



**ANNUAL REPORT 2022/23**

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Ontario Aboriginal HIV/AIDS Strategy

## W H O W E A R E

Ontario Aboriginal HIV/AIDS Strategy is a provincially mandated AIDS Service Organization (ASO) that provides outreach and support services to Indigenous people (First Nations, Métis and Inuit) who are living with or affected by HIV/AIDS and other sexually transmitted and blood borne infections (STBBIs) by way of a network of community prevention workers. Oahas, as a strategy, was born out of the work from a steering committee composed of government representatives, researchers, community representatives and people living with and affected by HIV/AIDS.

Oahas operates based on the principles of Greater Involvement of People living with HIV/AIDS (GIPA), Meaningful Engagement of People living with HIV/AIDS (MEPA), Indigenous harm reduction, and respect for our cultural knowledges and teachings. These foundational principles guide all aspects of our relationships and work, and support our community prevention workers in providing culturally safe and trauma informed approaches related to prevention, education, outreach, testing, and treatment supports and services for Indigenous peoples living in Ontario.

## M I S S I O N & V I S I O N

Oahas is in the process of connecting with community to re-imagine our mission and vision statements, which will be outlined in the 2025 Strategic Plan. Until that time our 2019-2024 Strategic Plan outlines our mission and vision as: Oahas leads culturally distinct and sensitive programs and supports to prevent the transmission of HIV and other STBBIs through safety, knowledge and care with Indigenous people to achieve wellbeing. Oahas exists to end HIV infections in Indigenous communities in Ontario.



# MESSAGE FROM BOARD CHAIR

ALBERT BECK

MEGHAN YOUNG



# AND EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

Following the significant changes that came with the organizational restructuring in 2021-2022, the primary goal at Oahas in 2022-2023 was to focus on stabilizing, both at the governance and operational levels of the organization. Lindsay Kretschmer joined the Oahas Board of Directors in September 2021 as an interim Board Chair, and given her love and care for the community and Oahas, she held this position until March 2023. It was at this time that Albert Beck (long-time Métis HIV activist), who had rejoined the Oahas Board of Directors in January 2023,

agreed to step back into the role of Board Chair.

On the Board of Directors, we also had Erika Pulfer, who was in the Secretary role, step down from the Board in February 2023, as she and her family welcomed a new baby into the world. Melissa Deleary, graciously stepped up and offered to fill the role of Secretary with Erika's departure. In addition, we also welcomed Dr. J. Craig Phillips, Professor in the School of Nursing at the University of Ottawa and Human Rights and HIV researcher, to the Board of Directors in January 2023.

In terms of the operations at Oahas, we had many positive changes that continue to strengthen the work of the organization, so that we can continue to be responsive to Indigenous peoples and communities. One of the benefits of COVID was the additional resources that organizations could access to support community. In November 2021, Oahas and Elevate NWO opened Maamowiitaawigamig: The Northside Warming Centre. We were able to stretch our COVID funds to keep the Warming Centre/Drop-in Centre running until June 2022, and between June 2022 and March 2023 Elevate NWO secured some additional funds to keep things running, while we were awaiting a funding decision. In March 2023, we are happy to report that we have received the funds to continue operating Maamowiitaawigamig for an additional 2 years. With these additional funds we are able to add a full-time designated HIV nurse and increased Nurse Practitioner hours. We also have a designated Project Manager for the Drop-in, who we look forward to welcoming to the team in 2023-2024.

In Sault Ste. Marie, the year was spent developing the core suite of training modules for the peer program, and preparing to launch our first ever province-wide Oahas Community Advisory Committee (OCAC). The first OCAC meeting was held in March 2023 and has representation from Indigenous people across Ontario who are living with HIV, or who have been diagnosed with HCV or who access harm reduction services. We are extremely excited to have these knowledgeable experts on board to advise on the peer program development, as well as other program development at Oahas. We continue to be looking for a new accessible space in Sault Ste Marie, and hope to move next fiscal year.

In Sudbury, the team was happy to finally welcome the new medical vehicle which can be used for IPHA support days, mobile testing events, and relationship building, community engagements, harm reduction services, and education activities with First Nations in the Sudbury-Manitoulin region. We are also happy to announce that we were able to renovate a new space for the Oahas Sudbury site, and the team moved into the new space in March! (You can find pictures on page 6 of the report.)

At our Central Office in Barrie, we were very happy to welcome Marie Hartman, the new Provincial Lead – Research and Evidence Integration to our team in January 2023. Marie has hit the ground running, and has been playing an active role in the current Oahas research projects, as well as supporting grant writing for future projects. With Marie's support, Meghan provided an oral and written deposition to the Ontario Budget Committee urging them to increase funding for STBBI and harm reduction services across the province.

