

PCHS

HEALTH MAGAZINE



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LETTER FROM THE CEO

Amandeep Kaur CEO, PCHS



As we welcome October, I am reminded that the strength of Punjabi Community Health Services (PCHS) comes from the people and relationships at the heart of our work. Each milestone we achieve reflects the dedication of our staff, volunteers, Board of Directors, partners, funders, and community members who share our commitment to building healthier, stronger, and more inclusive communities.

On September 16, we proudly held our 31st Annual General Meeting (AGM). The AGM provided an important opportunity to reflect on the past year, celebrate our collective accomplishments, and recognize the meaningful impact of our programs and services. It was also a time to look ahead with renewed energy as we continue advancing our strategic priorities to Sustain, Grow and Expand.

I sincerely appreciate everyone who participated in our AGM and our Board of Directors for their leadership and stewardship. I am equally grateful to our staff and volunteers, whose compassion and dedication are evident every day in the support they provide to individuals, families, seniors, newcomers, children, youth, and other community members who turn to PCHS.

September was also a time for meaningful reflection. Under the leadership of our Anti-Racism and Anti-Oppression (ARAO) Committee, PCHS observed the National Day for Truth and Reconciliation. We honoured the children who never returned home from residential schools, Survivors, their families, and Indigenous communities. This observance reminds us of the importance of listening, learning, and understanding the lasting impacts of colonialism and residential schools.

Reconciliation is an ongoing responsibility. As an organization committed to equity, diversity, inclusion, and belonging, PCHS will continue to create opportunities for learning and reflection and to deepen our understanding of Indigenous histories, experiences, and perspectives.

As we move ahead, I look forward to continuing this journey together, guided by compassion, collaboration, respect, and a shared commitment to ensuring that every person who connects with PCHS feels welcome, valued, and supported.





PCHS Recognizes the National Day for Truth and Reconciliation

By: Gursharan Kaur, Executive Office Assistant



The **National Day for Truth and Reconciliation**, observed annually on September 30, is a day to honour the children who never returned home from residential schools, Survivors, their families, and Indigenous communities. It is also an opportunity for Canadians to learn about the history and lasting impacts of the residential school system and to reflect on the ongoing journey toward reconciliation.

Truth involves acknowledging and learning about the experiences of Indigenous Peoples, including the harms and injustices caused by residential schools and colonial policies. Reconciliation is an ongoing process of building respectful relationships between Indigenous and non-Indigenous peoples through awareness, understanding, education, and meaningful action. It calls on individuals and organizations to listen, learn, recognize the past, and consider how they can contribute to a more respectful and inclusive future.



As part of this commitment to learning and reflection, the ARAO Committee brought staff and community members together on September 29, 2026, to recognize the National Day for Truth and Reconciliation. The event was held at Unit 101, 60 West Drive, Brampton, and provided an opportunity for participants to learn, reflect, and engage in meaningful conversation.

The afternoon began with registration and refreshments, followed by the **KAIROS Blanket Exercise**. This interactive educational experience helped participants explore the history and ongoing impacts of colonization and residential schools from an Indigenous perspective. The exercise encouraged participants to listen, reflect, and develop a deeper understanding of the experiences of Indigenous Peoples.



The event concluded with a wrap-up and Q&A session, giving participants an opportunity to reflect on their learning, ask questions, and continue the conversation around truth and reconciliation. Participants were encouraged to wear orange as a symbol of remembrance and to honour the message that Every Child Matters, every day and everywhere.

The gathering was a meaningful opportunity for the PCHS community to come together in learning, remembrance, and reflection. Recognizing Truth and Reconciliation is not limited to one day; it is an ongoing commitment to learning from the past, fostering respectful relationships, and supporting meaningful reconciliation in our communities.

Resources for Learning and Reflection

Government of Canada, National Day for Truth and Reconciliation: the history and significance of September 30, Orange Shirt Day, residential schools, and reconciliation.

