

Background

Bruce House has continued to operate throughout the COVID-19 pandemic adapting to the unpredictable landscape and the changing needs of our clients, taking advantage of every opportunity presented and maintaining excellence of support for people living with HIV in the National Capital Region. We are committed to continuing doing so while also learning from the needs of vulnerable populations exposed during the pandemic and establishing a solid foundation for long-term development.

Primary considerations:

- The pandemic will continue to impact Bruce House into 2022 and beyond. This will affect program and service delivery, client needs, and organisational capacity.
- Bruce House has evolved rapidly since the significant changes of 2016-17 and needs to assess organizational capacity and health.
- Client services and programs must be evaluated to inform long-term planning.
- Client needs must be evaluated to determine gaps in services, new needs which have emerged during the pandemic, and pre-existing needs which had not previously been identified.
- The requirement to pause many programs during the pandemic has created an opportunity for review and reflection.
- This 1-year plan addresses immediate needs while laying necessary groundwork for long-term planning.

Our Mandate

Bruce House is a community-based organization providing housing, compassionate care and support in Ottawa for people living with HIV/AIDS, believing that everyone has the right to live and die with dignity.

Our Vision

We envision a physically, socially, psychologically, spiritually and economically healthy community where everyone, including people living with HIV/AIDS or impacted by HIV/AIDS participates fully in all aspects of community life.

We envision a community free of stigma and discrimination towards people living with HIV/AIDS.

We envision adequate sustainable and flexible funding to enable the provision of a full range of high-quality services that respond to the needs of people living with HIV/AIDS.

We envision a well-integrated, coordinated service system that is accessible to people living with HIV/AIDS, regardless of their ability, age, culture, economic status, ethnicity, lifestyle, gender, or sexual orientation.

Our Values

We are accountable to our clients, the community, and each other. We take a holistic approach that recognises emotional, physical, social, spiritual and economic realities. We respect people's diversity and their different needs including, but not limited to ability, age, culture, economic status, ethnicity, lifestyle, gender and sexual orientation.

We support empowerment by providing information, sharing authority, promoting participation and providing choices.

Strategic Directions

Strategic Direction 1:

Serving Our Clients During the Pandemic

Bruce House will continue to proactively adapt to changing realities while maintaining excellence of programs and services, taking advantage of all resources available, maximize client supports, and proactively planning for the eventual and gradual resumption of programs paused during the COVID-19 pandemic.

Key Points:

- Examine all programs and services put on hold in 2020 due to the pandemic and:
 - Deliver these virtually, where possible, and
 - Proactively plan partial or full in-person resumption, and
 - At all times ensure the safety of staff, clients, and volunteers considering evolving Public Health recommendations.
- Ensure that clients are informed of services and programs available to them by:
 - Communicating realities effectively, including the possibility that certain programs may resume and pause repeatedly, capacities may be limited, and safety rules will be in place, and
 - Communicating clearly that pandemic assistance is not permanent and certain supports may not continue indefinitely, and
 - Ensuring that clients have clarity as to what can be provided for them, and
 - Addressing basic inequities which create barriers to effective communication with clients.
- Continue to address anti-black racism, oppression, inequities, and Indigenous reconciliation in every aspect of program and service delivery.

Intended Outcomes:

- Bruce House continues to deliver hope, housing and support with excellence to individuals and families impacted by HIV during and immediately after the pandemic, safely providing new and traditional programs and services.

- Clients are informed and have equitable and sufficient access to supports.
- Staff are able to plan their work effectively and efficiently.
- Programs transition smoothly between paused, virtual, and in-person delivery.
- Bruce House delivers programs and services in a culturally appropriate and equitable manner, acknowledging systemic and historical wrongs.

Strategic Direction 2:

Surveying Organisational Capacity, Status, and Health

Bruce House will examine all aspects of operations, finances, and capacity to fully understand the current status and health of the organisation and identify gaps and needs.

Key Points:

- Review client programs and services to:
 - Determine metrics of efficacy and assess current success rates, and
 - Itemise the resources each program and service requires.
- Examine the physical space to:
 - Determine best use of the current space, and
 - Identify accessibility concerns and other barriers to access, and
 - Identify characteristics of the space which negatively impact efficient and effective operations.
- Assess IT/communications infrastructure, office equipment, and furnishings to:
 - Identify equipment which is at or near end-of-life, and
 - Identify furnishings which need repair or replacement, and
 - Evaluate capacity of the IT and communications infrastructure.
- Review organisational finances and budgeting to:
 - Identify program and services needs, and
 - Assess program dependence on variable revenues such as fundraising and short-term grants.
- Review staff positions to:
 - Ensure accuracy of job descriptions, and
 - Identify gaps in staff capacity including training/qualification and staffing levels, and
 - Compare compensation to sector norms.

Intended Outcomes:

- Resources needed to deliver programs and services are clearly identified.
- Metrics of success for all programs and services are established and consistently measured.
- Staff job descriptions are accurate; gaps in staff skills, training, staffing levels and compensation are identified.

Strategic Direction 3:

Laying the Foundation for Long-Term Planning

Bruce House will identify client needs, organisational opportunities, and potential risks to inform long-term planning for a dynamic, financially sound, and effective organization which will successfully provide hope, housing, and support for people living with HIV in the National Capital Region.

Key Points:

- Review client needs and identify gaps in programs and services paying particular attention to needs revealed during the pandemic; this will include collating information from the Needs Assessment study, client surveys, and other sources to inform long-term planning. This must consider service gaps caused by the closure of the Transition House.
- Identify organisational resources required to meet future needs, including the physical space.
- Identify partnerships, long-term funding sources, and other opportunities.
- Determine fundraising and funding needs of the organisation to inform a plan for financial stability, with consideration given to the Dec. 31, 2023 end-of-lease.
- Develop a strategy to enshrine client engagement at all levels, respecting our obligations under the Ontario Accord, GIPA/MEPA principles, and funding agreement with the AIDS Bureau.
- Enshrine anti-black racism, anti-oppression, and Indigenous reconciliation in every aspect of Bruce House. Review/revise all applicable policies.
- Determine changes required to staff roles, organizational structure, and staff resources.
- Review governance to:
 - Determine if Board and Board Committee roles meet the needs of the organizations, and
 - Determine the skills, representation, and capacity needs of the Board and its Committees.
- Survey staff to determine:
 - Job satisfaction, adequacy of support and training, and career path.

Intended Outcomes:

- Clients are engaged and have a clear and meaningful voice in the organization.
- Governance is effective and reflective of our communities.
- Bruce House has an organizational structure and job descriptions which are accurate, effective, and efficient.
- Bruce House has a clear and documented understanding of client needs.
- Bruce House has sufficient information to create long-term plans considering required resources and financial stability.
- Bruce House has internalized delivery of programs and services in a culturally appropriate and equitable manner, acknowledging systemic and historical wrongs.
- Staff and management are engaged, supported, and fulfilled in their work.