The team at the Central Office has also been busy refining Oahas' staff on-boarding procedures, developing training for staff, drafting policies and procedures, implementing systems changes to our payroll and human resource systems. Delivering training to the middle management team and planning and facilitating our Oahas All Staff Gathering. We also co-developed and delivered a 4-part Webinar Series in partnership with CATIE and 2-Spirited People of the 1st Nation, which was focuses on Indigenous sexual health and HIV prevention. You can find these videos, as well as our interview with 3 First Nations HIV activists (René Boucher, Trevor Stratton and Doris Peltier) on our [YouTube channel](#).

In Toronto, we were able to continue funding 2 additional positions (Drop-in Support Worker and Outreach Support Worker) we had initially created with our COVID funding. The Toronto team also received a new medical van, which they integrated into their World AIDS Day events, and will be used for mobile testing and harm reduction services. The Toronto team continues to support Neechee Circle and many other cultural programs, and are exploring working with Casey House.

Lastly, we are so happy to share that Destini Millar returned to the Oahas London team in January 2023. Destini is now the interim Team Lead, and we have added Loretta Wettlaufer to the team in a part-time Community Prevention Worker role. Through Destini's leadership and connections in community, we have resumed programming in London, including outreach, supporting HIV & HCV testing and drop-in supports at our new space within RHAC. A picture of the new site is on page 6.

## 2 0 2 2 - 2 3 B O A R D

Albert Beck, Chair

Joceyln Staats, Treasurer

Melissa Deleary, Secretary

Lindsay Kretschmer, Interim Chair

Tricia Longboat, Director

K'Mesha Maloney, Director

Craig Philips, Director

Erika Pulfer, Director



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THANK YOU



Four Board Members are leaving or have left the Board this year.  
From left to right: Lindsay Kretschmer, Jocelyn Staats, K'Mesha Maloney and  
Erika Pulfer (not pictured)

# O A H A S I N O N T A R I O

## T H U N D E R B A Y

- 1 Team Lead
- 2 Community Prevention Workers
- 1 WHAI Worker

## S U D B U R Y

- 1 Team Lead
- 2 Community Prevention Workers
- 1 Two-Spirit Outreach Worker

## S A U L T S T E . M A R I E

- 1 Team Lead
- 2 Community Prevention Workers
- 1 Peer Engagement Coordinator

## B A R R I E

- 1 Executive Director
- 1 Director of Operations
- 1 Manager of HR and Admin
- 1 Program Manager
- 1 Researcher
- 1 Indigenous Knowledge Mobilizer

## T O R O N T O

- 1 Site Supervisor
- 2 Community Prevention Workers
- 2 Outreach Support Workers

## L O N D O N

- 1 Team Lead
- 1 Community Prevention Worker



## Accessible Spaces

Two sites found new locations over the past year. The London office moved into a new location, 602 Queens Avenue, The Hub. This newly renovated, former mansion, houses the Sisters of St Joseph's Hospitality food program, London Cares Homelessness Response, Thames Valley Addictions Services and the Regional HIV/AIDS Strategy.

In Sudbury, the site moved from a second-floor back alley space into a new storefront location at 66 Elm Street. Along with greater accessibility, the new location has an amazing drop-in space. On June 22, eighty-five people dropped in to celebrate the opening.



# CUTS FOR COMMUNITY



**What?**  
Free 30 minute clipper-cut session with a professional barber for Sudbury's unhoused community.  
Come as you are - clean hair is not mandatory

**When?**  
Monday, May 15th  
10am-4pm

**Where?**  
66 Elm St, Unit 108  
Sidewalk entrance

Light refreshments will be available for participants  
In partnership with:



To learn more, contact [albert@oahas.org](mailto:albert@oahas.org)



## Programming: Improving Health & Well-Being

- Street Outreach
- Access to a Housing Worker
- Food Cards
- Community Circles
- Movie and Medicine
- ID Clinic
- Needle Exchange
- Support Groups
- Drop-In Supports
- Webinars for service providers

