



NOMINEES

PEOPLE. IDEAS. IMPACT.

It takes a team.

AWARD: Heart of the Team

Organization	Individual
Peterborough Family Health Team	Alexis Turner Executive Assistant
South East Toronto Family Health Team	Alyana Shamji Nurse
Norfolk Family Health Team	Dr. Bill Thorogood Family Physician
Maple Family Health Team	Kelly Morris Administrator
Cottage Country Family Health Team	Lorraine Johnston Board Member / Interim Executive Director
North York Family Health Team	Dr. Michelle Greiver Family Physician and Researcher
Aurora-Newmarket Family Health Team	NP Tara Peel Nurse Practitioner



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NOMINEE(S):

Alexis Turner

Peterborough Family Health Team

AT A GLANCE

Alexis Turner is the person colleagues know will help, adapt and keep showing up with kindness. Across changing roles and the newcomer clinic, she brings calm, generosity and a willingness to step in wherever needed, making both patients and coworkers feel supported.

THE HEART ALEXIS BRINGS TO THE TEAM

Alexis is a shining light in the clinic. She has had to adapt to many jobs and she's done nothing but stay so kind and positive. She is so sweet and soft spoken to everyone she meets. She goes over and above for the new comer clinic on top of her other jobs and she just stays positive ready for the next task. She is always available to support her coworkers and if she cant she finds someone who can.

HOW ALEXIS SHOWS UP

Empathy and kindness are the definition of Alexis. She embodies those attributes no matter what job she is doing. We joke she is too kind but it just seamlessly her. She's always there you know she will be present giving 110% into her work

THE DIFFERENCE ALEXIS MAKES

She is always available to help and support others. She will always support with kindness and respect whether its with patients, sponsors or coworkers.

LIVING THE VALUES

She is heavily involved with the new comer clinic and the community her work ethic kindness and empathy just shine.





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NOMINEE(S):

Alyana Shamji

South East Toronto Family Health Team

AT A GLANCE

Alyana Shamji has been a constant through the rapid growth of Health Access Taylor Massey. As the clinic expanded from a small start-up team into a broad multi-partner model, she became a trusted anchor for colleagues, patients and the newcomer community the clinic serves.

THE HEART ALYANA BRINGS TO THE TEAM

Alyana works at Health Access Taylor Massey which opened its doors to a new comer community in Toronto in the fall of 2022. This is a multi-partnership venture between 2 primary care providers and 2 social services providers. She is one of the original staff onboard in early 2023 with the clinic was in the early process of staffing, offering services, designing processes and pathways. The clinic started with 1 NP, 1 RN, 1 RPN and 3 SW. It has now grown to 3 MDs, 2 NPs, 1 RNs, 2 RPNs, 2 dietitian, 1 pharmacists, 3 social workers, 4 social service workers and we continue to onboard new partners into the space. Through all the growth and staffing changes, Alyana has been as source of stability. She assists in onboarding all disciplines including MDs, acquainting them with the clinic space, processes, and other staff. She approaches all colleagues with a welcoming and inclusive attitude, building this into a strong and functional team with the core value of serving the newcomer/complex community around the clinic. She supports anyone who approaches her for help and is never too busy to assists.

HOW ALYANA SHOWS UP

Alyana approaches patients and colleagues with a bright smile, positive energy, offering to help others on a daily bases. With her patients, she listens intently to ensure they feel heard, provides explanations with gentle patience, and gives non-judgmental and patient centered care. Our clients in the last couple of months have been facing deportation.

In her busy day, she will make the time to sit them in as a centering and calm presence, connecting them with the social service team or simply be there as a support as this news and its reality hit home.

- 1) Standardization of charting - Alyana has taken it upon herself to update, redevelop the forms the nursing team uses to chart so there is consistency in patient care. Forms include diabetes visits, well baby visits, immunizations.
- 2) DR eye screening - we partner with Vision Loss Canada to provide eye screening to our DM patients. Alyana will conduct yearly review of patient charts to ensure up to date DR screening.
- 3) Seniors Care - When a senior she is worried about has not been seen, she will call them and reach out. If they don't answer the phone, she will connect with the outreach team and see if a visit can be made or call police for a wellness check.

