Elgin ONTARIO HEALTH TEAM

2025-26 ANNUAL REPORT

*WORKING TOGETHER FOR A **HEALTHIER ELGIN***

@ElginOHT
www.elginoht.ca

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Elgin ONTARIO HEALTH TEAM

Looking Back, Moving Forward

A Message From Our Leadership

This year was a defining one for the Elgin Ontario Health Team (OHT). Together, we reached important milestones that will shape how care and support are delivered in our community for years to come.

We approved Elgin's Neighbourhood Health Home model, a shared framework for integrated, team-based care that builds on the many strengths already in our community and will guide the future of our local health system. We also secured funding to expand primary care teams in alignment with our Neighbourhood-based framework and began modernizing how we work with one another to support the next phase of putting this vision into action. Together, these milestones establish a strong foundation for improving health outcomes, experiences, and equitable access to care across Elgin.

Equally important was the way we worked together. Through our Primary Care Network, Community Council, and partnerships with organizations and groups across Elgin, we strengthened the connections that help people receive more coordinated, person-centred care and support. Trauma-informed approaches, culturally safer care, and timely access to support are becoming foundational elements of how we work together to help people shape their own care.

We know meaningful change takes time. Building trust, breaking down long-standing barriers, and working differently across organizations doesn't happen overnight. Many of the most important changes happen behind the scenes before they are reflected in measurable results, but this year we strengthened the relationships and shared direction that will shape better care for years to come.

Thank you to every partner organization, healthcare provider, community leader, volunteer, and resident who contributed to this work. Everyone has a role to play. Together, we are building a stronger, more connected system of care and support for the people of Elgin.

Deanna Huggett
Executive Director
Elgin OHT

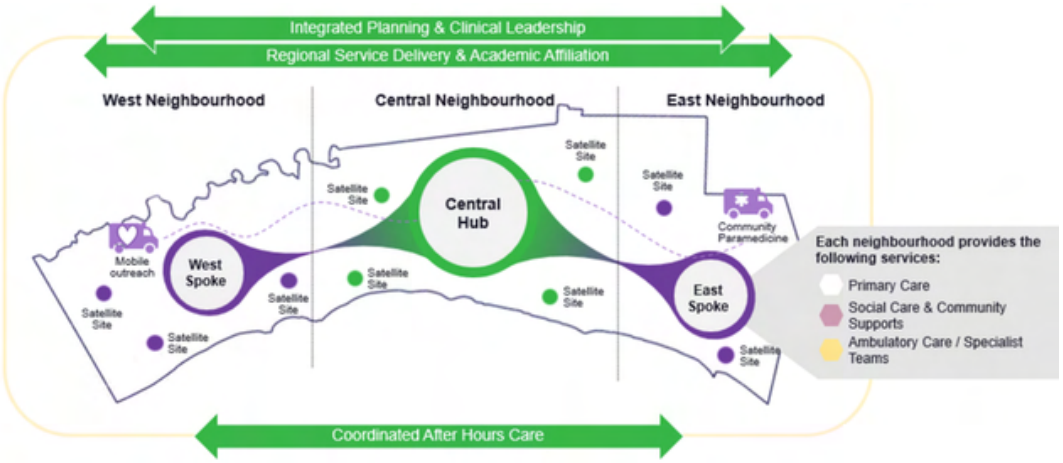
Karen Davies
Co-Chair, Elgin OHT
Coordinating Council

Ruthann Waldick
Co-Chair, Elgin OHT
Coordinating Council

Building a New Model of Care in Elgin

Neighbourhood Health Home (NHH) Model

A major milestone in 2025-26 was the approval of Elgin's Neighbourhood Health Home model. Developed through extensive collaboration with healthcare providers, community organizations, and community members, the model provides a shared vision for **how care and support services can work together** to better meet the needs of people across Elgin.



Built around three neighbourhoods – **West, Central, and East Elgin** – the model builds on existing community strengths while creating a roadmap for more coordinated, neighbourhood-based care and support.

The model is intended to make it easier for residents to find and access services, navigate between providers and organizations, and receive coordinated support closer to home.

Once fully implemented, the Neighbourhood Health Home approach will connect health, social, and community services through a **central hub in St. Thomas, East and West neighbourhood-based spokes**, satellite locations, mobile and outreach services, coordinated after-hours care, navigation supports, and expanded access to team-based care.

While implementation is **still in its early stages**, this year focused on establishing the partnerships, plans, and initial investments to bring the Neighbourhood Health Home model to life.

What the NHH Model Includes

This model will be introduced through a phased approach over time.

Neighbourhood Hub & Spokes

Main support in St. Thomas, with East and West Elgin spokes.

Satellite Sites

Satellite sites in high-demand and/or equity deserving neighbourhoods.

