OMSSA EXCHANGE

MAY 7-8, 2024 | TORONTO

PRELIMINARY PROGRAM

A NOTE FROM OMSSA'S PRESIDENT

On behalf of OMSSA's Board of Directors and staff, I'm excited to share our 2024 Exchange Conference program.

Coming to you in-person from May 7-8, our Conference brings together hundreds of human services professionals from front-line employees to service managers, and community organizations, from across Ontario to exchange knowledge, best practices, and creative solutions.

Our Association and Members are committed to tackling society's greatest challenges as we put a foundation in place for greater connectivity and growth to respond to local and national needs, and to ensure we leave no one behind in our communities.

We took great care to ensure the 2024 OMSSA Exchange Conference offers something for everyone in our sectors. I'm confident that you will find valuable sessions that pique your interest and give you a compelling reason to participate.

Consider what you learn at our annual Exchange Conference as enhancing your key skills and competencies on your immediate team and as training to become a volunteer leader within OMSSA and human services.

Hear from experts, partners, and members about timely and relevant information and practical take-aways. This includes insights into issues like national child care service delivery, child care recruitment and training, health equity, data management and mobilization, homeless prevention and encampment responses, enhanced case management, community safety and well-being planning, and so much more!

Many thanks to our conference planning committee, who helped to ensure that we could build a program focused on today's realities and tomorrow's big questions:

- Tod Duncan, OMSSA (Chair)
- Nalisha, Sankreacha (Chair)
- Doug Ball, OMSSA
- Tennille Billy, Regional Municipality of Peel
- Robert Blackwell, City of Greater Sudbury
- Nadia Boismier, Regional Municipality of York
- Roxanne Gillis, City of Toronto

- Christie Herrington, OMSSA
- Sumar Jasey, City of Windsor
- Rob Kirsic, OMSSA
- Tanis Lavigne, County of Renfrew
- Dunja Lukic, County of Wellington
- Jennifer McPhee, OFIFC
- Polly Smith, Municipality of Chatham-Kent

I encourage you to take a closer look at the 2024 Exchange Conference program, and I look forward to welcoming you from May 7-8.

THANK YOU TO OUR SPONSORS

OMSSA WOULD LIKE TO THANK OUR SPONSORS FOR THEIR GENEROUS SUPPORT OF THE 2024 EXCHANGE CONFERENCE.

SCHEDULE-AT-A-GLANCE

DAY 1: TUESDAY, MAY 7, 2024

8:00 - 9:00 AM	BREAKFAST AND REGISTRATION			
9:00 - 9:15 AM	OPENING REMARKS			
9:15 - 10:15 AM	OPENING PLENARY Room: Mississauga Ballroom			
10:15 - 10:30 AM	*BREAK*			
10:30 - 12:00 PM	**BREAKOUTS**			
	A	**B**	**C**	**D**
	"Social Assistance Modernization - Streaming Client Pathways through Meaningful Conversations" Dundas Room	"Collaboration and Quality Improvement in Children's Services" Mavis Room	"Improving Homelessness Policies at Both the Micro and Macro Levels" Vista Room	"The Ontario Human Rights Commission: A Human RIghts-Based Approach for Municipal Services" York Ballroom
12:00 - 1:00 PM	*LUNCH*			
1:00 - 2:30 PM	**BREAKOUTS**			
	E	**F**	**G**	**H**
	"Supporting Vulnerable Clients Through Low Barrier Service Delivery" Vista Room	"Culturally Inclusive Programs in Children's Services" Mavis Room	"Innovations in Technology and Data Analysis" York Ballroom	"Engaging and Leveraging Lived Expertise" Dundas Room
2:30 - 2:45 PM	*BREAK*			
2:45 - 4:10 PM	CLOSING PLENARY: Local Interventions and Tools for Healthier Communities Room: Mississauga Ballroom			
4:10 - 4:15 PM	CLOSING REMARKS			
6:00 PM - 12:00 AM	2024 AWARDS BANQUET Mississauga Ballroom			

SCHEDULE-AT-A-GLANCE

DAY 2: WEDNESDAY, MAY 8, 2024

Time				
8:00 - 9:00 AM	BREAKFAST AND REGISTRATION			
9:00 - 9:10 AM	OPENING REMARKS			
9:10 - 10:15 AM	OPENING PLENARY Room: Mississauga Ballroom			
10:15 - 10:30 AM	*BREAK*			
10:30 - 12:00 PM	**BREAKOUTS**			
	I	**J**	**K**	**L**
	"Navigating and Debriefing in Complex Challenging Times" York Ballroom	"Finding Successes in Emergency Newcomer Settlement" Mavis Room	"Local Initiatives in Community and Supportive Housing" Vista Room	"Connecting for the Dream: Urban Indigenous Homeward Bound" Dundas Room
12:00 - 1:00 PM	*LUNCH*			
1:00 - 2:30 PM	**BREAKOUTS**			
	M	**N**	**O**	**P**
	"Improving Case Management and Wrap-Around Supports" Vista Room	"Beyond the Building: Advocating for a New Outdoor Model of Early Learning and Child Care" Mavis Room	"Building an Equity Infrastructure: Constructing the Foundations of Progress" Dundas Room	"Community Collaboration for Health Equity and Resilience" York Ballroom
2:30 - 2:45 PM	*BREAK*			
2:45 - 3:30 PM	CLOSING PLENARY Room: Mississauga Ballroom			
3:30 - 3:45 PM	CLOSING REMARKS			

Session Descriptions & Speakers

TUESDAY, MAY 7

OPENING REMARKS & PLENARY

The Upstream and Downstream Impacts of Care
Room: Mississauga Ballroom (Main Level)

Land Acknowledgement and Opening Remarks:
- **Henry Wall**, OMSSA President and Chief Administrative Officer, Kenora District Services Board

The Upstream and Downstream Impacts of Care

OMSSA Members support the most vulnerable populations in environments that are becoming increasingly challenging to navigate. Issues with our health care system, mental health and addictions, housing, child care, income security, and the growing role of private equity, move our targets further away. Join Dr. Andrew Boozary from University Health Network and Armine Yalnizyan from the Atkinson Foundation for a fireside chat as they discuss the current and future state of our care economy and the impact on social services.

Presenters:
- **(moderator) Sue Ritchie Raymond**, SLRR Consulting
- **Dr. Andrew Boozary**, Executive Director, Gattuso Centre for Social Medicine, University Health Network
- **Armine Yalnizyan**, Fellow on the Future of Workers, Atkinson Foundation

This opening session is sponsored by the Regional Municipality of Durham.

