



STRONGER TOGETHER:

The power of collaboration & community

2022–2023 ANNUAL REPORT



Access Alliance
Multicultural Health and Community Services

New Beginnings for Newcomers.

Leadership Message

As the world comes to terms with the new realities of living and working in the age of COVID-19, at Access Alliance we continue to focus on renewal, recovery, and working alongside communities most impacted by the pandemic. This year we are focussed on rebooting and refreshing programs that were disrupted during the pandemic and integrating new ways of working to optimize the services we provide—from primary care and food insecurity programs to settlement and interpretation services.

In collaboration with our staff, volunteers, students, community partners, funders and other key stakeholders, we affirm our commitment to improve health outcomes for newcomers, immigrants, non-status residents and their communities. Over the past year we have:

- **Prioritized partnerships to amplify and extend access to services such as housing help, employment;**
- **Launched multi-year, multi-partner initiatives to deliver mental health programming for specific populations both on site at our facilities as well as off-site with other organizations;**
- **Stepped up (again) to provide primary care services for refugee arrivals – in this case Afghan and subsequently Ukrainian refugees in their temporary hotel accommodations**
- **Developed and launched our Standard Guide for Incorporating Remote Program and Service Provision into a Multi-Modality Service Provision Approach;**
- **Created a new virtual platform RioMix – Remote Interpretation Ontario's Multilingual Information eXchange, which is a collaborative, accessible repository of translated materials and websites relating to health and community care and support. The most recent focus for building the repository has been mental health resources from trusted national sources.**

Building on our Strategic Plan *Centering Clients Voices* we remain focused on addressing the deepening disparities in society and leveraging the power of collaboration through our systems change initiatives.

Grateful for our strong partners, inspired by our resilient clients and communities, we are proud of our accomplishments and thank all who contributed to our success. We look forward to 2023-2024 and celebrating our 35th Anniversary.

Axelle Janczur
Executive Director



Michael Torres,
Chair, Board of Directors



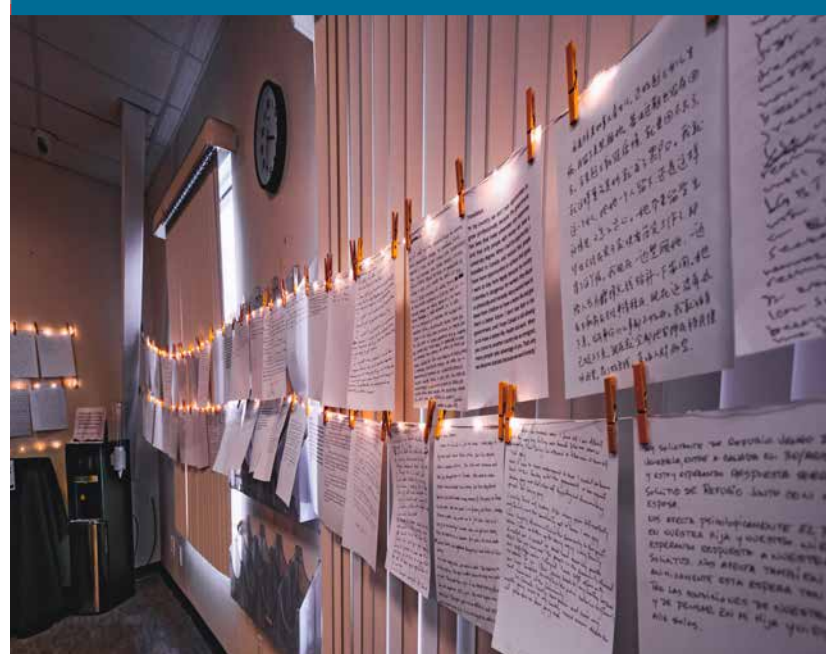
Status for All

Clients and communities who are undocumented and uninsured have been priority populations for Access Alliance for decades, both in terms of advocating for their rights and filling service gaps. More recently, in response to a policy window presented by the federal government in December 2021, we have ramped up our advocacy efforts through the Status for All (#StatusForAll) campaign. Alongside key partners including Migrant Rights Network, Migrant Worker's Alliance for Change and Worker's Action Centre, our collective call to the federal government is to grant permanent resident status to all people without permanent immigration status, including undocumented and failed migrants.