She is very dedicated to her patients. We had an elderly couple, husband nearly 90 was caring for his wife with dementia at home with no family support. Alyana gave this patient a gift that would not have been possible with her her care and dedication.

THE DIFFERENCE ALYANA MAKES

This may be a silly thing, but Alyana has a calendar in her personal phone to keep track of everyone's birthday from admin to management and all IHPs and MDs in between. Anyone new that joins are asked 2 questions: When is your birthday and What is your favorite care/snack? And on everyone's birthday week, a celebration with your favorite cake and/or snack will appear at lunch time. This is done out of her own finances as well. She takes this approach so all team members, regardless of partner organization will know they are included and a valued member of the team.

It brings team cohesion, and allows people to connect beyond work, fostering care and respect for each other as people. As mentioned before, she offers to help any one and find solutions to problems regardless of what discipline you are from. If you have a question, she will do her best to find the answer or find someone who would know the answer. Another small thing she does is offers to make tea for colleagues if she is boiling water and making a tea for herself.

LIVING THE VALUES

Alyana has becoming part of the community she serves. When we attend school fairs to promote primary care, families know her and greet her. When we go to the convenient store in the plaza, the owner knows her and does not let he pay. It is clear she is a respected and appreciated person and healthcare provider in the community. She treats all patients with equity and provides the same level of care. In the past months as attachment has been a focus, the clinic has received a high volume of patients of different needs and sociodemographic. Alyana approaches each as individual and unique stories, adjusting her use of language to account for literacy levels, mental health challenges, and language barriers. She understands and grounds her practice in team effort towards the best patient care outcomes when working with complex patients with many physical, emotional, mental, and social barriers. She knows each team member has unique expertise, and when we leverage all of them, patient outcomes will improve.





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NOMINEE(S):

Dr. Bill Thorogood

Family Physician

Norfolk Family Health Team

AT A GLANCE

Dr. Bill Thorogood's influence is woven through rural care in Norfolk, from Family Health Team leadership and hospital work to long-term care and 15 years of resident mentorship. He models comprehensive family medicine as a team sport rooted in service, partnership and community.

THE HEART DR. THOROGOOD BRINGS TO THE TEAM

Dr. Thorogood leads by example through an enduring commitment to his patients, his colleagues, and the health of his community. As Physician Lead for the Norfolk Family Health Team and an active leader at Norfolk General Hospital, he has helped strengthen collaboration across primary care, hospital, long-term care, and community services in Norfolk.

A strong advocate for comprehensive, team-based care, Dr. Thorogood has worked throughout his career to improve access to health services in rural communities. His leadership extends beyond his own practice.

He has supported local paramedics and frontline staff through education and training, championed new approaches to care delivery, and helped build stronger connections among providers across the region.

Dr. Thorogood's leadership is marked by humility, service, and a genuine commitment to his patients, colleagues, and community.

For more than 15 years, Dr. Thorogood has also mentored residents through the McMaster Rural Residency Program. He generously shares his knowledge and passion for rural family medicine, helping prepare the next generation of physicians for comprehensive community practice. Many of the residents he has supported have gone on to practise in the Brantford–Brant–Norfolk area, extending the impact of his mentorship across the region.

HOW DR. THOROGOOD SHOWS UP

Dr. Thorogood is known for the compassion, accessibility, and personal attention he brings to patient care. He makes every effort to accommodate patients during clinic hours and, when that is not possible, follows up after hours to ensure they receive the care and reassurance they need. He continues to make home visits when needed and makes himself personally available to patients facing difficult circumstances.

That same attentiveness extends to the everyday moments of care. He will reach out simply to let a worried patient know that a test result is normal. Patients consistently describe feeling heard, reassured, and genuinely cared for.

His respect for others is equally evident in how he works with colleagues. Dr. Thorogood takes time to recognize the people around him, from clinical colleagues to reception and administrative staff, and makes clear that every role contributes to excellent patient care.

He is the physician who still makes home visits, picks up the phone after hours, and ensures patients know they are not navigating their care alone.

Alongside his clinical practice, Dr. Thorogood continues to explore opportunities to improve care through digital health, new programming, and evidence-based practice. Whether caring for an individual patient or considering how services can work better across Norfolk, his focus remains practical and consistent: what will make care better for the people who need it?