Mobile & Outreach Services

Mobile and outreach services that bring care closer to people.

After-Hours Care Options

After-hours care options to meet community needs.

Centralized Wait List

A centralized wait list for people without a family doctor or nurse practitioner.

Navigation Support

Better support to help people find and access the services they need.

Improving Access to Primary Care in Elgin

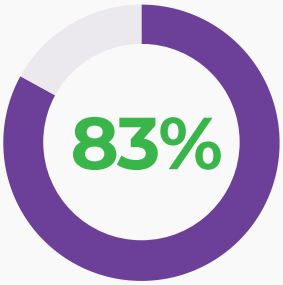
Improving access to primary care remains one of Elgin's most pressing healthcare challenges as approximately **8,000 Elgin residents do not currently have a Family Doctor or Primary Care Nurse Practitioner** and many more travel outside the region to receive care.

Access to care is a key foundation of health and well-being. To help residents access the services and support they need, the Elgin Community Health Hub and Central Community Health Centre mobile unit offer care to people without a Family Doctor or Nurse Practitioner. The Elgin OHT also developed and regularly updates a resource guide that highlights available health and community services.

Providing Service to People Without Primary Care

1,708

Residents supported through the Elgin Community Health Hub between April 2025 - March 2026



of whom were not otherwise connected to primary care.

Supporting Attachment

Through Elgin Community Health Hub's **new Supported Attachment Program:**

697

people were connected to family physicians or nurse practitioners for an ongoing primary care relationship.

Reducing Waitlists

By March 2026, of the ~1600 Elgin residents on the provincial primary care waitlist (Health Care Connect) prior to January 1, 2025:

99.6%

had been matched to a local family physician or nurse practitioner or removed from the list.

Expanding Team-Based Care

$4.06 million

Provincial investment secured to expand access to team-based primary care across Elgin and support implementation of key components of the Neighbourhood Health Home model.

Mobile Outreach Services

Central Community Health Centre's mobile outreach services expanded from:

1 → 4

days and locations per week, bringing care closer to communities where access is more limited.

More Connected Care for People with Complex Needs

People living with complex health needs, such as those with chronic conditions, mental health, substance use, and/or addiction challenges, often require care from many different providers and organizations. The Elgin OHT continues to strengthen connections across health and community services, making it easier for residents to access coordinated, team-based care closer to home, and receive more seamless, person-centred care.

Best Care

An evidence-based chronic disease management program.

- Available in **all three Elgin neighbourhoods** and hub-and-spoke sites.
- **488** Residents supported this year.
- Hospitalizations reduced from: **8.2** to **3.5** per 100 participants
- Emergency department visits reduced from: **19.0** to **8.9** per 100 participants

Pulmonary Rehabilitation

Launched March 2026

A new community pulmonary rehabilitation program was launched in Elgin for the first time, with expansion planned for the 2026-27 year.

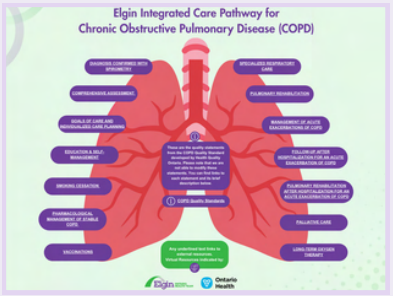
Virtual and in-person options to support care closer to home.

Community Supports After Discharge

The Let's Go Home program of bundled community support services continued to help residents transition safely from hospital to home.

250+ people supported this year

Integrated Care Pathway for Chronic Obstructive Pulmonary Disease (COPD)



Pathway launched to help healthcare providers quickly access:

- Local services
- Referral information
- Clincal resources

The pathway supports more consistent and coordinated care from diagnosis through treatment, rehabilitation, and ongoing support.

Building Skills & Supports*

Training and education to equip people in our community with skills to provide compassionate, timely, and person-centred care.

56	52	37	425+
Leaders and staff completed Trauma-Informed Approaches to Care Training.	People completed Mental Health First Aid Training.	Staff from six organizations completed Single Session Therapy Training.	Total participants received training since programs began.

- Created peer learning groups to help providers apply trauma-informed and "one-at-a-time" therapy approaches in practice.
- Expanded expert support to help primary care providers improve mental health, substance use, and addictions care.
- Hosted community education sessions to help residents better understand opioid use, overdose prevention, and available supports
- Launched an online directory to help residents and providers find mental health and substance use services.

**These initiatives are supported with additional funding from the Government of Canada.*

Supporting Care Teams

The Elgin OHT and Elgin Primary Care Network helped healthcare providers spend less time on paperwork and more time directly caring for people.

