



Rexdale Community Health Centre Community Forum

Rexdale Community Health Centre Fall 2008 Community Forums

FINAL REPORT

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on behalf of Rexdale Community Health Centre

OVERVIEW

In July 2006, the Ontario Ministry of Health and Long-Term Care announced support for the development of eight new satellite community health centres (CHCs) in the province. Rexdale Community Health Centre was designated as the sponsoring organization for two of these satellites – the Kipling-Dixon CHC Satellite and what has since become known as the Jamestown ‘Hub’.

The Jamestown neighbourhood was one of 13 identified by the City of Toronto and the United Way’s Strong Neighbourhoods Report as a ‘priority neighbourhood’, while Kipling-Dixon borders the priority neighbourhood of Weston-Mt. Dennis and shares many of the same issues. Priority neighbourhoods are those deemed most vulnerable for negative outcomes including lower school attainment, more unemployment, greater health problems, aging housing stock and less social infrastructure.

To reinforce informed decision-making regarding staffing and service planning for the two satellite CHCs, Rexdale Community Health Centre undertook an extensive environmental scan and community engagement initiative in 2007.

From a quantitative perspective, the CHC conducted a comprehensive review of 2006 Census data covering socio-demographic characteristics (i.e. population growth rate, age, gender, racialised and ethno-cultural groups, immigration, language), socio-economic indicators (i.e. education, employment, household income, housing, family composition, living arrangements), health status (i.e. births, chronic diseases, HIV/AIDs, mental health, disability, hospitalizations), health practices (i.e. preventative care), and access to health care.

The information gained from this review was further reinforced through qualitative research acquired through the implementation of community engagement initiatives in each of the two neighbourhoods.

In Kipling-Dixon, the CHC conducted a youth health needs survey, 40 stakeholder interviews, and six focus groups with priority populations. Two community forum events were also held and included a mix of presentations and small group discussions.

In Jamestown, the CHC conducted individual interviews with 25 service providers, and hosted five focus groups and two community forum events.

A consultation session with community leaders and provider agencies serving the Somalian community generated information about population needs in both the Jamestown and Kipling-Dixon neighbourhoods.

Based on both the qualitative and quantitative research, Rexdale Community Health Centre generated two comprehensive reports in July 2007 that summarized key findings in both Jamestown and Kipling-Dixon. These reports were posted to the CHC’s website for access by key CHC stakeholders including staff, clients, community residents and local service providers.

COMMUNITY FORUMS 2008

In October 2008, Rexdale Community Health Centre hosted four community forums as a follow-up to the release of the 2007 Jamestown 'Hub' and Kipling-Dixon CHC Satellite Reports as follows:

Wednesday, October 8, 2008
6:00 p.m. – 8:00 p.m.
Kipling Acres

Saturday, October 18, 2008
10:00 a.m. – 12:00 noon
Kipling Acres

Thursday, October 16, 2008
6:30 p.m. – 8:30 p.m.
Kipling Collegiate

Sunday, October 19, 2008
10:00 a.m. – 12:00 noon
Elmbank Community Centre

PURPOSE

The purpose of the community forums was:

- To update community residents and local service providers about progress being made on development of the Kipling-Dixon CHC Satellite and the Jamestown 'Hub' and to outline the next steps
- To reinforce Rexdale CHC's Strategic Direction
- To raise awareness about how Aging at Home funds will be used to support and expand Rexdale CHC's ethno-cultural seniors program
- To provide the community with an opportunity to identify any needs or priorities that have emerged since the last community forums
- To identify the best mechanisms for keeping the community informed of ongoing progress on the two initiatives as well as on Rexdale CHC programs and services

PROMOTION

The community forums were promoted extensively throughout the Jamestown and Kipling-Dixon neighbourhoods including newspaper advertisements in the Etobicoke Guardian, the Ajit Weekly, the Somalian-Canadian Times, the Caribbean Camera and the Weekly Khabarnama. Public service announcements were also broadcast on 770 AM (Urdu, Punjabi and Caribbean communities) and flyers were posted throughout the communities in shopping plazas/centres, community service organizations, schools and banks.

