



## Spotlight Presentation 4-3: Bringing Primary Care to the Doorsteps of Those in Need

### Presenters:

<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>Ivory Lo</li></ul>	Senior Manager, Integrated Care and Experience	<a href="#">Durham CHC</a>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>Alfred Ng</li></ul>	Associate Vice President, Integrated Care and Experience	<a href="#">Durham CHC</a>

### Description:

Durham Community Health Centre's (DCHC) vision for the Integrated Mobile Primary and Allied Care Team (IMPACT) is to operate seven mobile clinics to serve seven priority neighbourhoods in the Durham region, through both in-person and virtual care. The primary goal of this population-based health service model is to enroll a minimum of 17% of Durham's unattached population (44,000 individuals) with a primary care provider within the next two years.

### Session objectives and learning outcomes:

- How mobile clinics address the primary care needs in Durham.
- The outcomes achieved.
- What we learned and the next steps.

## Full description:

### Challenge:

The initiative addressed the pressing need for improved access to primary care and extended healthcare services within specific priority neighbourhoods in the Durham region. These neighbourhoods were identified based on various criteria, including sociodemographic factors, child health indicators, general health metrics, and health behaviour risks. Clients in these neighbourhoods face multifaceted barriers to accessing primary care and extended healthcare services tailored to their unique needs. These barriers include:

- 1) **Long Waitlist for Primary Care Attachment:** Many clients find themselves on lengthy waitlists to be attached to a primary care provider.
- 2) **Travel Challenges:** The method, cost, and time associated with traveling to see a primary care provider pose significant hurdles for community members.
- 3) **Workplace Flexibility:** Limited flexibility in work environments makes it difficult for clients to arrange time off to seek healthcare support without financial impact. The strengths and assets designed to enhance this initiative included a team-based approach led by nurse practitioners and supported by registered nurses.

The program leveraged existing community health center (CHC) services and aimed to roster a significant portion of the unattached population to primary care providers within the next two years.

**Action:**

The Integrated Mobile Primary & Allied Care Team (IMPACT) was developed through a comprehensive analysis of community needs, guided by the identified priority neighbourhoods. The initiative involved the collaborative efforts of primary care clinicians and community partners within the Durham region. In September 2023, DCHC launched our first primary care mobile clinic in three priority neighbourhoods. IMPACT's intake and triage process, overseen by its clinicians, resulted in clients being immediately rostered to primary care providers at DCHC.

Furthermore, clients were referred to DCHC locations for extended team-based care, encompassing mental health support, chronic disease education, and management, as well as holistic health and wellness programs. Expansion plans involve acquiring additional mobile clinics to extend services into additional priority neighbourhoods. There is also an ongoing collaboration with Durham District School Board (DDSB) to initiate services in high-risk schools. Furthermore, the initiative aims to establish new partnerships to reach the unsheltered and newcomer populations, addressing the unique challenge of inconsistent access to primary care amongst these individuals.

**Impact:**

To measure outcomes, the initiative tracked the attachment rates of the unattached population to primary care providers within DCHC, through IMPACT. For the next phase, we will begin collecting outcomes including improvements in access to extended healthcare services, as evidenced by increased engagement in mental health support, chronic disease education, and holistic health and wellness programs at Durham CHC locations. Key learnings from the initiative included insights into addressing multifaceted barriers, the effectiveness of the team-based approach, and the importance of flexibility in healthcare delivery. The program's impact is expected to be seen in increased attachment rates, reduced wait times, and improved

health outcomes, with ongoing measurement through data on client rosters and engagement in extended care services.

**Trajectory:**

The next steps involve assessing the readiness of the program for scale and spread. Adaptability to evolving needs is crucial, and the program's design allows for flexibility in response to changing community requirements. The learnings from this initiative can inform future healthcare initiatives by emphasizing the importance of a team-based model, flexibility in service delivery, and a client-centered approach. These learnings can be utilized to refine and expand similar programs, ensuring broader impact and sustained effectiveness.