



Building Better Healthcare

FUNDING OUR FIVE PILLARS OF WELLNESS





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What's the value of a healthy body and a healthy mind?

Health is freedom. It's what allows us to plan for the future without worrying about what comes next.

Now, imagine someone who has struggled with homelessness and poor health. To them — and to all of us — health is everything.

Every day, Cornerstone supports more than 300 individuals in our shelter and housing programs.

But we need to build better healthcare in these programs. As the need grows, our government funding stays the same. We must not let women in our community be left behind. We need nursing. We need mental health supports.

We need you.





The Need

We are in a healthcare crisis.

Health services are becoming more rigid, more institutionalized, and faster-paced. Vulnerable women and gender-diverse people are falling through the cracks. They are meeting challenges on a deeper, darker level than most of us can imagine. And far too often, we see the way they are denied care because of the challenges they face. Four out of five people at Cornerstone do not have access to a primary care healthcare provider, aside from a hospital emergency room.

We are also seeing desperate levels of loneliness and isolation — higher than at any time since the pandemic. For too many, isolation leads to despair. We're seeing this in our programs too. From January to September 2025, we have seen 672 crisis interventions across our locations, including hundreds of calls to emergency services. In fact, we average three calls a day to police, paramedics, fire services, and ANCHOR — a mobile mental health crisis team. Times when staff are supporting someone who is in medical distress, having a mental health crisis, or is a danger to themselves or others are increasingly common. Something has to change.

We cannot wait for change. We need to build it ourselves.

While Cornerstone has a wide range of programs, we cannot do everything. We want to do better for the women we serve. And that means bringing in experts — professionals who can bridge the gaps in our services and lift up the women we serve. Our residents need healthcare that meets them where they're at: physical, mental, emotional, and cultural care.

If we don't act now, more Cornerstone residents will not receive the care they so desperately need. We will see more people in our hospital waiting rooms. We will see worse outcomes and more people suffering without adequate care.



672

Crisis interventions by
Cornerstone staff due
to poor health in 2025

3

Average number of
calls to emergency
services each day

80%

Women do not have
access to healthcare
services
(beyond emergency care)

We need your help to Build Better Healthcare
for the women we serve.



Our Vision

Cornerstone must raise \$500,000 to build better healthcare that our clients so desperately need

“Building Better Healthcare” is a [pilot project](#) that will provide healthcare to over 300 Cornerstone residents every single day for two years. It consists of five pillars of wellness described in this document.

It’s about doing something innovative, something new. We cannot wait around for our healthcare system to be fixed — [not when we have the power, right now, to lift up these women](#). This project will prove that when we invest in the health of our vulnerable communities, everyone benefits.

With these funds at our disposal, Cornerstone can grow our healthcare offerings. We can provide specialized nursing care, consistent mental health support, and a holistic approach to health and healing. With these funds, we can ensure fewer calls for emergency services, healthcare provided in 100% of our locations, and more individuals able to access primary care through a healthcare provider.

[We cannot do this work without you](#). Our community lifts up the women we care for every day. Together, we provide a future full of possibility for our residents to find safe housing, reconnect with their community and heritage, rediscover hobbies and interests, and build successful lives.

But they need their health to do this. They need your help.

In two years, we will:

Reduce staff crisis interventions by

100

incidents per year

Provide care in

100%

of our locations

80%

of clients who need access to healthcare will have it



Because everyone deserves healthcare.
Everyone deserves a healthy future.

Better Healthcare at a Glance

Cornerstone is seeking \$500,000 to build better healthcare for residents in our housing and shelter programs. This campaign consists of five pillars of wellness — each supporting women who use our services to live healthy and full lives. But we can't do it alone. We need you to help us fund these life-saving pillars.



Nursing Care

\$150,000

Everything from medication support to wound care and annual physicals will be provided by a Nurse Practitioner at Cornerstone.

1



Mental Health Care

\$200,000

Whether it's support for hoarding behaviours or mood disorders, a Psychiatric Registered Nurse will support residents with their mental health needs.

2

Indigenous Spiritual Care

\$40,000

Building on existing support we offer at Cornerstone, Indigenous care will add access to land-based treatments and cultural supplies — food, art, and more.

3



Cultural Support

\$40,000

Providing tailored care to newcomers and refugees as well as culturally diverse members of our programs is integral to ensure the best health outcomes.

4

Peer Support Worker

\$70,000

Sometimes all you need is a helping hand from someone who has been through what you're experiencing. Our Peer Worker Support program will help individuals who use substances to reduce their drug use and better find support.

5





Five Pillars of Wellness

1

Nursing Care

Cornerstone currently supports residents through a partnership with Ottawa Inner City Health. However, this partnership only covers some residents in our programs.

By hiring a Nurse Practitioner, we will reduce the strain on the emergency healthcare system through better and earlier medical interventions. Roughly 80% of the residents in our care do not have a family doctor. This nurse would provide continuous care for residents including foot care, wound care, medical referrals, medication management, as well as general health care support.

\$150,000 FOR TWO YEARS OF NURSING CARE TO SUPPORT 300 WOMEN ANNUALLY WITH COMPLEX MEDICAL NEEDS



2

Mental Health Care

Through partnerships with local mental healthcare organizations, Cornerstone currently offers counselling and referral services to only some residents.

