

### OCS Cohort Characteristics

The OCS Data Administration Platform (ODAP) and data warehouse make it possible to access and analyze OCS data more quickly. In order to better understand our cohort, we carried out some analysis on the 5,449 active participants as of December 31, 2021. There were 414 participants who were new to the OCS in the past 24 months. 9% were diagnosed within the past five years, 30% from 6-15 years ago, and 61% more than 15 years ago. Participants were 80% male, 19% female, and less than 1% trans male or female. For priority populations, the cohort is 58% gay bisexual or other men who have sex with men, 28% African Caribbean or Black, 6% Indigenous, and 9% people who inject drugs. 71% of participants are in Toronto, followed by 14% in South west, 10% in Ottawa, 4% in Northern Ontario and 2% in Central west.

### OCS presence at CAHR

We are very proud to have several abstracts accepted at the Canadian Association for HIV Research Conference in April 2022. All abstracts can be accessed at the [CAHR website](#), posters and slides can be found at <https://ohtncohortstudy.ca/research>. We thank our co-authors who have contributed to these research efforts.

- [Bekele et al. Access to basic needs services provided by AIDS Service organizations \(ASOs\) among participants of the Ontario HIV Treatment Network Cohort Study \(OCS\) prior to and during the COVID-19 pandemic.](#)
- [Colyer et al. Pre-HIV-diagnosis utilization of HIV prevention modalities by people living with HIV in Ontario](#)
- [Light et al. Financial and health care planning among older adults living with HIV: Results from the Ontario HIV Treatment Network Cohort Study.](#)
- [Nyambi et al. Prevalence of COVID-19 infection and vaccine uptake among participants of the Ontario HIV Treatment Network Cohort Study \(OCS\)](#)
- [Obioha et al. Experiences of discrimination among people living with HIV in Ontario](#)
- [Qureshi et al. Patient experiences with HIV/AIDS care in Ontario: Findings from the OHTN Cohort Study \(OCS\)](#)

We'd also like to highlight presentations and posters using OCS Data from Ann Burchell's team at Unity Health Toronto.

- Chambers et al. Low Human Papillomavirus (HPV) Vaccine Coverage among Women Living with HIV in Ontario
- Frietas et al. Study Protocol of the COVID-HIV Evaluation of Serology and Health Services (CHES) Study
- Mah et al. Beliefs About Cervical Cancer Screening in Women Living with HIV and Recency of Screening

### OCS Quick Facts

As we celebrate Mother's Day, we'd like to honour women living with HIV who are aspiring, expecting, have birthed and/or cared for children.

In 2021, 391 women living with HIV responded to questions about motherhood, reproductive health, and family planning.

#### Motherhood

77% of women interviewed are mothers, with 41% having children <18 and 42% with children 18 or older.

#### Having Children

35% of women interviewed had children after finding out about their diagnosis. 12% have considered having children, but had not yet had children.

#### Reproductive Health

86% reported that they had a health provider with whom they could discuss reproductive needs.

#### Family Planning

17% of women interviewed were interested in becoming a parent, among whom 73% intended to become pregnant.



## Welcoming new members to the study team

OCS data collectors develop unique relationships with participants that support OCS enrolment and continuation in the study. They provide insights to the study team to improve and develop new questions. Many data collectors have been with the study since the beginning and we thank them for their continued dedication. We'd like to welcome some new data collectors who are joining the team, Lakeridge Health: Andrea Shore, Patricia Boyd and Bradie Ordog; Toronto General Hospital: Queenie Huang and Amy Ly; Hamilton Health Sciences: Saba Poursasan; Regent Park Community Health Centre (Blue Door Clinic): Michael Wu and Irene Wanyoto. We are grateful for your contributions and look forward to working together.

We'd also like to welcome new site Principal Investigators (PIs) and thank those who are leaving the study team. At Maple Leaf Medical Centre in Toronto, Dr. David Knox will be joining Dr. Mona Loutfy as Co-PI. Tammy Borque has stepped in as the site PI at the Haven Clinic in Sudbury. With the upcoming retirement of Dr. Jeffrey Cohen at Windsor Regional Hospital, we welcome Dr. Corinna Quan as the new site PI. As a site PI, we recognize your critical role to support implementation of the study at these key clinics in Ontario.

## OCS Sub-studies

The OCS can provide a platform for study recruitment that is efficient and limits participant burden. By recruiting through the OCS, studies can be directed to specific populations and data can be linked so that sub-study data collection can be efficient.

## CHES Study update

Recruitment for the [CHES study](#) (COVID-HIV Evaluation of Serology and Health Services) is underway! OCS participants are being invited to self-collect dried blood spots to measure antibodies to SARS-CoV-2, the virus that causes COVID-19, among people living with HIV. Recruitment has begun at St. Michael's Hospital, Hamilton Health Sciences Centre, London St Joseph's, Maple Leaf Medical Clinic, and Windsor Regional Hospital, with more sites to come online shortly. Those who enroll will receive a \$40 honorarium and learn the results of their antibody test. Findings will help inform immunization guidelines for people living with HIV.



## Cannabis Use and Impacts Among Ontarians Living with HIV in the Era of Recreational Legalization

Dr. Sergio Rueda is leading an OHTN funded study to examine the use of medicinal and non-medicinal cannabis use among people living with HIV. The aim of this study is to create a profile of Ontarians living with HIV who use cannabis, document their mental health and health service use needs, and report on key domains according to sex/gender/orientation, race/ethnicity, income and other determinants of health. Eligible OCS participants who used cannabis in the past year complete a 45-minute, self-administered cannabis questionnaire and receive an honorarium. Dr. Rueda is currently working with the OCS to begin study implementation over the next few months.

The **Ontario HIV Treatment Network Cohort Study (OCS)** is an ongoing research study that collects clinical, social and behavioural information about people living with HIV (PHA) in Ontario. Participation in the study is voluntary, and all personally identifying information of study participants is removed to ensure confidentiality. The OCS was established to improve our understanding of HIV and inform HIV prevention, care and treatment strategies for people living with HIV and groups at risk of HIV infection. For more information about the OCS, please visit [www.ohtn.cohortstudy.ca](http://www.ohtn.cohortstudy.ca) or email [ocs@ohtn.on.ca](mailto:ocs@ohtn.on.ca).