THE DIFFERENCE DR. THOROGOOD MAKES

Dr. Thorogood has helped create a culture in which people feel valued, respected, and part of something larger than their individual role. He leads with gratitude and makes a deliberate effort to recognize the contributions of everyone involved in patient care.

That appreciation is expressed not only in words, but in action. Last year, Dr. Thorogood and another physician personally organized and funded a Toronto Blue Jays outing for staff and their families as a thank-you for their dedication. It was a simple but meaningful reflection of the culture he works to create: one where relationships matter and where people know their contributions are seen.

His impact reaches well beyond a single workplace. Through mentorship, education and collaboration, Dr. Thorogood has helped strengthen rural primary care capacity across Norfolk. He brings together physicians, interdisciplinary teams, hospitals, long-term care,

community paramedics, and other partners around a shared commitment to better patient care.

What distinguishes his leadership is that greater responsibility has never created greater distance. He remains approachable, generous with his knowledge, and deeply appreciative of the people around him. That combination of clinical leadership and everyday humanity has earned the respect of patients, colleagues, learners, and community partners alike.

LIVING THE VALUES

Dr. Thorogood embodies a vision of family medicine grounded in comprehensive care, strong relationships, and teamwork. He understands that healthy communities depend not simply on access to individual clinicians, but on primary care teams and community partners working together around the needs of patients.

He advocates for that vision both locally and beyond Norfolk, sharing his experience and perspectives on rural medicine and team-based care through conferences, universities, and media engagements. He also gives his time and expertise to local fundraising and community initiatives that strengthen health and wellness across Norfolk County.

Across these roles, the thread is consistent. Dr. Thorogood invests in people: his patients, his colleagues, future physicians, and his community. His contribution is measured not only in the care he personally provides, but in the stronger teams, relationships, and rural health system he has helped build around him.





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NOMINEE(S):

Kelly Morris

Maple Family Health Team

AT A GLANCE

Ask Kelly Morris's team what her role is and the answer may be: almost everything. She is the connective hub colleagues turn to for knowledge, problem-solving, encouragement and inclusion, creating the kind of everyday team culture that makes better patient care possible.

THE HEART KELLY BRINGS TO THE TEAM

Kelly plays a central role in making the team a great place to work—and for patients to receive care. She brings a strong knowledge of the office, while remaining humble and always willing to seek out answers when she's unsure. She actively supports others by sharing her expertise, creating a safe space to ask questions, and ensuring everyone feels included and valued. We often reflect on "What is Kelly's role" – Which is something that is quite difficult to define, because she truly does it all. Kelly is the hub of our little group. She provides constant support to our FHT while fostering connections for education and mentorship with local institutions and collaboration with community partners and local organizations. From her upstream approaches in tackling everyday challenges to her out of the box creative problem solving, no problem is too big or too small – And if you discover a change that needs to happen, you can almost guarantee that Kelly's already working on it.

At a strategic meeting we had last year, one of the comments from team members was that we needed "2 Kellys"! And everyone agreed.

HOW KELLY SHOWS UP

Through her warm demeanor, open-door approach, and genuine willingness to listen. She regularly checks in on how others are doing—both professionally and personally—which shows how much she truly cares. Her sense of humour helps create a welcoming and comfortable environment, and she is consistently accommodating and open to new ideas. Kelly creates a sense of security for both her colleagues and the patients we care for that is evident daily. Whether it's your first interaction with her or the thousandth, there is always a sense of warmth and welcoming. Kelly is engaged meaningfully in both a professional and personal capacity. She is not just an exemplar office manager, she's, our friend. Kelly's office was previously a standalone FHT and recently went through a merger with another FHT. Despite the complexity, added workload, and many unknowns that come with such a transition, she remained consistently open and engaged throughout the process.

THE DIFFERENCE KELLY MAKE

She consistently fosters a highly inclusive environment. For example, she shares monthly office newsletters that highlight birthdays for both FHT and FHO members, always ensuring everyone is included without distinction. Her inclusiveness also comes through in thoughtful gestures. For example, she once invited me, even though I'm only on site once a month, to the office holiday party and included me in the gift exchange. She also invited me to a retirement lunch for a physician I hadn't yet met, so that I could meet him and spend time with the team in a relaxed, celebratory setting.

