

Canadian
Red Cross

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Greater
Hamilton
Health
Network
ONTARIO HEALTH TEAM



2024

FINANCIALLY ASSISTED SOCIAL PRESCRIBING

COMMUNITY
ENGAGEMENT REPORT



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Mirela Marceta, Project Manager

April 2025

All photos within this report were taken by Canadian Red Cross staff with consent



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The work of the Greater Hamilton Health Network and its Partnership Council members takes place on traditional territories of the Erie, Neutral, Huron-Wendat, Haudenosaunee, and Mississaugas. Indigenous people who have lived here since time immemorial and have deep connections to these lands.

This land is covered by the Dish Covenant, which was an agreement between the Haudenosaunee and Anishinaabek to share and care for the resources around the Great Lakes. We further acknowledge that this land is covered by the Between the Lakes Purchase, 1792, between the Crown and the Mississauga of the Credit First Nation.

The GHHN catchment area continues to be home to vibrant, diverse Indigenous communities who have distinct and specific histories and needs, as well as a constitutionally protected treaty. The GHHN is located next to Six Nations of the Grand River and Mississaugas of the Credit but most Indigenous peoples in the GHHN catchment area live in urban Hamilton. We honour this diversity and respect the knowledge, leadership, and governance frameworks within Indigenous communities. We are grateful for the opportunity to live, meet, work, and are committed to engaging and building meaningful relationships and partnerships with the Indigenous communities, Six Nations of the Grand River, Mississaugas of the Credit and Urban Indigenous populations on this territory.

[Greater Hamilton Health Network Land Acknowledgement](#)

Learn about the Canadian Red Cross commitment to reconciliation and the humanitarian principles that guide them by visiting the [Indigenous Peoples Framework](#)

To learn more about the people and communities served by the Greater Hamilton Health Network, and the history of the lands that they live and work upon, [click here](#).



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Financially Assisted Social Prescribing (FASP)

Hamilton (Ontario) – wards 2, 3, 4

Since January 2023, the Canadian Red Cross Society and Greater Hamilton Health Network (GHHN) has set out to co-design a system-wide and sustainable service delivery model that aims to increase health equity informed care and services.

Together with community, we're pleased to introduce FASP, an innovative approach to bringing social prescribing to community organizations in Municipal wards* 2,3, and 4 in Hamilton, Ontario.

[Join Now](#)

Join your community to help build a collaborative network of social prescribing services and referrals. Applications are now open for community organizations and healthcare professionals who are already providing social prescribing, or would like to.

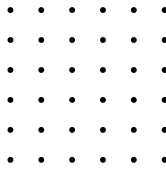
Advantages to Members

- Inventory of social prescribing services** in wards 2-4.
- Inventory of financially assisted services*** in wards 2-4.
- Online learning portal for members to access important social prescribing resources.
- Social prescribing training toolkit to train your organization.
- Link worker competency framework.
- Social Prescribing experts and facilitator knowledge.
- Financial Assistance toolkit to support clients.
- \$2M granting available for members to support clients when accessing social prescribing referrals and/or services.
- Low-barrier entry and application process for funding.

*wards refer to municipal divisions of the city that are represented by elected counsellors. To see a description of the wards in the City of Hamilton, click [here](#).

**A repository of organizations and services currently providing social prescribing within wards 2, 3, and 4.

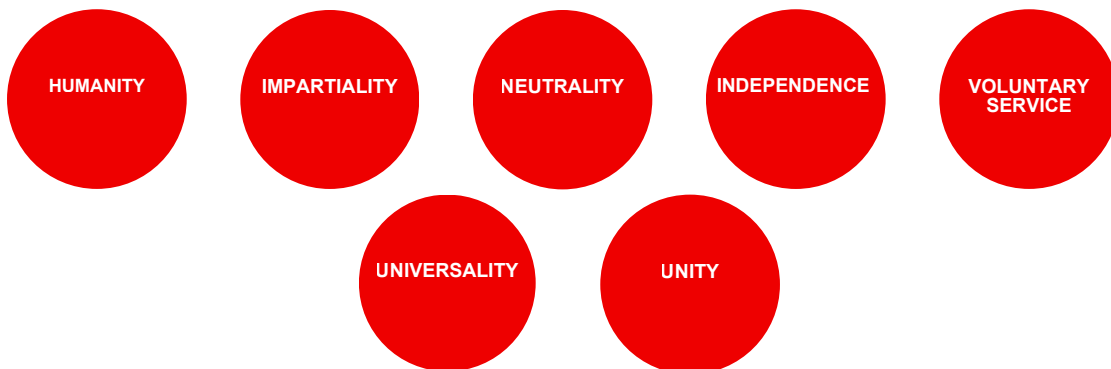
***A repository of organizations and services currently providing financial assistance within wards 2, 3, and 4.