National Centre for Truth and Reconciliation (NCTR): the Truth and Reconciliation Commission, the 94 Calls to Action, residential school history, Survivor statements, and educational materials.

BLOOD CANCER AWARENESS MONTH

By: Savita Saini, Preventive Care Specialist



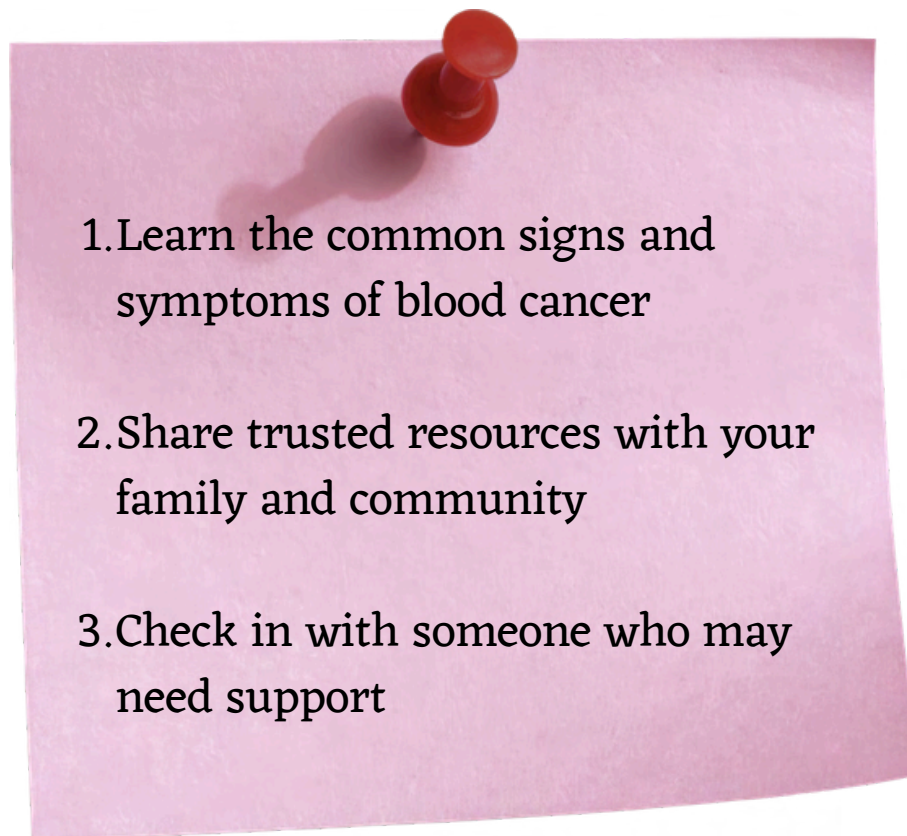
September is **Blood Cancer Awareness Month**, a time to raise awareness about blood cancers, encourage people to recognize possible warning signs, and support individuals and families affected by these diseases. Blood cancer is a broad term that includes leukemia, lymphoma and multiple myeloma. These cancers affect the blood, bone marrow, lymphatic system or immune system and can interfere with the body's ability to produce healthy blood cells and fight infections. The Canadian Cancer Society estimates that in 2026, approximately 6,500 Canadians will be diagnosed with leukemia, 12,100 with non-Hodgkin lymphoma, and 4,400 with multiple myeloma.

Leukemia develops in blood-forming tissues, particularly the bone marrow, and can affect the production of normal blood cells. Lymphoma develops in lymphocytes, a type of white blood cell that plays an important role in the immune system, while multiple myeloma affects plasma cells in the bone marrow. Each type of blood cancer is different, and symptoms and treatment can vary considerably. Some possible warning signs include persistent or unexplained fatigue, frequent infections, fever, night sweats, unexplained weight loss, easy bruising or bleeding, pale skin, shortness of breath, bone or joint pain, and swollen lymph nodes. These symptoms can also occur because of many other health conditions, so experiencing one or more does not necessarily mean a person has cancer. However, unusual symptoms should be discussed with a healthcare professional.



