

Overcoming Barriers to Health Care Through Identification Replacement Programs

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Street
HEALTH
TOGETHER WE CAN MAKE IT WORK

The logo for Street Health features the word "Street" in a black serif font, "HEALTH" in a large, bold, blue sans-serif font, and the tagline "TOGETHER WE CAN MAKE IT WORK" in a smaller, black, all-caps sans-serif font below it. The entire logo is enclosed in a thin black rectangular border.

IDENTIFIED NEED

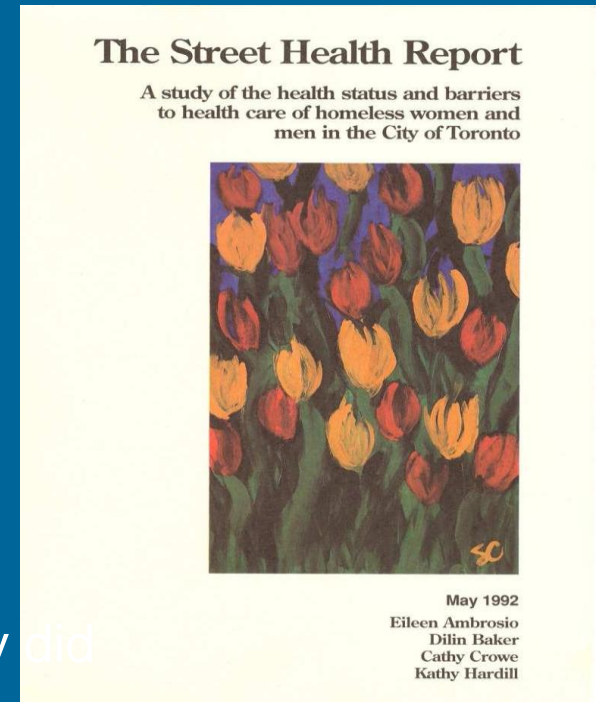
The Beginning...

- Lack of identification → Limited access to health care
- Identification replacement program began without funding

Street Health Report 1992

A survey of a representative sample of 458 homeless people in downtown Toronto.

- 37% (169) of respondents reported not having an Ontario Health Card.
- 7% (32) of respondents had been refused health care within their lifetime because they did not have a health card.



IDENTIFIED NEED

Street Health Report 2007

The Street Health Report 2007 presents the results of a survey on the health

Status of a representative sample of 368 homeless adults in downtown Toronto.



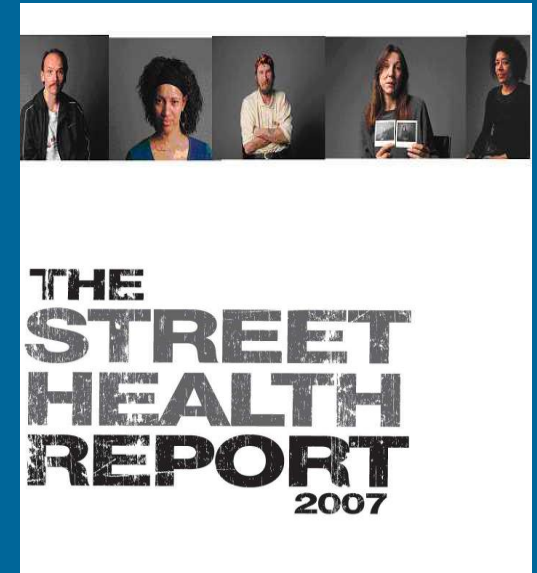
Current Statistics

- 34% (125) of the survey respondents reported not having a Ontario Health Card.
 - ❑ 66% (82) indicated it was either lost or stolen.
 - ❑ 14% (17) stated they had applied for a health card and were waiting for it.
 - ❑ 4% (5) reported that their health card had expired.

IDENTIFIED NEED

Consequences for Health Care Provision

- 28% (73) of all respondents had been refused health care in the past year because they did not have a health card.
 - Among those who did not have a usual source of health care, 19% (20) reported not having a health card as one of the main reasons.
 - Among those who could not access the mental health care they needed in the past year, 24% (10) indicated not having a health card as one of the main reasons.
 - Among those who had not had a physical or check-up in 3 or more years, 6% (7) cited not having a health card as one of the main reasons.