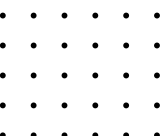
What Does Community Engagement Mean to Us?

Community is at the heart of FASP’s mission and guides every step we take. The Canadian Red Cross is passionate about working with communities to dream, co-design and deliver meaningful, local solutions. Simultaneously, the GHHN is on a mission to craft a healthcare system that puts patients first and is tailored to for the Hamilton community.

FASP uses a structured design and decision-making process based on equitable engagement principles co-developed by members of the FASP Advisory Committee and the Double Diamond, UK framework. In addition to the Double Diamond Framework, this project is guided by the Canadian Red Cross’ fundamental Principles:



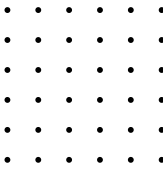
These principles allow us to provide help immediately to whoever needs it, wherever they are, whatever their race, political beliefs, religion, social status, or culture.





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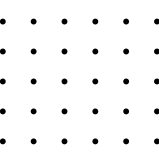
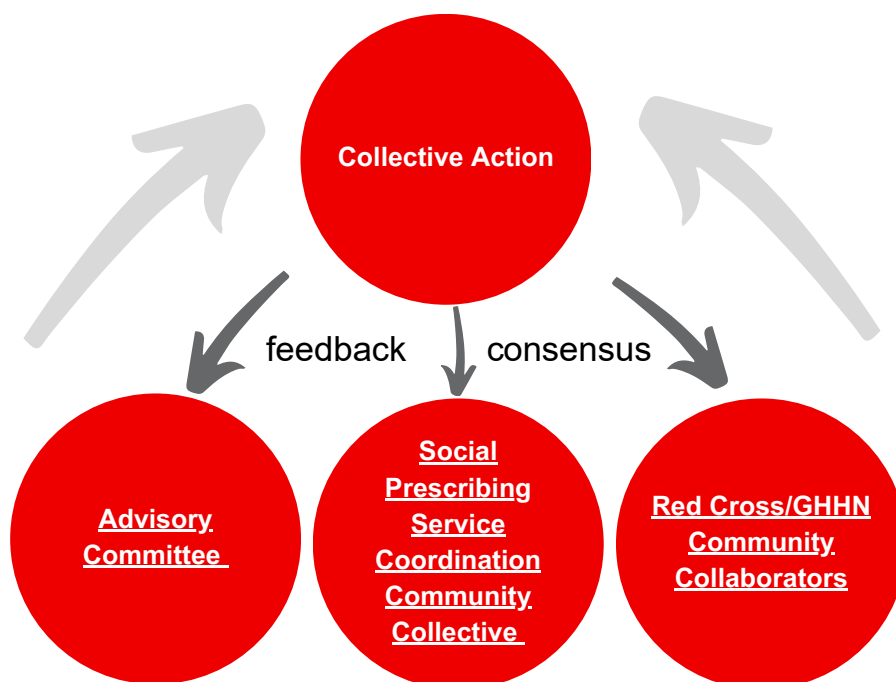
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Our membership engagement groups serve as platforms where planning and implementation are not just encouraged—they are driven by the community itself. These groups encourage members to take initiative, shape priorities, and actively contribute to the direction of our collective efforts. By placing decision-making at the helm of the community, we foster a sense of ownership, collaboration, and shared purpose.

Our membership reflects a diverse and committed body of individuals whose insights and participation are the backbone of our success. Their involvement ensures that our initiatives remain responsive, inclusive, and aligned with the evolving needs of those we serve.

Click on the bubbles below to learn more about each membership group:





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Thank You For Your Support

We have had the pleasure of learning from so many people.

475+

meetings with community
members and organizations

560+

hours of conversations with leaders

Thank you to the amazing people who shared their time with us...