Our unique contributions to the #StatusForAll campaign began in the fall of 2022. We collected and exhibited 125 handwritten stories from undocumented people in Toronto, many of whom were our own Non-Insured Walk-In Clinic (NIWIC) patients. We were awarded a certificate of recognition for this initiative from MPP Doly Begum, but the work didn't stop there. We wrote letters to MPs in our local ridings, ran a postcard campaign targeting key decision-makers in Parliament, and held meetings with two Cabinet Ministers to promote our position.

To further raise the voices of our undocumented story authors, we developed a partnership with Shakespeare in Action theatre company. Together we've received approval to display the *Undocumented.Stories* exhibit as part of Toronto's Nuit Blanche (September 2023), where the authors will have the opportunity to be involved in a multimedia version of the exhibit.

Lastly, on the horizon is the publication of our *Undocumented.Stories* [book](#), an online and print advocacy tool which will be used to urge a re-envisioning of our immigration system as one that is equitable, accessible and inclusive.



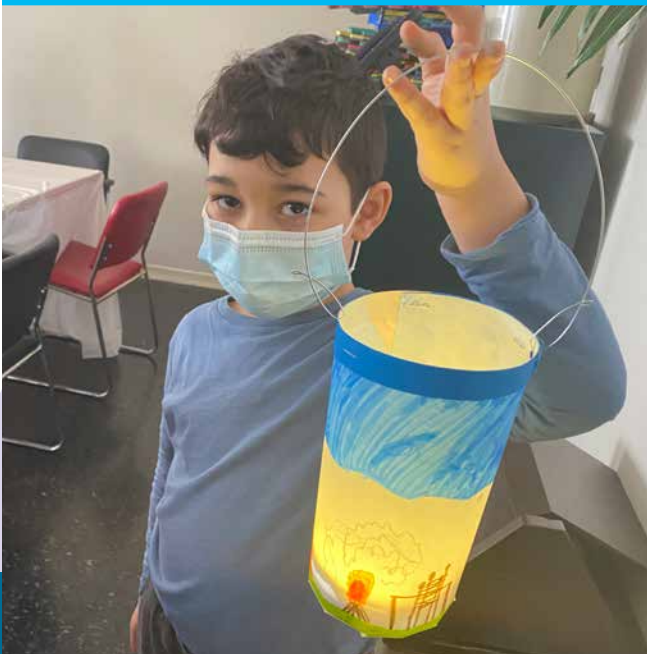
Community Arts & Mental Health



Our expressive arts programming continues to be an effective approach to improving the mental wellbeing of newcomers in Toronto. This year we've witnessed the positive impact of over 40 art-based virtual and in-person programs. Program practices such as movement, music, visual arts, and puppetry help break social isolation, strengthen community connections, and promote personal autonomy and self-care.

This year, Access Alliance has increased its capacity to offer a diverse range of arts programming by hiring art therapists and community artists as the main facilitators, working alongside an interdisciplinary team of healthcare staff. With specific art-based funding, we also developed an inventory of art-based resources and materials and offered more frequent art programs, initiatives and workshops.

Most recently, we are leading a multi-year, culturally-safe and creative research project to identify the most effective expressive arts practice for newcomer women survivors of domestic violence. The HEAL (Hubs of Expressive Arts for Life) project—funded by the Public Health Agency of Canada (PHAC)—uses art as a tool for healing trauma, for self-expression, and for learning about healthy relationships and human rights. HEAL's findings will be used across settlement, healthcare and gender-based domestic violence sectors, increasing our collaborative efforts.



“

I was able to learn more about stress by drawing my feelings. Also when we few women get together this helps a lot, it is a good environment that can prevent us from thinking about our past and present stresses. It is a short time we can have fun all together and forget about our worries.

