

# Advancing health and wellbeing for individuals, families and communities

Community Health and Wellbeing

Shift the conversation

AOHC and its members are using the Canadian Index of Wellbeing (CIW) as a powerful tool to support their efforts in making health and wellbeing part of the conversation and decision-making process. Explore our journey, milestones and next steps.

## Woolwich CHC adopts the CIW as a strategic planning tool



Woolwich CHC uses the CIW to measure what matters in their community. The centre becomes the first CHC in Canada to use the CIW as an integral part of their strategic planning process.

## Using the CIW to advance community health and wellbeing

Seeing the strong alignment between the CIW and the work of its members, AOHC discovers how the CIW can help promote a more comprehensive approach to health and wellbeing in Ontario. Going forward AOHC intends to make the CIW a foundational piece of its community health and wellbeing strategy.

## AOHC establishes a network of members interested in applying the CIW

2007

## A tool to shift the conversation



Former Saskatchewan premier Roy Romanow, who also led a commission on the future of health care in Canada, speaks at the AOHC conference about how the CIW can serve as a powerful tool to shift the conversation about health and wellbeing. The talk inspires members to use the CIW to support their work in addressing the broad determinants of health.

2010

## The first CIW group in Canada



Barrie CHC leads the creation of the Resilience Collaborative that includes partner agencies from multiple sectors across North Simcoe Muskoka.

2011

The Collaborative uses the CIW to engage citizens, hold public forums, deliver presentations to municipal government and shape healthy public policy to address environmental issues.

2012

## Ontario Trillium Foundation approves funding (1 year grant) for CIW Project

AOHC tests its initial theory that the CIW can be used to develop new approaches and innovations that will support member centres to further advance community health and wellbeing.

## Piloting strategic applications for the CIW

Chigamik CHC, Kingston CHC, South Riverdale CHC, Vaughan CHC, Woodstock and Area CHC, Woolwich CHC and Ottawa CHCs work intensively with the CIW in a variety of ways:

- Holistic Intake and Navigation
- Community Partnerships
- Strategic Planning
- Community Engagement
- Communications
- Policy and Advocacy
- Research and Evaluation

Each of the sites also takes part in the CHC-CIW network convened on a regular basis. Through this network, members share ideas on how to apply the CIW, review lessons learned and discuss challenges they encounter.

### What makes the CIW so effective?

1. The CIW provides a systematic, rigorous and deepened understanding of the broad determinants of health.
2. The CIW serves as a “shared language” that enables dialogue and collaboration on complex issues with partners from many different sectors to advocate for change.
3. The CIW offers a way to measure the impact of health promotion and community development initiatives, and encourages decision-making based on solid evidence.

2013

## A new Model of Health and Wellbeing

AOHC members adopt a new evidence-informed Model of Health and Wellbeing. Its guiding principles of: people and community centredness, health equity and social justice, and community vitality and belonging are informed by the CIW.

## Developing the CIW survey tool

To improve wellbeing, demonstrate the value and impact of our model, and promote common indicators and language for measurement of health promotion and community development work, the Be Well survey is developed in consultation with AOHC members and the CIW national office. The survey provides a comprehensive picture of the health and wellbeing needs and strengths of the people and communities who access programs, services and initiatives at member centres with a special focus on community vitality and sense of belonging.

The survey is first piloted as an intake tool in seven communities across Ontario: Ottawa, Bourget, Vaughan, Ignace, Kapuskasing, Midland and Guelph.

## Using the CIW to build community partnerships and promote increased sense of belonging

Woodstock and Area CHC uses the CIW to initiate a new multi-sectoral community collaborative. Collaborative members develop action plans around a shared goal: promoting community vitality, with a special focus on increasing sense of belonging.

## **Bridging the Gap: The Ottawa Wellbeing Report**

The Coalition of Community Health and Resource Centres of Ottawa, which includes six Community Health Centres, releases the groundbreaking multimedia report *Bridging the Gap: The Ottawa Community Wellbeing Report*.

Launched in the lead-up to the municipal election, the report assesses Ottawa's quality of life using CIW indicators. It raises awareness about key factors determining health and wellbeing in the community and helps shape election debate and coverage in the media.

## **Be Well Survey Phase I**

The CIW survey tool is further refined and modified through an equity lens to include recommendations identified during the pilot study. The survey is launched in seven languages with 20 members (across 24 sites) participating in survey collection.

## **Vaughan CHC launches Measuring What Matters report and coalition**

The Vaughan Community Wellbeing Coalition, headed by Vaughan CHC and made up of community stakeholders and a wide range of health and social service agencies, releases a report that uses CIW indicators to connect the dots between the health and wellbeing of the people living in Vaughan and the factors influencing their quality of life. The initiative helps enhance the centre's relationship with the municipality and leads to some new and promising municipal action to improve recreational opportunities.

## **Supporting evidence-informed decision making**

The CIW helps AOHC advance work on its strategic directions including building healthier public policy and demonstrating the value and impact of the Model of Health and Wellbeing on the improved health outcomes and experience of people and communities.

2014

## **Promoting province-wide dialogue**

To spread the word about the CIW's potential and to showcase the many different ways it is being put to use across the province, AOHC releases the concept paper called *Measuring What Matters: How the Canadian Index of Wellbeing can improve quality of life in Ontario*.

## **Ontario Trillium Foundation approves multi-year funding (3 year grant, current) for CIW Project**

AOHC is funded to explore the CIW as a vehicle for public communications, local partnership development; and measurement for progress in health promotion and community development initiatives.

