

**SMITHS FALLS NURSE PRACTITIONER-LED CLINIC
ANNUAL REPORT
October 27, 2021
For period covering
October 01, 2020 – September 30, 2021**

Message from Brenda Louttit-Bunker NP-PHC, MSN Nurse Practitioner Lead

This report covers the period October 1, 2020, to September 30, 2021. The Smiths Falls Nurse Practitioner-Led Clinic currently operates one site on Abbott Street in Smiths Falls. We are now in our 9th year of operation, and we continue to be a not-for-profit organization.

In addition to Nurse Practitioners at 4.0 FTEs, our Allied Health Professional team consists of two Registered Nurses, a Social Worker, a Registered Dietitian, a Pharmacist, a Physician Consultant, and a Respiratory Therapist (on loan from the Lung Health Program of ConnectWell – formerly NLCHC). Our administrative support staff consists of one Administrative Assistant and two Medical Receptionists, with our Administrative, and Co-Lead, Leeann Langdon.

Staffing

The Clinic has had some staffing changes over the last year: our long-term Registered Dietician found work closer to her home and we have since welcomed a new Registered Dietician, as of this month. We welcomed a new Receptionist a few months ago as well. We continue to have a full complement of Nurse Practitioners and Registered Nurses at 2 FTEs.

The co-lead model of Nurse Practitioner and Administrative Lead over the past two years has proven to be a great dynamic for our organization. I cover clinical aspects while Leeann does all the administration work. We have continued to focus on improving our policies and medical directives, along with our day-to-day operations. Our ongoing goal is to enhance our employee environment through equitable treatment of staff and to ensure all staff are practicing to their full scope. We are continuously growing as a team, especially in this second year of the pandemic.

Programs

Our team provides primary health care services to individual clients and families as well as providing several programs aimed at assisting clients in their health journeys. These programs include Well-Baby visits, Immunizations, Flu Clinics, Desensitization (injections), Prenatal, Hypertension, Lung Health, Diabetes, STOP (smoking cessation), and Palliative Care, including the use of social media (for example Facebook). For future, we are looking at a consultant for ECG interpretation as we have a machine here that we haven't used since the start. Another thing on the horizon is IUS insertion training.

Clients

At present, the Clinic has a total of approximately 2,655 clients. Over the past year, the pandemic did not slow us down. There was a total of 16,477 encounters: in-person, telephone, virtual, administrative for form completion, and consulting with other health care professionals. The

encounters including appointments with one or a combination of our Nurse Practitioners, Registered Nurses, and Allied Health Professionals. The number of encounters was consistent compared to the year prior of 16,432. Of those (16,477) encounters, 133 clients led to consults between the Nurse Practitioner and collaborative physician; however, none of the clients required direct care by the collaborative physician. Also, out of those total encounters, 14,337 were for chronic disease management and we found that 87% were deemed complex (definition of having two or more chronic conditions). Not only did we continue to see clients on-site (albeit selectively due to the pandemic) we also did home visits and there were 168, compared to last years' 66 encounters. Palliative care encounters were at 44. Along with the NPs scheduled clients of the day, there were 983 same day appointments; meaning clients were added to our day's workload, most are due to consults from the Registered Nurses who work to full scope.

We are actively registering clients to our Clinic, and we registered 253 this year. Our mandated target is 3200, however we continue to run short of our target. Several factors are involved in this: the ongoing imbalance of supply and demand of appointment availability, de-rostering of clients to go to physicians or people moving away from the area. Some continue to believe that the traditional model of care is the only option (for example, physicians and fee-for-service) and use as a temporary service.

Community

We continue to participate with other community organizations. Our Administrative Assistant continues with the Complex Rounds, a program to bring community and hospital resources together to improve client care. One of our Registered Nurses participates in the Palliative Care Group, which looks to bridge community- and hospital-based care. Our Social Worker has teamed up with Rideau Community Health Services, providing short-term counselling services to their clients at our Clinic; this is being weaned because of the demand from our own registered clients. We continue to have a collaborative relationship with ConnectWell in that we have access to their Registered Respiratory Therapist through the Lung Health Program. Our Administrative Lead is involved in several community collaborations, and she will expand on that. I, the Nurse Practitioner Lead, have been part of the Primacy Care Network working group and continue with the Primary Care Asthma Program Advisory group, a lung health foundation with a multidisciplinary team, from all areas of Ontario. We are continually trying to expand on our community involvement. We also continue to work with the Home Care and Palliative Care teams and working with the local Public Health Unit.

Students

The Clinic continued their close ties with the University of Ottawa, Queen's, and Athabasca, and more recently with the University of Toronto. Our professional staff provides placements and mentorship for Nurse Practitioner students; there weren't any Registered Nurses students this year. The Clinic supports the early introduction of students to allied health care team practice and collaboration. We seem to be on all the universities wish list of placements and there is always several students and universities reaching out.

Covid-19 Pandemic

This second year of the pandemic, the Clinic still carried on with our regular hours of operation and 40% of our appointments were in-person. We have found a mix of appointment modes effective for our clients. We will likely continue to offer telephone and Virtual appointments once this pandemic is over as it eliminates some barriers to care, for example, clients no longer had to take a day off from work to attend their appointments. Our client demographic is such that, some do not have sick benefits and/or flexibility in their employments. One thing that became clear was that barriers exist for most of our clients and some examples are: no access to computers/devices, no access to internet, limited cell phone plans or no phones at all, no benefit plans, no drug coverage, no transportation, no adequate support system, and/or no knowledge of health care system navigation, etc.

The uptake for Covid-19 vaccinations (Pfizer, Moderna, and Astrazeneca) for eligible clients were: 972 double vaccinated, 353 first dose so far, and we just had an afternoon clinic of Third doses (for our immunocompromised clients) including the Influenza vaccination today. Note these numbers are for only documented ones, as we are continuing to work on inputting vaccinations into clients' EMRs (electronic medical records). We did participate with other organizations from the County to hold a Covid-19 vaccination back in the spring. We are proud to relay that for our Leeds, Grenville, and Lanark county, we continue to have the highest percent in the province for both first (97.8%) and second doses (94.3%).

Acknowledgements

First and foremost, we would like to commend our staff for their ongoing efforts to provide quality care and for their teamwork. We would like to thank our clients who put their trust in us to advocate for them; to our families for their support while we do our work; and the community of the Smiths Falls area for their continued support of the clinic. Additionally, we acknowledge the Ministry of Health and Long-Term Care in providing our Clinic the funding that enables the provision of quality and comprehensive primary health care to our clients.