



West Elgin
Community
Health Centre

2024-2025 Annual Report

Vibrant and Caring Communities, People, and Workplace



**Celebrating 30 Years of Caring for You
(1994 - 2024)**

VISION

**Vibrant and
Caring
Communities,
People, and
Workplace**

MISSION

**Partnering with our
communities to achieve
the best health and
wellbeing
for all**

VA VALUES

**Compassion
Excellence
Collaboration
Accountability
Respect
Equity**

Strategic Directions



**Reimagine how our care
and services improve
equitable health and
wellbeing outcomes**



**Reconnect with our
team to co-create a
meaningful, healthy,
and compassionate
workplace**



**Redesign a stronger
healthcare system in
collaboration with our
partners**

**Message from our
Executive Director
Leading the Way**

**Message from our
Board Chair
Advocacy in Action**

**Justice, Equity,
Diversity, and Inclusion
Our Commitment**

**Serving Our Clients
and Community
Our Impact**

**Celebrating 30 Years
of Caring for You
1994–2024**

**Our Volunteers
Changing Lives and
Communities**

**Telling Our Story
We Are... the West Elgin
Community Health
Centre**

**Fundraising News
Community Kindness
and Generosity**

**2024–2025
Financial
Reporting**

Land Acknowledgement

We recognize that the work of the West Elgin Community Health Centre takes place across what is now called southwestern Ontario on traditional territories of the Indigenous people who have lived here since time immemorial and have deep connections to these lands. We also acknowledge the local communities which include Chippewas of the Thames First Nation, Oneida Nation of the Thames, Munsee Delaware Nation and Delaware Nation of Moraviantown. We further acknowledge that the area is covered by treaties, agreements and land purchases.

We are grateful for the opportunity to live, meet, and work on this territory. We commit to building allyship relationships with First Nation peoples in order to enhance our knowledge and appreciation of their many histories and voices. We also commit to sharing and upholding responsibilities to all who now live on these lands, the land itself, and the resources that make our lives possible.



Truth and Reconciliation
Day

One of the highlights of 2024/25 was when the Centre formally celebrated our 30th anniversary in July 2024. A special section of this report highlights this salute to all the amazing people who have contributed to our success over the years. We have an incredible community, staff and volunteers, and look forward to working with our partners to continue this great work for the next thirty years.

During the year, the Board spent more of their time on advocacy and fundraising, and those efforts will also be highlighted later in this report. We are very grateful for all the work by the Board, the community, and others to support our staff and volunteers, to provide them with the compensation they deserve and the resources they need to do their jobs well. However, there is still much that our funders need to do to support us.

The Centre successfully launched the First Five program across Elgin County for children aged 0-5 years without a doctor or nurse practitioner. This included offering services out of the South-western Public Health office in St. Thomas and here in West Lorne. In less than a year, this team built a new program that provided over 900 appointments to 250 children who otherwise would not have received the care they needed.

The Centre also made two changes to long delivered services due to challenges with our ability to recruit staff at the salaries that we can offer. Switching a Chronic Disease Nurse Practitioner (NP) role to a Primary Care NP will allow the Primary Care Team to take on more clients from our wait list. Going forward, the team will also prioritize intakes for those who live in the historical West Elgin and Dutton Dunwich catchment area.

The other major change was the replacement of our long-time Chiroprapist with a Foot Care Nurse. The Chiroprapist has moved into a leadership role at the Centre and we were unable to recruit a replacement.

Also in 2024, two of our three senior directors retired, taking with them their experience and knowledge. Being short staffed at the Senior Leadership level has impacted our capacity to take on increased demands from clients, staff, funders, and partners.

The Centre relied on vacancies in 24/25 to balance our budget, which is not sustainable going forward. The Centre has only received a 7% increase in our base budget over the past 15 years while coping with 40% inflation during that time. This leaves the Centre underfunded by \$500 thousand due to inflation and makes us uncompetitive with other health care sectors. Despite these challenges, in the fall of 2024, Community Health Centre staff were provided with an **unfunded** 5% permanent pay increase. Entering 2025/26, the Centre is fully staffed, so this will be a challenge unless we receive increases from our funders.

Continued on page 4..



