

# Open Doors. Open Possibilities.

IMPACT REPORT 2023



“We know having safe, affordable and inclusive housing not only improves health outcomes, but also reduces isolation and hospitalization.”

PAUL GREGORY, EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

#### Land Acknowledgement

Support House is located on the treaty lands and territory of the Mississaugas of the Credit First Nation and the traditional territory of the Haudenosaunee and the Huron-Wendat people. We understand that the land we recognize as Halton has been, and is, home to many First Nations, Inuit and Metis peoples from across Turtle Island, and beyond. We also recognize the unique connections and relationships that Indigenous people and their ancestors have had with this place since time immemorial.

We are all treaty people, and we encourage everyone gathered here today to continue to reflect on and acknowledge events of the past, all those who came before us, and continue on the path of Truth and Reconciliation.

We are grateful for the opportunity to live, work and meet in this territory. We are committed to learning, and to working together effectively to move us towards a community where all people and living things are valued and respected.

Developed in consultation with the Mississaugas of the Credit First Nation.

## Everyone Deserves Support.

**IMAGINE SOMEONE** has a heart attack and is given a plan instructing them to stop eating fatty foods. If they have another heart attack, we don't ask whether they followed their plan. We treat the heart attack. We don't condemn them for the lifestyle that they may be living that's causing the heart attack and requiring them to take up a bed in the ER.

Yet if someone has an addiction or mental illness, we start keeping count of the moments where they need support — whether they've lost their house, lost their job or used a substance to cope. Mental health and addiction support is consequence-based, and with each incident, people lose chances.

One out of every 5 Canadians will experience a mental illness this year. There has been a 79% rise in opioid overdose deaths since the onset of COVID-19. One in 4 youth struggle with their mental health. Each and every one of those people deserves our support.

By opening our doors and providing housing and support services to people experiencing complex mental health and substance-use concerns, we're opening possibilities. Providing these services in Halton will build a healthier, stronger community.

As you'll read in our Impact Report, by strengthening our services, aligning and developing our housing assets, and better integrating our supports within the care continuum, we're ensuring that everyone who needs support — receives support.

Paul Gregory  
EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

Dave Bedini  
BOARD CHAIR

# Everyone deserves care.



**“We need to follow the science. Take away your bias and your philosophies about what you think is right or wrong. Follow the science involved in why we have harm reduction. Know that harm reduction is on a continuum and that we have to meet people on that continuum to help to keep people alive.”**

BETTY-LOU KRISTY

**STUDIES SHOW** that a safe, secure place to live is a pre-condition of health and wellness. This has been the guiding premise for Support House since we opened our doors to Chartwell, our first seven-bedroom location, almost 40 years ago.

Unfortunately, the need for support has grown exponentially. Today, Support House operates three congregate homes in the Halton Region. Privacy is a key component of health and wellness. Our agency is moving towards private units in our new builds.

In Burlington, our townhomes provide shared housing for 26 tenants. In Acton, upgrades to our Maria Street location are fully funded and underway. In Oakville, our Grace House location on Cornwall Road will soon be rebuilt providing 37 single unit apartments. These projects will increase our owned units by over 50%, allowing us to open our doors to many more people who feel they have nowhere to turn.



**“We provide life-sustaining and life-preserving supports for people. It’s about walking alongside a journey with someone through all the ups and downs of their lives.”**

CHRISTINA JABALEE



**“I hope you can look at the value of a human life and see that this organization holds up that value. That’s worth everything to me.”**

AJ

**HARM REDUCTION** recognizes that substance use is rooted in trauma, brain chemistry and coping mechanisms. Helping people to reduce the harms associated with their use can be lifesaving.

Our Board of Directors has endorsed Org Code Consulting’s harm reduction strategy recommendations.

**30-45 Unit Project**

Pursue a 30-45 unit site-specific harm reduction supportive housing project in Halton.

**Scattered Units**

Pursue at least 30 scattered site harm reduction supportive housing units.

**Advisory Group**

Form a Persons With Lived Experience Advisory Group to help guide our supportive housing projects and scattered-site harm-reduction housing.

**Partnerships**

Explore key partnerships related to effective service delivery for people living in our units.

**Safe beds and detox**

Explore the delivery of a few non-medical detoxification and safe beds at our facilities.

**WE’VE BUILT** Support House on a mindset of ongoing growth and learning to ensure we’re providing critical support to all and to support the whole self.