BREAKOUT SESSIONS

A Social Assistance Modernization – Streaming Client Pathways through Meaningful Conversations

Room: Dundas Room (2nd Floor)

The session will be focused on the required use of the Common Assessment Tool (CAT), for Employment Transformation Sites (EST) and how it can be best utilized to have more meaningful conversations and enhanced client outcomes. Client outcomes are focused on high-impact and high-value activities, that are client-driven looking at life stabilization and the provision of person-centered supports and services. The session includes simulated role-play and completion of some CAT questions, to further understand best practices and strategies to support our most vulnerable participants.

Presenters:

- **Chris Kindy**, Case Manager, Haldimand Norfolk Unit Health and Social Services Division, Norfolk County
- **Kirby Steinhoff**, OMSSA Trainer, Integrative Consulting Inc.

Areas of Focus: Common Asssessment Tool, Person Centric Approaches; Stability Supports.

B Collaboration and Quality Improvement in Children's Services

Room: Mavis Room (Lower Level)

Moderator: Tanis Lavigne, Acting Early Years Supervisor, County of Renfrew

Local Municipal Champion: Better Together 2023

Holding the idea that growth and leadership thrive in connected allyships, in 2023, six children's services leaders, Shannon Brown (Leeds Grenville), Kelly Emery (Chatham Kent), Kristine Greaves (City of Cornwall), Pam Kent (Prince Edward Lennox and Addington), Miranda Mackie (City of Greater Sudbury), and Tonya Millsap (County of Simcoe) sought to take a new approach to leading through the transformational change of CWELCC in our sector. Supported by Senior staff, Caitlyn Bourque City of Greater Sudbury), Christina Davis (Leeds Grenville), and Jessica Brodie and Nadine Ladouceur (Chatham Kent), this group created additional opportunities for leadership development, succession planning and peer to peer mentorship.

Referred to as BT2023, leaders with a shared interest and passion for Early Learning and Child Care organized themselves to engage in collective learning, knowledge sharing, cost sharing initiatives, and networking. The work centered on three pillars: New Allies which supported one another in mobilizing relationships with economic development allies; New Narratives which built media content accessible for students and reaffirming our position that a career in Early Learning and Child Care is a rewarding career; and New Models which produced literature on workplace models that may not have been considered within our individual communities.

BT2023 has enabled its membership to champion change by creating time and space for strategic thinking with critical thought leaders. Through this collaboration the group has been able to share resources and knowledge as well as to build on ideas and concepts that will continue to benefit each of their municipalities now and into the future. The group really personifies the concept that together, we are better; that collective thinking around common goals brings forth greater innovation. BT2023 is just the beginning, the professional relationships and ideas that have come to life through this group will continue to flourish into 2024 and beyond.

Presenters:

- **Shannon Brown**, Manager of Children's Services, Counties (U/C) of Leeds & Grenville
- **Kelly Emery**, Director, Child Care and Early Years, Municipality of Chatham-Kent
- **Kristine Greaves**, Manager, Human Services, City of Cornwall
- **Pam Kent**, Manager, Social Services, Prince Edward-Lennox and Addington Social Services
- **Miranda Mackie**, Manager of Children Services, City of Greater Sudbury
- **Tonya Millsap**, Manager, Children Services, Early Learning and Child Care, County of Simcoe

Establishing a Culture of Evaluation and Quality Improvement in Children Services

Research has shown that organizations who foster a strong evaluative culture are able to strengthen the performance of programs through the regular collection of data and performance information and apply this information to support decision making. Through this process, organizations are able to implement effective and cost-efficient interventions, strategically utilize limited resources, and improve health and social outcomes for individuals and communities.

This presentation will share information about the benefits of fostering a culture of evaluation and continuous quality improvement (CQI) and considerations for implementation at the Service System Manager level, including staff training and roles, evaluation and CQI methods, and the use of data for evidence-informed decision making. The use of evaluation and CQI within quality, special needs resourcing, pedagogy, and human service integration will also be discussed.

Presenters:

- **Caitlyn Bourque**, Special Projects Co-ordinator, City of Greater Sudbury
- **Laura Urso**, Co-ordinator of Quality and Early Years Programs, City of Greater Sudbury

Areas of Focus: CWELCC; Cross-Regional Collaboration; Knowledge Sharing; Relationship Building; Workforce Development; Evaluation Framework; Evidence-Informed Decision Making.

C Improving Homelessness Policies at Both the Micro and Macro Levels

Room: Vista Room (Main Level)

Moderator: Michelle Baird, Director, Housing Services Division, City of Hamilton

Addressing Shelter-Based Violence Through Adaptations to Service Delivery, Program Policies, and Data Use

Emergency shelters are a core component of homeless service systems. Yet, violence is prevalent in these service settings, which can lead to service avoidance and unsheltered homelessness. Critical incidents, such as workplace violence, also threaten the safety of service providers and can lead to mental health deteriorations and increase the risk of employee turnover. This presentation will use data from a two-year, multi-methods study that examined the factors that contribute to shelter-based violence, the relationship between shelter-based violence and service restrictions, and the fundamental and innovative approaches for violence prevention. Findings are drawn from various data sources, including an online survey of 150 shelter staff; qualitative interviews with 26 shelter staff, 20 key informants, and 80 people experiencing homelessness; an environmental scan of shelter-based promising practices; secondary analysis of administrative shelter data; and a systematic review on contributors to shelter-based violence and safety. Data were collected in two Ontario cities, with the identification of promising practices outside the province as well. Overall, the evidence shared in this presentation will highlight approaches for improving violence prevention and safety in shelter settings through changes to the built environment, organizational policies, staff training, and specialized interventions.

Presenters:

- **Nick Kerman**, Scientific Associate, Centre for Addiction and Mental Health

Evidence-Based Policy Moves to Shift from Addressing Homelessness to Ending Homelessness

Our research team consisting of leading academics, service providers, lived experts, advocates, and policy makers has been working over the last two years to evaluate policy landscapes that either perpetuate, address, or prevent/end homelessness. This has included 77 interviews with local and national experts and 7 scholarly reviews of policy and literature. Through this process we have identified key policy levers that need to be priorities for transformation if we are going to reverse the growing trend of both visible and hidden homelessness.

In this presentation we will share the current policy landscape in Ontario, evidence on shifts to this landscape including a review of best outcomes globally, and a co-constructed ideal policy future. This framework serves as a direction for policy advocacy and policy change within the province of Ontario. Service managers and service providers should see within this work both a reflection of their own experiences of structural barriers, as well as hope for improvements in the future to address both the housing and homelessness system directly, but also many associated public systems.

