



**BRANTFORD BRANT NORFOLK  
ONTARIO HEALTH TEAM**



# **Every Resident Connected**

*Together We Deliver and Advance Integrated, Equitable,  
and Person-Centred Healthcare*



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## Message from the Executive Lead

*Working together to connect every resident to care.*

Over the past year, the Brantford Brant Norfolk Ontario Health Team (BBNOHT) focused on tangible changes that residents, providers, and partners can feel: more people connected to primary care, stronger pathways for chronic disease, mental health supports, and digital tools that make care easier to access and coordinate. We created a comprehensive strategy to enhance coordinated recruitment and retention efforts to bring more healthcare providers to the area.

This work reflects our shared purpose of advancing integrated, equitable, and person-centred health care across Brantford, Brant, and Norfolk. By working with primary care providers, hospitals, community organizations, public health, municipal partners, and people with lived and living experience, BBNOHT continues to move from planning to practical system change.

**Some compelling examples of our actions this past year to connect every resident to care are:**

- **An additional 2,800 people now have a primary care provider, and everyone who was on the provincial HealthCareConnect primary care waitlist in January 2025 is now receiving care.**
- **4,196 individuals received care at one of our three new Primary Care Access Clinics which were introduced for those who do not have a regular primary care provider.**
- **In collaboration with our partner agencies, the BBNOHT introduced three novel tools within our system to enhance health equity and access to care. One of those tools alone was able to support over 2600 individuals experiencing frailty.**

Thank you to every partner, provider, patient, caregiver, volunteer, and community member who contributed to this work. Together, we are building a more connected local health system where every resident can access the right care, in the right place, at the right time.

Ben Deignan  
Executive Lead  
Brantford Brant Norfolk Ontario Health Team



## Land Acknowledgement

**The Brantford Brant Norfolk Ontario Health Team acknowledges that the communities we serve are situated on the traditional territories of the Anishinaabe, Haudenosaunee, and Neutral Peoples. This land is covered by the Dish With One Spoon Wampum Belt Covenant, an agreement rooted in shared responsibility, mutual respect, and stewardship of the land and its resources.**

As an Ontario Health Team, we recognize our responsibility to advance equity and to work toward healthcare systems that are safer, more inclusive, and more responsive to the communities we serve. This includes listening to and learning from Indigenous communities, addressing systemic barriers, and embedding equity into how care is designed, delivered, and evaluated. In alignment with the Truth and Reconciliation Commission of Canada's Calls to Action, particularly Calls to Action 18 through 24 related to health, we acknowledge the importance of recognizing and addressing the health inequities faced by Indigenous Peoples, increasing cultural competency within healthcare systems, and respecting Indigenous approaches to health and wellbeing.

The BBNOHT commitment to reconciliation means moving beyond consultation toward true partnership, co-design, and shared accountability. Our actions from the past year include:

- **Meeting with Indigenous-led organizations, service providers and communities to discuss how we can support and improve services together.**
- **Ensuring all OHT member organizations and their staff have access to core equity, diversity and inclusion education. This upcoming year we are planning to expand and add Indigenous specific learning modules.**
- **Working closely with Indigenous primary care providers to ensure that the expansion of team-based primary care to our population includes the expansion of Indigenous-led care.**

At BBNOHT, we will continue to advance from intention to action in our commitment to genuine allyship, fostering meaningful partnerships and the co-design of Indigenous-led services to ensure that care across our region is culturally safe, community-informed, and reflective of Indigenous voices and priorities.



## Our Partner Organizations



# Who We Are and Who We Serve

Established in 2019, the Brantford Brant Norfolk Ontario Health Team (BBNOHT) is a partnership of 19 health, community, primary care, hospital, public health, and social service organizations working with residents and providers to improve care for more than 200,000 people across Brantford, Brant, and Norfolk. Through collaboration and system integration, BBNOHT supports more connected care by improving access, reducing duplication, strengthening service navigation and aligning services across sectors.



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## Meet Our Team



**Ben Deignan**  
Executive Lead



**Hayley Francis**  
Administrative  
Assistant



**Kerry-Anne Bartlett**  
Executive Assistant



**Anita Langlois**  
Manager of Primary Care  
Recruitment and Retention



**Jennifer Miller**  
Project Manager  
Integrated Programs



**Ellen D'Antimo**  
Integration Lead  
Mental Health and Addictions



**Arooba Gul**  
People with Lived  
Experience Coordinator



**Sonia Hayer**  
Equity, Diversity,  
Inclusion Coordinator



**Connie DeBenedet**  
Director of Digital Health  
and Decision Support



**Priyanka Sharma**  
Integration Specialist  
Digital Health





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## BBNOHT at a Glance



**19**

Partner Organizations



**2,604**

Frailty Screenings Completed



**15**

Community Outreach  
Events Attended



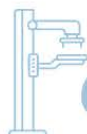
**2,360**

Patient Experience Surveys  
Completed



**\$812,600**

Provincial Investment to  
Expand Primary Care



**60.6%**

Residents Up To Date on  
Mammogram Screening Rate



**1,665**

ConnectMyHealth  
Registrations



**2,800+**

Residents Connected to  
Primary Care This Year



**59,362**

Patients with Access to Online  
Appointment Booking



**10**

Focus Groups Completed



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# Expand Access to Primary Care