Information about the community forums was posted on Rexdale CHC's website and e-mails promoting the events were distributed to community collaborators, partners and listserves.

All four venues were wheelchair accessible, offered free parking and were accessible by public transit. The forums were hosted in English, with interpreters available for those attendees who needed them. Complementary refreshments were provided.

FORMAT

The first three forums were hosted by Rexdale CHC's new Board Chair, Altaf Stationwala and incoming Executive Director Safia Ahmed. The fourth was hosted by Clinical Director Wady Dyson.

A total of 77 participants attended the forums including Rexdale CHC board members, staff, clients and volunteers, as well as local service providers and community residents. Board and staff representatives from the Central West Local Health Integration Network (Central West LHIN) attended the first three forums.

Attendance at the forums allowed for informal, interactive sessions that included a mix of formal presentations followed by an open dialogue with attendees. The Rexdale CHC Board Chair provided an overview of the 2007 community engagement process, a brief overview of the Jamestown Hub and Kipling-Dixon CHC Satellite findings and a summary of the CHC's Strategic Direction. The incoming Executive Director provided an update on progress that has been made to date on development of the Jamestown Hub and the Kipling-Dixon CHC Satellite, discussed next steps, and summarized plans for expansion of the CHC's ethno-cultural seniors program using funds provided by the Central West LHIN through the Aging at Home strategy.

During the open dialogue portion of the sessions, participants were asked to identify needs and priorities that had emerged since the 2007 community engagement activities and to shed insight on what communication tools would be most effective in reaching them with progress reports on Rexdale CHC activities and updates on development of the CHC satellites in Jamestown and Kipling-Dixon. The small group setting in each of the forums allowed for healthy dialogue on these topics and participants were open in sharing their thoughts with Rexdale CHC leaders.

Rexdale CHC Strategic Direction

Rexdale CHC has experienced significant change since the 2007 reports on the Jamestown and Kipling-Dixon CHC Satellite community engagement sessions were published. A new board was appointed in June 2008, and a new Executive Director will be in place as of October 21, 2008.

During the course of the community forums, the new Board Chair reinforced Rexdale CHC's Strategic Direction to:

- provide accessible programs and services that are responsive to community needs
- maintain a healthy and sustainable organization
- strengthen relationships and partnerships
- strengthen role in advocacy and social action

Being responsive to community needs means engaging community residents to better understand what those needs are and to reaffirm that the CHC is moving in the right direction to meet those needs. Delivering appropriate services relies on hiring the right staff with the right skillsets and developing strong partnerships with government, funders, agencies and other partners. The overall objective is to improve access to services, particularly for vulnerable populations within the community.

Kipling-Dixon CHC Satellite

The Kipling-Dixon CHC Satellite is slated to open in space in the south end of the Westway Plaza, a shopping centre located at 1723 Kipling Avenue at the intersection of Kipling Avenue and Dixon Road.

The space was selected based on community feedback generated during the 2007 community engagement sessions which called for a central, accessible space close to other amenities. The plaza offers abundant parking, is accessible by TTC and offers onsite complementary services that include a pharmacy, lab, walk-in clinic and bank. The two-level space covers a total of 7,014 square feet and is connected by an elevator for ease of access to services.

Rexdale CHC is currently in lease negotiations with the owner of the plaza. Once a lease has been signed, the CHC will prepare a capital funding request for the Ministry of Health and Long-Term Care, engage an architectural firm to design the layout, seek approval from the Ministry of Health for the design and renovation costs, renovate the space, hire people to staff the satellite and then open the facility to the public.

In response to key findings generated from the 2007 community engagement sessions, the Kipling-Dixon CHC Satellite will provide a range of programs and services that address primary health care, mental health and addictions, services for children and families, youth programs, programs for seniors, programs for girls and women, poverty reduction programs and newcomer services.

Rexdale CHC anticipates that the Kipling-Dixon CHC Satellite will open in about 14 months.

Jamestown Hub

The concept of a community 'hub' is a relatively new one in health care. It's essentially a central place within the community that brings together local residents and community-based service providers including medical, social and community services, all under one roof.

