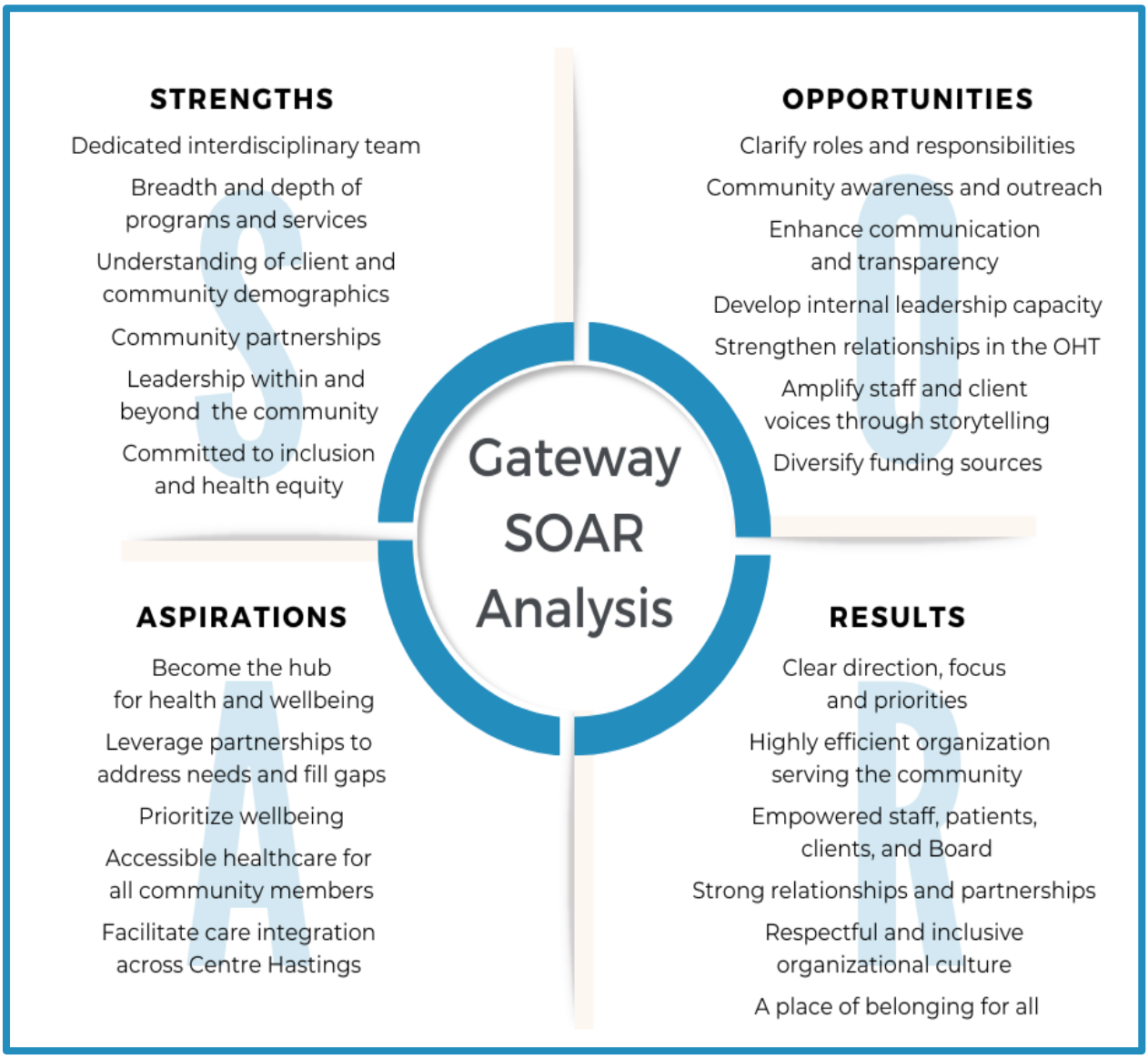
"I see them as connectors, facilitators and innovators."
~ Key Informant

SOAR Analysis

Through a strength-based lens, the SOAR Analysis (*Strengths, Opportunities, Aspirations, Results*) highlights what Gateway does well and areas for growth and improvement. The SOAR Analysis is not intended as a critique of Gateway; rather, it presents a snapshot of Gateway's current state — with careful consideration of staff, Board, and community insights — to inform the Strategic Plan.

