



Financially Assisted Social Prescribing (FASP) Quarterly Update

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Year 1, Issue 3

What is FASP?

The Canadian Red Cross (CRC) has been collaborating with the [Greater Hamilton Health Network](#) to develop Financially Assisted Social Prescribing (FASP), an innovative approach to bring social prescribing to community organizations providing support to people residing in Municipal wards 2, 3, and 4 in Hamilton, Ontario. The goal of the initiative is to increase health equity informed care and services in the Hamilton region by bringing the health and social sectors together. On September 16, 2024, the FASP initiative was officially launched accompanied by a community engagement campaign in Hamilton’s downtown wards 2, 3, and 4. In March 2025, the first Community Health Fund for social prescribing was launched to support existing programs and services within the Collective for those implementing social prescribing.

You are invited to FASP’s 1st Community Fair!

Join us for the first FASP Community Fair highlighting the organizations participating in the Collective. Join these service providers to learn more about bringing health equity informed care to the community. Free parking and refreshments provided.

 Thursday July 31, 2025, 1:00 p.m. to 3:00 p.m.

 Gasworks: 141 Park St N, Hamilton ON

Funding Announcement - Thank you, Ward 4!

In a powerful show of commitment to community well-being, City of Hamilton’s Ward 4 Councillor Tammy Hwang has contributed \$25,000 to FASP’s Community Health Fund. This generous contribution will support the FASP initiative focused on improving health equity and access to healthcare and wellness programs across the city.



TAMMY HWANG
ONWARD4

This infusion of \$25,000 will bring the first Community Health Fund to \$323,000. A fund that will provide the recipients from the Social Prescribing Service Coordination Community Collective with an additional micro-grant to supplement their existing funding. This will further support Ward 4 constituents in accessing Social Prescribing services across Hamilton.



(Top) Image of Councillor Hwang (Middle) Ward 4 logo (Bottom) is a map of the lower city, highlighting where Ward 4 is located

We look forward to sharing our impact with you in 2026 after the initial testing period of the Community Health Fund ends late 2025.



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Red Cross

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2025 Community Health Fund

In March 2025, the Canadian Red Cross (CRC) launched the first Community Health Fund (CHF) for social prescribing in Hamilton, ON, as part of the Financially Assisted Social Prescribing (FASP) project, a \$5.7M three-phased pilot project that began in September 2024. The Social Prescribing Community Service Coordination Collective (the Collective), consisting of 29 members from community and healthcare sectors, was eligible for the CHF. The Collective aims to create a shared vision of social prescribing for residents in Municipal wards 2, 3, and 4. In its second phase, the FASP project awarded over \$298,000 to 19 Collective members to support social prescribing initiatives for underserved populations. Since 2023, community engagement has identified gaps in services for these wards, and the CHF aims to support over 2,600 individuals through various initiatives.

Congratulations to the 2025 Community Health Fund Awardees:



Art Gallery
of Hamilton

The **Art Gallery of Hamilton (AGH)** will provide support for up to 370 clients referred to them by FASP Collective members and other community members. Both family or dual admissions, and individual admissions, are available to deliver socially-connective arts experiences as non-clinical interventions. Meaningful engagement in culture and community life can address feelings of exclusion, social isolation, and invisibility. Activities at the AGH are designed to build confidence, connection, and belonging, leading to wellness outcomes during and following a museum visit. To refer eligible individuals to this program, contact Laurie Kilgour-Walsh at laurie@artgalleryofhamilton.com.



The **Hamilton/Burlington SPCA (HBSPCA)** will provide support to 100 Pet Health Outreach clients in need of transportation for their pet to receive timely medical attention. Door-to-door roundtrip transportation services will reduce financial strain, improve overall well-being by reducing stress, and improve health outcomes for both pets and their guardians. To learn more about our Pet Health Outreach Program, contact Michelle Macnab at pethealthclinic@hbspca.com or visit www.hbspca.com.



Hamilton Health Sciences will enable access to non-clinical services for their most vulnerable patients at Hamilton General Hospital. 540 individuals during and after discharge will receive social prescriptions that may include memberships for health and well-being programs at YMCA HBB, 541 Eatery and Exchange gift cards to receive hot meals, as well as prepaid Presto cards to access public transportation. Patients experiencing frequent hospital visits, social isolation, and transportation barriers will be referred internally to Social Work for social prescriptions.