## **Community Health and Wellbeing Summer Institute**

Over 50 health promoters and community development workers from 33 centres explore the CIW and how it can help in the planning, monitoring and evaluation of community development initiatives over two days at Lakehead University's Orillia Campus.

## **A growing early adopter network**

More than 30 AOHC members are working with the CIW Project, deepening their understanding of the CIW and how to apply it to policies, programs and practices to improve health and wellbeing.

## **The 6th annual Health Promotion learning event**

Health promoters gather at the *Developing Health Promotion and Community Development Measures that Matter* event to share leading practices to strengthen belonging, social inclusion and food security, and to break down barriers between health promotion and clinical services.

2015

## Community Vitality and Belonging Resource Guide

The online resource demonstrates leading practices across AOHC membership for building community vitality and belonging.

## Chigamik leads the way using the CIW as an intake and navigation tool

Through Chigamik CHC, the North Simcoe Community Health Link incorporates the Be Well survey, and other CIW indicators, into their intake questionnaire to better understand their high-needs, high-cost clients. The results of this work are captured in their *Deepening the understanding of the people we serve through the lens of the Canadian Index of Wellbeing* report which shows that addressing social isolation and poverty, and connecting clients to primary care, helps reduce health care utilization in ER visits and hospital admissions, improving overall health.

## Grand Bend Area CHC sets the stage for collective impact

Grand Bend Area CHC, North Lambton CHC and Bluewater Community Family Health Team combine their Be Well survey results to better understand community needs and help guide a community-based common agenda.

This work leads to a regional summit, hosted by Grand Bend Area CHC, that brings together community partners to build support for programming and initiatives in priority areas.

2016

## Be Well Survey Phase I report

Member-level, regional and provincial reports from Phase I provide members with new information about the health and wellbeing of the people and communities that access their services. The survey data also provides a baseline, with comparable results to CIW measures, which can be used to demonstrate the impacts of programs, services and initiatives over time.

## Regional Health Promotion (HP) Networks

AOHC co-develops workshops with the HP networks of eastern and western Ontario to engage and build ownership in the community health and wellbeing measurement strategy.

## Be Well Survey Phase II

Up to 30 AOHC members are using the Be Well survey in Phase II.

Specialized survey tools geared towards Indigenous and rural communities are developed.

## Using the CIW for community engagement

Woodstock and Area CHC uses the CIW to enhance collaboration amongst community partners. This work leads to an exciting county-wide undertaking: engaging the CIW national office to support development of the community's sustainability plan for future growth and wellbeing.

## Community Health and Wellbeing Week

Community Health and Wellbeing Week helps to raise awareness and engage the public around the need for a new kind of conversation about health and wellbeing. The annual celebration features more than 100 special events and activities that showcase AOHC members' value and impact improving outcomes for people and communities facing barriers to health.

## AOHC Conference

During the annual conference, AOHC spotlights leading practices on different CIW applications which have potential for strong impact across the province including learning sessions on measurement, strategic planning and municipal policy influence.

# NEXT

## Health & Wellbeing Knowledge Mobilization

The CIW project is developing learning opportunities to support members in using their health and wellbeing data for planning, outcome evaluation, collective impact initiatives and effectively communicating findings to move evidence to action.

The focus will be on promoting and supporting the exchange of leading practices and evidence that demonstrates the value of health and wellbeing on health equity.

## Research & Demonstrating Impact

Using a collective impact approach, work is underway to scale up and replicate the research conducted by the North Simcoe Community Health Link which examined top users of the health care system from a social determinants of health perspective. Five centres (Chigamik, Kingston, Guelph, Gateway and Southeast Ottawa CHCs) will use standardized health and wellbeing indicators for in-take with Health Links clients with the goal of reducing social isolation and mitigating poverty. This work aims to demonstrate improved health outcomes and reduced costs to the health system.

## CIW Policy & Advocacy

Working with members who are using the CIW to effect change at the municipal level, AOHC has established a municipal governance working group.

The primary focus of this group is to strengthen ties with local government by actively promoting the CIW as the lens for evidence-based decision making.

## Community Initiatives Reporting Tool (CIRT)

CIRT is a planning, monitoring and reporting tool. It helps better understand and assess community capacity building work that addresses the determinants of health.

Using data collected through the CIRT, Ottawa CHCs will soon produce centre-specific and multi-CHC reports about their issue-based and place-based community initiatives.

## Standardized Health & Wellbeing Indicators

Standardized health and wellbeing Indicators, including some tested through the Be Well survey, will be recommended for use to demonstrate the impacts of the models of health and wellbeing. Indicators will be clustered by priority areas such as social isolation, food security and barriers to accessing services. The indicators will be collected into an indicator resource along with detailed examples of their use.

**For more information about AOHC, the CIW Project and how you can get involved:**



Visit us on the web: [www.aohc.org](http://www.aohc.org) | [www.communityhealthandwellbeing.org](http://www.communityhealthandwellbeing.org)



Follow us on Twitter: [twitter.com/AOHC\\_ACSO](https://twitter.com/AOHC_ACSO)



Connect with us on Facebook: [facebook.com/AOHC.ACSO](https://facebook.com/AOHC.ACSO)



Email us: **Wendy Banh, CIW Project Coordinator, at [wendy@aohc.org](mailto:wendy@aohc.org)**



Call us: **416-236-2539**



Association of Ontario Health Centres  
**Community-governed primary health care**  
Association des centres de santé de l'Ontario  
**Soins de santé primaires gérés par la communauté**

Ontario  
Trillium  
Foundation



Fondation  
Trillium  
de l'Ontario

An agency of the Government of Ontario.  
Relève du gouvernement de l'Ontario.