> *"Gateway is very open to new ideas and new ways of doing business, I think that's a real strength."*
> *~ Key Informant*

The SOAR Analysis was informed by the strategic planning process, including the in-depth review of Gateway's internal documents, the pre-design thinking sessions questionnaire, the design thinking sessions, key informant interviews, and the community survey.



The Foundation for the Strategic Plan

Gateway's new Strategic Plan was developed on a solid foundation that reflects the comprehensive and iterative strategic planning process. The foundation emphasizes vital elements of Gateway's identity, priorities, and goals for the next five years. The foundation states:

Gateway is…

- Centred on **wellbeing** and **quality of life**
- Inspired by collaborative **co-design** and community **engagement**
- Guided by a **strength-based** and **asset-oriented** lens
- Anchored in **leading** and **emerging** practice
- Fueled by shared **commitment** and **passion**
- Rooted in shared **values**

Yet, Gateway remains **responsive**, **flexible**, **agile**, and **adaptable**

Strategic Lens

During the strategic planning process, envisioning the future of Gateway required careful consideration of various perspectives, dynamics, and internal and external factors. This led to the development of Gateway's strategic lens (*see below*).



The strategic lens is vital to the Strategic Plan as it aims to ensure no entity — from each individual to the healthcare ecosystem as a whole — gets lost in the process. Each view in the strategic lens may impact or be impacted by any other view, demonstrating the dynamic interplay that informs Gateway's mission, vision, and strategic priorities for the next five years.

Through the strategic lens, the first view focuses on **individuals**, such as Directors, staff, patients/clients, and volunteers. The second view looks at **teams**, such as the Board of Directors, primary care, dental, community, and administration/operations. The next view — strategically placed in the middle — is Gateway as an **organization**. This view considers Gateway as a whole, as

well as the sum of all its parts, such as human resources, programs and services, finances, governance, and risk management.

Moving outside Gateway's four walls, the next view considers the **community** in which Gateway operates and serves. This view encompasses the geographical and rural needs of the community, as well as the diverse needs and perspectives of those who seek care and support from Gateway, both within and beyond the catchment area.

Lastly, the final view zooms in (and out) on the broader **healthcare ecosystem** in which Gateway operates. This view considers how Gateway contributes to and benefits from the region (e.g., the OHT), the province (e.g., the Ministry of Health) and nationally (e.g., health and healthcare across Canada). Furthermore, the broader healthcare ecosystem, social determinants of health, and social, economic, political, and environmental factors could affect Gateway, the fulfillment of its mission, and the Strategic Plan over the next five years (e.g., a global pandemic, economic recession, shifting government priorities and natural disasters) affecting Gateway, its staff, patients/clients, and community.

Key Considerations

Building on the foundation and strategic lens, several key considerations informed the development of the Strategic Plan to ensure a final product that reflects the insights gathered during the strategic planning process and is ultimately feasible, actionable, measurable, and informed by internal and external factors.

To develop the Strategic Plan, we considered how the plan…

- Captures the **heart**, harnesses the **passion**, and showcases the **commitment**
- Is **operationalized** and **implemented**
- Is **measured** and **monitored**
- Is **integrated** into programs and services, admin/operations, finances, and governance
- Is **communicated**, **recognized**, **repeated**, **marketed**, and **understood** by others
- **Impacts** and is **impacted** by individuals, teams, the organization, the community, the healthcare ecosystem, and broader social and economic factors.

While these key considerations informed the development of the Strategic Plan, they require ongoing consideration as Gateway remains agile, flexible, responsive, and adaptable. Any changes to Gateway's funding, programs and services, client and community needs, or external influences may require a modified approach to how the plan is operationalized, integrated, implemented, monitored, measured, and communicated to others.

Strategic Plan

Nestled in the rural community of Tweed, Ontario, Gateway Community Health Centre is about more than healthcare. It is a pillar of the community — one that is dedicated to providing accessible care across Centre Hastings. With a staff driven by passion and unwavering purpose, Gateway provides a wealth of community services to be well, get well and stay well.