Elgin Primary Care Network

Building on many years of working together, the Elgin Primary Care Network gives primary care providers a formal way to share ideas, solve challenges, and improve care across Elgin.

130+
Members

- Elected its first Executive Council.
- Provided regular opportunities to share knowledge, solve common challenges, and improve care together.
- Contributed clinical expertise to all OHT initiatives.

Online Appointment Booking

Online Appointment Booking (OAB) makes it easier for people to book appointments when it works best for them, improving access while reducing phone calls to clinics.

30%
Increase in users in 2025-26

~15,000 People had access to OAB by March 2026.

3,600+ Appointments booked online this year.

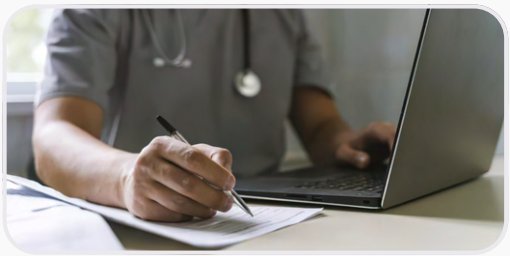
AI Scribe Pilot

AI Scribe uses artificial intelligence to help healthcare providers automatically create clinical notes during or after appointments, allowing them to focus on people not paperwork.

33 Participants in the 2025-26 pilot.

5 hrs Average reported reduction in admin time each week (from 24-19 hours).

82% Of participants reported more accurate clinical notes.



Practice Facilitation Initiative

This new initiative is helping primary care clinics improve how they work through practical coaching, shared learning, and better use of technology.

- 8 clinics participating
- Focus is on improving triage and prescribing processes.
- Clinic and system improvement plans will help prepare for expanded team-based care across Elgin.

A Message From The Elgin Primary Care Network

The Elgin Primary Care Network (Elgin PCN) connects, integrates, and empowers more than 130 family physicians, primary care nurse practitioners, pharmacists and other primary care professionals working in Elgin.

Formalizing our PCN this year and electing our inaugural Executive Council has been a pivotal step in strengthening the foundation of our health care system. By aligning our local primary care community with the Elgin OHT, we are doing more than just coordinating services, we are co-designing a system that reflects the needs of our providers and the people we care for.

This collaboration is already yielding results: we are strengthening clinical leadership, reducing administrative burden and provider burnout, sharing best practices, connecting more people to primary care and ensuring strategic initiatives are grounded in clinical feasibility and reality. We look forward to collectively working to continue building these partnerships to improve patient care, population health and health equity in Elgin. Elgin will remain a desirable community that can recruit and retain excellent primary care providers that feel supported and connected in their work.

Kellie Scott

Dr. Kellie Scott
Elgin Primary Care Network Co-Chair
Elgin OHT Clinical Lead

Jillian Toogood

Dr. Jillian Toogood
Elgin Primary Care Network Co-Chair
Elgin OHT Clinical Lead

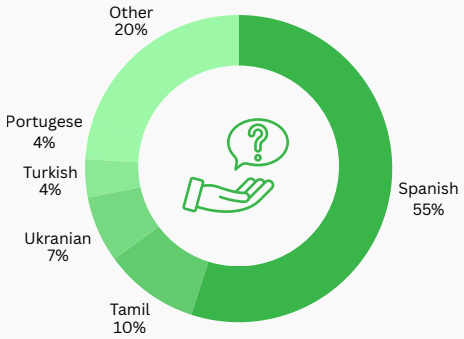
Advancing Equity & Reducing Barriers

Good health depends on more than medical care. Throughout the year, the Elgin OHT worked with partners to reduce barriers and better connect people with health, housing, food, transportation, and other community supports.

Interpretation Services

Interpretation services were available to all primary care clinics across Elgin, helping residents communicate more effectively with healthcare providers in the language of their choice.

161 Total interpretation requests



Of the 161 total interpretation service requests in 2025-26, **55% were for Spanish.**

Transportation & Outreach Supports

Expanded accessible transportation and mobile outreach options across Elgin helped connect people in rural and underserved communities to services and supports.

Medication & Health Supplies

Emergency funding helped people access essential medications and medical supplies, such as cold medications and first aid supplies, reducing financial barriers, supporting timely treatment and preventing health issues from worsening.

Access to Healthy Food

1,000 subsidized food boxes were distributed to individuals and families in Elgin, improving access to nutritious food, reducing financial barriers and supporting overall health and well-being.

Health & Housing

Site enhancements at The INN (Elgin's low barrier shelter), such as secure cart storage to help people store belongings during appointments, and a new Housing Focused Case Manager, helped individuals access housing and support services.

Community Voices & Engagement

Meaningful community engagement is central to the work of the Elgin OHT. Community voices help shape priorities, improve services, and inform decision-making across the health system.