As we continue to advocate for permanent increases to our core funding that will benefit our staff and our clients, we did obtain some additional resources during the year:

- ⇒ One-time \$142,842 for physician salaries and benefits
- ⇒ One-time \$118,135 capital for front door replacement and fire alarm system (Community Infrastructure Renewal Fund)
- ⇒ One-time \$88,900 for Community Health Centre staff and operating expenses
- ⇒ Permanent \$48,320 for Assisted Living and Community Support Services staff and operating expenses
- ⇒ One time \$12,000 for Seniors Active Living Centre program in Rodney (Ministry for Seniors and Accessibility)
- ⇒ One-time \$8,530 for Assisted Living and Community Support Services staff and operating expenses
- ⇒ One-time \$7,000 for food security and Alayacare software improvements (Elgin Ontario Health Team)
- ⇒ One time \$5,070 for system navigation (Elgin County Warden's Golf Tournament)
- ⇒ Permanent \$5,047 for Meals on Wheels
- ⇒ One-time \$4,512 for Gift-a-Ride Program (United Way Elgin Middlesex)

Some other highlights during the year included:

- Physicians, Nurse Practitioners, and the Clinical Team took on 199 new primary care clients from our wait list
- Teaching kitchen renovations completed with an Ontario Trillium Foundation grant
- Centre held the first All Staff retreat in 10 years
- Food pantry in the lobby given larger space to help with the growing community need

- Youth garden created at the Centre
- Board participated in their first retreat in 7 years
- Communications Task Team created 8 articles in the local newspaper, a 30th anniversary video, and updated materials for all programs. They also promoted staff through social media using a Humans of the Centre feature and re-established the Centre's presence on LinkedIn to help with recruitment
- Let's Connect program formalized support of primary care physicians through a Well Baby program
- Social Prescribing group launched the Erie Shore Singers
- Started use of Heidi Artificial Intelligence system to reduce provider administrative burden
- Partnered with Southwestern Public Health to place a needle disposal kiosk in the Centre's parking lot

Thanks again to all our amazing staff, volunteers, and community partners for your hard work and dedication over the past year.

We cannot do this great work without you.



Andy Kroeker
Executive Director



Reflecting on the last fiscal year, I am profoundly impressed by the level of advocacy achieved by the Board of Directors on behalf of our staff and the Centre as a whole. Early on, the Board recognized that proactive and independent advocacy was essential to enhance awareness about the CHC, the salary disparities, and our thirty-plus-year presence in West Elgin.

The Board's advocacy advancements include:

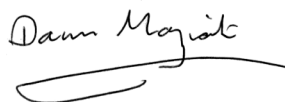
- ⇒ Establishing a Fundraising and Advocacy Committee
- ⇒ Informing the public about our CHC services through a series of articles in the Chronicle.
- ⇒ Initiating a petition to educate the public about the wage disparity. The petition was presented at the Rodney and Wallacetown fairs culminating in over 780 signatures.
- ⇒ The Board Chair, Vice Chair, selected Directors, and our Executive Director presented at the Dutton Dunwich and West Elgin Council meetings, informing them about our current pressures and requesting their support.
- ⇒ The Board Chair, Vice Chair, and Executive Director presented to the County Council, receiving full support from the Warden and all of Elgin's mayors.
- ⇒ Board Directors met with MPP Rob Flack presenting a one page summary that illustrates the wage disparities and issues facing our rural communities.

This year, we continue our advocacy efforts focusing on:

- Remaining dedicated to regular meetings with the Mayor of Dutton Dunwich and the Mayor of West Elgin to promote collaboration and tackle community concerns.

- To better understand and address the needs of our residents, we will host two Town Hall meetings to encourage dialogue about how the Community Health Centre (CHC) and our municipalities can best support the community.
- Our ongoing fundraising efforts are crucial for maintaining the operational status of our transportation van, which is essential for serving our community effectively.
- We will ensure that Minister Flack and the Elgin Ontario Health Team are kept consistently updated on our unwavering commitment to providing high-quality, accessible primary care and support services for the residents of West Elgin and Dutton Dunwich.

On behalf of the Board of Directors, we look forward to our continued collaboration with community members, clients, staff, and volunteers. Let's make 2025/2026 an unforgettable year!