With a legacy of over 30 years, the strategic planning process provided an opportunity to honour the past, respect the present, and envision the future of Gateway. Together, we acknowledged the incredible work by the Board of Directors and staff of the past, who built a strong foundation focused on client-centred care and meaningful connections as a trusted community resource. We also embraced the lessons learned, not as failures but as opportunities for growth, quality improvement, and a renewed connection to the Community Health Centre Model of Health and Wellbeing.

While in many rearview mirrors, the COVID-19 pandemic placed undeniable stress and strain on Gateway, primary care, clinical and administrative staff, and the broader healthcare ecosystem. However, it serves as a reminder that while guided by this Strategic Plan, Gateway should remain flexible, agile, and adaptable. Within an ever-changing healthcare landscape, Gateway is a leader, connector, innovator, and collaborator. Providing leadership at both the local and regional levels, peer organizations look to Gateway as a resource, one who will stand up and speak out when needed, and one who will roll up its sleeves to partner on new or existing initiatives that make a difference in the lives of Ontarians far beyond their catchment area. Gateway's staff includes many who walked through the doors 10, 20 or 30 years ago and remain committed to providing vast services and care with compassion. Gateway's patients and clients possess diverse needs and perspectives in a community that is continuously growing while remaining grounded in its historic, rural roots.

As organizations continue to adapt to the realities of the post-COVID world, Gateway has its sights set on the next five years. The new Strategic Plan reiterates what matters most to Gateway: care and wellbeing throughout the community. With clear direction and priorities, the new plan sets the wheels in motion to achieve new heights as an organization, aligning with the community and healthcare ecosystem. Each element of the plan is strategically interconnected and woven together with care to remind us all that...

WE ARE YOUR GATEWAY.

Mission

Building on Gateway's current mission, recognizing the parameters defined by the provincial funding agreement, and in alignment with the CHC Model of Health and Wellbeing, Gateway's new mission states:

Gateway provides
accessible high-quality care
to optimize
individual, family, and community
health and wellbeing

Vision

Organizational visions are crafted to be aspirational, inspirational, and memorable. Gateway's new vision checks all those boxes as it articulates Gateway's goal to be the health hub in the community, providing programs and services for health promotion, prevention, primary care, treatment, and overall wellbeing. The new vision states:

Gateway is
the health hub
to be well
get well
and stay well
in our community

We Live Our Values: The Gateway Commitment

Unlike typical organizational value statements that list three to five core values, Gateway's values can't be narrowed down to just a few. Gateway is about much more than a few core values. As a result, the strategic planning process inspired the creation of *The Gateway Commitment,* articulating how, at Gateway, *we live our values:*

WE treat others with dignity, respect, and kindness
WE act with authenticity, integrity, and honesty
WE work efficiently, effectively, and ethically
WE engage with empathy, care, and compassion
WE champion inclusion, equity, and reconciliation
WE foster a sense of security, safety, and belonging
WE remain flexible, responsive, and agile
WE believe in continuous improvement, accountability, and transparency

WE care about YOU!
WE care for YOU!
We are YOUR Gateway to be well, get well, stay well.

Strategic Priorities: Realizing Gateway's Vision

From the start of the strategic planning process, wellbeing served as the framework, considering Gateway's wellbeing, and its role in the wellbeing of staff, patients/clients and the community. To amplify the importance and focus on wellbeing, the strategic priorities focus on **WELL**being:

W **Wholistic Wellbeing**[3]
E **Excellence**
L **Leadership**
L **Listen and Learn**

Each strategic priority contains several measurable outcomes, designed to identify Gateway's focus to achieve the strategic priority. Much like the strategic priorities, the measurable outcomes appear broad in nature and scope to allow Gateway to remain flexible, adaptive, and agile, while providing clear direction to be operationalized by staff.

Strategic Priority #1: Wholistic Wellbeing

Wholistic Wellbeing focuses on the physical, mental, emotional, and spiritual wellbeing of all those who cross paths with Gateway, for example, staff, patients/clients, Directors, volunteers, program participants, and community members.

Wholistic Wellbeing also considers quality of life, including the social determinants of health that affect the Gateway community and barriers to accessing primary care, programs and services. As Gateway's new mission focuses on providing care to optimize wellbeing, this strategic priority reiterates Gateway's goal to optimize wellbeing for all.