LIVING THE VALUES

Kelly's is passionate about the work we do, and that's reflected in her commitment to her team, demonstrating key values that are congruent with AFHTO's. No matter the role, Kelly is an active champion for you. She recognizes the crucial foundations of team dynamics along with the unique strengths of everyone she works with to optimize engagement, mutual-respect, which ultimately ensure we are providing the best possible care to our community.





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NOMINEE(S):

Lorraine Johnston

Cottage Country Family Health Team

AT A GLANCE

Retirement did not stop Lorraine Johnston from showing up for her team. She stayed to advance a major capital project, returned as interim leader when the organization needed her, and is mentoring the next Executive Director, all while championing a community health hub that has raised more than \$1.2 million.

THE HEART LORRAINE BRINGS TO THE TEAM

Lorraine is an exceptional individual and leader. She is a visionary who works tirelessly for our Family Health Team. When Lorraine retired from her role just a little over a year ago she stayed on to help us with a major capital project.

When we lost our new ED she did not hesitate to jump back in as our interim leader and has committed to mentor our recently selected ED to ensure a smooth and successful transition.

Lorraine is exceptionally well respected by her team and has personally mentored new members whether they are in administration or clinical roles.

As a nurse practitioner herself she brings a strong perspective and commitment to primary care and is

able to support and nurture clinicians who are new to practice and new to their role within

Prior to leaving, Lorraine spearheaded our Gravenhurst Health Hub project and facilitated a collaboration with the Rotary Club of Gravenhurst to make her vision come to reality through fundraising now over \$1.2 M.

the team. As a Board member, Lorraine holds our full trust and often mentors and nurtures us as members of the overall FHT team.

HOW LORRAINE SHOWS UP

Lorraine has an open door policy and is available to talk to team members on any issue. She makes the time to get to know each member of the team on a personal level and supports them in finding that key work life balance needed for success within our organization. We have seen Lorraine's kindness when over the holidays she personally bakes and purchases thoughtful gifts for each team member. She demonstrates and shows a genuine warmth and care for all the staff in Board meetings and at events.. She celebrates individual member and team successes and provides support and development to those who may be challenged at times for whatever reason.

Lorraine embodies a leadership style that facilitates and supports individual team member growth, ensures each member understands and is rewarded for their contribution to the organization

She cares about the organization, the community and our staff. And then when we lost our ED with only 4 weeks notice she did not hesitate to return to help us recruit and now to mentor a new ED.

THE DIFFERENCE LORRAINE MAKES

Lorraine is such a positive person who is down to earth, practical and approachable. She works with her team to make collaborative decisions and provide collective advice to the Board. She brings staff to Board meetings to show case and celebrate the work of her staff and teams. Staff and team events are organized that include the Board members and are led by staff.

LIVING THE VALUES

This is so easy to answer. She appreciates and expects openness and respect across the organization. Lorraine rarely says "I" she always speaks of the "we" in terms of the FHT team. When she does speak in first person it is to hold herself accountable and responsible for any challenges that we have experienced. As our ED, Lorraine is well known in our community through her support for community events, town halls, health fairs, and deputations to District and Municipal Councils.





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NOMINEE(S):

Dr. Michelle Greiver

Family Physician and Researcher

North York Family Health Team

AT A GLANCE

Dr. Michelle Greiver makes improvement a shared practice rather than a management exercise. Through mentorship, regular team-based QI, research and system leadership, she creates space for clinicians, staff and learners to use data, ask questions and improve care together.

THE HEART MICHELLE BRINGS TO THE TEAM



Dr. Michelle Greiver is an exceptional mentor who leads by example and creates opportunities for others to learn, contribute, and improve. As a family physician and quality improvement leader at North York Family Health Team, she has built a culture of continuous learning by holding regular office Quality Improvement (QI) meetings where the team reviews performance data, discusses opportunities for improvement, and develops practical strategies to enhance patient care. Rather than directing change from the top down, Michelle actively engages physicians, nurses, administrative staff, and learners in the process, ensuring every team member feels empowered to contribute. Michelle generously shares her knowledge, tools, and experience with colleagues both within and beyond our

organization. She celebrates improvement and provides thoughtful guidance that helps others develop confidence in using data to improve care.