Presenters:

- **Abe Oudshoorn**, Associate Professor, Western University

Using Data to Drive Continuous System Improvement to Advance Reductions in Homelessness

Built for Zero Canada is an ambitious national change effort helping a core group of leading communities end chronic and veteran homelessness – a first step on the path to eliminating all homelessness in Canada. Quality data is an essential ingredient of participating in the Built for Zero movement and key to guiding homeless serving system development and improvements. This presentation will explore how two communities, Dufferin County and St Thomas-Elgin, use the Built for Zero Canada data-informed approach to measure system performance, identify problems, and drive reductions in homelessness. Both communities have faced unique challenges on their journey to end homelessness. Like other Ontario communities, they have seen fluctuations in the number of people experiencing homelessness as the pandemic, cost of living and health crisis impacted housing stability. However, they continue to lean into their data with a focus on continuous system improvement to streamline capacity, housing resources, and align services to overcome homeless serving system gaps and barriers.

This presentation will provide tangible examples of homeless serving system gaps and barriers along with actionable approaches of how you can use data to drive continuous system improvement, advance reductions in homelessness, and streamline homeless serving system programming in your community.

Presenters:

- **Anna McGregor**, Director, Community Services, Dufferin County
- **Danielle Neilson**, Manager, Housing Stability Services, City of St. Thomas
- **Lori Richer**, Improvement Advisor, Built for Zero Canada, Canadian Alliance to End Homelessness

Areas of Focus: Homelessness Policy; Ending Homelessness; Homeless Shelters; Violence Prevention; Data Use and Analysis; Training and Interventions

D The Ontario Human Rights Commission: A Human Rights-Based Approach for Municipal Services

Room: York Ballroom (Lower Level)

In this session, you will learn more about how the Human Rights Based Approach (HRBA) Framework can help you apply a human rights lens to support policy, program and service system planning and implementation in a way that mitigates discrimination populations in your community.

Presenters:

- **Juliette Nicolet**, Acting Director, Policy, Education, Monitoring & Outreach, Ontario Human Rights Commission

Areas of Focus: Service System Planning; Policy and Program Development; Educational Tools; Inclusivity; Equity; Accessibility.

E Supporting Vulnerable Clients Through Low Barrier Service Delivery

Room: Vista Room (Main Level)

Moderator: Polly Smith, Director, Employment & Social Services, Municipality of Chatham-Kent

Changing Justice Service Delivery in Populations Experiencing Homelessness to Reduce Returns to Custody

Persons experiencing homelessness, mental health and addiction are often stuck in the cycles of the justice system. This population is denied bail at higher rates and must navigate the complicated system by attending various appointments around their communities or risk returning to custody. Windsor Essex has an established Housing and Homelessness Help Hub that provides day services to those experiencing homelessness. This program has the following services on site: housing, medical, mental health/addictions, and income assistance. Low barrier service delivery and flexible appointment times has made this hub a one stop shop for persons getting released from custody. In 2022, John Howard Bail Verification program was added as a service, recognizing that coming to the population may result in more success and less returns to custody.

Probation & Parole has joined the hub and meets with people with mental health and addiction who may forget their appointment times at the probation reporting. Later in 2023, the local jail will begin discharge planning meetings for persons at risk of homelessness and will utilize the hub to ensure a smooth connection to services. The local Community Justice Coordinator is also linked into the Hub and can provide advocacy (when appropriate) for people who will lose their housing if incarcerated. Their model and collaboration between justice partners aims to reduce barriers, reduce breaches, and empower individuals to exit the system.

Presenters:

- **Whitney Kitchen**, Coordinator, Housing Administration and Development, CIty of Windsor

Durham Region Drop-In group: A Collaborative and Innovative Approach to Providing Support to Sex Workers and Victims of Human Trafficking

Victims of human trafficking or those involved in sex work have been provided a safe space to drop-in and connect to supports. Many don't have secure phones and struggle to attend set daytime appointments. Staff from Victim Services of Durham Region, the Durham Regional Police Human Trafficking Unit, and Social Services in Durham Region, along with other community partners are on site to provide immediate support and address the unique needs of this population. This setting offers the opportunity to access services and basic necessities, while developing relationships and a sense of community.

Presenters:

- **Karly Church**, Anti-Trafficking Advocate and Crisis Counsellor, Victim Services of Durham Region
- **Rebecca Richardson**, Detective Constable, Durham Region Police Services
- **Jenn Wynne**, Case Coordinator, Human Trafficking Response Team Income, Employment and Homelessness Supports Division, Regional Municipality of Durham

Local Municipal Champion: Adult Protective Services: Innovative Partnerships and Housing Stability

The Adult Protective Services (APS) team provides case management and advocacy for over 300 adults with developmental disabilities living in the community. Clients of the APS program are those with mild developmental/intellectual disabilities that can often 'fall-through-the-cracks' and can represent some of our most vulnerable citizens in the community.

Traditionally, the APS team operated within its own intake/application process, separate from Ontario Works (OW), Housing Services, and other social services programs. Durham's team recognized that OW intakes may not identify someone with a mild developmental disability who might qualify for ODSP. The APS team then began to establish an innovative partnership with the OW office. The approach instituted an integrated model that provided a supportive process to both OW staff and clients. Wrap-around support aimed to ensure financial security, homelessness prevention, and reduced vulnerability for clients.

Today, APS workers (APSWs) are successfully embedded within OW offices, Primary Care Outreach Program, Mental Health Outreach Program, community organizations and hubs. APSW's support clientele with suspected developmental delays to connect with Developmental Services Ontario (DSO) and access funded assessments to confirm eligibility, if required. This has resulted in enhanced access to appropriate services and supports for individuals with a developmental disability.

This process also ensures that OW clients who are DSO eligible are transferred to ODSP. The APS team also plays a part in helping to reduce systemic barriers to accessing housing. Through a partnership with Housing Services the APSW Program attained rent supplement units to provide affordable community-based housing to clients, and ultimately preventing homelessness for many.

More recently, the APS team began targeting Canada Ontario Housing Benefit (COHB) to aid in securing affordable housing for vulnerable clients. The APSW service model supports clients to maintain their housing through a long term homelessness prevention lens.

Presenters:

- **Mark Grant**, Area Manager, Family Services Durham
- **Rachel Hirstwood-Judd**, Supervisor, Adult Protective Services, Family Services Durham

Areas of Focus: Person-Centric Approaches; Discharge Planning; Wraparound Supports; Cross-Sectoral Collaboration; Supporting Vulnerable Service Users

F Culturally Inclusive Programs in Children's Services

Room: Mavis Room (Lower Level)

Moderator: Nadia Boismier, Supervisor, Child Care Services, Regional Municipality of York

Local Municipal Champion: Indigenous-Led RECE Training Program

For Niagara's Indigenous-led early years and childcare service providers, the current early years staffing crisis is exacerbated by the dire lack of Indigenous Registered Early Childhood Educators (RECEs). Leveraging strong relationships with local Indigenous and Post Secondary partners plus provincial workforce development funding, the Niagara Region Children's Services team came together with the Fort Erie Native Friendship Centre (FENFC), Niagara College, and Six Nations Polytechnic to brainstorm ideas that could add culturally appropriate staff to local Indigenous early years program delivery.

