“I’m going to talk about Women’s Health, I like the space here, it’s nice, it’s large, it’s clean, it’s furnished well, you know, there’s access, it’s not just a clinic.”

(Client: Collaborative Process to Achieve Access to Primary Health Care for Black Women and Women of Colour Research Project.)
OUR MANDATE

The mandate of Women’s Health in Women’s Hands [WHIWH] Community Health Centre is to provide community, mental and clinical health promotion support to Black Women and Women of Colour from the Caribbean, African, Latin American and South Asian communities in Metropolitan Toronto and surrounding municipalities. We are committed to working from an inclusive feminist, pro-choice, anti-racist, anti-oppression, and multilingual participatory framework in addressing the issue of access to healthcare for our mandated priority populations encompassing gender, race, class, violence, sexual orientation, religion, culture, language, disability, immigration status and socio-economic circumstances.
MESSAGE FROM THE CHAIR - Tigist Abebe

It is with great pride and sadness that I say goodbye to Women’s Health and Women’s Hands as Chair of your Board of Directors. First let me begin by stating what an incredible privilege it has been to be a part of this organization for the past six years. During WHIWH’s 16 year history we have become instrumental in meeting the health needs of Black Women and Women of Colour in the city of Toronto and surrounding areas. In addition to providing quality health care, WHIWH has become influential in many advocacy and quality care arenas locally, nationally and internationally. This year alone, WHIWH played a pivotal role in the International AIDS Conference held in Toronto, making strides in vocalizing the unique concerns of our target communities and bringing those concerns to the attention of the broader public as well as various levels of government. However, none of this would have been possible without the outstanding work of the board and staff at WHIWH. The success of this model has depended entirely on their expertise, cooperation and compassion and it is gratifying to know that this behavior exemplified on a daily basis.

Over the last six years, my time with WHIWH has been an amazing period of personal growth. I have seen the organization mature during my tenure as we successfully navigated two BHO reviews and implemented policies which ensured that we fulfilled the mandate of the organization. We have revised and implemented policies over the past year to ensure that barriers to accessing care at our health center for the most marginalized were removed. We have implemented administrative processes to facilitate the financial accountability of the organization and this year we saw the largest base budget increase the centre has received to date. I have been privileged to be a part of such growth and change. The transformation has not always been easy, but I feel assured that WHIWH will always maintain its commitment to Black Women and Women of Colour, and remain inspired by its vision, one that aims at providing Black Women and Women of Colour the tools and resources necessary to help them make informed decisions about their health and mental well-being.

It is therefore imperative that we acknowledge those who have motivated us as well as those who continue to carry the torch. I would like to express my appreciation for the many contributions of our past Executive Director, Eunadie Johnson, and also congratulate our new Executive Director, Notisha Massaquoi. Notisha brings a wealth of experience and an unmatched dedication to the health centre. She has served in several capacities at WHIWH since 1998. Notisha holds a Masters of Social Work from the University of Toronto and is currently working on her Ph.D. in Sociology and Equity Studies at the Ontario Institute for Studies in Education at the University of Toronto. Her numerous scholarly publications and community based research studies focus on equitable access to healthcare for Black Women and Women of Colour.

I hope you will join me in giving Notisha your support and good wishes in her new position.

The outlook for WHIWH remains illustrious and I know it will continue to be a voice for change and advocacy. And although I will no longer be serving on the Board, WHIWH will always remain a part of me.
MESSAGE FROM THE EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR - Notisha Massaquoi

I can not begin to express what an honor it is to be appointed Executive Director of Women’s Health and Women’s Hands. For the past eight years I have had the privilege of working with people who are encouraged by their dreams and passions and there is no question that the success of WHIWH is a result of our tireless collective efforts. WHIWH staff have provided exemplary clinical and health promotion services through a feminist anti-oppression/anti-racist framework and our unique model of care has made us one of the most important organizations for Black Women and Women of Colour in Canada.