HOW MICHELLE SHOWS UP

Michelle approaches every interaction with genuine compassion and respect. She recognizes that quality care begins with understanding what matters most to patients and works tirelessly to ensure care is both evidence-informed and person-centred. A recent example is her leadership in improving Advance Care Planning (ACP) and Power of Attorney (POA) documentation for older adults in her practice. Recognizing that these conversations can be difficult, Michelle developed thoughtful, patient-friendly approaches to introduce ACP discussions, including secure email communications and educational resources that allowed patients and families to engage in these conversations at their own pace. She also volunteered her time to present at community-based ACP education sessions alongside other healthcare professionals, helping patients and families better understand the importance of planning for future healthcare decisions. She personally collects, monitors, and analyzes quality improvement data over time, using it to identify trends, measure progress, and implement sustainable improvements within her practice. By creating structured documentation within the electronic medical record, developing patient communication tools, and systematically tracking outcomes, Michelle implemented changes that were thoughtful, measurable, and sustainable. Whether mentoring colleagues, supporting her team, volunteering in the community, or advancing quality improvement, Michelle consistently demonstrates reliability, humility, and a commitment to excellence.

THE DIFFERENCE MICHELLE MAKES

Michelle fosters an environment where collaboration, innovation, and mutual respect are part of everyday practice. Her regular QI meetings are not simply opportunities to review data. Rather, they are safe spaces where team members openly discuss challenges, celebrate successes, and work together toward shared goals. Michelle also always extends invitations to the larger NYFHT team to her meetings, not just for her own practice. By encouraging everyone's participation, Michelle ensures that improvement is truly a team effort. Her enthusiasm for quality improvement is contagious. The positive culture she has cultivated has strengthened teamwork within the clinic and created an environment where continuous improvement feels achievable and rewarding.

LIVING THE VALUES

Michelle embodies AFHTO's values by consistently advancing collaboration, equity, respect, and community both within our Family Health Team and across the primary care system. She believes that improving healthcare is a shared responsibility and has dedicated her career to building partnerships that enable clinicians to learn from one another and improve care together. As a family physician, Professor at the University of Toronto, and former Director of the University of Toronto Practice Based Research Network (UTOPIAN), Michelle has brought together clinicians, researchers, and healthcare organizations to use data

responsibly to improve patient care. As the founding lead of POPLAR, Ontario's Primary Care Practice-Based Learning and Research Network, she has helped advance Ontario's primary care learning health system by integrating continuous learning into everyday practice, generating and implementing evidence in frontline primary care, elevating evidence-based recommendations to inform policy, and meaningfully engaging both healthcare providers and the communities they serve. She volunteers her time delivering Advance Care Planning education alongside other healthcare professionals, empowering patients and families to make informed decisions about their future care. Whether working with patients, colleagues, or provincial and national partners, she leads with humility and respect, valuing every voice and fostering meaningful collaboration.





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NOMINEE(S):

NP Tara Peel

Nurse Practitioner

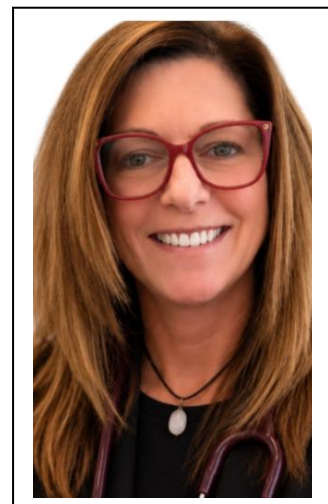
Aurora-Newmarket Family Health Team

AT A GLANCE

Tara Peel strengthens a team by making expertise travel. She mentors nurses and NP students, supports program development, contributes to governance and community outreach, and consistently connects clinical knowledge with the people around her so that both colleagues and patients benefit.