The measurable outcomes for **Wholistic Wellbeing** are:

Meet diverse needs
Deliver whole-person care
Enhance quality of life
Integrate the social determinants of health
Eliminate barriers to care
Optimize wellbeing

Strategic Priority #2: Excellence

Excellence highlights Gateway's commitment to high standards. This includes high-quality, positive experiences for all those who interact with Gateway, such as patients/clients, community members, vendors, suppliers, project partners, and peer organizations.

[3] Though often spelt with an "h," wholistic is intentionally spelt with a "w" to highlight the word "whole" as in whole-person care and to be more culturally respectful to Indigenous communities by representing the interconnectedness of physical, mental, emotional and spiritual aspects of being.

Excellence isn't just about healthcare excellence. Instead, excellence highlights Gateway's commitment to delivering programs and services that meet diverse community needs, leveraging the talents of the interdisciplinary staff team, implementing leading and emerging practices in all aspects of Gateway's operations (i.e., primary care, dental, community, finances, admin/ops) and utilizing technologies to support excellence.

The measurable outcomes for **Excellence** are:

Provide high-quality experiences
Deliver diverse programs and services
Leverage interdisciplinary expertise, competencies and skills
Implement leading and emerging practices
Integrate emerging technologies

Strategic Priority #3: Leadership

Leadership aims to amplify and leverage Gateway as a leader in the community, region, and beyond. Leadership builds on existing momentum as Gateway continues to lead by example, partner with others to meet community needs, develop innovative solutions to address service gaps, mentor emerging leaders internally and externally, and lead advocacy efforts to enable positive changes in the healthcare ecosystem.

This strategic priority seeks to build leadership capacity and capabilities within Gateway, recognizing that Gateway possess many leaders, current and emerging, across the organization with the potential to enhance the Gateway experience for all.

The measurable outcomes for **Leadership** are:

Connect, collaborate, and partner with peer organizations
Build leadership capacity and capabilities
Enrich the healthcare ecosystem
Develop innovative solutions
Model leadership and mentor others
Lead regional advocacy for system change

Strategic Priority #4: Listen and Learn

Listen and Learn focuses on listening to and learning from ourselves, each other, and those around us, including the community and healthcare ecosystem.

Listen and Learn highlights opportunities for personal reflection to support continuous improvement, meaningful engagement with those closest to Gateway (e.g., staff, patients/clients, community, partners, peers) to create a reciprocal relationship of listening and learning, opportunities to learn about topics that may affect Gateway (and its staff, patients/clients, or community), and awareness of what is happening in the healthcare ecosystem that may ripple onto Gateway.

The measurable outcomes for **Listen and Learn** are:

Create opportunities for self-awareness, reflection, and continuous improvement
Engage staff, patients, clients, partners and collaborators
Provide team-building and learning opportunities
Learn with and from partners and peers
Engage the community
Increase awareness and understanding of the healthcare ecosystem

Gateway's Tagline

The essence of Gateway's new mission, vision, and values can be understood and communicated in the new Gateway tagline:

We are YOUR Gateway to be well, get well, stay well.

This memorable tagline serves as a reminder of what Gateway does and how Gateway is there for the community. It plays on the word "gateway" as the community's path, road, or outlet to achieve optimal wellbeing. The new tagline becomes Gateway's *north star,* while providing security, stability, and strength for the organization. It continues to be the *north star* even in times of uncertainty, instability, change, and rapid growth that require Gateway to be flexible, responsive, and agile while remaining true to its mission, vision, and values.

Action Plan: Strategies for Gateway's Success

To achieve the strategic priorities and each measurable outcome, Gateway will implement strategies. The strategies steer Gateway's Action Plan for the next five years. Each strategy includes actions that Gateway will undertake to achieve each strategic priority.

As Gateway's new mission focuses on providing care to optimize wellbeing, the strategic priorities of WELLbeing will be achieved through the strategies of CARE:

C **Clarity and Consistency**
A **Accessibility and Awareness**
R **Relationships**
E **Evolving**

Strategy #1: Clarity and Consistency

Clarity and Consistency focus on a shared understanding of what, why, who, hopes, and barriers. This strategy aims to ensure clear direction and an understanding of who is doing what to achieve the strategic priority.