We understand that Black Women and Women of Colour are experts in our experience and that our lives matter. With the growing number of underserved Black Women and Women of Colour seeking health care services, as well as the complexity of the problems that the most marginalized members of our populations face, community health centers are quickly becoming the backbone of primary health care for our communities. WHIWH recognizes this fact and that is why we are deeply invested in improving access to health care for our priority populations.

As we move forward in the New Year, WHIWH will continue to strive to meet its mandate of equitable and accessible health services through our leadership in community based research on the healthcare needs of Black Women and Women of Colour which will enhance evidence based practice. WHIWH will continue to build upon our distinctive style of workshops, presentations, programs and support groups that enhance the lives of Black Women and Women of Colour. We will also continue to build community partnerships and collaborations in order to increase access to primary healthcare for our priority populations.

We can all be proud of the outstanding reputation WHIWH has earned. I would like to particularly acknowledge the outstanding commitment of the Board of Directors. I believe that as we grow and mature we will carry on being a strong CHC in the Greater Toronto Area. As the Executive Director, it is my desire to continue in the spirit of integrity and excellence that WHIWH has laid for itself, and I hope that we can count on your continued support in the coming years.

“I would never stop coming to Woman’s Health because like, at least Women’s Health has the correct philosophy that I agree with...and I don’t think any other health provider thinks this way...for a woman of colour, where my sexual identity is not an issue. I think Woman’s Health is basically providing a very comfortable place where a woman can come and know that they are being heard on some level, and is genuinely cared for. It makes me feel good. It makes you feel cared for. It makes me feel like there is somewhere that I can go.”

-South Asian Client, Collaborative Process to Achieve Access to Primary Health Care for Black Women and Women of Colour Research Project.
PROGRAM UPDATE

WHIWH continuously strives to create programs that contribute to the well being of Black Women and Women of Colour. As one of the 54 Community Centres in Ontario, we endeavour to present programs that have an emphasis on health promotion as well as disease prevention. The staff at WHIWH, offer a range of services and skills that are best suited to deal with the complexity of our client’s reality. From the concerns of food access to healthy babies, immigration, human rights, healthy sexuality, aging, chronic disease, mental health and home care support, WHIWH thrives to properly address the wholistic needs of our priority populations.

As a CHC in the greater Toronto area, it is our responsibility to routinely observe how effectively we are responding to the needs of the women we serve. This year WHIWH was able to offer and improve on a number of services.

- Established an intake and advocacy support process for all WHIWH Clients
- Provided Volunteer Program training and placements for 27 women
- “Don’t Give it All Away”, our 5th annual forum for young black women focused on issues of success and self-esteem
- Developed a Woman Abuse Protocol for the Centre
- Developed a Program Evaluation Framework in keeping with our mandate

“...The receptionist (at WHIWH) is always marvelous. She always has a smile on her face, as well as the lady who sits beside her. They are kind. They do not feel like they are queens. In comparison, you go to other places doing the same job and they do not even greet you.”

-Participant - Older Spanish Women Focus Group

TOP FIVE CLINICAL ISSUES

1. Reproductive Health Issues
2. Menopause
3. Hypertension
4. Foot Care
5. Diabetes Mellitus (Type 2)
PRESENTATION AND CONFERENCE HIGHLIGHTS OF 2006

WHIWH Staff delivered 25 Healthy Woman workshops at a variety of community venues and 66 presentations at forums, conferences and other community events. Some of the highlights include:

- Is Immigrating a Health Hazard? - St. Lawrence Forum
- A Dialogue on Black Youth Within an Anti-Oppression Framework – Ryerson University
- We Are Not All Equal: Health Care Issues of Women from the South Living in the North - Health Equity and Diversity Conference
- Partnering Together Towards Better Health Care - Olive Branch of Hope
- Healthy Black Communities - Malvern Community Health Day
- Women of Colour and Access to Reproductive Health Care: Emerging Issues Based on WHIWH Research Projects - Toronto Public Health
- Global and Individual Factors Impacting on Youth Vulnerability and Risk - Department of Women’s Studies, University of Toronto
- Systemic discrimination and its impact on ability to mitigate HIV/AIDS Risk - Canadian Skills Building Symposium
- Issues that black women bring to the health care setting - 4th Dialogue Conference for HIV Positive Women
- Issues and barriers of incorporating Nurse Practitioners into Family Practice Teams - Ontario Hospital Association

“WHIWH has done and is doing a lot for women. When I first visited the centre I was amazed to see how much I was helped. I didn’t expect that, I have since been able to participate in workshops and group meetings. I have also referred newcomer women to the centre. They are happy as I am with the services offered. Keep up the good work.”