Hamilton Urban Core Community Health Centre (HUCCHC) will specifically target 214 individuals within their care. These essential client support services, are also culturally responsive and include a number of activities that are meant to reduce social isolation and improve mental well-being. Activities may include admission to cultural events, yoga classes, art therapy sessions, inclusive art and storytelling events, group meditation workshops, language programs, job readiness workshops, or cultural wellness sessions. Activities may also include community gardening, food security initiatives, transportation vouchers, professional attire for interviews and tablets or laptops for online support groups. Micro-grants for educational support for youth in need of education may also be provided. To refer eligible clients, contact intakes@hucchc.com.



Head Injury Rehabilitation Ontario (HIRO) will support access to services within a client's natural community to encourage active participation in rehabilitation. By leveraging local resources and promoting social integration, HIRO connects eligible clients to goal-oriented programs which can include yoga, swimming, tai chi, art, music, and pottery classes, as well as public transit passes. These activities help enhance physical, cognitive, and communication skills through meaningful community engagement. For more information about the program or HIRO services, please contact Sheena Patel at spatel@hiro.ca.



Indwell aims to improve access to activities by assisting up to 220 tenants through existing front-line staff acting as Link Workers. Services provided may include health and wellbeing programs, social or cultural outings, art and music education, and may also include financial assistance for public transportation, running shoes, workout clothing and sports equipment. Tenants must be referred internally via their program support staff.



Luso Canadian Charitable Centres (Luso) formerly known as Portuguese Support Services, aims to increase opportunities for community inclusion for eight people that fall within the FASP target population of people who need help the most living within Municipal wards 2, 3, and 4. Cultural and social activities will be provided to these existing clients and may include improving access to volunteering, walk and social support groups, inclusion cafes, meditation and mindfulness sessions, bowling and local Hamilton cultural enrichment such as Dundurn Castle, Art Gallery of Hamilton, and Royal Botanical Gardens. For more information contact Jacinta Ribeiro at jacinta.echo@lusoccs.org.



Mishka Social Services aims to provide support to 30 newcomer and refugee youth with developmental disabilities through the development of an evening respite program called Twilight Connections. Mishka aims to address the critical need for accessible recreation and respite for newcomer families while also reducing social isolation. Various outings and activities are planned, including arts and crafts, basketball, swimming, bowling, sensory play, music sessions and team-building games. The program will offer a safe, supportive environment with trained staff and volunteers. Caregiver support will also be integrated through a Caregiver Advisory Committee. To refer eligible clients, contact Maryam at maryamq@mishkasocialservices.org.



Shalem Mental Health aims to support ten couples living in Municipal wards 2-4 during their regularly occurring two-day "Hold Me Tight" workshop. To date, the workshop has helped couples facing socio-economic challenges by strengthening emotional bonds, improving communication, and reducing stress, making it a vital tool for couples dealing with external pressures affecting their health and overall life enjoyment. Many couples face stress, anxiety, and depression due to financial instability and social pressures, causing communication breakdowns and increased feelings of isolation. Participating in Hold Me Tight, allows for stronger bonds to form, creating supportive environments for couples and families that may result in reducing adverse childhood experiences when children are involved. To refer eligible clients and to address any barriers to participation, contact Felicia Van Dyk at feliciav@shalemnetwork.org.



Wesley Urban Ministries will provide support to nine people within their Special Care Unit who identify as someone who formerly experienced chronic homelessness. The Emergency Rental and Dental Support for Homeless People Experiencing Polysubstance Use Disorders and Intersecting Health Issues program will provide first and last month's rent, and/or dentures to those who have navigated existing financial assistance supports and found no relief. Internal referrals can be made to Robyn Currie, Robyn.Currie@wesley.ca.



YWCA Hamilton aims to support 120 women and gender diverse people who access their housing and/or settlement services with the Art on Prescription project. The Art on Prescription project is a creative art based workshop series that connects art and creative experiences to enhance overall health, decrease social isolation, and enhance connection to community. At the completion of the series, planned visits to the Art Gallery of Hamilton will take place, as well as an art show to showcase the artists will take place in the community. For more information contact Chelsea Kirkby at ckirkby@ywcahamilton.org.