By implementing this strategy, Gateway will:

Clarify purpose and priorities
Clarify goals, objectives, and anticipated outcomes
Clarify internal roles and responsibilities
Clarify external roles and responsibilities
Clarify hopes and expectations
Clarify boundaries and limitations

Strategy #2: Accessibility and Awareness

Accessibility and Awareness focus on communication, engagement and transparency, both internal and external, at Gateway.

By implementing this strategy, Gateway will:

Increase awareness of Gateway and its services
Increase community outreach
Diversify and streamline internal and external communication
Create internal and external engagement opportunities
Enhance internal and external transparency regarding accomplishments, challenges and opportunities

Strategy #3: Relationships

At Gateway's core are relationships, including those between staff, between staff and patients/clients, between Gateway and project partners, and between Gateway and the community. Fostering relationships takes time, energy and focus and is essential to Gateway living its values and supporting the wellbeing of all with ties to Gateway.

By implementing this strategy, Gateway will:

Cultivate and nurture relationships
Leverage and strengthen internal and external relationships
Eliminate barriers hindering strong relationships
Include and welcome everyone to Gateway
Honour and appreciate everyone at Gateway
Invest in organizational culture
Heal relationships

Strategy #4: Evolving

Evolving is the final strategy, which focuses on Gateway's commitment and ability to remain flexible, responsive, and agile. This strategy also recognizes Gateway as a place for continuous growth, development, and improvement in an ever-changing world.

By implementing this strategy, Gateway will:

Grow personally, professionally, and organizationally
Adapt to internal and external factors
Respond to the evolving needs of staff, patients, clients, and the community
Plan for the future through the strategic lens
Foster resilience
Ensure sustainability

Timelines

As the Operational Plan will contain specific details regarding how and when each strategic priority and measurable outcome will be achieved, the timeline below provides a high-level overview of strategic activities to be undertaken by the Board, SLT, and staff. These activities aim to ensure that the Strategic Plan and Operational Plan remain at the forefront of Gateway's work over the next five years. Regular review of the Strategic Plan and Operational Plan ensures Gateway remains grounded in its mission, vision, values and strategic priorities until 2030.

Frequency	Date	Activity	Team
One-time	Starting in August 2025	Development of Operational Plan (incl. tools, resources, surveys and templates)	SLT and Staff
One-time	October 5, 2025 *(tentative)*	Public launch of new Gateway Strategic Plan	SLT and Staff
Quarterly	Starting in December 2025 until December 2030	Survey data collection (e.g., staff, patients/clients, community)	Staff
Annually	Starting in December 2025 until December 2030	Governance review (e.g., Board and Director assessments)	Board
Annually	Starting in December 2025 until December 2030	Staff self-assessment	SLT and Staff
Annually	Starting in January 2026 until January 2030	Personal and professional objectives and professional and leadership development plan	SLT and Staff
Bi-monthly	Starting in February 2026 until December 2027	Review of Operational Plan	SLT
Semi-Annually	Starting in April 2026 until October 2030	Status review of Strategic Plan	Board
Bi-annually	Starting in May 2026 until November 2030	Report to Board of Directors on Operational Plan	CEO
Bi-annually	Starting in January 2027 until January 2031	Review of Strategic Plan	SLT
Semi-annually	Starting in June 2028 until December 2030	Review of Operational Plan	SLT
Every 5 years	December 2030	Final Review of Strategic Plan and Operational Plan	SLT

Performance Metrics

Performance metrics are vital to ensuring Gateway is on track to achieve its strategic priorities and outcomes. Detailed performance metrics and key performance indicators (KPIs) will be developed by the Senior Leadership Team with input from staff to align with the Operational Plan.

With careful consideration of Gateway's strategic lens (i.e., individuals, teams, organization as a whole, community, and healthcare ecosystem), everyone has a role to play in achieving Gateway's strategic priorities. Staff are responsible for their personal and professional goals, including monitoring progress to achieve WELLbeing. The SLT is responsible for the KPIs for their teams, while the Board is responsible for KPIs relevant to the CEO's performance. The CEO defines the KPIs for the organization with input from the Board on matters of compliance, governance, and risk. The CEO also defines the KPIs relative to the community and healthcare ecosystem.

The following high-level performance metrics are meant to be used as a guide during the development of the Operational Plan.