- African client
PUBLICATIONS AND MEDIA

WHIWH continues to make headlines through our unique model of care. In 2006 WHIWH was featured in a number of documentaries and news programs as well as in several publications.

Global Canada West Television: Body and Health Program on WHIWH Model of Care

Omni Television: Current Agenda Program on HIV/AIDS

CBC 1 Metro Morning: Interviewed on issues of HIV/AIDS in African and Caribbean communities

Surviving in the Hour of Darkness: The Health and Wellness of Women of Colour and Indigenous Women by G. Sophie Harding

The anthology contains two chapters submitted by WHIWH staff on issues impacting our priority populations.

Canadian Women’s Health Network Magazine: Article on HIV/AIDS epidemic in Canada

RESEARCH INITIATIVES

Research continues to be a vital component of WHIWH. We aim to provide a supportive environment for multidisciplinary health research. Our staff, colleagues, volunteers and partners work together to generate knowledge, gather findings, assess the success of various health promotion strategies and create tools to translate the information collected into practice.

A Collaborative Process to Achieve Access to Primary Health Care for Black Women and Women of Colour

WHIWH in collaboration with the Faculty of Social Work University of Toronto, Planned Parenthood of Toronto, Sistering, Rexdale Community Health Centre and Parkdale Community Health Centre.

Principle Investigator: Dr. Charmaine Williams.

Funded by The Ministry of Health and Long Term Care.

This project was developed using a collaborative process to address a pressing need to increase access to primary healthcare for Black Women and Women of Colour. The project identifies barriers to accessing primary healthcare by women from Africa, the Caribbean, Latin America and South Asia while also looking at women within these groups who experience further barriers due to homelessness, poverty, sexual orientation, disability and HIV/AIDS. The objectives of this study are to explore the experiences that Black Women and Women of Colour have when attempting to address their healthcare issues, to identify the facilitators and barriers to this population’s access to adequate healthcare and to develop an alternative service delivery model.

“Health care is about more than treating illness, it’s also about addressing the underlying conditions that contribute to healthy lives and healthy communities, and Community Health Centres are one of the best vehicles for doing that.”

-The Honourable George Smitherman, Minister of Health
Sisters, Mothers, Daughters and Aunties: Protecting Black Women against HIV/AIDS

Collaborating Agencies: WHIWH; The University of Toronto Faculty of Social Work
Principle Investigators: Dr. Peter Newman, Dr. Charmaine Williams
Funded by Canadian Institutes of Health Research

The Sisters, Mothers, Daughters and Aunties Project has been created to encourage Black women’s involvement in setting the agenda for protecting our communities against HIV. This project focuses on finding out what Black women will need to receive in order to fully benefit from the protection that could come from HIV vaccines that may be available in the future. It looks at what women think about HIV and vaccines, as well as other aspects of the community and health care system that are important in protecting Black women from HIV/AIDS right now. Findings from this project will be used to alert the community and the health care system as to what will help ensure Black women have access to and gain benefits from HIV vaccines and other HIV prevention innovations.