AFGHAN REFUGEE EXPRESSIVE ARTS PROGRAM PARTICIPANT

Partnership Highlights

NIWIC

The Non-Insured Walk in Clinic (NIWIC) is operated by Access Alliance in partnership with six other CHCs and the West End Midwives. The goal of the NIWIC is to provide acute/episodic care to uninsured/non-status clients and connect medically-complex clients to ongoing primary care and specialist services. Services include primary care, referrals as required, midwives for prenatal care, health coaching and peer support. Interpretation is available as needed. The clinic allows for increased access, improved care, supported pathways, processes, practices, reduced progression to severe health outcomes and reduced inappropriate use of emergency level services.

A welcoming space offering a combination of walk-in service and appointments, the NIWIC is a unique service in the City of Toronto dedicated to providing non-insured residents with episodic health care services. Over the past year, it has served 1052 clients.

Airport Hotel Refugee Clinic

Access Alliance and COSTI Immigrant Services are leaders in refugee health, and our partnership in the Airport Hotel Refugee Clinic is a testament to our commitment to providing high-quality healthcare services to the most vulnerable members of our society.

Our Hotel Clinic provides a range of services including primary care, mental health support, and counseling to refugees and new immigrants to Canada who may have experienced trauma and other challenges. In the past year, 1377 patients receive personalized care from a team of compassionate healthcare professionals dedicated to helping them overcome the challenges of their new lives in Canada.

Our partnership with COSTI agency allows us to leverage our expertise in refugee health and provide a unique service to refugees as they arrive in Canada. This initiative is a good example of the positive impact that can be achieved when organizations come together to address the pressing healthcare needs of refugees and newcomers to Canada.



Employment Services and Housing Program

Our employment service and housing program partnerships align with our strategic priority to *address social determinants of health through cross-sectoral collaboration*.

In the fall of 2022, Access Alliance and The Neighborhood Group (TNG) launched an Employment Services program at AccessPoint on Danforth (APOD). This partnership has been making a significant positive impact on APOD clients, who now have access to free employment services and workshops to enhance their employability skills. The TNG's employment counsellor provides bi-weekly satellite service out of APOD, and offers additional holistic services to support our clients' success in the Canadian labour market. A referral service has also been introduced, assisting Access Alliance clients in gaining full-time employment over the fall/winter.

Also in 2022, East York East Toronto Family Resources (EYET) Housing Help Centre resumed its in-person itinerant housing services, which had paused during the pandemic. Services are now available at APOD every Tuesday (full-day) and Saturday (half-day). Affordable housing is one of the priority needs for many of our clients and they have appreciated the return of in-person housing services.

Newcomer Youth Wellness Hub

In partnership with Downsview and Greenwood Secondary Schools, the Access Alliance Youth team runs multiple engaging in-school programs for newcomer high school youth centered around themes like nutrition, expressive arts, and leadership skills.

At our APOD location we've joined forces with TNG for our Youth Wellness Hub, focused on supporting the mental health of newcomer youth. Funded by multiple governmental and public foundations, the Hub leverages the participants own leadership skills to promote newcomer youth mental health.



AccessPoint Online

In the past year, Access Alliance has prioritized the continuation of our remote programs and services, recognizing the significant role they played in providing accessible healthcare services and community programming to our clients during the pandemic.

In order to build our understanding and awareness of better tools for offering our digital programs and services to our newcomer clients, we collaborated with renowned digital health experts, like Access Alliance research partner Ibukun Aberjinde. A scientist and Global Health researcher at Women's College Hospital Institute for Health System Solutions and Virtual Care, Ibukun spoke at a 2022 all-staff meeting on the virtual care experience. Backed by her research on understanding migrants' experiences of virtual care, she shared insights and information about the importance of quality, compassionate digital transformation in healthcare.

In March 2023, after focused development work, we successfully launched Ocean, a secure online appointment booking platform, with the pilot funded by the Ministry of Health. Our primary care team is now moving forward with the Ocean platform, offering a secure, accessible online alternative for patients to book appointments, contact providers, and access healthcare information.