Working collaboratively, the partners developed the Indigenous RECE training program, integrating the strengths of each partner into a unique service delivery model that is delivered at FENFC where Indigenous Early Learning occurs. Launched in Fall 2022, the participants will acquire the skills necessary to work as an ECE in Ontario as well as receive the culturally specific training that will help to build a more diverse, equitable and inclusive Indigenous early years workforce. Jennifer Dockstader, FENFC Executive Director stated.

This program is ReconcilliAction and an example that when we move beyond policy into innovative solutions, there are benefits to everyone. We are proud to help our people and be able to do this with established partners and new partners. When we as a community succeed, all of Niagara succeeds.

Presenters:

- **Jennifer Butera**, Manager, Children's Services, Regional Municipality of Niagara
- **Jennifer Dockstader**, Executive Director, Fort Erie Friendship Centre
- **Satinder Klair**, Director, Children's Services, Regional Municipality of Niagara

Local Municipal Champion: Build Belonging: Inclusive EarlyON Programming

Build Belonging is a collaboration between the Brantford Immigration Partnership, Community Living Brant, Child and Family Services of Grand Erie, YMCA Immigrant Services, the Brant Haldimand Norfolk Catholic District School Board, and the City of Brantford. The goal of Build Belonging is to increase EarlyON attendance from diverse families, by offering culturally-informed programming, art, books, and toys, and seeking guidance from local subject matter experts. The project also identified community and cultural champions who attended the EarlyON Event Series to share stories and experiences, and to create an inviting space for families that have been historically underrepresented in EarlyON programming.

Over the first six months, attendance at these EarlyON sites increased by nearly 10 per cent, with a high propotion of 'new' visitors representing a variety of ethnic and cultural backgrounds. This project supports the goals of the City of Brantford 10-Year Children's Services Plan, Building the Community from the Kids Up, and the City of Brantford Inclusive Community Plan 2023-2026.

Presenters:

- **Dimple Bal**, Community Initiatives Coordinator, Social Development and Policy, City of Brantford
- **Barb Vanry**, Manager, EarlyON Child and Family Centres, City of Brantford

Areas of Focus: Workforce Development; New Service Delivery Model; Culturally-Informed Programming; Equity; Diversity; Policy Changes

G Innovations in Technology and Data Analysis

Room: York Ballroom (Lower Level)

Moderator: Robert Blackwell, Manager of Community Initiatives and Performance, City of Greater Sudbury

Just Scraping By - Understanding Rents at a Neighbourhood Level Using Web Scrapping Technology

As with many other jurisdictions in Canada Ottawa's real estate market is under pressure due to rising prices and scarce availability of rental prices. Average market rents provided by the Canada Mortgage and Housing Corporation are a typical benchmark for affordability nationwide, but they provide an incomplete sample of the overall rental market and do not reflect the current financial barriers to entering the rental market. Some of the most up-to-date data on the rental market are found in 3rd party listings and online classified services such as Rentals.ca, Kijiji, Padmapper, and MLS.

In collaboration with the Ottawa Neighborhood Study, the Community and Social Services Department at the City of Ottawa created a web scraping tool that extracts data from these sources, removes duplicates, and categorizes them into neighborhoods. This allows the City of Ottawa to better understand neighborhood trends across unit types, prices, and availability at a more detailed level than ever possible.

Presenters:

- **Klaus Cumani**, Business Analyst, City of Ottawa
- **Boun Inthavong**, Sr. Statistics and Data Consultant, City of Ottawa

Collaborative Advanced Analytics to Improve Community Safety and Wellbeing

In 2019, the Province of Ontario mandated that every municipality in the province prepare and adopt a Community Safety and Wellbeing Plan. In the City of Toronto, this plan takes the form of SafeTO, Toronto's 10 year plan to reduce vulnerability, reduce violence, advance truth and reconciliation; promote healing and justice, invest in people, invest in neighbourhoods, and drive collaboration and accountability. A key element of SafeTO is the role that advanced, collaborative analytics will play in the identification of innovative, preventative measures to improve community safety and wellbeing. In this presentation, members of the SafeTO Collaborative Analytics and Learning Environment, will talk about its work in establishing effective data sharing, the tools and methods that are being tested to enable collaborative, community-based analysis, and the governance structures being created to ensure that this work remains ethical.

Presenters:

- **Wayne Chu**, Manager, Social Data Analytics, Social Development, Finance and Administration, City of Toronto
- **Bilqees Mohamed**, Policy Development Officer, Social Data Analytics, Social Development, Finance and Administration, City of Toronto
- **Patrick Roncal**, Policy Development Officer, Social Development, Finance and Administration, City of Toronto

Areas of Focus: Collaboration; Data Analysis; Community Safety and Wellbeing; Capacity Building; Technology

H Engaging and Leveraging Lived Expertise

Room: Dundas Room (2nd Floor)

Moderator: Naama Ofrath, Policy Development Officer, Toronto Children's Services

Co-Designing Financial Literacy Innovations for People Experiencing Low Income

As a result of a 3-year research project led by Durham College in partnership with the Regional Municipality of Durham, two financial literacy innovations were co-designed and prototyped. The two innovations address 1. the unique barriers to, and the reasons for, non-tax filing for people living with low income, and 2. their unique needs related to financial literacy. The project is innovative because it includes the people we hope to help in the creation of these strategies in a co-production approach. The first innovation is a board game for youth designed to improve tax literacy called Tax Tycoon™. The game employs a fun and proactive approach in order to break down fears and demystify the tax system for youth as they transition to adulthood.

The second innovation, the Financial Help Hub (FHH), is a walk up, interactive kiosk where people living with low income can readily access financial help information. This innovation addresses the barrier identified in the research that though there is good financial literacy information available, people living with low income are not accessing it.

In this panel presentation, research partners Durham College and the Regional Municipality of Durham will share the challenges and opportunities inherent in working alongside service users in applied research projects in order to innovate and redefine social services and supports.

Presenters:

- **Lorraine Closs**, Professor, Durham College
- **Geraldine Morrison**, Policy Analyst, Regional Municipality of Durham

Meaningful Engagement of Lived Experts in Homeless System Transformation: Experiences from Niagara

Since 2018 lived experts have played an increasing role in the transformation of Niagara's homeless serving system. This presentation will describe the local service manager's unique low-barrier approach to engaging and promoting the voices of lived experts as part of Niagara's 10-year housing and homelessness action plan. Through activities such as journey mapping, a living library, and the creation of ten recommendations to address homelessness in Niagara, lived experts have positively impacted how we plan our system, develop policy, respond to service user needs, and address stigma.