DIRECT SERVICE REPOSENSE

I.D. REPLACEMENT

“Access to Health Cards for the Homeless”

- Established in 1999.
- Assists homeless people in obtaining birth certificates, Social Insurance Cards, Ontario Health Cards, certain landed immigration documents by completing document applications, contacting guarantors, and paying the application fees.
- Street Health provides the mailing address for receiving identification.
- Two full-time staff provide service in accessible locations (e.g., drop-in centres).
- OHIP ‘kiosks’ in CHCs
- In 2009, 2992 pieces of ID were processed.

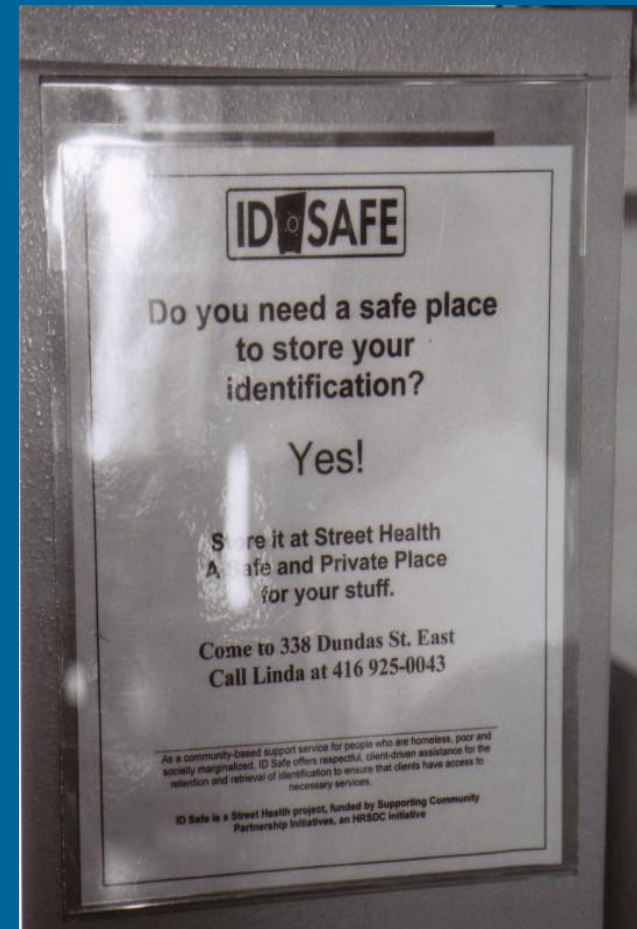


DIRECT SERVICE RESPONSE

I.D. STORAGE

“ID Safe”

- Established in 2003.
- Provides secure storage of clients’ personal documents on-site at Street Health.
- One full-time staff works in the program.
- Liaison between government agencies and ID Safe clients (e.g., OW).
- ID Safe Membership Card.
- Currently, 553 client accounts.
- In 2009, over 2000 client visits.



BARRIERS TO OBTAINING AND RETAINING IDENTIFICATION

Obtaining ID

- Lack of Financial Resources
- Mailing Address
- Literacy
- Cognitive Functioning
- Involvement with Child Welfare System
- Parents without Legal Immigration Status
- Lack of Birth Registration
- Increased Security Measures
- Lack of Cooperation Between Provinces
- Need for a Guarantor

Retaining ID

- Tenuous Living Conditions (e.g., shelter, street)
 - Theft
 - Loss
 - Damage
 - Eviction
- Justice System

BENEFITS OF DIRECT SERVICE RESPONSE

- Accessibility to essential services (e.g., health care)
- Reduced frequency of replacing documents
- Access to housing (e.g., Housing Connections)
- Economic support (e.g., OW and ODSP)
- Improved quality of life

POLICY SUCCESSES

Health Card

- Joint outreach with Ministry of Health and Long Term Care
- Temporary health cards

Ontario Birth Certificate

- Declaration form
- Fee waiver

Record of Landing

- Expedited service
- Fee waiver

Ontario Works

- Client Referral Checklist to expedite financial support
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FUTURE POLICY OBJECTIVES

- Citizenship and immigration (e.g., Documents and 90 day wait period)
 - Service Canada
 - Cooperation of governing bodies
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Questions?



CONTACT INFORMATION

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