THE HEART TARA BRINGS TO THE TEAM

Our Nurse Practitioner, Tara Peel exemplifies a collaborative and nurturing spirit, consistently supporting team members across all roles—from back-office administrative staff to Interdisciplinary Health Professionals (IHP) and fellow Clinicians. Her inclusive approach fosters a cohesive work environment where every team member feels valued and empowered. She plays an instrumental role in mentoring Registered Nurses, particularly in areas such as program development and adherence to mandated Schedule A requirements. Her guidance ensures both compliance and quality of care while promoting the professional growth of nursing team members. In addition, she actively mentors Nurse Practitioner students from post-graduate institutions,



sharing her expertise and clinical insight to help shape the next generation of Nurse Practitioners. Beyond mentorship, the nominee regularly steps in to provide clinical coverage, including taking on patient care responsibilities during late evenings or in the absence of Physicians. This unwavering commitment ensures continuity of care and reinforces her reliability as a strong team member.

HOW TARA SHOWS UP

Tara consistently embodies empathy and kindness in every aspect of her day-to-day interactions. She begins each morning by checking in with team members—taking the time to ask how they're doing, both personally and professionally. This small yet meaningful gesture sets a tone of compassion and connection for the day ahead. Her door is always open, and she is the first to offer help if someone is feeling unwell, overwhelmed, or simply needs a listening ear. With patients, her approach is equally compassionate. Her empathy is not performative—it is woven into the way she communicates, collaborates, and provides care. She will make herself available for home visits to ensure patients receive the care they need when they cannot make it to the office. Whether it's supporting a colleague during a tough shift or offering encouragement to a patient facing challenges, she leads with kindness and models what it truly means to care.

Her dedication to her patients and our team is unwavering. Whether it's staying late to support a patient in crisis, mentoring a new team member, or leading a quality improvement initiative, she approaches every task with professionalism and care.

Our Nurse Practitioner Tara has been with the ANFHT for 14 years and demonstrates exemplary attendance, only missing work because I insisted, she stay home to recuperate and another time when she could not work due to COVID-19. This may seem trivial, but to me this level of consistency reflects her strong sense of dedication, professionalism, and respect for both colleagues and patients. Patients trust her deeply because they know she will be there for them. **Tara has been a successful nominee of the "Patient Choice Award" through the NPAO 5 years in a row.**

THE DIFFERENCE TARA MAKES

Tara plays a vital role in fostering a positive, inclusive, and connected team culture. She actively participates in team-building initiatives and is often the first to volunteer ideas that bring our team together, whether through lunch and learns, wellness/team building activities, or recognition at our monthly team meetings. She collaborates closely with the Executive Director to support morale-building efforts and always extends that support to administrative employees, ensuring that no team member feels overlooked. Beyond social engagement, she contributes meaningfully to planning and organizing team events, helping with logistics and coordination for celebrations and staff appreciation initiatives. Her dedication to maintaining a supportive workplace reflects a deep commitment to the values

of the organization. She also leads inclusivity through her clinical and program work, embedding sociodemographic considerations into planning and implementation. The programs she facilitates are thoughtfully designed to meet the diverse needs of both employees and the patient population, reinforcing a culture of equity and respect.

LIVING THE VALUES

Tara exemplifies AFHTO's core values through her actions and leadership. As a board member of the Georgina Nurse Practitioner-Led Clinic (GNPLC) and an active participant in community outreach, she demonstrates a strong commitment to equity and community engagement. Tara has partnered with the YRDSB to present on menopause and its impact in the workplace. She also presented to residents of Georgina through a collaboration with the NYSS OHT and the Town of Georgina (mentioned above). Additionally, representatives from the Government of Nova Scotia's Department of Health and Wellness - who are currently developing the province's first-of-its-kind Menopause Centre of Excellence (MCoE) reached out for guidance and she has met and discussed the approach we have taken with this program. Tara presented to Southlake Health's cardiovascular and rehab program on peri menopause/menopause and how it effects cardiovascular risk.

She remains deeply engaged in professional development through her active involvement in the Nurse Practitioners' Association of Ontario (NPAO), consistently bringing back "pearls" of knowledge and implementing updated practices and guidelines. Most notably, she led the transition in our office to the new HPV testing protocol, ensuring evidence-based improvements were adopted swiftly and effectively. Through her collaboration, leadership, and unwavering dedication, she brings AFHTO's values to life in both clinical and community settings.