Adrien McKenna
Alice Plug-Buist
Allison Stockton-Aird
Amanda Demmer
Amandeep Saini
Andrew Matthews
Angela Naveau
Audrey Davis
Babrah Kamaldip
Bonnie Kin
Brian McKenna
Councillor Nrinder Naan
Councillor Tammy Hwang
Dan Edwards
Danielle Newton
Darrah Tan
David Wallace
Deepika Anandkumar
Dena Silverberg
Elizabeth Cameron

Elizabeth Zvereva
Erica Conly
Evan Gravely
Helen Harris
Jeffery Black
Jessie Charbot
John Stapleton
Josephine Pham
Justin Eisinga
Kamal Babrah
Katherine Kalinowski
Kristyn Bruce
Laura Cattari
Macksensy Bacon
Marijke Ljogar
Marlena Nguyen
Meghan Tinmouth
Mehnaz Munir
Naghm Azzam Iqbal
Naomi Berlyne

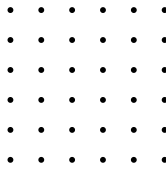
Nicole Cormier
Pam Hillier
Pat Spadafora
Renee Wetselaar
Rob Murphy
Robyn Currie
Ruthanne Talbot
Safiya Clarke-Mendes
Sam Campanella
Samina Talat
Sarah Feeney-Martin
Sarah Martin
Sarah Owens
Shereen Zahid
Sonia Hsiung
Srija Biswas
Tamaya Wilson
Terry Ramirez
Tessa McFadzen
Valerie Sadler



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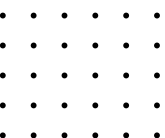
Engaging Healthcare

The FASP team is committed to collaborating with local healthcare providers to connect people in health, community, and social care sectors. Over the past year, we have successfully pursued this goal in partnership with the GHHN.

The **GHHN** has been our co-design partner since 2023. One of the first Ontario Health Teams established in the province, the GHHN includes voices from over 150+ organizations across the region, including primary care, home care, hospitals, community agencies, long-term care, mental health, Indigenous health, post-secondary education, and local municipalities.



Led by the GHHN, the **Greater Hamilton Health Network Primary Care Network (PCN)** represents primary care providers, workers, and organizations across the region. The PCN aims to improve delivery and coordination of primary care services by providing a platform for collaboration and support.





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2024 Timeline



January

Advisory Committee & Collaborator network approves their co-developed three-phased approach to bring FASP to Hamilton

February

2023 Advisory Committee adjourns

March

Red Cross approval process launch

April

2023 Annual Report and 2023 Community Engagement Report

June

2023-2024 Community Engagement Funding concludes

August

FASP Project Team Hired:

- Project Manager
- Project Coordinator
- Project Assistant
- Evaluation and Learning Specialist
- Community Health Coordinator
- Community Engagement Coordinator

July

2024-2028 FASP project agreement signed

October

Membership recruitment leads to 30 applications within the first two weeks

September

FASP officially launches at the first Canadian Social Prescribing Conference

December

72 Members
178 Volunteer hours
232 Subscribers to FASP Newsletter

November

All member meetings launched:

- Advisory Committee
- Working Group
- Collective

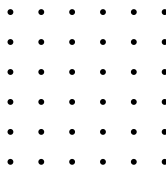




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Academic Collaborations

THE ROLE OF THE PROJECT ASSISTANT

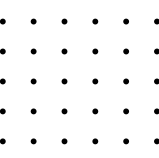
The FASP Project Assistant is a position filled by a post-secondary student and develops resources for both internal and external use, which are shared with collaborators. Additionally, the Project Assistant supports the team with the maintenance of two service inventories: the Social Prescribing Service Inventory* and the Financial Assistance Inventory*.

“I think especially studying in a program that so often preaches selfishness and focus on one's own work, to be in an environment where everyone was so passionate about working towards the betterment of their community was quite emotional. That interaction grounded my understanding of the work and reminded me of the human element that drives systems change.” - Project Assistant, FASP

ACADEMIC PRESENTATIONS

We are grateful to have been invited onto the campuses of McMaster University and the University of Waterloo to share insights on developing FASP with over **150+** students. Our discussions with students have fostered a deeper understanding of how social prescribing can address health inequities and enhance community well-being. We have had the pleasure to participate in three guest lectures this year:

- McMaster University, Political Science Department
- McMaster University, Peace Studies Department
- University of Waterloo, Health Science Department





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Volunteering with FASP

With over 13,000 volunteers at the Canadian Red Cross, we know the immense value that volunteers bring. Social Prescribing Liaison Volunteers are a group of committed volunteers that serve as an accessible link to those who may be interested in learning more about the FASP project.

Focusing on community outreach and administration, volunteers provide and collect information that currently support the development and maintenance of the two service inventories* for Municipal wards 2, 3 and 4. These service inventories provide an up-to-date list of programs and services available for social prescribing or financial assistance referrals. Additionally, some volunteers are currently supporting ongoing learning and evaluation planning for the project. In 2024, volunteers spent **178** hours on:

Development of Social Prescribing Service Inventory	By streamlining access to local resources that provide Social Prescribing, it enhances service navigation for both service users and providers.
Community Outreach & Recruitment Membership Campaign	The campaign expanded the awareness of FASP within the community, recruited organizations for the collective and aided in inventory development
Development of Financial Assistance Inventory	Will aid individuals in accessing emergency funds, subsidies, and cost-of-living relief and ensures frontline workers can quickly connect people to vital resources that ease financial stress and promote stability.