Dawn Maziak
Board Chair





The Centre is committed to fostering a culture of belonging embracing social justice, equity, diversity, and inclusion. As supported by the Centre's strategic directions, we continually strive to promote a safe and welcoming workplace where discriminatory or oppressive behaviours are not tolerated.

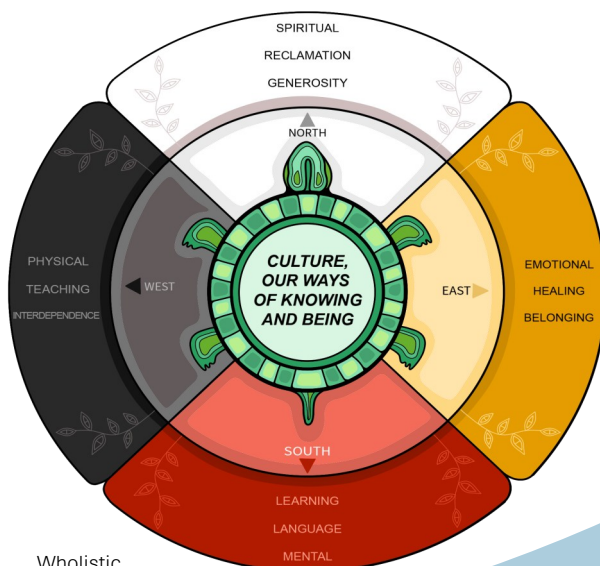
Our commitment inspires us to support each other with dignity and respect and to be empowered to drive change.

During the past year we reviewed the Health Equity Charter, held training related to Indigenous Health, 2SLGBTQ+ Health, trauma informed care in addition to ongoing accessibility training.

Work began on our Indigenous Healing Garden, we are finalizing Indigenous and 2SLGBTQ+ artwork for new building banners, we installed Indigenous and 2SLGBTQ+ sidewalks onsite, and we held flag raising events to honour PRIDE, Trans Day of Visibility, and National Day for Truth and Reconciliation.



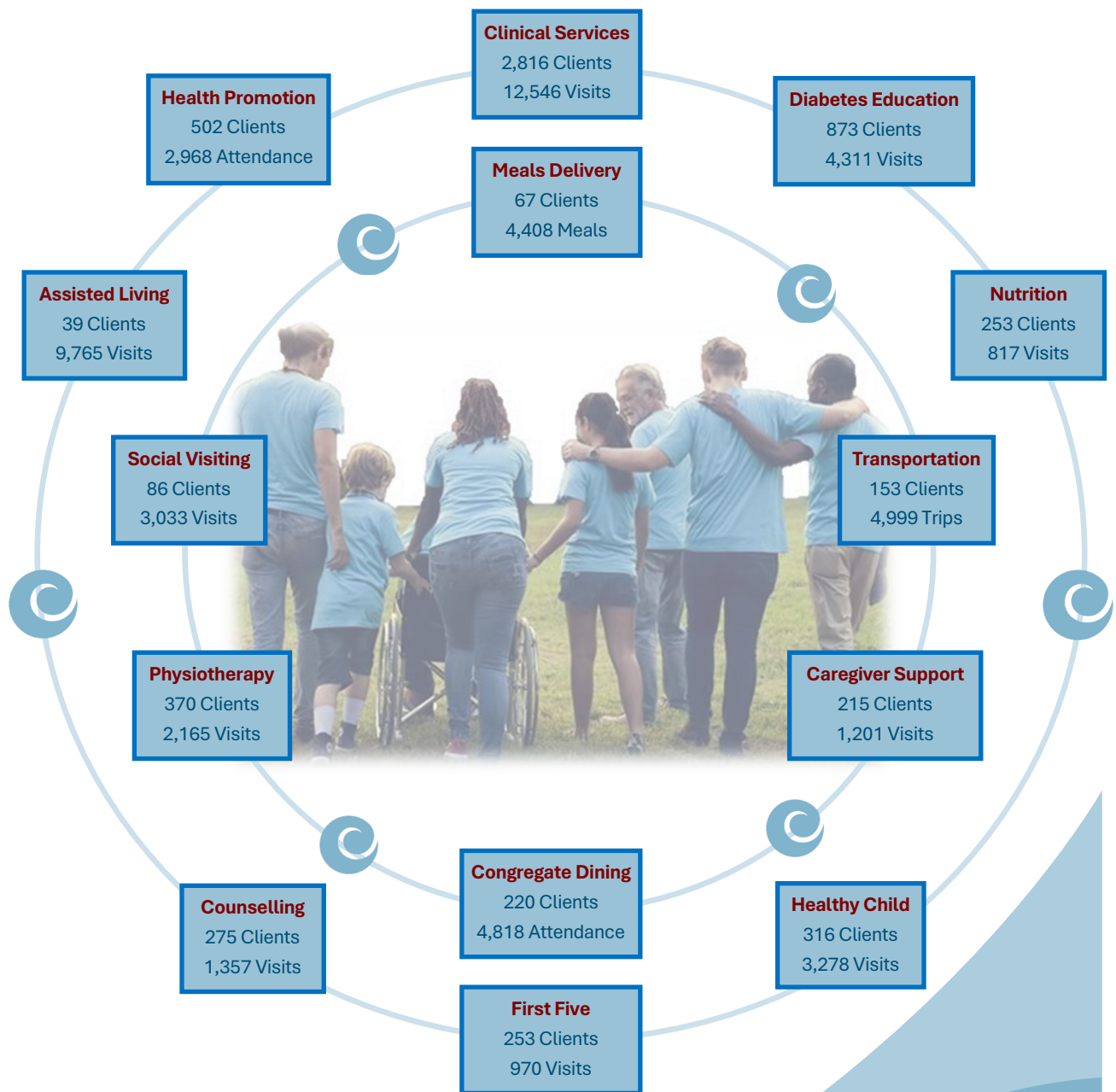
With the help of the community, a safe space mural was created in our reception area, we held two Indigenous Kairos blanket exercises onsite, we organized a staff multi-cultural event, and added new diversity, equity, and inclusion learning materials to our library.