For communities across Peel Region—including Brampton, Mississauga and Caledon—raising awareness about cancer is an important part of supporting community health. South Asian and other diverse communities may also face barriers related to language, health literacy, access to services, and navigating the healthcare system. Sharing clear, culturally appropriate and multilingual health information can help people better understand when to seek medical advice and where to find support. It is also important to remember that there is no single routine screening test for all blood cancers. Diagnosis may involve blood tests, imaging, a biopsy or other investigations depending on the suspected type of cancer.

This Blood Cancer Awareness Month, take three simple actions:



If you or a loved one experiences persistent or unexplained symptoms, such as unusual fatigue, frequent infections, unexplained bruising or bleeding, night sweats, or unexplained weight loss, book an appointment with a healthcare professional. Awareness starts with knowing what to look for and taking action when something does not feel right.

Reference:

Blood cancer in Canada | Canadian Cancer Society



THE INVISIBLE CAREGIVER: WHO TAKES CARE OF THE CAREGIVER?

By: Navneet Kaur, Caregiver Support Worker

Caregiving is often described as an act of love, compassion, and responsibility. We recognize the person receiving care: an older adult who needs assistance, an individual living with a disability, or someone who requires ongoing support. But behind every person receiving care, there is often someone whose own struggles remain unnoticed.

That person is the invisible caregiver.

Invisible caregivers may be family members, spouses, children, friends, or other loved ones who spend their days supporting someone else while quietly carrying their own emotional and physical burdens. Their work may not have a job title or receive recognition, but it requires tremendous patience, strength, and dedication. Caregiving involves much more than helping someone with daily activities. It can mean preparing meals, attending appointments, coordinating services, providing emotional reassurance, managing household responsibilities, and constantly thinking about the well-being of another person.

Much of this work happens quietly. A caregiver may smile and say, "I'm fine," even when they are exhausted. They may put their own needs aside because someone else needs them. Over time, caregiving can become a responsibility that feels like it never truly stops. Many caregivers also hold jobs while caring for their loved ones, which leaves them even more tired.

One of the greatest challenges of caregiving is emotional exhaustion. Caregivers may experience worry, frustration, loneliness, guilt, or sadness. They may feel guilty for wanting a break or for becoming frustrated. But needing support does not make someone a bad caregiver. It makes them human. Caregivers often neglect their own health, give up their social life, and push their hobbies aside. That can leave them socially isolated, stressed, and tired of providing care.

Who Takes Care of the Caregiver?

This is where PCHS plays an important role. Through the Sahara Caregiver Support Program, PCHS recognizes that supporting a client also means recognizing the needs of the caregiver. A Caregiver Support Worker provides a listening ear and a source of guidance, encouragement, and social support for caregivers who may otherwise feel alone. CSWs maintain regular contact with caregivers, check in on their well-being, provide emotional support, discuss concerns, and help caregivers find strategies and resources that make their journey more manageable. CSWs also run social group sessions that give caregivers time out from caregiving. A caregiver does not always need someone to solve every problem. Sometimes they need someone who will listen without judgment, acknowledge their efforts, and remind them that they do not have to carry everything alone. Caregiver support does not take away from the person receiving care. It strengthens the entire circle of care. At PCHS, Caregiver Support Workers help make the invisible caregiver seen, heard, and supported, and can help arrange PSWs to provide respite and relief. The invisible caregiver deserves care too.

And sometimes, the person holding everyone else together simply needs someone to say:

"We see you. We appreciate you. And we are here to support you."