**Noteworthy Internal Training and Onboarding Initiatives**

- Diversity, Equity and Inclusion (DEI) foundations
- Trauma-informed training
- Inclusive Leadership & Recruitment
- Housing First
- Harm Reduction

**Capacity Building Initiatives (Internal, Community & Partners)**

With the guidance of Canadian Equality Consulting, we’ve developed a DEI strategic action plan with staff, client, and community engagement and we have reviewed our job descriptions to support diverse, equitable and inclusionary hiring.

We received \$65K in seed funding from the United Way Hamilton & Halton (UWHH) for further DEI capacity building in 2024. This will include the review of policies, the creation of a DEI onboarding manual and training opportunities for Support House and our community partners.

To further support our team and modernize our training, we secured \$100,000 in funding through the Community Services Recovery Fund via UWHH to develop our Employment Skills Development e-learning platform. The platform will offer accessible skills development opportunities for our community members as they pursue employment and volunteer positions as peer support workers and experience-based advisors.

# Everyone deserves housing.



“We need to break down the idea that there are deserving and undeserving people.”

PAUL GREGORY

**\$613/mo**

SOCIAL HOUSING COST

**\$1840/mo**

SHELTER

**\$4290/mo**

CORRECTIONAL FACILITY

**\$20K+/mo**

HOSPITAL BED

**STUDIES SHOW** that investing in supportive housing and peer support programming saves across the healthcare, social services and justice sectors. Simply stated, supportive housing is foundational to health and wellness.

A person in social housing costs \$613 per month. If that person were in a shelter, it would cost three times that. A correctional facility? Seven times. A hospital bed? That would cost \$20,000-plus per month.

We are working closely with the Halton Region’s Coordinated Housing Access Team in order to prioritize the intake process to get those most in need into valuable and limited housing.

This includes transitioning or diverting people quickly out of high cost options like shelters and hospitals, and into our supportive housing options.

With the addition of our Housing First Response Team as of June 2023 we are actively meeting people who are unsheltered such as in encampments, in order to wrap supports and work alongside them to find shelter and a home.



MARIA STREET

Investments in supportive housing provide people with improved health and social outcomes. It helps reduce systemic and structural inequities; provides community and belonging through inclusion and strengthens our housing and public health systems. This build will result in overall cost-savings for all orders of government.

## Harm Reduction/Unhoused Projects (est. timelines)

### 2023/24

#### **Housing First Response Team**

- \$1.1M 2-year funding 6.OFTE
- Partnership with Region of Halton, Halton Health Services, and Halton Regional Police Services and shelters
- Build an Advisory Group

#### **Harm Reduction Housing Project**

- 8 unit rent supplement with private landlord
- Partnership to Region of Halton/ shelters/Churchill project

#### **Safe Bed(s)/Detox Expansion**

- \$0.5M Renovation – Chartwell
- Additional staffing required
- Partnership with CMHA/ADAPT/Region of Halton/Halton Healthcare Services

### 2025

#### **Maria St. Occupancy**

- \$8.7M New Build
- 12-unit residence
- Staffing and rent supplements required

### 2026/27

#### **Cornwall Rd. Occupancy**

- \$20.0M New Build
- 37-unit residence
- Staffing and rent supplements required
- Partnership Region of Halton and ADAPT





We will break ground on our new Cornwall Road location by mid-2024 to open our doors by 2026. The site will feature:

- A mix of 37 bachelor and 1-bedroom units for adults living independently in the community.
- A common area and program space that promotes relationship building.
- Tenant support onsite 24 hours a day, seven days a week.

• Supports designed to assist residents in their move from transitional to long-term permanent housing and independent living.

- Fully accessible units made available for those who need to age in place.
- Affordable units geared to residents' income.

The Cornwall Road redevelopment is a \$20 million project. With potential grants, we expect to need to raise \$4 million.

It is possible to make a difference for those among us who are struggling, stigmatized and vulnerable. Together, we can ensure that they will be supported with dignity, reflecting the compassion of this great community.

**These projects will increase our owned units by 50%, allowing us to open our doors to many more people who feel they have nowhere to turn.**

## Open Doors and Possibilities

# 65%

of people experiencing homelessness in Halton reported mental health concerns

# 43%

of people experiencing homelessness in Halton reported substance use issues

Halton has fewer safe beds and support services than other regions in the province

To donate, visit [supporthouse.ca](https://supporthouse.ca)

# Everyone deserves inclusion.



PEER SUPPORT AND LIVED EXPERIENCE SYSTEM CAPACITY BUILDING

90

AGENCIES SUPPORTED IN BUILDING PEER SUPPORT CAPACITY

59

TRAINING SESSIONS

5

WEBINAR SESSIONS

55

COMMUNITY OF PRACTICE SESSIONS

## System Transformation Work

### MHA Alliance

The Mental Health and Addictions Alliance — comprised of ADAPT, Summit Outreach and Housing, STRIDE, Hope Place Centres, CMHA-HRB and our agency — have continued to work in partnership across funding opportunities. We have also been renewing our governance structures in order to develop innovative care solutions to MHA supports under our new Ontario Health Teams. This collective work has been essential to our strategic thinking and our systems approach to MHA supports across Halton.