Primary care is the foundation of the healthcare system. Primary care can include preventive care, chronic disease management, mental health services, and coordination with specialists. Despite its essential role, many Ontario residents continue to face challenges accessing a family doctor or nurse practitioner. Improving timely access to primary care remains one of the BBNOHT's highest priorities.

## Provincial Investment and Local Attachment

Through Ontario's Primary Care Action Plan, BBNOHT received \$812,600 to improve primary care access across Brantford, Brant, and Norfolk. In its first year, the initiative exceeded its goal by connecting more than 2,800 residents to primary care. An additional \$2.4 million investment will expand team-based primary care access for more than 6,300 residents in 2026.



3

Access Clinics



4,196

Patients Served in  
2025

"One of our greatest achievements has been the strong collaboration across primary care teams. By working together, we've strengthened continuity of care and improved access to services for our community."

Tina Gabriel - Executive Director,  
Primacare Community Family Health Team

## Access and Attachment Clinics

To improve access for residents without a family physician or nurse practitioner, the BBNOHT established three Access and Attachment Clinics at Grand River Community Health Centre, Norfolk Family Health Team, and PrimaCare Community Family Health Team.

The clinics provide appointment-based primary care for unattached patients, including chronic disease management, preventive care, mental health services, and treatment for minor illnesses and injuries, while helping connect patients to ongoing primary care through Healthcare Connect.

For more information, visit: [BBNOHT Access Clinics](#)



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# Expand Access to Primary Care

## Partnering for Recruitment and Retention

The BBNOHT and Brantford Brant Norfolk Primary Care Network partnered with the City of Brantford to strengthen recruitment and retention of family physicians, nurse practitioners, and allied health professionals. The City's \$450,000 investment supports staffing, marketing, outreach, and recruitment incentives over two years. In March 2026, BBNOHT welcomed a new Program Manager, Primary Care Recruitment and Retention, through funding provided by the City of Brantford. This dedicated role will lead regional recruitment and retention initiatives aimed at improving long-term access to primary care across Brantford.

## Bringing Cancer Screening Closer to the Community

BBNOHT continues to support the Mobile Cancer Screening Coach, which provides breast, cervical, and colon cancer screening for residents facing barriers to care, including those without a family doctor. The Coach visits Brantford and Norfolk regularly, improving access to essential preventive screening. [Click here to find a location near you](#)



## Connecting Residents Through Health Care Connect

The BBNOHT continues to encourage unattached residents to register with Health Care Connect. With the regional waitlist cleared and providers actively accepting new patients, residents have increased opportunities to become connected to primary care. To access, visit [Health Care Connect](#) or call 8-1-1 anytime (available 24/7).

Over **2,800 Residents** became connected to primary care last year

## Frailty Screening Pilot Project

Frailty affects an individual's ability to recover from illness or injury and is most common among older adults. Early identification allows for timely interventions which help to prevent or delay further decline and in some cases reverse progression.

In 2025, BBNOHT launched a pilot frailty screening initiative across hospital, primary care, and community support settings. Screening is currently conducted at Brantford General Hospital and Norfolk General Hospital, as well as through the Norfolk Family Health Team, Adult Recreation Therapy Centre (ARTC), and Victoria Order of Nursing (VON). Future efforts will focus on evaluating the screening process, expanding training, and increasing the use of frailty screening across the region.

**2,604**

Frailty  
Screenings  
Completed

# EMERGENCY



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## Integrated Care Pathways

### Chronic Disease Pathways

As part of a provincial initiative to improve chronic disease management, BBNOHT advanced Integrated Chronic Care Pathways for Chronic Obstructive Pulmonary Disease (COPD) and Diabetes, supporting more coordinated, patient-centred care. Working groups assessed current services and care processes to identify opportunities to improve access, strengthen care transitions, reduce duplication, and standardize education and referral pathways across the region.

### Key Benefits of Chronic Care Pathways



Earlier Identification  
of Needs



Better Care  
Coordination



Consistent Patient  
Education



Improved Care  
Transitions



Simplified System  
Navigation



Better Patient Experience  
and Outcomes

### Mental Health and Substance Use Integrated Care: Patient Oriented Discharge Summary (PODS)

BBNOHT supported implementation of the Patient-Oriented Discharge Summary (PODS) for individuals seeking Mental Health and Substance Use services at the Brantford General Hospital's Emergency Department, with expansion being explored at Norfolk General Hospital. PODS improves transitions from emergency care to community mental health and substance use services by providing clearer discharge information and coordinated follow-up planning.

