

Guelph Community Health Centre  
176 Wyndham Street North  
Guelph, Ontario  
N1H 8N9

October 2, 2023

RE: Sanguen's Community Health Van

To Whom it May Concern,

We are pleased to offer a letter of support as part of Sanguen Community Health Van's delegation to the County of Wellington. Sanguen Health Centre delivers services to those in our community who face multiple barriers to housing, health, and social care due to their substance use, poverty and lack of connection to traditional services. Sanguen offers low-threshold mobile health care and social support through their Community Health Van program in 12 locations across the City of Guelph and the County, in addition to a number of specialized health care services such as blood borne infection testing and treatment.

Given the small size and tight-knit nature of rural communities people can feel highly visible and at risk of stigmatization when accessing services. To counter this, the Community Health Van has built partnerships with community organizations and has carefully selected locations where it parks to provide as safe and welcoming an environment as possible.

Community Health Van staff have also worked to build relationships and trust in rural communities, and to demonstrate the difference of the Van's harm-reduction approach from services people may have encountered in the past. Word of mouth referrals remain a key driver of new people accessing services on the Van. The employment of Peers as navigators and advocates contributes to trust and relationship building.

By including wraparound supports such as nurses and social support staff, Sanguen can ensure Hepatitis C and other specialized clinical services reach those who need it the most. By bringing health and social care and harm reduction supports directly to community spaces, such as encampments, drop-in locations, shelters and supportive housing, individuals have access to consistent, trauma-informed care to meet their health, social and housing needs.

The continuation of Sanguen's Community Health Van would support further access to both primary health and specialized care for the individuals at most risk of blood borne infection and drug poisoning. The Sanguen Van team works closely with staff of the Guelph Community Health Centre, to provide client-centred wraparound care services in our community, as well as under-served rural areas. We are huge supporters of Sanguen and see their work taking on even greater importance in the coming years. The services that they offer address known gaps in our system and facilitate opportunities for linking our most equity deserving community members to services they would not otherwise receive.

We are proud to contribute this letter of support on behalf of our organization and the people we serve.

Sincerely,

Lindsey Sodtke  
Harm Reduction Manager,  
Guelph Community Health Centre