Communications

New Website

A better experience for care providers and community members seeking information and resources.

Facebook

131% Increase in followers in 2025-26

LinkedIn

156% Increase in followers in 2025-26

Community Council

The Elgin OHT Community Council strengthened its leadership structure by electing its first Chair and Vice Chair and welcoming three new community members.

Engagement Strategy

The Elgin OHT approved a new Community Member Partnership and Engagement Strategy. The strategy outlines a shared approach to ensuring community voices are heard and valued throughout planning, implementation, and evaluation activities.

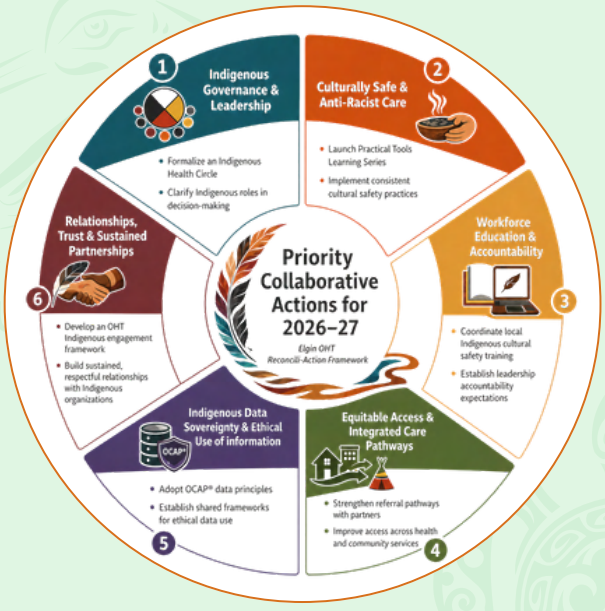
Truth & Reconciliation

Advancing Truth and Reconciliation remains an important priority for the Elgin OHT and its partners.

In March 2026, the Elgin OHT approved its **first Reconcili-Action Framework** under the leadership of the Elgin OHT Indigenous Health Lead. The framework provides a shared roadmap for OHT members to work together to advance Truth and Reconciliation and improve access to culturally safe, coordinated care for Indigenous communities.

Throughout the year, work continued to strengthen relationships with Indigenous partners and improve connections to Indigenous-specific services. This included **developing pathways between The INN and Indigenous organizations** to support access to traditional healing practices, medicines, and culturally appropriate care.

These efforts reflect a long-term commitment to learning, relationship building, and improving experiences and outcomes for Indigenous peoples across Elgin.



Thank You to Our Partners

The progress highlighted in this report would not be possible without the dedication, collaboration, and shared commitment of our partners. We also extend our sincere thanks to the nine students who worked alongside our team throughout the year, bringing fresh perspectives, enthusiasm, and meaningful contributions to this work.

Together, we strengthened connections across health and social care, improved access to services, and supported the well-being of our community. Thank you for your ongoing partnership and helping us create a healthier future for Elgin.

Alzheimer Society SOUTHWEST PARTNERS

BARRIE FAMILY HOSPICE OF ELGIN

CarePartners Well ahead.

Central Community Health Centre

cheshire making independence possible

ST. THOMAS THE RAILWAY CITY

Closing the Gap HEALTHCARE

Canadian Mental Health Association
Thames Valley
Addiction and Mental Health Services

Dale Brain Injury Services

EAST ELGIN Family Health TEAM

ElginCounty

ELMWOOD FAMILY HEALTH CENTRE

MCS Mennonite Community Services of Southern Ontario
faithfully linking resources with needs

Ontario Health atHome

PHSS Medical & Complex Care in Community

Regional HIV/AIDS Connection

SW SOUTHWESTERN Public Health
Oxford · Elgin · St.Thomas

ST JOSEPH'S HEALTH CARE LONDON

St.Thomas Elgin General Hospital

ST. THOMAS · ELGIN Local Immigration Partnership

Talbot Family Health Organization

Thames Valley Family Health Team

The INN St. Thomas-Elgin

VON

wellkin CHILD & YOUTH MENTAL WELLNESS

West Elgin Community Health Centre

YWCA ST. THOMAS-ELGIN

LOOKING AHEAD

With the Neighbourhood Health Home model now approved, the focus will increasingly shift from planning to implementation.

Over the coming year, partners will continue working together to expand team-based primary care, strengthen neighbourhood-based services, improve coordination between providers and organizations, reduce barriers to care, and advance Truth and Reconciliation.

The work ahead will build on the strong foundation established in 2025-26 and move us closer to a future where residents can more easily access care, navigate services, and receive support closer to home.

STAY CONNECTED WITH US!

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The Elgin OHT is funded by the Government of Ontario.