A big thank you to the 2024 volunteer team!

Asia Mangan
 Chika Okafor
 Chloe Ho
 George Sargious
 Holy Sargious
 Ivan Twinomugisha

Jeremy Brown
 Jordan Baker
 Joy Sargious
 Mary Elector
 Naeva Scott Bouris
 Patricia Acen

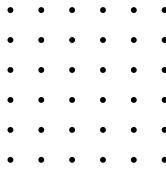
Ruby Bhatti
 Sadie Gilliland
 Solomon Dare
 Sylvia Bishay
 Yasaman Amini



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Advisory Committee

The Advisory Committee is a group of community leaders that help advise the FASP project. Members share knowledge and lessons learned that assist in identifying and advancing key opportunities in alignment with strategic priorities.

Members come from:

- Academia
- Allied Healthcare Practitioners
- Community Service Providers
- Healthcare Administration
- Healthcare Providers
- Law
- Lived Experience

THE ADVISORY
COMMITTEE INCLUDES

10

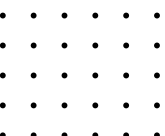
COMMUNITY
LEADERS

[Meet the Committee](#)



“We must proceed with our mission to enhance the lives of participants in the chosen wards*”

- Advisory Member





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Financial Assistance Working Group

The Financial Assistance Working Group (FAWG) is comprised of up to 11 community members who have lived experience and expertise in the financial assistance landscape in Hamilton. Together, they work to identify the criteria for the Community Health Fund and develop a low-barrier application process.

THIS YEAR, WE
WELCOMED

11

FAWG MEMBERS

6 Front Line Workers

- Child & youth agencies
- Settlement services
- Women's services
- Housing services
- Mental health supports
- Harm Reduction services

4 People with Lived Experience

- Experience with navigating different health and social systems
- Experience accessing supports like Ontario Disability Support Program (ODSP) and Ontario Works (OW)

1 Policy Expert

- Experience addressing economic disparity through social interventions

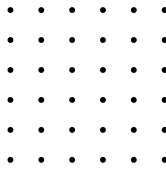
“There is a wealth of knowledge and experience from various backgrounds that will be helpful in formulating the logistics & roll-out of the FASP program”

- Working Group Member



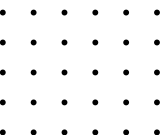
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Social Prescribing Service Coordination Community Collective (The Collective)

The Collective provides a space for community, social, and health service providers to gather, learn more about social prescribing, and build a shared vision of social prescribing in Hamilton together. Members also receive several resources developed by the FASP team, such as a social prescribing training toolkit to expand knowledge at their organization, service inventories for wards 2-4 for social prescribing and financial assistance services and program, and access to the Community Health Fund. Looking ahead to 2025, we aim to strengthen relationships between organizations and support each other to continue building a connected Hamilton.





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Collective Members 2024



Shine On



CLICK ON THE LOGOS TO LEARN MORE!





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What We Are Hearing From Members...

"In so many ways I am and have been in previous roles as a social prescriber. Its great to come together and learn about new programs and connections. Having a centralized list... will be amazing."

- Collective Member

"I'm really excited about where the project is going and just to learn more like there's so many intricacies when it comes to social prescribing"

- Working Group Member

"This was my first meeting but a great meeting, very welcoming, excellent venue, appropriate time designated to the meeting agenda. I'm learning about newer and smaller organizations and am able to put names to faces and recognize alternate resources for service users"

- Collective Member

"I have a lot to learn, and I'm in the right place. I'm very happy with the meetings... I think we are onto the right way"

- Advisory Member

"I can kind of feel it like coming together now,... So I'm just excited to see kind of what we can do with it"

- Advisory Member

Get Involved

Help pilot this initiative with your insights, leadership
and strategic connections

Join the Advisory Committee

Provide social prescribing, or would like to, within Municipal
wards 2,3, and 4 in Hamilton, Ontario?

Join the Collective

Share your passion and time to help illustrate a new
path for financial assistance

Join the Financial Assistance Working Group

Support with your time, passion and skills and help
the community develop resources for those receiving
social prescribing services.

Join The Volunteer Team

Contact Us

for more information, partnership opportunities or how you can support

E: mirela.marceta@redcross.ca