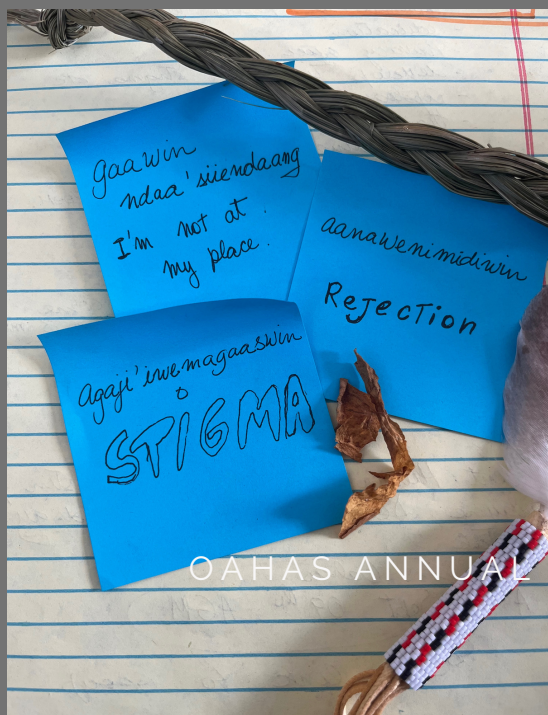
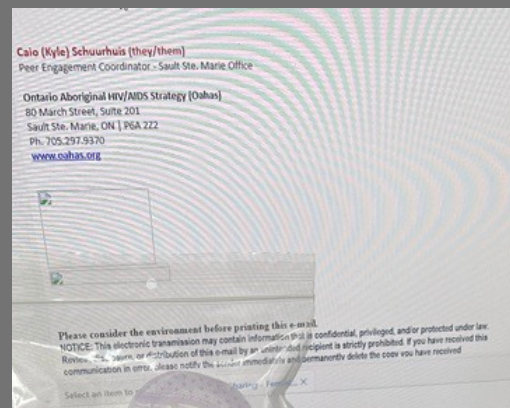


# Programming: Promoting Sexual Health

- Safer Sex Kit Distribution
- Health Fairs
- Two Spirit Sexual Health
- Pride Picnics



Condoms and Cupcakes

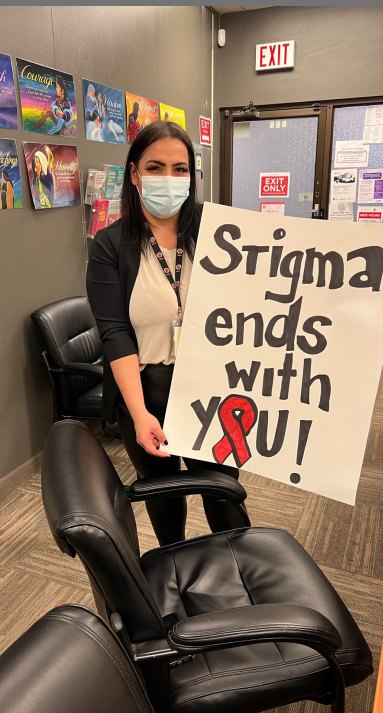






# Programming: Diagnosing HIV Early

- Testing events
- World AIDS Day
- Aboriginal AIDS Awareness Week



## HIV & HEP C TESTING

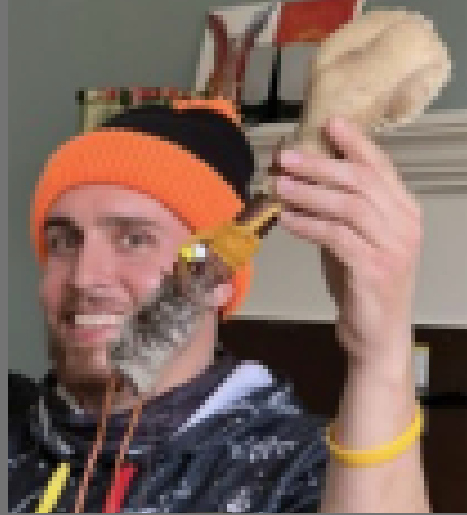
### When?

Wednesday, May 24th  
11:00am - 2:00 pm

### Where?

Ontario Aboriginal





## Programming: Improving Quality of Life

- Wellness Checks,
- Transportation Assistance,
- Access to an Elder, Ceremony,
- Community Fires,
- Healing Circles,
- Access to smudge and medicines,
- Hair Cuts for Community,
- Ribbon Skirt/Shirt Workshops
- Overdose Awareness Day
- Prisoners' Justice Day



## TRANSPORTATION SUPPORT DAY

### What?

Two hour block for basic needs transportation

Examples:

- Appointments
- Groceries
- Trips to the reserve

### When?

Monday, August 1st



# SOME HIGHLIGHTS

In March 2023, Oahas launched its Community Advisory Committee. This monthly committee meets to advise and make recommendations to Oahas on a wide range of Oahas programs, policies and initiatives and to act as a community-informed and community-driven voice.



On June 4-9, staff from all sites gathered in Muskoka to spend five days learning. Hosted on picturesque Lake Muskoka, the staff did team building (right), learned how to incorporate culture into programming, welcomed a big drum to Oahas (above), practiced crisis intervention and got to spend time with one another.



