

Bruce House Strategic Plan 2010-2015

Working with staff and volunteers, clients and partners, the Bruce House board of directors laid the groundwork for this five-year strategic plan with an eye to creating a better future for people in Ottawa living with HIV/AIDS.

A growing body of research has underscored the relationship between the availability of quality, affordable housing and improvements to the health and well-being of people living with HIV/AIDS. As the only organization in Ottawa with a mission to provide housing and compassionate care to this segment of our community, what Bruce House does and how it does it has a tremendous impact on the day-to-day lives of individuals, families and neighbourhoods.

Through this plan, the Bruce House board and staff seek to ensure that the organization's human and financial resources are used to optimum effect—leading to a better quality of life for those who turn to Bruce House for support.

The Bruce House board embraces the UNAIDS principle that calls for the greater involvement of people living with HIV—GIPA. That principle guided the board's approach to developing this plan. That same principle will come to life as the board and staff move forward with the plan's implementation.

Bruce House shares this plan with those who support our mission and values. We hope it inspires—trust, commitment and engagement. Together, we can make a difference.

Our values

- We are accountable to our clients, our community and each other
- We take a holistic approach that recognizes emotional, physical, social, spiritual and economic realities
- We respect diversity and differing needs including but not limited to ability, age, culture, economic status, ethnicity, lifestyle, sex, gender and sexual orientation
- We support empowerment by providing information, sharing decision-making, promoting participation and providing choices
- We engage in broad-based consultation with stakeholders and other concerned and interested parties
- We actively collaborate with individuals, organizations and the community at large to improve the quality of life for people living with HIV/AIDS
- We recognize the importance of providing a supportive working environment for paid and unpaid staff, as they provide a caring environment for our clients

About Bruce House

Since 1988 Bruce House has been providing housing, compassionate care and support for people in Ottawa living with HIV and AIDS.

The Bruce House Transition House provides around-the-clock care for up to seven men and women who require extensive physical and/or psycho-social assistance. And, through block leasing agreements and other arrangements with social service housing providers, Bruce House's Independent Living program offers 32 affordable apartment units to individuals and families living with HIV/AIDS.

A small staff and a large team of volunteers support the Transition House and Independent Living programs, and provide residents and clients with a wide range of other support services.

Bruce House receives limited funding from various federal and provincial programs. Donations from individuals and foundations and fund raising account for more than a third of the organization's annual budget.

Membership in Bruce House is open to anyone in the Ottawa community. Those attending the organization's annual meeting, which is usually held in October, elect board members to serve two-year terms. Board members chose a chair, vice-chair and other members of the board executive committee from among their number.

In keeping with the Bruce House mission statement, the board of directors sets the organization's strategic directions, establishes policies, approves the annual budget and oversees senior staff.



Our mission

Bruce House is a community-based organization providing housing, compassionate care and support in Ottawa for people living with HIV and AIDS, based on the belief that everyone has the right to live and die with dignity.

About the Bruce House strategic plan

To inform the development of this five-year strategic plan, the Bruce House board of directors surveyed residents of the Transition House, clients of the Independent Living program and more than 25 community-based organizations whose missions and strategic objectives complement those of Bruce House.

Board members and staff were also polled to glean their thoughts about the organization's existing programs, services and operating environment, and the challenges it is likely to face over the short and medium term. An environmental scan that looked at HIV/AIDS from national, provincial and regional perspectives rounded out the intelligence gathering efforts.

Staff and board members met to review these findings; to assess organizational strengths, weakness, opportunities and threats; and to identify a series of strategic directions that would guide the organization's development, and Bruce House program and service offerings over the next five years.

The board of director's strategic planning committee subsequently compiled the results of that meeting into this five-year strategic plan. The Bruce House board of directors endorsed the plan on 30 March 2010.



Strategic Direction #1

Provide more affordable, independent living units for individuals and families living with HIV/AIDS.

Rationale: Clients of the Independent Living program, community partners, board members and staff—all agreed on the critical need for Bruce House to provide additional housing units. An increasingly diverse clientele calls for a more diverse mix of housing solutions. Among the ideas discussed by board members and staff: units outside of the downtown core; housing solutions for an aging population.

- By 2015, increase the number of units available through the Independent Living program by 30 per cent over the current level.
- By 2015, ensure that 20 per cent of Independent Living units are outside of the downtown core.

Strategic Direction #2

Improve Bruce House's capacity to help residents and clients live independent, productive, quality lives.

Rationale: In their discussion of Bruce House programs and services, staff and board members called for a continuum of care aimed at optimizing the clients' quality of life through greater independence and self-reliance.

- By the beginning of fiscal 2011-2012, develop a comprehensive strategy to introduce new programs and services to enhance the quality of life of Transition House residents.
- By the beginning of fiscal 2011-2012, develop a comprehensive strategy to introduce new programs and services to enhance the quality of life of clients of the Independent Living program.

Strategic Direction #3

Improve Bruce House's human resources and business management practices and processes.

Rationale: In their discussion of organizational strengths, weaknesses, opportunities and threats, staff and board members agreed that the dedicated cadre of Bruce House staff and volunteers was a key organizational strength. They also recognized that potential staff turnovers could lead to a critical loss of organizational memory and professional expertise. Investments in staff development, knowledge sharing, knowledge transfer and improved internal communications were seen as critical to the organization's future success.

- By the beginning of fiscal 2011-2012, introduce a comprehensive human resources strategy aimed at knowledge sharing and knowledge transfer, staff development and performance measurement.
- By the beginning of fiscal 2012-2013, complete a comprehensive review of Bruce House bylaws and policies and produce a policy manual for staff and members of the board of directors.
- By the beginning of fiscal 2012-2013, complete a comprehensive internal communications review and develop policies and procedures to strengthen communications within the organization.
- At the end of each fiscal year, undertake a review of this strategic plan, measure progress and introduce adjustments as needed.

Strategic Direction #4

Strengthen Bruce House's relations with its clients, volunteers, partners and supporters.

Rationale: Community partners, board members and staff noted that while Bruce House has an extensive network of community partners, volunteers, donors and supporters, Bruce House could enhance its position by strengthening existing relationships and developing new ones. Staff identified Bruce House clients as a potential source of increased engagement and involvement.

- By the beginning of fiscal 2012-2013, develop a comprehensive community relations program.
- By the beginning of fiscal 2012-2013, develop a comprehensive volunteer and donor recognition program.
- By the beginning of fiscal 2013-2014, develop a program to better engage residents of the Transition House program and clients of the Independent Living program in the life of the Bruce House organization.

Strategic Direction #5

Build on Bruce House's capacity for innovative, community-based research and its capacity to create, apply and share knowledge about housing as it relates to people living with HIV/AIDS.

Rationale: Community partners, board members and staff recognize Bruce House as a centre of expertise on housing-related issues pertaining to people living with HIV/AIDS. Building upon and sharing that expertise through community-based research can help to improve Bruce House programs and services. It can also help to underscore the relationship between quality housing and better health outcomes for people living with HIV/AIDS—knowledge that could have applications elsewhere in Canada and beyond.

- By the beginning of fiscal 2013-2014, develop a knowledge-creation and knowledge-transfer strategy to leverage and share staff, client and board expertise—to inform Bruce House program and service offerings; and to improved the well-being of people living with HIV and AIDS everywhere.
- By the beginning of fiscal 2014-2015, develop a model for the continuum of care that links the Transition House and Independent Living programs.