Presenters:

- **Marni Katzman**, Lived Expert, Lived Expert Advisory
- **Jeffrey Sinclair**, Housing and Homelessness Action Plan Advisor, Regional Municipality of Niagara

Areas of Focus: Lived Experts; Co-production; Low-Barrier Service Delivery; Policy Development

CLOSING PLENARY

Local Interventions and Tools for Healthier Communities
Room: Mississauga Ballroom (Main Level)

Navigating the Path and Building Capacity for Community Safety and Well-Being Implementation: Insights from Durham, Halton, Peel and York

The panel presentation will begin with a brief introduction to Community Safety and Well-being (CSWB), outlining its key principles. The overarching goal of fostering collaborative and upstream efforts for enhanced community well-being will be emphasized. The focus will then shift to specific initiatives in key municipalities, highlighting their unique approaches to CSWB implementation.

Halton will delve into capacity building and community supports for CSWB implementation. The model's progress will be showcased, emphasizing the utilization of tools such as CSWB Action Table Toolkits and planning resources. The discussion will also cover continued community partner engagement and the launch of a CSWB dashboard to aid in evidence-informed decision-making.

Durham will share its experience using community micro-granting as a tool for CSWB plan implementation. Lessons learned in leveraging grassroots community partnerships to address risk factors identified in the CSWB plan will be shared.

York Region will highlight its place-based approach and how they are working with communities that can benefit most. They will highlight their planning process and how they help build capacity to identify and respond to local priorities.

Peel will highlight their experience applying an equity lens throughout the development, implementation, and evaluation phases of their CSWB Plan to ensure community co-ownership of the 2020-2024 Peel CSWB Plan. They will also share how this approach has impacted overall community engagement and collaboration.

The presentations will wrap up with common themes around key lessons learned, how to get involved/be a champion of CSWB.

Presenters:

- **Anjana Aery**, Advisor, Strategic Initiatives, Regional Municipality of Peel
- **Jenna Dolly**, Program Manager, Community Development (A), Regional Municipality of York
- **Kendra Habing**, Decision Support Advisor, Regional Municipality of Halton
- **Janisha Kamalanathan**, Policy Advisor - Community Safety and Well-Being, Regional Municipality of Durham

- **Tineka Levy**, Manager - Community Safety and Well-Being, Regional Municipality of Durham

Transforming Mental Health Crisis Response: The Right Response, At The Right Time

This presentation will showcase the Toronto Community Crisis Service, focusing on its development, implementation, service structure and model. We will delve into key insights drawn from the service evaluation, and explore barriers and facilitators that have contributed to the service's success. Finally, the presentation will provide an overview of the roadmap for the city-wide expansion of the service in 2024, positioning it as the fourth emergency service in Toronto.

In February 2021, Toronto City Council unanimously approved the Toronto Community Crisis Service as part of SafeTO, the City of Toronto's 10-year Community Safety and Well-Being Plan. The Toronto Community Crisis Service introduces a new, community-based approach to responding to non-emergency, non-violent calls, including those involving persons in crisis and wellness checks.

The Toronto Community Crisis Service was launched in four pilot areas in March 2022 after an intensive period of research and community engagement that prioritized the communities that are most impacted by over-policing and that have lived experiences of the mental health, substance use, and engagement with the justice system.

Presenters:

- **Mohamed Shuriye**, Director, Community Safety and Wellbeing, Social Development, Finance and Administration, City of Toronto
- **Nicole Watson**, Manager, Policing Reform Social Development, Finance and Administration, City of Toronto

Areas of Focus: Integrated Services; Non-Police Interventions; Evidence-Informed Decision Making; Equity

2024 AWARDS BANQUET

Room: Mississauga Ballroom (Main Level)

As part of the Exchange Conference festivities, OMSSA is pleased to announce the Awards Banquet will return for 2024. The Awards Banquet is an opportunity to recognize our OMSSA Awards recipients (see more information below) and to gather for an evening to celebrate as a sector. As we get closer to May, we will offer more information on our Awards Banquet, in addition to our exciting program and confirmed speakers. **Please note**: the Awards Banquet is a separate ticketed event. Registration is required to attend.

2023 Award Recipients

Champion of Human Services - David Thomas

Many of you know David from past years employed by OMSSA as a Lead Trainer in their Social Assistance Training, commencing from 1994, and in more recent years as a Lead Trainer for the SAIL Curriculum, and currently with Ontario Works (OW) Directive Training and Life Stabilization. David is involved with various leadership initiatives providing skills and competencies designed to improve service quality, build organizational capacity, enhance service system management, and further service integration. David's role in supporting integration includes managing multiple projects related to implementation and delivery of streamlined services for clients and staff alike.

Lifetime Achievement Award - Douglas Bartholomew-Saunders

Following 45 years of management and executive experience in government operated and funded health and human services, Douglas uses his expertise to provide strategic advice to government, not-for-profit and for-profit organizations. His experience spans service system management, multi-system integration, strategy and policy development, systems expansion, and oversight design and implementation within the human services and includes considerable understanding and expertise in diversity, equity, and inclusion.

Local Municipal Champions Award

We will recognize outstanding teams who have advanced excellence in service integration and service system management:

- City of Brantford Build Belonging: Inclusive EarlyON Programming
- City of Ottawa Catherine Street Community Service Hub
- City of Windsor Asylum Claimant Team
- County of Simcoe Local Immigration Partnership Ukrainian Response
- Region of Durham Adult Protective Services: Innovative Partnerships and Housing Stability
- Niagara Region Indigenous-led RECE Training Program
- Better Together 2023

WEDNESDAY, MAY 8

OPENING REMARKS & PLENARY

Real Talk and Fireside Chat with Lee Airton
Room: Mississauga Ballroom (Main Level)

Land Acknowledgement and Opening Remarks:
- **Stella Danos-Papaconstantinou,** OMSSA Vice-President and Commissioner of Social Services, Regional Municipality of Durham

Presenter:
- **Dr. Lee Airton**, Assistant Professor of Gender and Sexuality Studies in Education, Queen's University

Real Talk and Fireside Chat with Lee Airton

Lee Airton (they/them), Assistant Professor of Gender and Sexuality Studies in Education at Queen's University, will discuss contemporary successes and challenges in the work of creating institutions that welcome gender and sexual diversity, particularly in the changing Canadian political context. Dr. Airton will then answer pre-submitted questions from OMSSA conference attendees about specific practical issues that are arising in attendees' workplaces so we can work to ensure our spaces are affirming for all.

Submit Your Questions for Lee Airton

Part of Lee Airton's keynote will include a fireside chat where they will answer your questions.