We are also proud to have expanded our RioMix database, which enables us to provide essential resources and support to our community. RioMix is an online library for multilingual health information, and makes it easier for service providers to find and share information with their clients.

Looking ahead, we are excited to announce our next steps in further enhancing our digital strategy. We will improve our phone queuing process, further online booking, and proceed with online client registration applications. These steps will enhance the accessibility and convenience of our services.

We are also proud to have developed a standard guide of best practices for remote work, to ensure that our staff can continue to deliver high-quality services to our clients and patients regardless of their location. Adjacent to this project, we received an evaluation grant in partnership with Women's College Hospital, to evaluate our implementation process of Best Practice #3, *"The agency has a digital equity screening protocol to determine at intake or other points of care the training and support needs of clients so that they can participate meaningfully in the programs and services they need and want."*

We remain committed to building relationships, partnering with others and leveraging digital technology to enhance our services and to better serve the needs of our community.



Access Alliance Language Services

Many of Access Alliance Language Services' (AALS) partnership efforts are aimed at building capacity to respond to changing language needs, supporting language access initiatives and best practices, and quality improvement by supporting the professional development of interpreters.

BUILDING CAPACITY

AALS is committed to being responsive to changing needs for language support; often that means building capacity for emerging or underserved language communities. Collaborating with Mennonite Central Committee Ontario, we developed and delivered a workshop for Low German-speaking individuals to learn about interpreting ethics, share language resources, and explore pathways toward professional interpreting. Participants joined from Ontario and Alberta, and they continue to connect through a network coordinated by Alberta Health Sciences.

Working with Meno-Ya-Win in Sioux Lookout, our Remote Interpretation Ontario (R.I.O.) Network customers can access on-demand interpreting in Cree, Oji-Cree, and Ojibwe.

SUPPORTING LANGUAGE ACCESS INITIATIVES

We play an active role in the efforts to increase awareness about the negative impacts of unaddressed language barriers, and the need to establish and implement best practices in language access. Last year, AALS continued to support WE-SPEAK, a language access initiative to increase awareness of, and facilitate access to, language support services among health service providers across southwestern Ontario. Alongside the WE-SPEAK team, AALS provided trainings and tools for providers to work effectively with interpreters and to establish best practices for delivering care and information across language barriers.

Thanks to sponsorship from the Canadian Association of Community Health Centres, we launched a French interface of riomix.ca where providers can find health related information in over 55 languages.

QUALITY IMPROVEMENT THROUGH INTERPRETER PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT

Ongoing education is a priority for AALS, especially where we can emphasize the need for an anti-stigma approach for training. We partnered with the Ontario Council on Community Interpreting to deliver a workshop led by an Access Alliance physician about interpreting for infectious disease care, with a focus on the topic of monkeypox. Then, through a collaboration with Alzheimer Society of Toronto, AALS interpreters had the opportunity to attend a workshop aimed at dementia training for interpreters, looking at the evolution of language and terminology used in dementia-friendly care.

2022/23 AALS NUMBERS

133
languages supported
614,488
words translated

19,725
prescheduled
requests
processed

176,722
on-demand
remote calls
answered

Top 10 languages requested:

Spanish
Arabic
Portuguese
Mandarin
Cantonese
Hungarian
Farsi
Tigrigna
Vietnamese
Dari