This one-stop shopping approach to service delivery calls for a large space where multiple service providers can function within close proximity to each other. The Rexdale CHC is currently working in collaboration with a number of service providers to develop the Jamestown Hub.

The former Father Henry Carr Catholic Secondary School at 15 Panorama Court, just north of the Kipling Avenue/Finch Avenue intersection, has been identified as the ideal location for the Jamestown Hub, offering 45,000 square feet of usable space. Environmental and building condition assessments have already been completed and additional financial and service partners for development of the hub have been established.

The former school must first be designated as surplus by the Toronto Catholic District School Board. Once designated as surplus, other school boards have a 3-month window in which to bid on the space before the City of Toronto is able to sub-lease it. In the meantime work is being done to confirm which community partners will be participating in the Jamestown Hub and what their respective space needs are. Once the space has been sub-

leased from the City of Toronto, it will be renovated, service will move in, and the hub will be opened to the community.

Key findings generated from the 2007 community engagement sessions identified a need for the hub to offer health services, immigration and settlement services, legal services, housing and support services, youth and children's programs, seniors programs, and crisis response, mediation and conflict resolution services.

The timelines for completion of the Jamestown Hub are difficult to target as the financial management and administration of the Toronto Catholic District School Board are currently under the supervision of the province. The current target date for completion is in about 2-3 years.

Aging at Home Initiative

Rexdale CHC has received funding from the Central West LHIN through its Aging at Home strategy to further develop and expand its ethno-cultural seniors program with a focus on the provision of services in Jamestown, North Etobicoke and Kipling-Dixon. Two full-time employees have been hired to support the program.

The objective of the Aging at Home strategy is to help seniors remain living independently at home as long as possible. The current ethno-cultural seniors program offers a weekly health and fitness program and arts and crafts program. Further development of the program will include the addition of three drop-in centres, congregate dining three times a week, friendly home visiting and telephone calls to help address isolation, interpretation services, child minding during program hours for seniors who care for grandchildren, recreational activities and personal support services.

OUTCOMES

During the open dialogue portion of the community forums, participants were asked to respond to two questions:

1. Are there any needs and priorities that we have missed? Have any new priorities emerged since the last community engagement sessions?
2. How can Rexdale Community Health Centre keep you better informed?

The following tables outline the themes that emerged during the course of these discussions. Overall, participants responded positively to the progress that has been made to date on development of the Jamestown Hub and Kipling-Dixon CHC Satellite. Rexdale CHC board members, staff and volunteers were applauded for the work that has been done to address community feedback received by the CHC during the 2007 community engagement initiative and participants were pleased to see evidence of that feedback reflected in the planning for the two satellite CHCs. The CHC was also acknowledged by participants for its ongoing commitment to community engagement to identify emerging gaps and issues within the communities it serves.

QUESTION #1: EMERGING NEEDS & PRIORITIES	
Access to CHC services	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • intake is closed • waiting list of 20 people for CHC seniors program – no more room to take them • shortage of primary care physicians and nurse practitioners • review existing CHC processes to improve access
Services for uninsured/impooverished persons	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • access to medically necessary medications • access to specialists • designated funding for uninsured
Primary care services – physician assessments	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • access to primary care physicians/psychiatrists who can help individuals to complete medical forms needed for Ontario Disability • significant concern for those with mental health issues • requires medical expertise and familiarity with medical forms used for disability • delays in medical form completion can lead to 2-year wait for disability approval
Services for young women	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • teen pregnancy support/prevention • outreach program/Group meetings • after school program • culturally sensitive services
Youth services – support programs	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • outreach program in schools • support youth with self-esteem, making good choices • needs assessment for youth – identify sectors that need resources most • explore partnership opportunities (i.e. Humber College)
Intergenerational programming	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • education and support • culturally sensitive services • conflict resolution
Services for newcomers	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • settlement services • education, employment, legal issues
Mental health services	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • gambling and addictions services • recreational programs

Dialogue concerning emerging needs and priorities focused heavily on issues related to access to community health centre services, on the development of programs for youth, and on access to primary care.