What is a challenge arising in your workplace or sector about welcoming gender diversity, or about your duty to prevent gender identity and gender expression discrimination? Is there a thorny problem in your area of practice, or a novel solution you are wondering about? Submit your questions for Lee to answer at the Exchange Conference. Submitted questions will remain anonymous. Due to the interest of time all questions may not be answered.

Please note: For those not attending the conference, we will summarize the session content including the questions and answers from the fireside chat as a resource for all to read after the Conference.

Deadline to submit questions: April 12, 2024

BREAKOUT SESSIONS

I Navigating and Debriefing in Complex and Challenging Times

Room: York Ballroom (Lower Level)

There can be a tremendous amount of suffering caused by complex situations we are regularly confronted with in our workplaces. In order to continue to be effective, caring, and compassionate, we need to harness new skills and deepen our self-reflection. This workshop will provide tools and approaches for both high risk complex situations as well as for leading and facilitating critical incident debriefings. Critical incident debriefings are a powerful resource that is key to mitigating vicarious trauma, learning from misses, processing trauma, and continuing to be client and staff centered. Using a trauma informed lens, this session will also delve into the nuances of helping people and communities navigate multiple barriers of oppression and will cover many facets of safety planning and collaborating in high risk situations.

http://karinesilverwoman.com/

Presenter:

- **Karine Silverwoman**, Social Worker and Consultant

Areas of Focus: Person Centered Approaches; Debriefing; Critical Incidents; Complex Situations

J Finding Successes in Emergency Newcomer Settlement

Room: Mavis Room (Lower Level)

Moderator: Andrew Scavarelli, Director, Ontario Works, County of Simcoe
Sponsored by the County of Simcoe.

Local Municipal Champion: Asylum Claimant Team

Immigration, Refugees, Citizenship Canada (IRCC) has been providing temporary accommodations in hotels for asylum claimants entering Canada without accommodation arriving through the Roxham Road irregular border crossing into Quebec. The pressure on the social support system led IRCC to expand its hotel operations outside of Quebec by transferring asylum claimants via charter bus to multiple municipalities across Ontario for temporary hotel accommodations. IRCC contacted City of Windsor Administration on December 30th, 2022, with information on the transfers. Three Windsor hotels totaling 439 rooms were secured for over 500 claimants representing 30 nationalities and 18 languages. The sudden increase in applications and case management from applicants with language barrier put pressure on already stretched resources on City of Windsor Employment & Social Services. The Department immediately put together a contingency plan to respond to the influx of applications and caseload increase within a short period of time. A special assignment team was created under the leadership of the Intake Supervisor, the team included – three caseworkers and two intake service representatives. This team brainstormed the most efficient and responsive methods to respond to the applications, case management, and other support challenges without putting undue hardship on existing staff resources. Together, the team has completed 700+ applications within a two-month time period and maintained up to-date case management for a caseload of 700+ clients.

The approach is to leverage on resources from provincial, local, external community partnership and client self-serve strategies. Applications and case management are completed at hotels where clients are at to avoid increase traffic to the OW office. Clerical support assist clients to navigate SADA online application tool, bilingual staff and translation software on clients' mobile device are utilized to support client language needs, assist all clients registering for digital self services (MyBenefits, DBD & RPC), the team took a shared responsibility approach with 3 caseworkers supporting 700+ Benefit Units, providing access to other sectors for intensive support (housing, health, education, child care, and employment registration/service) at hotels. The key to success is having clerical support assist with tasks, messages, phones, and taking on any administration duties that assist the client to free up the caseworker. IRCC recognized this application and case management model as a best business practice and the Asylum Claimant Team was asked to share the practice with other municipalities that experienced a similar influx. Feedback from claimants was positive and all received the support needed to transition to living in Windsor-Essex County or other municipalities.

Presenters:

- **Sheri Arseneau**, Supervisor, Ontario Works, City of Windsor
- **Neda Ali**, Ontario Works Caseworker, City of Windsor

Local Municipal Champion: Local Immigration Partnership Ukrainian Response

In February 2022, war broke out in Ukraine, and the Canadian Government created the Canada Ukrainian Authorization for Emergency Travel (CUAET) to provide a mechanism for individuals and families fleeing war to arrive in Canada. The Simcoe County Local Immigration Partnership responded to the increasing number of Ukrainians arriving in Simcoe County by working with community stakeholders to share information, identify gaps, and develop solutions. A unique section of information for CUAET holders was created on www.immigration.simcoe.ca; Early In 2023, County staff worked collaboratively across the Social and Community Services Division to improve outcomes for Ukrainian arrivals through enhancements to local service delivery. Homelessness funding was allocated to provide resources and create a new housing navigator position in the community. Fifty-six CUAET holders moved from temporary accommodations that were scheduled for demolition to permanent housing because of this support. A single point of contact in the Children Services Department was established to help CUAET holders find childcare spots and access fee subsidies. To further support CUAET holders in resettlement in Simcoe County and enhance opportunities for employment, interested CUAET holders were invited to take part in Early Childhood Education Assistant training. This employment training initiative resulted in five new Ukrainian workers in the Early Learning and Child Care Sector.

Presenters:

- **Sandra Lee**, Manager, Community Services, County of Simcoe
- **Yana Skybin**, YMCA Simcoe Muskoka

Areas of Focus: Emergency Newcomer Settlement; Systems Navigation; Access to Child Care; Child Care Assistant Employment Training

K Local Initiatives in Community and Supportive Housing

Room: Vista Room (Main Level)

Moderator: Jocelyn Siciliano, Income, Employment & Homelessness Supports Division, Regional Municipality of Durham

Innovative Supportive Housing Solutions – Setting the Standard in Ontario

The City of St. Thomas partnered with Indwell before Covid with a strategic plan to create 3 housing opportunities - one for individuals with high acuity (high supports), mid acuity and low acuity. The concept was that individuals could move through the continuum based on the level of support that was required. Railway City Lofts opened Oct 21 with 16 bachelor style units with high support. The second build welcomed tenants in the fall of this year. 6 tenants from the high acuity program moved to the mid acuity program and opened up 6 space for those who need the higher level of supports. All tenant selection is from the By Names list and is a collaborative effort.

The secret sauce from the beginning is around building relationships and trust - beginning with the politicians and continuing with the tenants and staff in the programs. Indwell operates the programs and receives funding through Ontario Health. The City helped with Capital and ongoing supports. The third project is in the planning stages.