BREAKING THE CYCLE OF OVERTHINKING

By: Seart Gill, Case Manager, Sahara Mental Health Program



In a world filled with constant decisions, expectations, and uncertainty, it is easy for our thoughts to become overwhelming. Overthinking occurs when we repeatedly analyze a situation, conversation, decision, or possible outcomes without reaching a firm conclusion. Psychology Today states "emerging research shows that chronic overthinking is closely tied to anxiety. Studies indicate that repetitive thought patterns (like rumination and worry) activate the brain's stress response and increase the release of cortisol, our stress hormone" (Cohen, 2025). Although careful thinking can help us solve problems, excessive repetitive thinking can increase psychological distress and make it difficult to focus on the present (Watkins, 2008).

Overthinking is often connected to the brain's natural desire for safety and control. When faced with uncertainty, the mind tries to predict what might happen next. This can lead to repeatedly reviewing past events or imagining negative future scenarios. For example, a person may replay a conversation and worry that they sounded awkward, even though there is no evidence that the other person viewed it negatively. Repetitive negative thinking can involve both rumination about the past and worry about the future, and these patterns have been associated with a range of mental health difficulties (Watkins, 2008).

Fortunately, overthinking can be managed with practical coping strategies. For example, an effective approach to managing overthinking is writing our thoughts down as a visual representation of what we are thinking and feeling. Journaling can help organize worries and make them easier to examine objectively. This strategy can be useful because it encourages people to step back from repetitive thoughts rather than automatically accepting every thought as accurate.



To add, another helpful strategy is creating a "worry period". Setting aside 10-15 minutes to focus on concerns can prevent them from taking over the entire day. Research suggests that deliberately scheduling worry for a specific period can be a useful strategy for managing excessive worry, although its effectiveness may vary depending on the individual and the nature of the problem (Wolitzky-Taylor et al., 2024).

Grounding and mindfulness techniques can help break the pattern of repetitive thinking. Slow breathing, taking a walk, listening to music, journaling, or focusing on the sights and sounds around you can bring your attention back to the present moment. Research indicates that mindfulness-based interventions can reduce repetitive thinking and increase mindfulness skills (Li et al., 2022).

To conclude, overthinking does not make someone weak or incapable. The most important take away is that uncertainty is a normal part of life and not every situation can be predicted, controlled, or solved immediately. With awareness and healthy coping strategies, repetitive thoughts can become easier to recognize and manage, allowing more room for calmness and clarity.

References

- Cohen, I. S. (2025, April 15). How to escape the overthinking trap. Psychology Today.
- Li, P., et al. (2022). Mindfulness on rumination in patients with depressive disorder: A systematic review and meta-analysis of randomized controlled trials. *International Journal of Environmental Research and Public Health*, 19(23), 16101.
- Watkins, E. R. (2008). Constructive and unconstructive repetitive thought. *Psychological Bulletin*, 134(2), 163-206.
- Wolitzky-Taylor, K. B., et al. (2024). Worry postponement from the metacognitive perspective: A randomized waitlist-controlled trial. *Journal of Behavior Therapy and Experimental Psychiatry*.

SOCIAL MEDIA AND ADDICTION

How does social media impact addiction

By: Jasmin, Addictions Case Manager

How does social media shape our view on substance use?

Social media is a powerhouse that influences individuals' actions, opinions and thoughts. It also allows people to be vulnerable to their own mental health and substance use habits.

Social media and media in general is known to highlight and glamourize substance use. Social media is user generated and will display videos and content that focuses on targeted algorithms. This can include individuals constantly seeing the "highlighted" versions of what substance use is rather than the reality of substance use disorder/addiction. Content can be shown that promotes substance use and challenges people in recovery, focusing on the euphoria and calmness experienced with substances.

It is important to understand the potential risk factors that support normalizing substance use through glamorized content (partying and enjoyment of substances) and videos of people consuming alcohol through competitions and challenges.

Though social media is not all negative influence for people wanting to get into recovery. Social media can support individuals in connecting with support groups and other individuals looking to get into recovery. It can be used as a great resource in getting quick information on trigger management and craving management skills through informative videos and engaging content from other people in recovery.