### Burlington Ontario Health Team (BOHT)

Our MHA Alliance has also been integrated into the governance incorporation at the BOHT. As a result, MHA will be represented through a population-based approach. The Alliance influence and progressive BOHT integration of our work will have lasting impact on the development and incorporation models of OHTs into the future.

### Connected Care Halton-Ontario Health Team (CCH-OHT)

The CCH-OHT has been at the forefront of rethinking care for the unhoused population in Halton including care coordination pathways with our community partners. That coordination has supported our work serving the unhoused population in Halton. We hope to bring more resources and supports to those facing the most barriers to health through our coordinated work with our partners over the next year.

### Region of Halton (ROH)

We continue to work with ROH to coordinate our MHA supports for the unhoused population in Halton. With the Region's \$1.10M funding for our Housing First Response Team we have moved to the forefront of progressive housing first strategies — assisting people to move from encampments to housing and supports.

The Region's \$6.0M capital investment in our new 12-unit apartment build at 47 Maria St in Acton will have significant impact for the people that are housed there in 2025.



**SUPPORT HOUSE'S** Centre for Innovation in Peer Support is a “Benchmark of Excellence” in peer support in Ontario. The Centre’s Provincial, System and Partner team provides evidence-based offerings to drive innovative best practices related to peer support and meaningful engagement and co-design alongside those with lived/living experience and family/caregivers.

ADVISORY/COMMITTEES:

Ontario Health - Mental Health Addiction Centre of Excellence — Provincial Mental Health & Addiction Oversight Table

Ontario Health - Mental Health Addiction Centre of Excellence — Planning & Performance Council

Ontario Health - Mental Health Addiction Centre of Excellence — Substance Use Disorder Advisory Table

Ontario Health - Mental Health Addiction Centre of Excellence — COVID Recovery & Essential Services Advisory Table

Ontario Health - Central Region Planning Table 2.0

Ontario Health - Provincial Breaking Free Online Addiction Support Advisory Board

Ontario Health Teams (OHTs) Patient, Family, Caregiver Community of Practice

Ontario Health Teams (OHTs) Patient and Caregiver Engagement Curriculum Development in partnership with Better Health Institute at Trillium Health Partners & Ontario Caregiver Association

Advancing the Profession of Peer Support Community of Interest (CoI) Executive Team Leads in partnership with Evidence Exchange Network (EENet) at Centre for Addiction & Mental Health (CAMH) & Peer Support Canada.

Canadian Centre of Substance Use/Addiction (CCSA) Lived/Living Experience Advisory Table

Centre for Addiction & Mental Health (CAMH) Collaborative Learning College Advisory Committee

Addictions & Mental Health Ontario (AMHO) Engaging Lived Experience Strategic Planning

Peer Support Core Competencies Provincial Trainer Community of Practice

Peer House - Peer Leadership Table

Halton Transitional Age Youth Crisis Committee (TAYCC)

Halton Overdose Prevention Education (HOPE) Committee

SECTOR REPRESENTATION

Azrieli Adult Neurodevelopment Centre at CAMH-Explorations of Peer Support

CMHA Simcoe Start Talking – Lived/Living Speaker Training Consult Community Development Halton — Engaging Lived/Living Experience Panel Consult

Peterborough Drug Strategy — People with Lived Experience Panel Consult

Institute for Clinical Evaluative Sciences (IC/ES) Public Advisory Consult

Ontario Strategy for Patient Oriented Research (SPOR) — Engagement of Lived Experience Consult

EVERYONE  
DESERVES  
A VOICE

In addition to their official roles, Support House Centre for Innovation in Peer Support staff represent supportive housing, peer support and lived experience engagement on several boards and provincial advisory councils.



Alyssa Gremmen is a Board Director of Addiction & Mental Health Ontario (AMHO)



Betty-Lou Kristy is in her third year as Chair of the Health Minister’s Patient and Family Advisory Council.