Presenters:

- **Graham Cubitt**, President, Flourish (Indwell)
- **Heather Sheridan**, Director, Social Services, City of St. Thomas

A Collaborative and Evidence-Based Approach to Addressing the Centralized Waitlist for Community Housing in Niagara Region

Since 2019, the Niagara Region (NR) housing waitlist has grown by over 50% as the need for housing far surpasses the amount of community housing available. As a response to this need, NR housing and homelessness divisions came together to examine its current local priority policy to consider how it could better align with the current community need and re-prioritize populations facing barriers to housing. A deep dive into existing waitlist data and comparisons to other data sources such as Niagara's By-Name list were examined to inform recommendations.

This presentation will showcase the process underwent to use data to inform changes to the local priority policy for community housing, specifically, highlighting the need to align with best practices in the Homeless Serving system and address the feedback received from community partners and impacted parties to this policy change. One important change to the policy was the recommendation to align homeless status for community housing with Niagara's BNL data. Lessons learned and ongoing evaluation of the data and impact will also be shared.

Presenters:

- **Sandy Dupuis**, Manager Compliance and Community Engagement, Regional Municipality of Niagara
- **Kristina Nickel**, Program Evaluation and Data Analyst, Regional Municipality of Niagara

Areas of Focus: Building Partnerships; By-Name Lists; Mobilizing Data; Community Housing; Supportive Housing Continuum

L Connecting for the Dream: Urban Indigenous Homeward Bound

Room: Dundas Room (2nd Floor)

The session will spotlight Urban Indigenous Homeward Bound (UIHB), a Friendship Centre program that systematically addresses the barriers that sole-parent Indigenous mothers face when trying to find employment, safety and prosperity for themselves and their children. Urban Indigenous Homeward Bound has a proven track record of achieving results that directly align with the MMIWG Calls for Justice. The four-year program connects Indigenous mothers to meaningful employment through the provision of wraparound stability supports including supportive housing, child care, access to culture, education and life-skills curriculum, transportation and mental health supports.

UIHB changes the course of women's lives and contributes to long-term positive impacts for their families that span generations. Attendees will hear directly from a UIHB graduate and acquire a better understanding of how to support holistic, Indigenous-led programming that achieves results and has positive ripple effects in communities.

This session will provide an overview of UIHB including success stories and challenges and how the program is adapted to meet the needs the unique needs of each community in which it operates. Attendees will also learn about the Indigenous Skills and Employment Training Program (ISET), another Friendship Centre program that intersects with UIHB and offers a wide range of flexible employment and training supports to adults and youth, along with stay-in-school supports for school-age children and youth. Facilitators will discuss how UIHB intersects with municipal social services, explain referral criteria and how clients are selected, discuss the importance of benefits alignment, and provide examples of how supportive relationships and partnerships with municipal social services contribute to the success of participants in the program.

Presenters:

- **Erika Corbier**, Former Urban Indigenous Homeward Bound Navigator, Hamilton Regional Indian Centre
- **Karolyn Harris**, Regional Program Advisor, Housing and Employment, Ontario Federation of Indigenous Friendship Centres
- **Chastity Pratt**, Urban Indigenous Homeward Bound Graduate

Areas of Focus: Urban Indigenous Homeward Bound; Stability Supports for Urban Indigenous Single-Mothers; Partnerships with Municipal Service Providers; Ontario Works; Systems Navigation

M Improving Case Management and Wrap-Around Supports

Room: Vista Room (Main Level)

Moderator: Tennille Billy, Supervisor, Income and Social Supports, Regional Municipality of Peel

Local Municipal Champion: Catherine Street Community Service Hub

At the start of the COVID-19 pandemic, the community was faced with the closure of many programs and services. The City of Ottawa's Community and Social Services department established temporary respite centres as a place where Ottawa residents experiencing homelessness, or those precariously housed, could go to meet their needs. As service delivery began to transition back to the community, gaps in programs and services were identified and that were anticipated to exist beyond the pandemic. In response, the Catherine St. Community Service Hub (the Hub) was established.

The Hub provides integrated person-centered services through collocation, system navigation, information sharing, partnership, and case management services. Strategically co-located within the City of Ottawa's Employment and Social Services and Employment Ontario sites, caring and knowledgeable staff and community partners work together to provide wrap around municipal and community services and supports in one location with the goal of maximizing positive outcomes for Ottawa residents. Services provided include OW and ODSP financial and application assistance, employment services, childcare subsidy support, housing and crisis supports and referrals, and community and health services including vaccine, dental and identification clinics, harm reduction, legal supports, and a community food bank. On average, the Hub has over 2,600 visits per month. It is a safe, accessible space where everyone is welcome.

Presenters:

- **Kristine Haines-Chiarello**, Manager (A), Employment and Social Services Central, Community and Social Services, City of Ottawa
- **Jean Doyle**, Coordinator, Employment and Social Services, City of Ottawa

Serving Individuals in Haldimand and Norfolk Counties Through One-on-One Support by Community Support Workers

For close to a decade, Ontario Works recipients in Haldimand and Norfolk Counties have had the opportunity to engage in one to one support from Community Support Workers. Community Support Workers are community based and offer in person connections and supports at various levels. The program is voluntary for Ontario Works recipients and promoted through our Case Management team. Referrals are obtained directly from Case Managers and at times, partnering community agencies. Individuals participating in this program have an opportunity for more intensive support through connection to community resources and programs. Community Support Workers offer a unique approach to stabilization for individuals within Haldimand and Norfolk County without any ties to their financial eligibility.

Presenters:

- **Chris Hass**, Community Support Worker, County of Norfolk
- **Jaclyn Piper**, Community Support Worker, County of Norfolk

City of Ottawa's Case Management Tool

The Case Management Tool was the first and largest project to be created out of Ottawa's staging of SAMS Extract files into a database. There was a need for customizable, accurate and up-to-date reporting on Ontario Works and related metrics for social services. Previously, data that had already been entered in SAMS was manually duplicated in Excel sheets that were used to track deadlines. This took time that staff had precious little of while working with their caseloads, and the manually-entered data was too unreliable to be used for operations performance. Provincial reports exist, but their frequency is too low and combining them to cross-reference data is cumbersome. Having the new tool populate automatically from SAMS data saves Ottawa's Case Workers collectively between 40-80 hours daily of duplicate administrative work. It provides supervisors and managers unprecedented visibility into operational performance and demographics for Ottawa's case loads. It has provided a way for staff to empirically show the work that they do every day and allowed their supervisors to support them in managing and prioritizing their work. Where the extracts are missing information, we created custom applications to fill the gaps. The data infrastructure used to develop the Case Management Tool was built with the help of other municipalities' similar projects. Now Ottawa has reached a point where it can share its experience with other municipalities across Ontario. Through creating a network of knowledge-sharing, we strive to expand the use of data and make more innovative tools for social services province-wide.