Social media is a great conversation starter on harm reduction practices and supports the destigmatization of substance use. It is important and healthy to have discussion of substance use in a way that does not stigmatize others or isolate people from getting support. Having open discussions about substance use disorder allows people to share their story and reach out for help in a comfortable environment.

Social media can be both a positive and negative influence for substance use disorder. In one way it can glamourize and highlight ways that substance use can be "fun" and encourage the behaviour. In another way it can trigger and cause individuals to relapse on their own substance use. Lastly, it can create a healthy and anonymous environment and open discussions around impacts of substance use and pathways to recovery.

Social media should be used carefully, with consideration that it is user generated and that the content various platforms push to consumers is heavily targeted through algorithms that focus on content the user prefers.

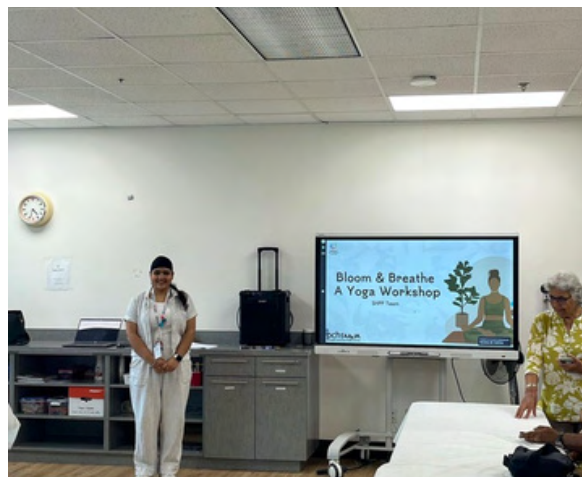
BLOOM & BREATHE WORKSHOP

By: Navdeep Kaur, Case Manager, SHPP

The SHPP Department hosted the Bloom & Breathe Workshop on September 3rd, creating a welcoming space for participants to focus on their mental health and overall well-being. The workshop began with a presentation on stress and coping mechanisms, where participants learned what stress is, how it can impact our physical and emotional well-being, and how to recognize common signs of stress.

Participants then took part in a variety of interactive activities designed to help them identify their stressors and explore healthy coping strategies they can use in their daily lives. The activities encouraged self-reflection, mindfulness, and discussion while providing practical tools for managing everyday stress.

The workshop concluded with a peaceful yoga session, giving participants an opportunity to slow down, relax, and reconnect with themselves. It was a meaningful session focused on learning, reflection, relaxation, and promoting positive mental well-being.



OBESITY IN OUR COMMUNITY SESSION

By: Ramanpreet, CHA, SHPP



On Friday, September 25, SHPP hosted an Obesity Session focused on increasing awareness of obesity, nutrition, and healthy lifestyle practices. A dietitian was invited to deliver an informative presentation, providing clients with practical information and guidance to support their overall health and well-being.

The session gave clients an opportunity to learn about healthy eating habits and ask questions related to obesity and nutrition. The dietitian addressed participants' questions and shared practical recommendations that could be added to their daily routines.

To conclude, clients took part in an interactive question-and-answer activity based on the information presented. Participants who answered correctly received small prizes, adding an engaging and enjoyable element to the session while reinforcing key messages from the presentation.

The session encouraged open discussion and active participation, allowing clients to gain knowledge directly from a health professional. Through education, interaction, and practical guidance, the Obesity Session supported clients in making informed choices and taking positive steps toward healthier lifestyles.



PCHS 31st ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING

PCHS proudly hosted its 31st Annual General Meeting, bringing together community members, partners, Board members, and staff to reflect on another year of growth, impact, and service to our communities. We extend our sincere thanks to everyone who joined us and contributed to the success of this important event. A special thank you goes to our dedicated staff and team members who worked behind the scenes to ensure the AGM ran smoothly. We are also pleased to share our 2025–2026 Annual Report, highlighting PCHS's achievements, impact, and continued commitment to providing culturally responsive health, social, and settlement services to the communities we serve.