Wholistic
Healing Model

Our journey of cultural competency and strengthening our community and workplace sense of belonging continues.





Statistics
2024 - 2025
Programs and
Services

Celebrating 30 Years of Caring for You

8

1994–2024

On July 10, 2024, the Centre celebrated its 30th anniversary of serving its clients and communities. As we reflected on the countless lives the Centre has touched, we extended our deepest gratitude to our amazing employees, volunteers, and community members for their unwavering commitment to excellent care and supporting the needs of others.

We also recognized the first Board's lasting impact and legacy. Graham Warwick, a member of the Centre's original Board of Directors, accepted a commemorative plaque on behalf of the 1994 Board.



L-R Graham Warwick and David James



Dawn Maziak & MPP Rob Flack

Rob Flack, Member of Provincial Parliament (MPP) and Karen Vecchio, Member of Parliament (MP) attended our event. We are grateful for both the MPP and MP's support to help champion the unique service and funding needs of community health in rural Ontario.

Also, a heartfelt thank you to Richard Leatham, Mike Hentz, Ed Ketchabaw, Taraesa Tellier, and Sarah Hobbs for celebrating with us!



MP Karen Vecchio



L-R Shelly Vergeer and Cathy Attridge



Exit 137 Band



L-R Beth and Barry Fellingner



Members of the community, staff, and volunteers celebrating together



Ralph and Friend



Scan to watch our 30th anniversary videos!





L-R Sandra Close, Mary Silveira, Gayle Collins, Mary Jane Mezenberg, Carole Giles, Candi Francisco



L-R Gord Keane, Doug Walker, Randy Rivest, Don Bobier

We are very grateful to each one of our dedicated volunteers who tirelessly support our clients and rural communities. Our volunteers consistently go above and beyond with one common goal ~ making a positive impact in the lives of the clients we serve.

Our Volunteers - Changing Lives and Communities:

113	# of Volunteers Registered with the Centre
5292	# of Volunteer Hours Served
4408	# of Meals on Wheels Deliveries Made
2396	# of Rides to Client "Necessary Appointments"
168,632	# of Kms Driven for Client "Necessary Appointments"

Our devoted volunteers also facilitate fitness classes, support groups, and drop-in sessions.

They pick up food daily from local grocery stores and stock the Centre's pantry shelves, regularly cook / serve delicious community meals, offer support with room set-up and tear down for programs, provide friendly visits to clients who are isolated, happily provide program childcare when needed, and share their wisdom with all of us.