#### My Care Guide

Name: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

| My Wellness Plan                                             |                                                  |
|--------------------------------------------------------------|--------------------------------------------------|
| <b>If I Start To Feel Or Act:</b><br>_____<br>_____<br>_____ | <b>I Can Help By:</b><br>_____<br>_____<br>_____ |

| Who Can I Talk To (Anytime)   |                                               |                                  |                                              |  |
|-------------------------------|-----------------------------------------------|----------------------------------|----------------------------------------------|--|
| ✓ Who                         | How To Contact                                | For What                         | Languages                                    |  |
| Black Youth Helpline          | 1-833-294-8650<br>*9am-10pm only              | Black Youth<br>& Family Support  | English & French<br>Translation Available    |  |
| Hope for Wellness<br>Helpline | 1-855-242-3310                                | Indigenous<br>Wellness Support   | English, French, Cree,<br>Ojibway, Inuktitut |  |
| Kids Help Phone               | Call 1-800-668-6868<br>Text CONNECT to 686868 | Youth Mental<br>Wellness Support | 100+ Languages                               |  |



# Advancing Equitable Access

## Mental Health and Substance Use Equity Gap Analysis

In partnership with Wilfred Laurier University, the BBNOHT is conducting a Mental Health and Substance Use Equity Gap Analysis to identify barriers and opportunities for improving equitable access to care. This community-embedded research initiative is examining barriers to accessing mental health and substance use services for equity-deserving populations across Brantford, Brant, and Norfolk. To date, more than 25 individuals have participated through focus groups and interviews, including:

- **Indigenous community members**
- **Black people**
- **Older adults**
- **People with disabilities**

These voices are critical, as they represent communities whose experiences have often been underrepresented in system planning.

## Medetomidine Test Strips

BBNOHT partnered with the Brantford Brant Drug Strategy and Lighthouse Community Strategy to expand access to medetomidine test strips across regional harm reduction service sites. With medetomidine increasingly found in the unregulated drug supply, test strips provide people with critical information to help reduce harm and make safer choices. This initiative represents harm reduction in action—practical, non-judgmental, and life saving.



## Anti-Stigma YouTube Videos

In partnership with the University of Windsor and Sheridan College, BBNOHT developed a series of anti-stigma videos featuring individuals sharing their lived experiences with mental health challenges. The videos aim to foster understanding, reduce stigma, and highlight the human stories behind mental health statistics. By amplifying diverse voices and experiences, this initiative promotes empathy, dignity, and person-centred care. The videos are available on the [BBNOHT YouTube channel](#).



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# Engaged Communities

## Primary Care Network

The Brantford Brant Norfolk Primary Care Network (PCN) is a provider-led partnership within the BBNOHT, representing more than 100 physicians and nurse practitioners who provide care to the majority of residents across Brantford, Brant, and Norfolk.

As a unified voice for primary care, the PCN supports collaboration, leadership, and regional system planning. Its strategic priorities include:

- Supporting provider recruitment, retention, and collaboration
- Strengthening primary care leadership
- Advancing digital integration and innovation
- Expanding equitable access to care
- Improving system navigation for patients and providers

Through this work, the PCN is helping build a more connected, accessible, and sustainable primary care system across Brantford Brant and Norfolk.

[Learn more about the Primary Care Network.](#)



**Over 100**

Engaged through emails,  
newsletters, events



The Primary Care Network (PCN) fosters ongoing engagement, communication, and collaboration across the primary care community through:

- The Annual Primary Care Networks in Action Summit
- Monthly newsletters featuring health system updates, engagement opportunities, and educational resources
- Weekly communications highlighting urgent and time-sensitive information
- Monthly PCN meetings that support collaboration and shared planning

Beyond these activities, PCN members contribute significant leadership and expertise to initiatives that improve patient outcomes and enhance provider workflows across Brantford, Brant and Norfolk.



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# Engaged Communities

## Primary Care Networks in Action Summit

In March 2026, the BBNOHT, in partnership with the Primary Care Network (PCN), hosted the inaugural Primary Care Networks in Action Summit, focused on team-based care and digital health.

The event brought together local providers, administrators, system partners, and people with lived experience to explore opportunities to strengthen primary care across Brantford, Brant, and Norfolk.

### Participation Included:

25

Physicians

5

Nurse Practitioners

7

Clinic Administrators

21

Exhibitors

Keynote speakers highlighted the future of primary care and digital innovation, while peer discussions and networking sessions supported collaboration and shared learning.

The Summit strengthened connections across the primary care community and advanced a shared vision for more coordinated, team-based care across the region.