PCHS in the Community



SHPP Team at Region of Peel
Peel Living BBQ Outreach



PCHS Staff at UTM Be Well Fair



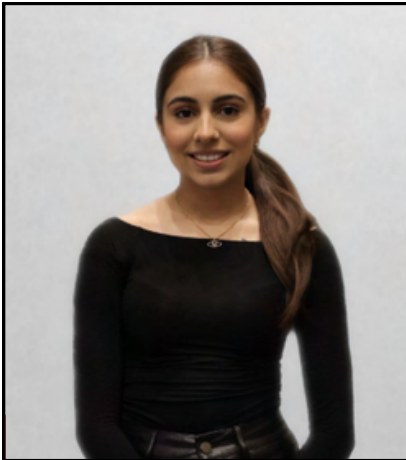
SHPP Team at CMHA Health Fair



PCHS Staff at Wellspring
Chinguacousy Cancer Support
Centre Satellite Program Launch

WELCOME

NEW STAFF



Jasmeet Soni
RPN, Concurrent
Disorders



Anjali Singh
Peer Support Worker, RRSL

CLIENT

T E S T I M O N I A L S

“Thank you so much for all your efforts, support, and genuine concern. I truly appreciate everything you have done for me and my family. Your kindness and attention to my situation mean a lot to us. Honestly, I have not found anyone who has shown as much care and concern about my situation as you have. I have the deepest respect and appreciation for you and everything you are trying to do to support us. Thank you from the bottom of my heart for your kindness, understanding, and support. It truly means more to us than I can express.”

-Sahara Support Services Program Client

“We would like to thank you and your team from the Friday women’s PCHS group. It is beyond our expectations what you do for the Friday members. Your continuous dedication and commitment to deliver the best programs for seniors’ needs is the best thing. Your contribution makes lots of difference in our lives and makes us feel well, younger and full of energy. We always look forward to Friday, to join your program, enjoy the activities and socialize with the new friends made at your group. Please accept our heartiest thanks for all that we received from you.”

-Friday Women’s Group, Malton



Our 2025-2026 Impact Report is Here!

Please click on the following image to view the report.



Impact Report



BE AWARE • GET INFORMED • SHOW SUPPORT

Breast Cancer Awareness

HOSTED BY: PCHS & ROOTSCS

Join us for our Breast Cancer Awareness event featuring health education, a special guest speaker, and empowering stories!

-  BREAST CANCER RISK ASSESSMENT
-  BREAST SELF-EXAMINATION
-  STORIES OF STRENGTH
-  LUNCH & REFRESHMENTS
-  RAFFLE PRIZE & MORE



COMMUNITY DOOR, 7700
HURONTARIO ST,
BRAMPTON ON L6Y 4M3



24 October, 2026
12:00PM - 3:00PM



Scan/Click
this QR code
to register!

13th ANNUAL FRIENDS OF PCHS

Join us for an inspiring afternoon of collaboration and learning as we celebrate the power of friendship, partnership, and community impact.



Date

Saturday, November 28, 2026



Time

12:00 pm to 3:00 pm



Location

Natraj Banquet Hall

7275 Torbram Road
Mississauga, ON L4T 1G8

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YouTube



CENTRE FOR GRIEF & HEALING
Bereaved Families of Ontario -
Halton / Peel



The Centre for Grief and Healing in
partnership with the Punjabi
Community Health Services:

South Asian Grief & Healing Workshop Series

A 3-part culturally responsive workshop series exploring
grief, loss, identity, culture, and healing

Swipe to explore the series →

Workshop 1 – Understanding Grief: Culture, Loss & Identity

Grief can feel different for everyone.