# SOME HIGHLIGHTS

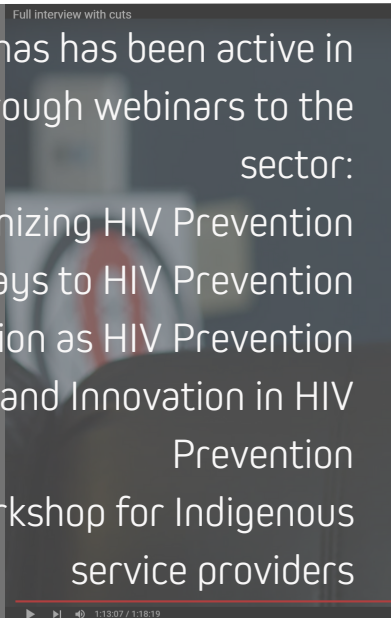
Oahas contracted artist Eugene Morriseau to create a painting for the Maamowiitaawigamig Drop-In Centre at our Thunder Bay site. The huge piece is mounted in the space, and prints were made on a smaller scale for the other sites to hang proudly.



In November, two medical vans were added to the Oahas fleet, giving us three vehicles in total. These new vans, located in Toronto and Sudbury, will allow Oahas to provide mobile outreach in various Toronto communities and Manitoulin Island.

Throughout the year, Oahas has been active in providing training through webinars to the sector:

- Decolonizing HIV Prevention
- Supporting Pathways to HIV Prevention
- Indigenous Self-Determination as HIV Prevention
- Indigenous Engagement and Innovation in HIV Prevention
- HIV self-testing project: Workshop for Indigenous service providers



# F I N A N C I A L S

## Ontario Aboriginal HIV/AIDS Strategy Statement of Financial Position

As at March 31	2023	2022
<b>Assets</b>		
Current		
Cash	\$ 289,119	\$ 559,159
Accounts receivable	2,000	-
HST receivable	77,362	71,680
Prepaid expenses	<u>15,038</u>	<u>19,800</u>
	383,519	650,639
Equipment and leasehold improvements (Note 3)	<u>400,157</u>	<u>354,114</u>
	<u>\$ 783,676</u>	<u>\$ 1,004,753</u>
<b>Liabilities</b>		
Current		
Accounts payable and accrued liabilities (Note 4)	\$ 143,672	\$ 279,122
Deferred revenue (Note 5)	<u>136,652</u>	<u>280,251</u>
	280,324	559,373
Deferred capital contributions (Note 6)	<u>400,157</u>	<u>354,114</u>
	<u>680,481</u>	<u>913,487</u>
<b>Fund Balances</b>		
Operating Fund	30,727	31,881
General Reserve Fund	<u>72,468</u>	<u>59,385</u>
	<u>103,195</u>	<u>91,266</u>
	<u>\$ 783,676</u>	<u>\$ 1,004,753</u>

## Ontario Aboriginal HIV/AIDS Strategy Statement of Operating and Reserve Funds

For the year ended March 31	2023	2022
<b>Operating Fund</b>		
Balance, beginning of the year	\$ 31,881	\$ 26,285
Repayment of prior year surplus (Note 7)	-	-
Excess of revenue over expenses	<u>(1,154)</u>	<u>5,596</u>
Balance, end of the year	<u>\$ 30,727</u>	<u>\$ 31,881</u>
<b>General Reserve Fund</b>		
Balance, beginning of the year	\$ 59,385	\$ 45,517
Excess of revenue over expenses	<u>13,083</u>	<u>13,868</u>
Balance, end of the year	<u>\$ 72,468</u>	<u>\$ 59,385</u>

# FINANCIALS

## Ontario Aboriginal HIV/AIDS Strategy Statement of Operations

For the year ended March 31

	2023	2022
<b>Revenue</b>		
Ontario Ministry of Health and Long-Term Care	\$ 1,897,871	\$ 1,734,474
TASSC COVID funding	269,765	434,628
Gilbert Centre	92,904	60,744
Public Health Agency of Canada	86,350	-
Indigenous Services Canada	68,224	240,827
York University	16,000	-
Ontario HIV Treatment Network (OHTN)	11,187	-
Barrie Area Native Advisory Circle	5,000	-
Toronto Urban Health Fund	-	24,722
Other revenue	25,527	7,240
Amortization of deferred capital contributions	<u>59,434</u>	<u>49,732</u>
	<u>2,532,262</u>	<u>2,552,367</u>
<b>Expenses</b>		
Advertising and community relations	7,514	7,079
Amortization	59,434	49,732
Bank charges and interest	2,491	3,027
Insurance	22,383	6,489
Supplies	208,190	100,819
Postage and courier	4,277	9,203
Programming costs (Note 8)	465,489	725,135
Rent	163,964	192,134
Telephone and utilities	26,463	42,639
Travel and accommodation	145,452	25,203
Wages and benefits	<u>1,427,759</u>	<u>1,385,311</u>
	<u>2,533,416</u>	<u>2,546,771</u>
Excess of revenue over expenses	<u>\$ (1,154)</u>	<u>\$ 5,596</u>





# Oahas Administrative Office



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