Our volunteers offer client technology aide including loaning out iPads, providing in-home printer and internet setup, and facilitating client device training.



L-R Marg Rae, Tom Barry



Rodney Garden

During the warmer months, our volunteers tend to the Rodney Community Garden empowering residents to grow their own produce regardless of their living situation.

We get together with our volunteers to formally express our appreciation twice a year. We most recently acknowledged their contributions at the Spring Soiree Volunteer Appreciation Event in March 2025 with a dinner and a live musical performance. While we formally gather only twice a year, we recognize our volunteers every day!

At the Centre we strive to ensure that all of our volunteers have an engaging, fulfilling, and meaningful volunteer experience while also making a positive contribution to the lives of our clients and rural communities.

We sincerely thank all of our volunteers for their ongoing enthusiasm and commitment!

Interested In Volunteering?

We are always looking to grow! We are seeking new volunteers to help expand the friendly visiting program (socializing with clients in their homes for an hour a week).

Contact Jenna by Email:

jdenijs@wehc.on.ca

QR Code to Webpage:





2024 Employee Service Milestones

Your outstanding contributions to our clients, rural communities, and to each other are an inspiration for us all. Thank you for your dedicated service.

30 Years

Paula Alves

25 Years

Marcy Machado-Shiryayev

15 Years

Andy Kroeker

10 Years

Adina Kilbourne

5 Years

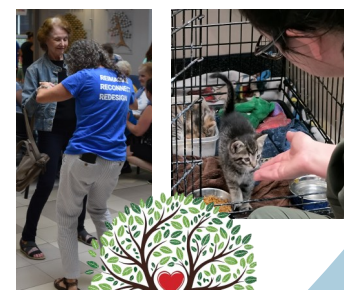
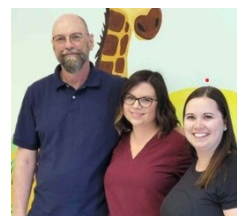
Heather Vanrabaeyns

2 Years

Steve Wilkins
Keerthi Soman

Dr. Michelle Welch
Sami Saleh

Maria Teresa Diaz



Growing
Kindness



Sharing
Joy



Through individual financial donations and the amazing efforts of the Fundraising Committee and Larry Schneider, Board Director, we are forever grateful for the kindness and generosity of so many organizations and donors over the past fiscal year.

Each of you have helped the Centre make a difference in your rural communities and in the lives of your friends, family, and neighbours. We are truly thankful for your commitment to helping others.



A.C.W. of Nativity /
St. Peters Anglican Church
ADAH Chapter #276

Lions Club of Rodney
Municipality of West Elgin
Optimist Club of West Lorne
United Way Elgin Middlesex
West Lorne and Community
Horticultural Society
Kiwanis Club of West Lorne
Salus Mutual



Golden Acres Chapter #305
Dunwich Pastoral Charge
Grace Anglican Church
Kiwanis Club of Rodney

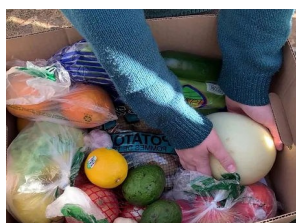


salus MUTUAL



The belief in the Centre's vision and mission to serve our rural communities has been incredible with each financial donation directly supporting the Centre's many programs, services, and community events.