**“We open our arms and our doors to all the people that fall through the gaps.”**

# Everyone deserves accountability.



## Our Impact

### SUPPORT SERVICES

**1,114**

unique people supported across all Support House programming, including:

**250**

Community Outreach Team Careload

**48**

Congregate Housing Tenants

**271**

Low-Barrier Peer Supports through the Centre

**200+**

unique people supported to navigate to appropriate service

### Housing First Response Team

**55**

PEOPLE

were supported in shelters and encampments

*from June-August, 2023*

### Registered Outreach Nurse

**50**

PEOPLE

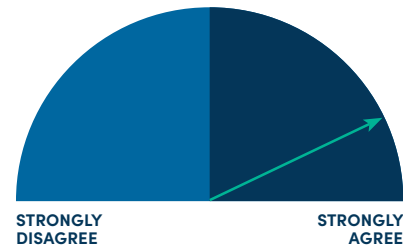
connected with our RN around primary care and vital harm reduction needs

*from June-August, 2023*

CLIENT FEEDBACK  
SURVEY

Values

Do staff demonstrate agency values through their actions?

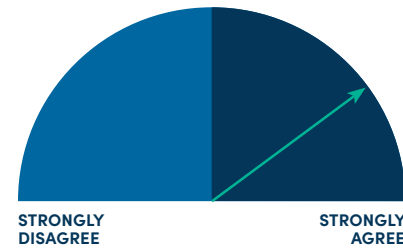


Highest Response:

**Staff genuinely listen to me.**

Impacts

Does our support impact your daily life?

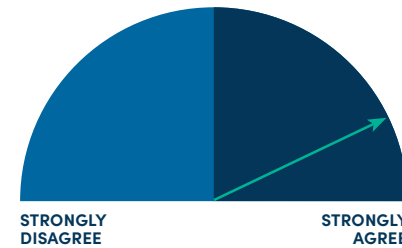


Highest Response:

**Supports helped me be more hopeful about my life.**

Overall Experience

How are the agency services overall?



Highest Response:

**If a friend were in need of similar help, I would recommend this service.**

**40%**

of people had a reduction in the level of supports they needed.

Top concerns improved:

- Money (budgeting)
- Safe, stable, affordable housing
- Meaningful activities
- Looking after the home (chores, maintenance)
- Understanding of physical/mental health and strategies for enhancement

**29%**

of areas of serious concern in people's lives were improved.

Our peer trainings, consultations, partnerships and collaborations included the following sectors:

Peer programs

First Nations communities

Community Health Centres

Family Support programs

Various state/provincial departments

Private health organizations for:

- mental health
- substance use
- housing/homelessness
- HIV/AIDS prevention education and support
- children and youth
- faith-based supports
- seniors
- justice supports
- survivors of violence or sexual exploitation
- food security.

Hospitals

Other top impacts identified by the people we support:

**82%**

IMPROVED MY ABILITY TO TAKE CARE OF MYSELF

**74%**

HELPED ME MEET MY NEEDS

**73%**

PROVIDED TIMELY CONNECTION TO APPROPRIATE SERVICE AND SUPPORTS



## HOUSING

14

people housed that were from the Region of Halton's By-Name List which prioritizes unhoused individuals

23

people transitioned into appropriate levels of support within our housing

4

people were supported moving into an independent, market-rent living situation

### HOUSING FIRST RESPONSE TEAM

Our Housing First Response Team, established in June of 2023, connects with people who are unhoused in Halton, including in shelters and encampments, who have mental health and substance use concerns and who need crisis support and wrap-around services.

## Average Length of Stay in Housing programs:

7.1  
years

PERMANENT  
SINGLE UNITS

324  
days

TRANSITIONAL  
SINGLE UNITS

3.9  
years

TOWNHOMES

430  
days

DAILY SUPPORTED  
CONGREGATE HOUSING

## REVENUE

With revenue from various public and private funds, we understand that responsibly managing our agency's operation is of the utmost importance. We believe that transparency is necessary to achieve that end. These numbers are condensed from the audited financial statements and have been approved by Support House's Board of Directors.

### Revenue

ONTARIO HEALTH  
\$3,846,947

MINISTRY OF HEALTH  
\$931,411

DEFERRED CAPITAL  
CONTRIBUTIONS  
\$546,614

MUNICIPALITY OF HALTON  
\$328,114

UNITED WAY HALTON & HAMILTON  
\$225,000

OTHER GRANT FUNDING  
\$147,000

CONTRIBUTIONS FROM RESIDENTS  
\$296,476

OTHER  
\$37,329

BINGO FUNDRAISING  
\$6,502

DONATIONS  
\$814

**Total: \$6,366,207**

### Expenses

SALARIES AND WAGES  
\$2,872,329

EMPLOYEE BENEFITS  
\$516,409

HOUSING COSTS  
\$1,262,190

OPERATING EXPENSES  
\$1,133,918

AMORTIZATION  
\$148,317

**Total: \$5,933,163**

# Everyone deserves gratitude.



## Our 2022-2023 Board of Directors

**David Bedini**  
CHAIR

**Swaraj Mann**  
VICE-CHAIR

**Alfred Chuang**  
SECRETARY

**Bonnie Camm**  
DIRECTOR

**Husayn Sidi**  
TREASURER

**Michael Walters**  
DIRECTOR

**Mark Lawrence**  
DIRECTOR

**Benaaz Irani**  
DIRECTOR

**Jasmin Ahmad**  
DIRECTOR

“If someone else is in my place where I was seven years ago, they deserve the same opportunity. They deserve the same hope that I’ve had given to me and that I continue to have every day knowing that I have these supports.”

AJ

## Our Team

**Akemi Moore**  
Finance Coordinator

**Alyssa Gremmen**  
Peer Integration and Systems Lead

**Angelina Madia**  
House Support Coordinator

**Barrie Sachs**  
Director, Finance & Administration

**Barry Hadlow**  
Peer Support Worker

**Betty-Lou Kristy**  
Director, Centre for Innovation in Peer Support

**Catlin De Villa**  
Community Outreach Coordinator

**Christi-Marie Allicock**  
Community Outreach Coordinator

**Christina Jabalee**  
Associate Executive Director

**Clare Sheedy**  
Supervisor, Peer Support Services

**Dave Kilgannon**  
Peer Support Worker, Community Outreach

**Elijoy Moses**  
House Support Coordinator

**Emelyn Rozas**  
Peer Support Worker

**Gabi Marino**  
Peer Support Worker

**Habiba Majeed**  
Community Outreach Coordinator, Housing First Response Team

**Heather Albertson**  
Project Coordinator

**Jacqueline Walsh**  
Peer Integration & Systems Support

**Jennifer Barclay**  
Lead, Data Quality

**Jennifer Melo**  
Community Outreach Coordinator, Housing First Response Team

**Jeremy Daniels**  
Manager, Housing Supports

**Joanna Ruta**  
Supervisor, Community Outreach

**Katie Brown**  
Peer Support Worker, Housing First Response Team



## Our Team (cont.)

**Kayla Roberts**  
Community Outreach Coordinator

**Kelly Green**  
House Support Coordinator

**Kim Allen**  
Supervisor, Grace House and  
Housing Supports

**Lisa McVey**  
Communications & Marketing  
Coordinator

**Marco D'Auria**  
Peer Support Worker

**Maria Estrada**  
Community Outreach Coordinator,  
Youth

**Melanie Cullis**  
Supervisor, Community Outreach

**Melissa Ross**  
Human Resources Coordinator

**Michael Blackmore**  
Community Outreach Coordinator,  
Justice

**Michaela Peters**  
Service Pathways, Lead

**Natalie Millar**  
Community Outreach Coordinator,  
Youth FASD

**Natasha Blake**  
Manager, Community Outreach

**Ola Rzeszutek**  
Community Outreach  
Coordinator, Youth

**Paul Gregory**  
Executive Director

**Richard Adair**  
Manager, Peer Services

**Robert Hurd**  
House Support Coordinator

**Shafeeda Khan**  
Community Outreach Coordinator,  
Housing First Response Team

**Stephanie Muron**  
Registered Nurse

**Teralynn Frank**  
Property Coordinator

**TJ Shurland**  
Peer Support Worker,  
Community Outreach

**Victoria Lynn**  
House Support Coordinator

**Wumi Aina**  
Community Outreach  
Coordinator

**Zach Garner**  
Community Outreach Coordinator,  
Housing First Response Team

**Zoe Roy**  
Community Outreach Coordinator

## Special thanks to our valued contributors:

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Kerr Street Mission  
Invizij Architects Inc.  
Schilthuis Construction Inc

And every person who has  
made our engagement sessions  
and impact videos possible!

## Our Funders



## Our Partners



## OPEN DOORS AND POSSIBILITIES

Support House is Halton's lead agency in helping people who confront mental health concerns, substance use and housing instability – so prevalent today that, directly or indirectly, all our lives are touched.

It is possible to make a difference for those among us who are struggling, stigmatized and vulnerable. With your help, we can make our new Support House on Cornwall Road a reality. To learn more about how your contribution will open the doors to more possibilities, contact:

Paul Gregory

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paulg@supporthouse.ca



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