By partnering to bring a Psychiatric Registered Nurse to our programs five days a week, we would be able to better support residents with mental illness — something more than 80% of women at Cornerstone struggle with. This nurse will provide targeted interventions to prevent hoarding behaviours, monitor and support resident mental health, as well as provide ongoing staff training around evolving best practices.

\$200,000 FOR TWO YEARS OF MENTAL HEALTH NURSING CARE TO SUPPORT 300 WOMEN ANNUALLY



3

Indigenous Spiritual Care

Cornerstone already offers specialized supports for Indigenous residents. Through this program, we would bolster our work and partnerships to better care for Indigenous clients.

With additional funds through this program, we would provide access to land-based treatment, provide cultural supplies like country food, art supplies (such as beading, soap stone, and drum-making kits), as well as transportation to cultural events that residents would be unable to otherwise attend.

\$40,000 FOR TWO YEARS OF SPECIALIZED SPIRITUAL CARE FOR OUR INDIGENOUS RESIDENTS

4

Cultural Support

As Cornerstone has grown to meet the demand for shelter services in Ottawa, we are seeing more and more refugees and newcomers using our services. From 2023 to 2024, the number of refugees in our shelter increased 411%.

By building partnerships with external organizations, we will support women from diverse cultures and religions. These partnerships will help us provide culturally-sensitive physical and mental healthcare and better train our staff to support people of all religions and backgrounds.

\$40,000 FOR TWO YEARS OF CULTURAL SUPPORT FOR THE 165 WOMEN IN OUR SHELTER

5

Peer Support Worker

Cornerstone currently provides limited harm reduction supports to residents who use substances through a partnership with Ottawa Inner City Health. However, as our new shelter has grown from 61 beds to 165, we need to increase this support, especially for women who are distrustful of traditional medical systems.

A Peer Support Worker will build bridges of trust between service users and healthcare professionals. These workers have lived experience with substance use and can help us make connections and improve healthcare for all.

\$70,000 FOR TWO YEARS OF PEER WORKERS PROVIDING LIVED EXPERIENCE SUPPORT TO WOMEN USING DRUGS

Our Programs



Emergency Shelter - 165 beds

Our largest program, which moved to a new location of Carling Ave in 2024, supports 165 women daily. Each shelter resident is offered tailored supports to find housing — whether it be in Cornerstone's housing programs or at other organizations. The average length of stay is 90 days.



MacLaren Residence - 19 units

Our oldest supportive housing residence, opened in 1989. This residence supports 19 individuals to live semi-independently, while still following a supportive housing model. Here, residents are supported in affordable, long-term living units in Centretown.



Booth Residence - 42 units

Booth Residence offers long-term, supportive housing for 42 individuals. Opened in 2011, the residence consists of a 20-unit supportive aging-at-home program for senior women and a supported living program that provides 22 units for women with complex needs.



Princeton Residence - 42 units

Our second newest housing community, built in 2018, provides a permanent home for 42 women needing moderate support, with unique Indigenous and Cultural Services for the over 40% of Indigenous residents.



Eccles Residence - 46 units

Our newest residence, opened in 2024, which houses 46 women with complex mental health and substance use disorders. Existing programs include partnerships with Minwaashin Lodge and the Ottawa Rape Crisis Centre. Almost 50% of residents in this program identify as Indigenous.

Our Costs Over Two Years

Existing Healthcare Services at Cornerstone

Ottawa Inner City Health Partnership	\$70,000
Minwaashin Lodge	\$80,000
Royal Mental Health Centre	No cost to Cornerstone
Pinecrest Queensway Hospital	No cost to Cornerstone
Ottawa Inner City Health - Aging at Home	No cost to Cornerstone
TOTAL EXPENSES	\$150,000

Where We Need You

Nurse Practitioner	\$150,000
Psychiatric Nurse Practitioner	\$200,000
Indigenous Spiritual Care	\$40,000
Cultural Support	\$40,000
Peer Support Worker	\$70,000
TOTAL NEEDED	\$500,000



From our Residents



Krystal

When Krystal first came to Cornerstone, she had been living in her car for months. She lost her job and then later her housing during the pandemic. Then, she was diagnosed with heart failure. Through Cornerstone, Krystal — now housed at our Booth Street Residence — has found support, but not as much as she needs. Her heart health requires care at a hospital, because without on-site nursing, she must travel to do outpatient care that could be done on site at Cornerstone. Much of the mental health and spiritual care that's needed with a diagnosis of heart disease is lacking because we simply don't have the funds to support this healthcare.

Kara

When Kara came to Cornerstone after years on the street, she needed support. A child who experienced the horrors of the 60s scoop and the Residential Schools system, Kara had struggled for years. When she came to Cornerstone, she immediately connected with the Indigenous Cultural Services program. Through this program, she reconnected with a true love of hers — art. Today, she paints to heal from the trauma of her childhood. She has even become a bit of a big sister to some of the other women at Cornerstone. Without ongoing support or an expansion of the Indigenous Cultural Services program, Kara knows that she and many other individuals at Cornerstone will have to look to other agencies for the mental health care they need and deserve.



Will you help to build better healthcare?

Let's keep in touch:

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