Thank you
for your
kindness and
generosity



Good Food Box



Cooking Programs



Community Dinner

More than \$2,750
donated to support
the annual community
holiday dinner



Youth Garden

Over \$1,800
donated to
support a
youth garden
at the
Centre

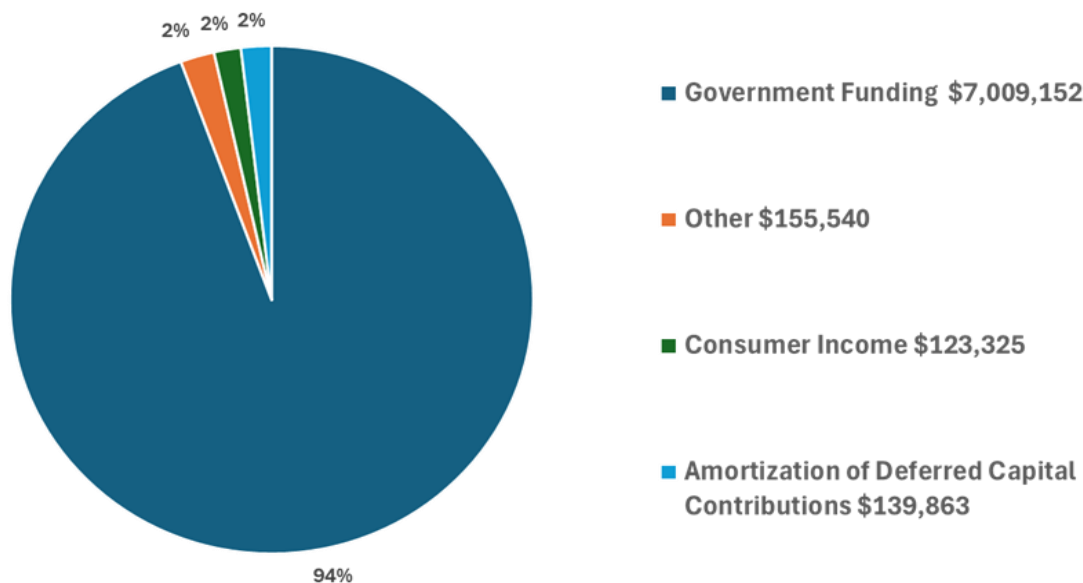


Transportation

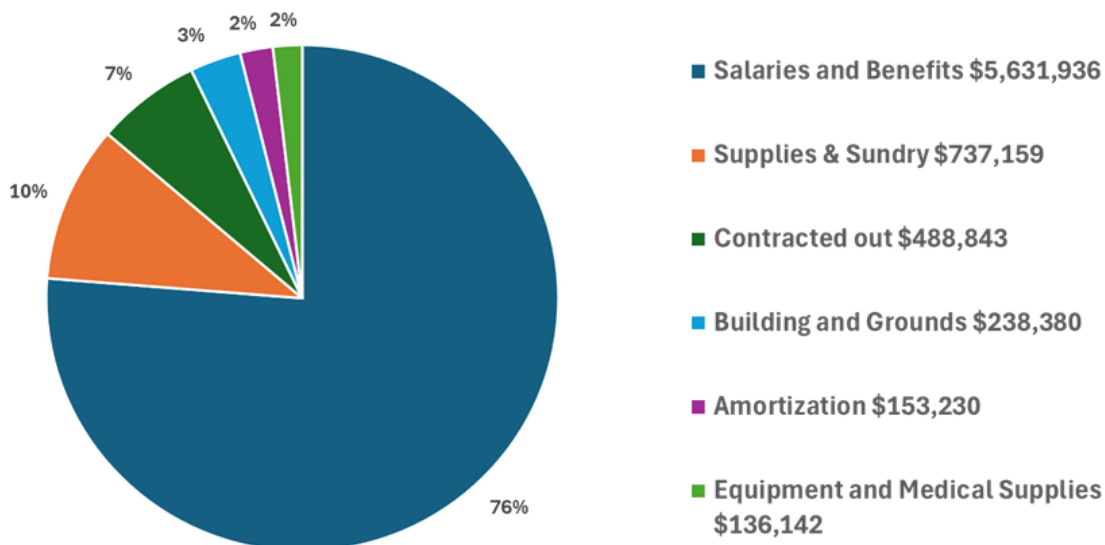
Donations
supported
free rides to
dialysis
treatments

With compassionate support from a local church congregation and a women's group, our Centre gifted **110 Good Food Boxes** to 30 unique community households.

Revenue \$7,427,880



Expenses \$7,385,690



Full financial report for period
ending March 31, 2025
available online:
wechc.on.ca





West Elgin
Community
Health Centre

West Elgin Community Health Centre

153 Main Street
West Lorne ON, N0L 2P0
T 519-768-1715
info@wechc.on.ca

East Elgin Diabetes Education Program

424 Talbot Street West, Unit L9
Aylmer, Ontario , N5H 1K9
T 519-765-4797



Alliance for Healthier Communities
Alliance pour des communautés en santé

Reimagine. Reconnect. Redesign.

Funded By:



2024 -2025
Annual Report