Principle Investigators: Wangari Tharao, WHIWH/ACCHO and Dr Stan Read, Hospital for Sick Children
Co-Investigators: Dr. Lindy Samson, Children’s Hospital of Eastern Ontario; Dr. Lynn Leonard, University of Ottawa, Notisha Massaquoi, WHIWH, Dr. Mark Yudin, St. Michael’s Hospital
Funded by the AIDS Bureau, Ministry of Health and Long Term Care

The Prenatal HIV Testing Evaluation Working Group is evaluating the status of the Ontario Prenatal HIV Testing Program. Several studies are being undertaken including this one. Through this study we will interview 60 African and Caribbean women to examine their experiences and opinions about the program. We will also review women’s prenatal charts to determine the type and quality of information provided to inform HIV testing decisions and access to follow up care.
HEP Project: Health Canada, AIDS Community Action Program

With this funding we are developing an HIV Prevention and Risk Reduction Model for African and Caribbean Women and a video resource for HIV Positive African and Caribbean Women. The video will feature six HIV Positive women as they go about their daily lives.

African And Caribbean Community HIV/AIDS Capacity Building Project

With funding from the Public Health Agency of Canada and the AIDS Bureau, Ontario Ministry of Health and Long Term Care Women’s Health in Women’s Hands, in partnership with the African and Caribbean Council on HIV/AIDS in Ontario (ACCHO) has delivered this important and ground breaking project whose deliverables include:


- HIV/AIDS training sessions in Toronto, Ottawa and Montreal for 300 providers

- The first HIV Research Summit for African and Caribbean populations

The HIV Prevention Guidelines and Manual written by LLana James, National Project Co-ordinator, are one example of how individuals from the African and African Caribbean communities in Canada have mobilized and continue to chart a course of self-determination in the face of great odds.

TOP TWELVE ISSUES IN PSYCHOTHERAPY

1. Relationship Issues
2. Abuse
3. Depression
4. Career Issues
5. Post Traumatic Stress Disorder
6. HIV Diagnosis
7. Bereavement
8. Torture / Kidnapping
9. Isolation
10. Medical Illness
11. Financial Situation
12. Alcohol Abuse
Women’s Health in Women’s Hands has always used international meetings to advocate on issues of health for Black Women and Women of Colour. This year we wanted our participation at the 16th International AIDS Conference, to move forward issues and make a difference. We made a strategic decision as members of the African and Caribbean Council on HIV/AIDS in Ontario to organize AIDS 2006 activities as a collective through ACCHO to maximize our strength.

Thus, the development and implementation of the “African/Black Diaspora Stream”, was born - the FIRST of its kind in the history of the International AIDS Conferences. This stream provided an extraordinary opportunity to change the trajectory of the HIV/AIDS pandemic among black populations living in the western world.

Wangari Tharao a staff member of WHIWH and Co-Chair of the African and Caribbean Council on HIV/AIDS in Ontario sat on the local host planning community and co-hosted the conference closing ceremonies. WHIWH staff also moderated and sat on panels, facilitated workshops presented papers and hosted forums which addressed innovations in Women’s Health, Innovative African-Caribbean HIV/AIDS Service Organizations, African and Carribean Women Living in the Diapora, Being Queer in the African Diaspora, The African/Black Diaspora Symposium and The Global Network Development Session. Additionally several oral and poster presentations in the scientific program were delivered including:

- African and Caribbean Perspectives on HIV/AIDS Etiology and Prevention: Theoretical Implications
- Silent Voices: Canadian Perspectives on African and Caribbean Women and the HIV/AIDS Epidemic
- Best Practice Model: HIV Education and Prevention for African and Caribbean Women in Canada
- A Collaborative Process to Achieve Access to Primary Health Care for HIV Positive Black Women and Women of Colour
- Developing World Epidemic in the Developed World: Canada
Board Members

Tigist Abebe (Chair)
Rumana Chowdhury (Treasurer)
Hyacinth Francis
Cheryl Henry (Vice Chair)
Shari Joseph
Archana Mathew
Ines Merino
Ayshia Musleh
Sharon Njobo (Secretary)
Fouzia Warsame
Natasha Williams

Student Placements

Daniela Alfaro
Bianca Cot
Simone Donaldson
Martha Hendrie
Krystyna Moore
Michelle Nicholls
Tonya Parriag
Sol Redondo
Mitsy Robinson
Colette Talbot
Vanita Varma