Together, we will explore how culture, family, migration, religion, identity, and life experiences can shape the way we grieve.

A space to understand your grief and the strengths within our communities

Workshop 2 – Life After Loss: Navigating Grief in Daily Life

Life can keep moving, even when we are grieving

Together, we will explore how grief can show up in our everyday lives, relationships, family responsibilities, and sense of well-being, while finding practical ways to care for ourselves and navigate what comes next

Workshop 3 – Finding a New Normal: Carrying Grief Forward

Loss can change us in ways we may not always expect

Together, we will explore identity, hope, healing, and the ways we can stay connected to the people, culture, traditions, and values that matter to us

A space to reflect on who we are becoming and find a meaningful way forward

Join Us!

In partnership with the Punjabi Community Health Services, our South Asian Grief & Healing Workshops begin October

 **Dates:**

Workshop 1: October 6, 2026

Workshop 2: October 13, 2026

Workshop 3: October 27, 2026

 **Time:** 3:30pm – 4:30pm

 **Location:** Halton Hills Cultural Centre

*Register
Now*

For more information and registration details, please contact us at info@bereavedfamilies.ca

SAHARA PARENTING GROUP

This hybrid support group runs every Wednesday from 5:00 pm to 7:00 pm. Designed to raise awareness and provide education on building positive and healthy relationships, this group offers a welcoming space for parents and caregivers to learn and share together. Each session focuses on strengthening family connections through guided discussions and practical tools.



LEARN MORE ABOUT:

- ✓ Strengthening parent-child relationships
- ✓ Bullying awareness
- ✓ Understanding cultural differences
- ✓ Developing healthy communication skills
- ✓ Support with education and career planning

** Free for all participants*

FOR INFORMATION AND REGISTRATION:

karman.gill@pchs4u.com
or 365-866-3320

WEEKLY HYBRID GROUP

LOCATION: 60 WEST DRIVE, UNIT 101, BRAMPTON & ONLINE (Teams' link provided upon registration)

**DATE & TIME: EVERY WEDNESDAY
5:00 PM - 7:00 PM**

TYPE 2 DIABETES

PREVENTION PROGRAM

We are looking for Family Caregivers

Join us for a 6-month coaching program to help prevent Type 2 Diabetes among **Black, African, Caribbean, and South Asian** families in Peel Region.



WHO CAN PARTICIPATE

- ✓ 18+ year old family caregiver
- ✓ Resides in Peel (Mississauga, Brampton, Caledon) and has kids at home
- ✓ Identifies as Black, African, Caribbean, or South Asian
- ✓ Able to participate for 6 months
- ✓ Can speak, read, and understand English



WHAT PARTICIPANTS RECEIVE



Compensation available for participation (Gift cards or E-transfers)



Free health and wellness coaching for your family



GET IN TOUCH



Phone +1 437-231-6951



Email hamna.khan@thp.ca

Or scan this QR :



24th Annual IWD Gala

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Jaswinder Bassan





PCHS Locations

Head Office

2980 Drew Road, Unit 241
Mississauga, ON L4T 0A7

Brampton Office Location

60 West Drive, Unit 202 and 101,
Brampton, ON L6T 3T6

Community Door

7700 Hurontario St, Unit 1300,
Bampton, ON L6Y 4M3

Malton Youth Hub

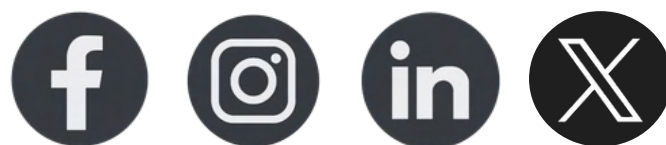
3545 Morning Star Drive, Jonathan
Davis Centre, Mississauga, ON L4T
1Y3

Different Spokes:

8 Nelson Street West
Brampton, ON L6X 1B7

Southfields Community Center

225 Dougall Ave.
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