Strategic Lens View		Performance Metrics	Domains	Team
Individuals	**Directors**	Engagement Learning	• Demographics • Self-assessment • Learning opportunities • Director feedback survey	Board
	Staff	Engagement Learning Satisfaction	• Demographics • Engagement opportunities • Learning opportunities • Personal and professional objectives plan • Professional and leadership development plan • Leadership development opportunities • Self-assessment • Staff feedback survey	SLT
	Patients/ Clients	Engagement Satisfaction	• Engagement opportunities • Patient/client records • Waitlist • Emergency department visit records • Virtual appointment records • Compliments, comments, and complaints • Client/patient feedback survey	Staff
	Volunteers	Engagement Satisfaction	• Demographics • Engagement opportunities • Volunteer feedback survey	Staff

Strategic Lens View		Performance Metrics	Domains	Team
Teams	**Board of Directors**	Engagement Learning Team-building	• Board assessment • Learning opportunities • Team-building opportunities	Board
	Primary Care **Dental** **Community** **Admin/Ops**	Engagement Learning Team-building	• Engagement opportunities • Learning opportunities • Team-building opportunities	SLT
Organization	**Gateway**	Risk Financial Human Resources Outreach & Communications	• Compliments, comments, and complaints • Financial records • HR records • Internal/external comms	Board CEO
Community	**Diverse rural needs and perspectives**	Engagement Learning	• Demographics • Engagement opportunities • Learning opportunities • Community insights survey	CEO
Healthcare ecosystem	**Regional**	Engagement	• Ontario Health Team (OHT) • Project partners • Peer organizations	CEO
	Provincial	Engagement Awareness	• Ministry of Health • Ontario Health • Public Health Ontario • Canadian Alliance of Community Health Centres • Alliance for Healthier Communities	CEO
	National	Engagement Awareness	• Statistics Canada • Health Canada • Public Health Agency of Canada (PHAC) • Canadian Institute for Health Information (CIHI) • Wellbeing indices • Academic/research partners	CEO

Recommendations for Next Steps

With sights set on the future, exciting times are here for Gateway Community Health Centre!

A new Strategic Plan, including a new mission, vision, values, and strategic priorities, means change. A change in mindset, a change in ways of doing, and for some, perhaps a change in ways of being. While change theory reminds us that no change is easy, it provides a roadmap for moving forward. While what comes next may feel overwhelming at first, with dedicated leadership and the passion of staff at the forefront, Gateway is well-positioned to embrace change to optimize wellbeing for all. Remaining grounded in its commitment to wellbeing will anchor Gateway with strength and energy to fulfill its mission and strive for its vision by 2030.

With the strategic planning process complete, it is now time for Gateway to roll up its sleeves and focus on engagement, communications, operational planning, KPIs, and the public launch of the new Strategic Plan in October 2025.

Staff were vital to the strategic planning process and will be critical to its implementation. Continued engagement with the staff will ensure they understand the new direction the organization is taking, why Gateway is going in this direction, and how essential they are to its future. Engagement can build excitement, momentum and champions of the new Strategic Plan.

While internal communications are being shared on-site and online, the SLT will be busy developing the Operational Plan with active staff involvement. The Operational Plan will also consider current policies, procedures, and practices to ensure alignment with the Strategic Plan.

Tools to measure progress and outcomes, such as surveys and templates, will also be developed. During this time, the Board will focus on developing its work plan and the CEO's performance KPIs.

The next steps for Gateway include many simultaneous activities occurring internally and externally. Building on the momentum from the strategic planning process, the public launch of the new Strategic Plan is currently scheduled for October 2025.

The implementation of an internal and external communications strategy will showcase the new Gateway tagline, ***We are YOUR Gateway to be well, get well, stay well,*** and kick off a "We are YOUR Gateway" campaign to promote Gateway's new Strategic Plan and the focus on wellbeing. This campaign can amplify the voices of staff and patients/clients through storytelling that resonates with everyone, from individuals to the healthcare ecosystem.

Gateway is building on a legacy of more than 30 years, a legacy of caring for others, nurturing meaningful relationships, and making a positive impact in the community. The new Strategic Plan honours this legacy and focuses Gateway's sights on 2030 with wellbeing front and centre. Gateway is ready to hit the ground running! ♦

"There's a real opportunity for Gateway because of where they're situated and where they're seen as providing leadership."

~ Key Informant