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# Engaged Communities

## People with Lived Experience (PWLE) Network

The People with Lived Experience (PWLE) Network plays a key role in BBNOHT's work, bringing together community members, partners, and primary care representatives to inform planning, support outreach and engagement activities, and ensuring community perspectives are reflected in decision-making.

BBNOHT continues to strengthen its engagement approach through the Engagement Capable Environment Framework, supporting:

- Consistent and meaningful engagement practices
- Integration of lived experience into planning and decision-making
- Stronger community partnerships and co-design
- A focus on equity, accessibility, and inclusion

This work helps ensure services are informed by lived experience while responsive to local needs.

## What's Next?

BBNOHT will continue to expand engagement opportunities, strengthen community partnerships, and increase diverse representation to help shape future priorities and improve care experiences across the region.

## Since September 2025 BBNOHT has:



**Conducted 10 focus groups with community members and partners**



**Participated in 8 community outreach events across Brantford, Brant and Norfolk**



**Engaged more than 30 residents to help shape mental health, substance use, COPD, and diabetes care pathways**



**Shared monthly newsletters with updates, resources, and opportunities for involvement**





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## Digital Health Innovation

### Online Appointment Booking

Online Appointment Booking (OAB) continues to provide patients with convenient and flexible access to care.

This year:

- 59,362 patients had access to online booking
- 59 providers continued using OAB
- 5 new providers joined the program
- 2,360 patient surveys were completed

Patient feedback consistently demonstrated high satisfaction, with most respondents indicating that online booking was convenient, easy to use, and preferable to traditional phone booking.

### Reducing Language Barriers

Access to healthcare should not be limited by language. In 2025, the BBNOHT worked with seven partner organizations to implement enhanced translation services supporting communication in more than 300 languages and dialects, including American Sign Language (ASL).

The initiative helps healthcare providers communicate more effectively with patients and supports more equitable access to care across the region.

### ConnectMyHealth

ConnectMyHealth provides patients with secure online access to health information from participating hospitals throughout the Ontario Health West region.

Through participation from Brant Community Healthcare System and Norfolk General Hospital, patients can conveniently access their hospital health records in one location, helping them become more informed and engaged in their care. To access, visit [ConnectMyHealth](#).



# BBNOHT Partner Spotlight



## Norfolk General Hospital shows Excellence in Laboratory Services with Accreditation in Diagnostics

Accreditation Canada surveyors reviewed more than 420 requirements and highlighted the teams strong performance in several key quality and patient-safety areas. The hospital laboratory performs approximately 500,000 tests each year and plays a vital role in patient care across Norfolk County. Accreditation is recognized around the world as a mark of excellence. [To learn more, click here.](#)



## Brant Community Healthcare System Advances New Hospital Redevelopment Plans

The Brant Community Healthcare System's (BCHS) New Hospital Project is a once-in-a-generation investment in the future of healthcare for Brantford-Brant and surrounding communities.

A new, modern hospital will help meet growing healthcare needs, support economic growth, and strengthen the region's ability to attract healthcare professionals—creating lasting benefits for the entire community.

[To learn more, click here.](#)



## Norfolk Family Health Team is awarded the 2024 Bright Lights Award by the Association of Family Health Teams of Ontario

The Norfolk Family Health Team is improving access to mental health care through Talk-In, a free, no-wait counselling service for individuals without a family doctor. Launched in response to community-identified gaps in mental health support, the program offers rapid access to single-session therapy with no referral or health card required. In its first year, Talk-In helped nearly 200 people, connecting many to additional community resources and demonstrating the impact of timely, accessible mental health care.

[To learn more, click here.](#)



## Grand River Community Health Centre (GRCHC) hosts its Annual International Agriculture Workers Health Fair

Every year, thousands of international agricultural workers travel to Ontario to support the province's agricultural sector, including more than 6,000 workers in Brant, Haldimand, and Norfolk. To celebrate and support these essential workers, Grand River Community Health Centre (GRCHC), together with community partners, hosts an annual International Agricultural Workers Health Fair. The event offers workers an opportunity to connect with healthcare providers and community organizations while enjoying food, prizes, raffles, and wellness resources in a welcoming environment.

[To learn more, click here.](#)



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## Where to Find Us!



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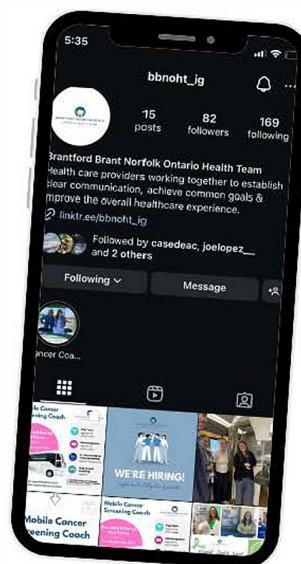
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