Intake for services at Rexdale Community Health Centre is currently closed in large part due to clinical staffing shortages. The CHC is actively recruiting for primary care physicians, nurse practitioners and other health professionals in a highly competitive environment and continues to focus its efforts on addressing the needs of high priority populations. It is also reviewing its current processes and systems to determine if there are ways in which it can improve access to services within its existing staffing levels.

Within the Central West LHIN, new initiatives like the emergence of Family Health Teams and the development of the Jamestown Hub and Kipling-Dixon CHC Satellite are all expected to have a positive impact on improving community access to primary care.

The availability of services for youth, particularly young female teenagers, was raised at all four forums. There is a desire to see improved access to services that support pregnant teens, as well as services that provide programming for teens after school. Intergenerational programming was also seen as an important tool for promoting understanding amongst youth and their families throughout the community.

QUESTION #2: MECHANISMS FOR KEEPING COMMUNITY INFORMED	
Face-to-face	<u>Community Outreach</u> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • schools/colleges <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • school councils • parent councils • schools are important channel for connecting with new Canadians • service clubs • temples/churches/synagogues • community centres • libraries • seniors centres • shopping malls (i.e. the Albion Centre)
Print media	<u>Newspapers</u> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • community advertisements in Toronto Star (i.e. community events section) • articles/advertisements in Etobicoke Guardian newspaper • engage ethnic newspapers <u>Flyers/Bulletins</u> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • monthly bulletin distributed to information centres in drug stores,

QUESTION #2: MECHANISMS FOR KEEPING COMMUNITY INFORMED	
	<p>grocery stores, ethnic stores, shopping malls, employment service centres, agencies, bus stops</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> invite Rexdale CHC volunteers to distribute flyers/bulletins to homes of housebound neighbours/ethnic communities <p><u>Translated Materials</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> produce key information materials (i.e. Program Calendar) and event flyers into predominant languages spoken in community
Broadcast media	<p><u>Television</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> programming/information on Rogers Cable TV ethnic television programming <p><u>Radio</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> community spots on Humber Radio (Humber College) CBC Radio (i.e. talk show interviews, phone-in show) ethnic radio programming
Online media	<p><u>Website Presence</u> (via link to CHC website)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Ministry of Health & Long-Term Care Central West LHIN Association of Ontario Health Centres

There was strong support at all four forums for generating increased face-to-face interactions between Rexdale CHC and community residents as a means for raising awareness of CHC programs and services, and for keeping people up-to-date with ongoing CHC activities. There was a perception that many in the community are unaware of the breadth of programs and services offered through the CHC and that this was a barrier to access.

Participants indicated a need for the CHC to complement print and online communications with a greater presence in the community. In particular, schools were seen as an ideal venue for reaching new Canadians, as were employment centres.

Shopping malls were also identified as ideal locations where CHC staff and volunteers could meet with all sectors of the community in an informal setting.

The Board Chair floated the concept of a formal community liaison committee with structured meetings whose membership would include agencies, key partners and consumers

as a means for engaging the community. Service providers present at the forums suggested that there are already enough formal mechanisms of this nature in place for the exchange of information between organizations, and that perhaps those should be utilized rather than creating something new.

A common theme throughout dialogue regarding communication was the need to translate CHC materials into the most predominant languages spoken within the communities served by the CHC. Participants felt this approach would serve to engage a much broader sector within the community. This theme was further reinforced with the suggestion that greater effort be placed on engaging ethnic newspapers, television and radio stations for raising awareness of Rexdale CHC activities, programs and services.

NEXT STEPS

At the conclusion of the community forums, participants were invited to share any additional thoughts or suggestions with Rexdale CHC through its online e-mail address for community forum input and through its onsite suggestion box at 8 Taber Road in Rexdale.

Rexdale CHC leadership will review the feedback generated through the four community forums and will take this input into consideration as it moves forward with its Strategic Direction and with planning for the Jamestown Hub and Kipling-Dixon CHC Satellite.

The CHC is committed to keeping its staff, volunteers, clients, partners, agencies, community leaders and local residents informed of its activities and its progress in the development of the two satellite CHCs in a timely manner.



Rexdale Community Health Centre Community Forum

Rexdale Community Health Centre is a multi-service centre offering free quality health care, community support and activities for women, children, families, youth, adults and seniors of diverse cultures.

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