Hamilton Sings! Community Choir will provide support to up to 16 clients referred to them by FASP Collective members and other community members. Group singing provides proven physical, social, emotional, psychological and educational benefits. By delivering memberships for people with limited material resources to partake in singing activities, Hamilton Sings! aims to promote physical and social well-being while building mutual trust. This singing group is not just a chorale - it's a community! To refer eligible individuals to this program, contact apply@hamiltonsings.ca.



Hamilton Wentworth Green Venture intends to support 140 people by improving access to nature-based activities like nature walks, community gardens and exploring green spaces. Access to many green spaces and nature activities are limited due to full waitlists and restrictions such as low-accessibility, and this project intends to increase free nature connections and outdoor education programs for youth and older adults. Green Venture supports may include nutritious snacks for low-income youth, transportation subsidies, materials that improve mobility and multilingual communications, and may also include program supplies including shovels, trowels, and paintbrush sets. To refer eligible individuals to this program, contact Heather Govender at heather.govender@greenventure.ca.



Shine On

The **YMCA of Hamilton/Burlington/Brantford (YMCA HBB)** will support 55 people through a program developed with healthcare providers and paramedics connecting seniors and students to recreational and wellness programs. In addition to the funds received from FASP, they will additionally be supplementing YMCA HBB memberships up to 50% subsidy. YMCA HBB activities are known to reduce isolation and improve health outcomes, and in this project may include fitness centre passes, group fitness classes, health management programs, swim programs and lessons. To refer eligible individuals to this program, contact Genevieve Hladysh at genevieve.hladysh@ymcahbb.ca.



Compass Community Health Centre will continue to support their existing network of 400 seniors (60+) by connecting them to community resources. By increasing access to non-medical interventions, they intend to improve participant wellness by providing recreation centre memberships and passes, providing transportation subsidies, increase distribution of fresh produce, and admission to various arts, social, and cultural activities. For more information contact Mariko Bown-Kai at mrown-kai@compassch.org.



Mission Services of Hamilton will support 130 people through its "Prescribing Hope" program. The goal of the 'Prescribing Hope' program is to promote wellness amongst permanently housed individuals to help integrate them back into community. Activities include family re-engagement activities, support groups, mindfulness practices, and cultural and social enrichment activities. They may also include increasing access to develop personal hobbies, and education and/life skills. For more information contact Valerie Sadler at vsadler@mission-services.com.



The "Holistic Care for Healthier Lives" project by **AbleLiving Services Inc.** aims to promote overall well-being by reducing social isolation, providing a sense of community, and ensuring clients meet their basic needs as they transition into more sustainable on-going support systems. The project will support 49 people to actively engage in their community through memberships to City of Hamilton community centres and recreation programs, including adult day programming. The "Holistic Care for Healthier Lives" project will additionally assist clients with immediate needs such as access to food, access to pay-as-you-go cellphones, and transportation assistance. To refer eligible clients, contact Mary Warnick at MWarnick@thrivegroup.ca.





**Canadian
Red Cross**



The "Prescription for Better Health and Wellness (PBHW)" program by **Good Shepherd Centres Hamilton** will provide 70 tenants and clients access to financial resources that will enable the pursuit of self-identified goals relating to personal resilience, health and well-being. "Connectors", selected from existing staff teams, will educate co-workers, tenants and clients across Good Shepherd programs about social prescribing and the PBHW program. Connectors will coordinate applications, navigation and accessing of resources, and follow-up with client progress. Activities that will be provided to tenants and clients may include cultural connections, artistic and creative workshops, transportation, and educational opportunities. It may also include emergency response for those requiring special one-time supports. For more information contact Katherine Kalinowski at KKalinowski@gsch.ca.



The "Ubuntu (I am because we are) Community Wellness Program" by **Afro Canadian Caribbean Association** will support 20 marginalized seniors to Black and culturally relevant wellness activities that foster mental, emotional, physical and social well-being. The "Ubuntu Community Wellness " program will address social isolation and promote healing through ancestral traditions and shared community care. Activities may include cultural Black history tours, Afro-Caribbean dance workshops, Afro-Caribbean drumming programs, and Senior walking programs. To refer eligible individuals contact Stacy-Ann Lamb at salaccaseniors@gmail.com.

For more information

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