Presenters:

- **Kurt DesRoches**, Business Analyst, City of Ottawa
- **Mirti Hanna**, Program Manager, City of Ottawa

Areas of Focus: Case Management Approaches and Tools; Stability Supports; Systems Navigation; EST Change Management; SAMS

N Beyond the Building: Advocating for a New Outdoor Model of Early Learning and Child Care

Room: Mavis Room (Lower Level)

Moderator: Christine Alden, Program Director, Lawson Foundation

At OMSSA's 2023 Virtual Forum, we had the opportunity to hear from national and international experts who shared how their regions are implementing outdoor Early Learning and Child Care (ELCC). In this session, we will continue the conversation and explore a continuum of outdoor ELCC from EarlyON programming to conventional ELCC settings with outdoor environments to the possibility of licensing a new model of child care taking place entirely outdoors and utilizing non-traditional forms of shelter such as a yurt or a barn.

We will explore this continuum in the context of creating new ELCC spaces and choices for children and families for programming in natural spaces. We will hear from leaders who offer licensed and unlicensed outdoor programming to better understand the opportunities and challenges (and how they are overcome) of this type of programming and the interest of OMSSA Members in advocating for a new outdoor model of ELCC.

Presenters:
- **Shannon Brown**, Manager of Children's Services, Counties (U/C) of Leeds & Grenville
- **Kim Hiscott**, Executive Director, Andrew Fleck Children's Services
- **Leanne Morton**, General Manager, Family Support, YMCA Greater Toronto
- **Emily Recoskie**, Outdoor Program Coordinator, Compass Early Learning and Care
- **Jill Wickins**, Organizational Link for Operations, Compass Early Learning and Care

Areas of Focus: Outdoor Early Learning and Child Care; Licensing; Nature-based Early ON; Expanding Child Care

⭕ Building an Equity Infrastructure: Constructing the Foundations of Progress

Room: Dundas Room (2nd Floor)

Although municipal governments have taken tangible actions to respond to the needs of Indigenous, Black and equity-deserving people, it is critically important that we focus on ways to systemically create the foundations for improved services that respond to the everchanging needs of residents and advance human rights and reconciliation. Join the City of Toronto to learn how their Equity and Human Rights team is working to build organizational capacities to create an inclusive workforce, collect and utilize high-quality sociodemographic data, respond to complex human rights challenges, and embed equity and accountability measures City-wide. By intentionally and collaboratively constructing a solid equity and reconciliation organizational infrastructure, municipalities can drive positive outcomes for all communities.

Presenters:

- **Emily Akerman, Consultant**, Equity Unit, People and Equity Division, City of Toronto
- **Tineke Harrison-Hansraj**, Training and Development Coordinator, City of Toronto
- **Emma Kelly**, Complaints and Research Analyst, Human Rights Office, City of Toronto
- **Rachel Weiss**, Business Intelligence Consultant, Data for Equity Unit, City of Toronto

Areas of Focus: Advancing Reconciliation, Equity and Human Rights; Data for Equity; Preventing Discrimination

P **Community Collaboration for Health Equity and Resilience**

Room: York Ballroom (Lower Level)

Moderator: Mike Nadeau, Chief Executive Officer, District of Sault Ste. Marie Social Services Administration Board

The City of Hamilton's Menstrual Products Pilot Program: Partnering to Provide Free Menstrual Products to Those in Financial Need

Access to menstrual products is essential for health, well-being, and full participation in society. Lack of access to menstrual products, due to financial constraints or period poverty, is a health equity issue affecting girls, women and all persons who menstruate. In 2020, Hamilton's City Council approved a 12-month pilot project to distribute free menstrual products through a universal and targeted approach. Menstrual products were made available in women's and universal washrooms in five recreation centres across the City (universal approach), and Hamilton Food Share (HFS) – a not-for-profit organization that distributes food to emergency food programs - was funded to distribute menstrual products through their network of food bank partners (targeted approach). The pilot included an evaluation component which consisted of tracking of usage patterns as well as obtaining feedback from program participants. Based on the success of the initiative, it was subsequently expanded in 2023 to provide free menstrual products at all City of Hamilton recreation facilities and municipal services centres. In addition, the City provided additional funding to Hamilton Food Share to continue to distribute free menstrual products in 2023. This presentation explores the origins and evolutions of the program including building strong working relationships with internal partners and local community organizations.

Presenters:

- **Janine Gaunt**, Senior Manager Recreation Operations, City of Hamilton
- **Colin McMullan**, Manager Performance, Planning and Evaluation, City of Hamilton

Community Coordination Plan: A Model for Activating Partnership and Centering Equity in the City of Toronto

Developed in partnership by the City of Toronto and United Way Greater Toronto in response to the COVID-19 pandemic, **the Community Coordination Plan** ensures coordination and communication with more than 400 community-based organizations across Toronto. The partnership model implements service coordination and hyper local solutions to meet the needs of Toronto's equity-deserving communities.

Made up of ten geographic Clusters and two non-geographic Clusters, partners work together to identify high priority issues experienced by residents, develop immediate actions to respond in real time, foster collaborative initiatives, and track, analyze and report trends, gaps and solutions. The City of Toronto and United Way of Greater Toronto have nurtured longstanding community development partnerships, many of which are closely aligned with equity strategies and initiatives. The Community Coordination Plan has deepened City and United Way partnership while positively impacting the non-profit sector and equity-deserving communities through a more strategic and aligned approach.

Presenters:

- **Alex Dow,** Director, Community Initiatives and Partnerships, United Way Greater Toronto
- **John Smith**, Manager, Community Development, City of Toronto

Areas of Focus: Health Equity; High-Priority Communities; Service Coordination; Collaboration with Community Organizations; Community Resilience-Building

CLOSING PLENARY

Keynote by Tricia Williams, Director, Research, Evaluation and Knowledge Mobilization, Future Skills Centre
Room: Mississauga Ballroom (Main Level)

Tricia Williams brings a strong background across anthropology, sociology and economics disciplines to her role as Future Skills Centre's (FSC) Director of Research, Evaluation and Knowledge Mobilization. She has particular expertise in the future of work including digital economies, skills development, migration and gender.

At the FSC, Tricia leads a pan-Canadian research strategy focused on advancing the FSC's strategic goals. She also collaborates closely with their partners on the broader evidence agenda, ensuring that knowledge is both generated and mobilized effectively for uptake and usage.

Prior to joining FSC, Tricia spent seven years with the Mastercard Foundation, leading research, evaluation and knowledge mobilization initiatives related to youth employment and digital economy across Africa and with Indigenous communities in Canada. She has authored and overseen numerous reports, events and research programs to generate evidence and action around inclusive employment and development.

Tricia previously worked for the federal government in evaluation and policy functions, which she joined through the Recruitment of Policy Leaders program. She also spent several years supporting immigrant rights organizations in the United States and community organizations in Haiti, where she lived for several years.