Our 29 staff members speak 17 languages & come from 19 countries

Staff

Loriedelle Addun
Tulika Agarwal
Judith Andrade
Jewel Bailey
Cylma Burke-Morgan
Kerry Carpenter
Shirley Cheung
Linda Cornwell
Deone Curling
Cavelle Davis
Rosa Maria Flores
Helen Gateri
Haregwa Getu
Kim Gordon
Marina Hilaire
Victoria Icatar
Maryvic Irula
Sharon Khoo

Volunteers

Sarah Lee Dookhanie
Erica Extavour
Marisa Fortune
Birkty Elias Gebremariam
Karen Green
Sarah King
Patricia Kinott
Laena Maunula
Tiaetsi Russell
Tangu Sichilinia
Amarpreet Sikend
Uratile Sijiye
Lisa Thakkar
Elham Zeynalibagha

Our 29 staff members speak 17 languages & come from 19 countries
## STATEMENT OF REVENUE AND EXPENSES FOR THE YEAR ENDED MARCH 31, 2006
(with comparative figures for 2005)

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<thead>
<tr>
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<th>2006</th>
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<td>Ministry of Health</td>
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<tr>
<td>Ministry of Health - Non Recurring Item Funding</td>
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<td>76,863</td>
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<tr>
<td>Grant Income</td>
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<td>Ministry of health - Early Years Program Funding</td>
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<td>Miscellaneous Income</td>
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<td>Interest</td>
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<td><strong>EXPENSES</strong></td>
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<td>Rent and property taxes</td>
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<tr>
<td>Grant expenses</td>
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<td>182,360</td>
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<td>Purchased services and resource materials</td>
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<td>Early years program expenses</td>
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Complete financial statements are available upon request.
Community Partners

We acknowledge the many stakeholders in the community who work with and alongside us in broadening our work so that we are able to meet the needs of more women. In particular we recognize the importance of our academic and community partners who continue to be instrumental in implementing services and creating spaces that provide health care that meets the needs of Black Women and women of Colour. This year we would especially like to acknowledge the contributions of African Community Health Services; Africans In Partnership Against AIDS; Barbra Schlifer Commemorative Clinic; Black Coalition for AIDS Prevention; Black Health Alliance, People To People AID Organization, University of Toronto, Faculty of Nursing, University of Toronto Faculty of Social Work, Voices of Positive Women, Sistering, Planned Parenthood of Toronto, Rexdale Community Health Centre, Parkdale Community Health Centre, African and Caribbean Council on HIV/AIDS in Ontario, Ethno Racial People with Disabilities Coalition of Ontario, Riverdale Immigrant Women’s Centre, Centre francophone de Toronto, AIDS Bureau, Ontario Ministry of Health, Nellie’s, Somali Immigrant Aid Organization, The Daily Bread Food Bank, Tretheway Community on the Move Program, Horn of Africa Women’s Group, St. Joseph’s Hospital, Mount Sinai Hospital St.Michael’s Hospital, Thrive: Women of Colour Against Violence.

List of Funders

Women’s Health in Women’s Hands expresses gratitude to our funders, first and foremost, the Ministry of Health and Long-Term Care Community Health Branch.
We are also grateful for the funding provided by Human Resources and Skills Development Canada, City of Toronto AIDS Prevention Investment Program, Canadian Institutes of Health Research, Ministry of Health and Long Term Care Primary Health Care Transition Fund, AIDS Bureau, Ministry of Health and Long Term Care, Ontario Trillium Foundation, MAC AIDS Fund, Health Canada International Directorate and the Public Health Agency of Canada.

Total Number of New Clients:

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Total Number of Clinical Encounters:

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<tr>
<td>2005-2006</td>
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Women’s Health in Women’s Hands Location

Wellesley Street West

Wellesley Street East

College Street

College subway

T.T.C.

T.T.C.

Gerrard Street West

Gerrard Street East

Yonge Street

Nicole Curling - Text Consultant

Funded By the Ministry of Health & Long Term Care