Community & Clients



Volunteers

Volunteer hours: 3033

Number of volunteers: 160

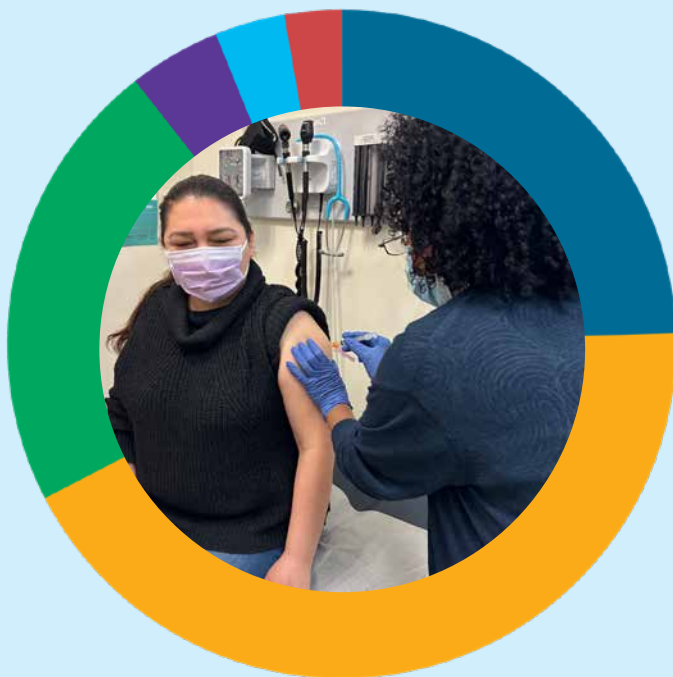


Students

Total student hours: 12282

Number of students: 53

Clients



College Site	7,580
Danforth site	13,288
Jane site	6,828
Afghan & Ukrainian Refugee Clinics	1,377
NIWIC Clinic	1,052
Other locations	851

Total number of clients
served across all locations:

30,976

Financials

Statement of combined expenditures and revenue for the year ending March 31, 2023.

Expenditures	2022	2023
Personnel expenses	7,979,446	8,693,695
Service delivery	6,905,716	7,134,289
Operating expenses	2,221,322	2,526,050
Total Expenditures	17,106,484	18,354,034

Revenue	2022	2023
Federal Grants	1,314,437	1,549,808
Provincial Grants	8,224,417	8,013,546
Municipal Grants	762,725	1,029,455
United Way	495,108	677,972
Foundations/Other	980,973	1,331,313
Language Services	5,431,287	5,850,016
Total Revenue	17,208,947	18,452,110



Thank you to our funders & donors

We gratefully acknowledge our funders and donors. Their support helps us to expand, improve and deliver essential programs and services to our communities.



Thank you to our Board, volunteers, and staff

Through the ongoing hard work and dedication of our Board, our staff, and our many volunteers, Access Alliance continues to provide programs and services and advocate our newcomer clients and diverse communities. We thank you all for your commitment and support, and look forward to advancing our mission with this invaluable team.



To learn more:

accessalliance.ca/about-us/our-board

accessalliance.ca/get-involved/volunteer-with-us

Vision, mission, values

Vision

Toronto's diverse communities achieve health with dignity.

Mission

Access Alliance provides services and advocates to improve health outcomes for immigrants, refugees, and their communities, which have been made vulnerable by systemic barriers and poverty.

Values

Collaboration

Our partnerships leverage collective action and voice to increase knowledge, capacity, respond to gaps in service delivery, and optimize resources.

Client-centred

Our clients are our most important partners and have the right to self-determination in their health and well-being.

Equity, Access and Inclusion

We are committed to challenging systemic discrimination by providing inclusive and accessible services and by engaging in health equity advocacy.

Accountability

We take responsibility for our actions and strive to be transparent about how decisions are made, and how resources are allocated.

Innovation and Excellence

We strive to be a leader in service excellence by investing in a culture of continuous learning and by seeking consistent feedback from clients and partners to improve program design and delivery.

Our vision, mission and values provide a solid framework for the programs and services we provide, guide us to our goals, and unite and strengthen our organization.

For more information about who we are, what we do and what drives our work, please visit:



Contact us

Access Alliance Downtown

340 College St., Suite 500, Toronto, ON M5T 3A9
Phone: 416.324.8677 | TalkToUs@accessalliance.ca

AccessPoint on Danforth

3079 Danforth Ave., Toronto, ON M1L 1A8
Phone: 416.693.8677

Programs & Services

For information about our programs and services, please see our online program calendar:



AccessPoint on Jane

761 Jane St., 2nd Floor, Toronto, ON M6N 4B4
Phone: 416.760.8677

Access Alliance Language Services

340 College St., Suite 500, Toronto, ON M5T 3A9
Phone: 416.324.2731 | languages@accessalliance.ca

Find us online:



RioMix:

