



ClosingtheGap® Healthcare



Annual Report 2021

A message from the CEO



As I write this message, we are a year and a half into the COVID-19 pandemic and facing uncertainty over the extent and duration of the fourth wave of the pandemic. At the beginning of 2020 we could not have predicted just how dramatically (and potentially irreversibly) our lives would be changing. In 2021 we continue to live very different personal and professional lives than we did in 2019.

Life-changing events always prompt an element of reflection, and this has not been an exception. As I look back over our past 18 months at Closing the Gap Healthcare, two words keep surfacing in my mind – **PRIDE** and **GRATITUDE**.

PRIDE – for many reasons, but mostly at how well the team has navigated our way through change of unprecedented scale unfolding at an accelerated pace. Despite significant challenges we have been able to continue with the delivery of exceptional care to our clients and provide comfort to their families and caregivers. The diligent work of many has ensured that we have done this in a manner that has been safe for our team as well as for our clients and their families. COVID-19 transmission rates in homecare have thankfully been very low and have certainly been much lower than those experienced in the long-term, and acute care settings.

GRATITUDE – for the dedication and commitment of every member of the CTG team. I am very aware that there have been a range of personal strains of living through a pandemic and that it has not always been easy, but I have witnessed so many examples of people going out of their way to ensure that clients receive the care they need. This has happened in all areas of the organization from frontline care provision through to expert scheduling and responsive administrative and corporate support. I am so proud and grateful to be part of such an exceptional team.

“Life-changing events always prompt an element of reflection, and this has not been an exception.”

Looking forward: Whilst we will still be dealing with the pandemic and its consequences for some time, I remain optimistic that we will continue to demonstrate that we are A Team Made for Caring. There is lots to be positive about including:

- High COVID-19 vaccination rates across members of the CTG team in Ontario and Nova Scotia. This is likely to be enhanced by our commitment, as part of a group of 22 home care organizations in Ontario, to implement a mandatory vaccination policy for every member of the CTG team.
- Continued expansion of our services to provide more care to vulnerable populations that will see growth in the size of the CTG team in the coming months.
- Ongoing work on our Inclusion, Diversity, Equity and Anti-Racism initiatives across the organization to ensure that we have a safe and supportive working environment for our team.

Most importantly I would like to express my sincere appreciation to every member of the CTG Team for all you continue to do to support each other, our clients, and their families. I look forward to working with you as we continue to maneuver our way through these challenging but exciting times.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'L McDonald', written in a cursive style.

Leighton McDonald
President & CEO, Closing the Gap Healthcare

A message from Siobhan



Looking back at 2020, I am struck by the broad societal changes as a result of the COVID-19 pandemic. However, what I will never forget is the resilience, compassion, and agility of our frontline caregivers, or frontline “heroes” as they have become known.

The same level of agility and compassion was seen in Closing the Gap’s (CTG) leadership team as they worked to respond to this crisis, training more caregivers and planning and implementing new safety protocols for its care teams.

The role of the Client and Family Advisory Council (CFAC) is to provide input and feedback to the CTG leadership team on a range of policies and educational resources designed to improve the client and family experience and optimize outcomes. Throughout the pandemic the Council worked diligently to provide input into the design and launch of new programs to improve care under quarantine mandates including a framework to maximize virtual connectivity for clients & caregivers. The Council also reviewed models of care under Health Standard Organizations frameworks to further integrate client experience into planning and evaluation of services.

In addition to consultation on pandemic related programs and services, the Council also helped CTG’s leadership team with its ongoing deliverables including responding to the accreditation process further to requirements of Accreditation Canada and provided input into updates on a range of operational policies including policies on Clients Rights and Responsibilities, Management of Unexpected Client Emergency Situations, and Management of Expected Death in the Home for Non-Nurse Providers.

“What I will never forget is the resilience, compassion and agility of our frontline caregivers, or frontline “heroes” as they have become known.”

In a year of unprecedented challenges, it was an honor to support the CTG leadership team. The broad range of client and worker safety issues and quarantine mandates imposed brought further clarity and purpose to the role of the CFAC. It is my pleasure to lead this group and continue supporting the CTG leadership team in its mission to improve the client and family experience while optimizing healing and health outcomes.

Siobhan Cavanaugh,
Co-Chair, Client & Family Advisory Council

CTG has experienced significant growth through increased volumes, new clinics, and new partnerships in response to the growing need and demand for high quality healthcare and wellness services. Building on this growth, we will focus our investments over the next three years to create health and wellness services that offer clients and their families what they want most: to live healthier lives in healthier communities.

We will do this through:

Our Strategic Pillars



- Care That Matters:** Deliver a high-quality experience that is safe and meaningful to clients, caregivers, and providers.
- United & Engaged Teams:** Support and develop high functioning and flexible teams.
- Partnering with Purpose:** Advance the delivery of integrated care in the community.

Closing the Gap Healthcare collects data on many elements of our work including from regular staff satisfaction surveys, staff safety practices, and on the care we deliver. We are proud to present on this page a snapshot of our organisational data as a way of summarising our work over the past year.



Care That Matters



97% compliance rate for hand hygiene during client visits.

More than 300 providers are trained to deliver services virtually. Since March 2020, 41,058 client visits have been completed through Virtual Care.

115% increased capacity in a Timiskaming region program designed to transition patients who require an alternate level of care from acute care back to their homes. Program also improved staff retention and staff capacity.



United & Engaged Teams



20% increase in overall staff engagement since 2019.

10% increase in team members feeling recognized for the work they do.

93% of team members reported that colleagues treat each other with respect, regardless of race, ethnicity, gender, disability, or age.

15% increase in staff feeling safe and supported with the resources they need.



Partnering with Purpose



CTG implemented a Long Term Care (LTC) Rapid Response team in Fall 2020. 157 providers were hired to provide care in 58 homes that were in COVID-19 outbreak. They were deployed for a total of 1308 days. 51% of team members recruited were not previously working as a PSW, creating new capacity for the sector.

CTG participated in the design and implementation of 16 Ontario Health Teams across Ontario.

CTG implemented many innovative partnerships to increase capacity and ability to accept new clients. Two key projects are highlighted below:

- Partnered with 2 subcontractors to support 24/7 care for PSW clients discharged from the hospital into the community while waiting for a Long Term Care bed.
- Transitional Care rehab support for 346 clients to date receiving rehabilitation services while awaiting Long Term Care in Southwest Ontario.

Pillar One

Deliver a high-quality experience that is safe and meaningful to clients, caregivers, and providers.

Care That Matters

DELIVERING SAFE CARE:

Throughout the pandemic, IPAC (infection prevention and control) compliance and safety became one of the major priorities of CTG to ensure the safety of all our team members, clients, their families, and the communities that we serve. Our response to COVID-19 was founded in ensuring that we could continue to care for our clients in a way that was safe and was constantly adapting to the changing guidelines surrounding IPAC and PPE (personal protective equipment). We did this through regular communication, town halls, team meetings, staff education, and individual staff rounding. Throughout the pandemic, our team held more than 200 IPAC and Outbreak Management Team (OMT) meetings. During dialogues, team members shared their successes and challenges implementing and communicating safety practices in their local communities. As a member of the IPAC team, I heard firsthand how much they appreciated the timely communication with team members, clients, and family and the reassurance given during these unprecedented times. I am proud to be part of such a dynamic and values-driven team.

WRITTEN BY TIAN SUN, MANAGER, EDUCATION AND BEST PRACTICE



Tian Sun –
Manager, Education and
Best Practice



Jennifer Rodgers –
Director of Corporate
Clinical Support



Michael Rotstein –
Director of Client Services

“Members of the team took great initiative to ensure their fellow team members had access to PPE by setting up a one-day PPE pick-up across 4 different parking lots.”



An important part of IPAC at CTG is ensuring all team members have adequate supply of PPE to complete their jobs safely and effectively. When looking back at all the times our teams went the extra mile during the pandemic, one example that comes to mind is how our team in Nova Scotia demonstrated what it means to be a part of our Team Made for Caring at the beginning of the pandemic. Members of the team took great initiative to ensure their fellow team members had access to PPE by setting up a one-day PPE pick-up across 4 different parking lots spanning Spryfield, Bedford, Clayton Park and downtown Halifax.

WRITTEN BY NICOLE PIMENTA, MARKETING COORDINATOR

Pillar Two

Support and develop high functioning and flexible teams.



Closing the Gap® Healthcare

“Our team recognized that during these challenging times, children with disabilities, their families and their school teams still required our services to support children’s functioning and participation.”

United & Engaged Teams

OUR COMMITMENT TO INCLUSION, DIVERSITY, EQUITY AND ANTI-RACISM:

The summer of 2020 will forever be remembered as one that catapulted the social justice movement into focus across the world. Amid this worldwide movement CTG formally launched a group called the Inclusion, Diversity, Equity and Anti-Racism (I.D.E.A.) Committee which would be tasked with determining how to strengthen our organisation’s commitment to supporting an inclusive and diverse team and embedding equity and anti-racism as core values in all we do. The committee of 13 individuals is Co-Chaired by a member of the team, Jennifer Rodgers, together with Leighton McDonald, our CEO. What was remarkable was how many members of our Ontario and Nova Scotia teams came forward to volunteer to participate in the I.D.E.A. Committee.

This speaks to how much the issues resonate with our team and especially the providers who work with many communities across both the provinces we work in. Very quickly the Committee identified the need to provide the broader CTG team with support for their learning including access to the Canadian Centre for Diversity and Inclusion’s education seminars, tools and resources as well as the launch of an I.D.E.A. awareness building communication campaign. As we continue to learn about our needs, our next steps are to develop our own CTG I.D.E.A. framework which will outline the work we will do together, with metrics, to move towards an organization where everyone feels supported, recognized and safe working as a member of our team.

WRITTEN BY ANGELIKA GOLLNOW, SENIOR DIRECTOR, STRATEGY AND CARE INTEGRATION

EMBRACING VIRTUAL CARE THROUGH INNOVATION AND TEAMWORK:

During the onset of the COVID-19 pandemic, the Ministry of Health implemented virtual care policies to minimize in-person visits and decrease the spread of the virus. This forced a quick shift in children’s therapy practices and was ultimately successful due to a collaborative effort from a unified team. Our team recognized that during these challenging times, children with disabilities, their families and their school teams still required our services to support children’s functioning and participation.



With a united approach the team not only learned the technical aspects of virtual care but had to adapt their practice to provide effective care while maintaining client safety, as well as upholding college standards, funder expectations and privacy legislation. Nearly 14,000 virtual paediatric school visits were delivered between April 1, 2020 and March 31, 2021. This shift took dedicated teamwork, where colleagues came together to support one another, share experiences, collaborate, and problem solve. It was quickly recognized that virtual care can align well with a consultative model and family centered approach for children with disabilities as it can remove geographical barriers, improving access to therapy services for families and school teams. Virtual care is here to stay and is another tool that has been added to a children’s therapist’s toolkit.

WRITTEN BY ROBIN GOODY, PHYSIOTHERAPIST AND CHAMPION IN DELIVERING VIRTUAL CARE

Pillar Three

Partnering
with
Purpose

Advance the delivery of integrated care in the community.



“It has been fantastic having them with us (PSWs) - they jumped right in and picked up on residents’ routines very quickly. And their positive and upbeat attitudes were a huge boost for our team. Our residents want them to stay!”

— Sarah Caitlin,
Manager from
Reena Residence

The COVID-19 pandemic has not been easy on anyone, especially our vulnerable population living in congregate settings. The LTC Rapid Response team was created in partnership with 3 Home and Community Care Support Service areas. CTG hired and remotely onboarded 157 PSWs and Nurses within a matter of weeks in the Fall of 2020. We quickly shifted our orientation of these new team members to a virtual approach, and found ways to make this engaging, informative and ensured that all members of the team learned the CTG values as well as the skills and tools to carry out the responsibilities to support the long-term care homes and retirement homes affected by COVID-19.

These deployed teams worked alongside the permanent staff of 58 different homes and stayed up to 4 weeks, depending on the need. The shortest deployment to a home was one day, and the longest deployment continued for 64 days. With an intense workload in these congregate settings, we implemented weekly COVID-19 testing and rest periods between deployments to ensure the health of team members. The 8-month program was a success for all involved as CTG filled the need in our local communities by acting as quickly as possible to provide care. We heard many stories from our PSW and Nursing team of how they were helping residents receive the care they need while helping their colleagues in the field when their teams were short staffed.

Managing the Rapid Response Team and partnering with local communities and HCCSS to provide support and care to our vulnerable population was an amazing experience to be part of. The support I felt and was given from within CTG helped to make this program a success. I know that the residents and staff of the homes were grateful for our support and that our work made a difference to the lives of many.

WRITTEN BY JOANNA MARSHALL, RPN, CLIENT SERVICE SUPERVISOR



Closing the Gap Locations

Campbellford
Grey Bruce - Owen Sound
Halifax
Lindsay
Mississauga - Matheson
Muskoka - Huntsville
Shelburne
Toronto - Lansdowne
Toronto - York Mills

Elgin - St. Thomas
Guelph
Innisfil
Mississauga - Lakeshore
Orangeville
Simcoe - Barrie
Timiskaming
Toronto - Danforth
Toronto - Sherbourne



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Questions? Get in touch *Closing the Gap® Healthcare: info@closingthegap.ca • T 905.306.0202*



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