

# Victoria Forum

## Black Opportunity Fund



August 24 to 27, 2024

# Land Acknowledgement



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# BLACK OPPORTUNITY FUND

## HEALTH WORKING GROUP TOWNHALL SERIES REPORT

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AUGUST 27 , 2024

BY DR. ATO SEKYI-OTU AND  
DR. BUKOLA SALAMI



# OVERVIEW

## BLACK OPPORTUNITY FUND

- Registered charity (Founded in 2020)
- Supports Black communities by challenging anti-Black racism in two ways:
  1. By delivering sustainable and needs-informed capital streams, managed by Black people for the benefit of Black communities
  2. Work nationally to strengthen collective actions by Black organizations and leaders



# FOCUS AREAS

- **EDUCATION**
- **HEALTH**
- **ENTREPRENEURSHIP**
- **ARTS & CULTURE**
- **CRIMINAL JUSTICE**

# BLACK OPPORTUNITY FUND



# HEALTH WORKING GROUP(HWG)

## Team Members:

- Craig Wellington (CEO of the Black Opportunity Fund)
- Dr. Ato Sekyi-Otu, an Orthopaedic surgeon at the William Osler Health System
- Dr. Oluwabukola Salami, professor at the Cumming School of Medicine,  
University of Calgary



- The Black population accounts for 4.3% of Canada's total population and 16.1% of the racialized population (Statistics Canada, 2021).
- This population is more prone to diseases compared to their white counterparts (Statistics Canada, 2023).
- There exists a paucity of up-to-date data on health inequalities and the causal factors among the Black population.

# OBJECTIVES

01

Identify the health issues affecting Black individuals in Canada.

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02

Improve policies and health services to focus on the health concerns impacting Black populations in Canada

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03

Feedback from members of the Black communities on how stakeholders can mitigate health inequities.

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# **NATIONAL BLACK HEALTH STRATEGY**



- A Series of four national town halls
  - Three out of the four town halls have occurred.
  - Establishment of a foundational framework
  - Community engagement of the Black Population
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- Development of national strategy and policy for Black Health in Canada.
  - Implementation

# SESSION 1: PRIORITIES FOR BLACK HEALTH SERVICES AND POLICIES : BARRIERS,ISSUES AND GAPS

- **Date:** March 21, 2024, from 6:00 pm to 8:00 pm Eastern Standard Time, held virtually on Zoom.100 attendees; 287 people listed as registrants.
- **Objective:** Identify and discuss the major health issues affecting Black individuals in Canada.
- A one-hour panel presentation and discussion.
- Question: “What are the major issues in Black people’s health and what priority policies and services are needed to address this?”.
- Breakout rooms in English and French.

# PANELISTS

- Senator Rosemary Moodie, Chair of the African Canadian Senators Group, and professor of Paediatrics at the University of Toronto.
  - Dr Bukola Salami, RN, MN, PhD, Professor, Cumming School of Medicine, University of Calgary
  - Dr. Jude Mary Cénat, Ph.D, Associate Professor, School of Psychology, University of Ottawa.
  - Dr. Edouard Kouassi, BPharm, PhD,
  - Dionne Sinclair, Vice President of Clinical Operations and Chief Nursing Executive at the Centre for Addiction and Mental Health (CAMH)
  - Valérie Gazemar, Ralliement of Haitian Nurses in Montreal
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# FINDINGS (THEMES)

- Addressing Racism
- Specialized programs tailored to the needs of adult population
- Chronic disease management

- Mental health
- Culturally appropriate health services
- Inter-professional collaboration

- Increased access to family practitioners
- Training programs for health care professionals.

# SESSION 2: MODELS OF SUCCESS



- **Date:** May 16, 2024, from 6:00 pm to 8:00 pm Eastern Standard Time, held virtually on Zoom. 179 individuals registered for the session.
- **Objective:** The bring to light the current roles of Black health organizations in addressing health issues affecting the Canadian Black population.
- Question: *“What are key considerations in integrating these promising practices into a National Black Health Strategy?”.*
- Translation in English and French.

# PANELISTS (Session 2):

## **First Segment: moderated by Dr. Bukola Salami**

- Ms. Sharon Davis Murdoch, Co-President and Director, Health Association of African Canadians (HAAC)
- Reverend Debbie Simmonds, Executive Director, Health Association of African Canadians
- Liz Arnason, Founder, Ase Community Foundation for Black Canadians with Disabilities
- Brienne Olibris, Executive Council as Director of Student Affairs, Black Medical Students Association of Canada (BMSAC).

## **Second Segment : moderated by Dr. Ato Sekyi-Otu**

- Ms. Angela Carter, Advisor, Strategic Initiatives, Lead for the Black Health & Social Services Hub, Roots Community Services.
  - Dee Adekugbe, Founder and Executive Director of Ruth House.
  - Mr. Anthony Henry, President, The Walnut Foundation.
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# FINDINGS

- Significant contributions of various organizations in advancing the health of Black communities across Canada.
- Initiatives and organizations: mental health of Black men and youth.
- A follow-up Survey with quotes from town hall participants



## QUOTE

**“Great content. Dedicated professionals...So great to hear the amazing work being done across the country in support of Black Health.”**

# SESSION 3: CAPITALIZING ON BLACK PEOPLES' STRENGTHS, BLACK HEALTH LEADERS AND HEALTH PROFESSIONALS TO IMPROVE HEALTH SERVICE DELIVERY

**Date:** July 18, 2024, from 6:00 pm to 8:00 pm Eastern Standard Time, held virtually on Zoom. A two-hour session with a total of 202 attendees. Audience interaction utilizing the MentiMeter platform.

## **OBJECTIVES:**

- To bring to light the current strengths and capacities within the Black community
- To discuss activities and roles of Black health leaders and professional organizations and other resources within the Black community
- To discuss how these strengths can be leveraged to better support Black people's health and issues identified in previous sessions

# PANELISTS for Session 3

## **Moderated by Dr. Onye Nnorom**

- Dr. Nicolas Cadet, Ophthalmologist and Oculoplastic Specialist at the CUISSS du Centre.
  - Dr. Delores V. Mullings, Full Professor and Vice-Provost (Equity, Diversity and Inclusion) at the Memorial University of Newfoundland (School of Social Work).
  - Dr. Mojola Omole, Breast Surgical Oncologist and General Surgeon, Scarborough Health Network & President of the Black Physicians of Ontario (BPAO).
  - Noreen Sibanda, Registered Provisional Psychologist, Alberta Black Therapist Network.
  - Dayirai Kapfunde, Registered Clinical Social Worker and Clinical Supervisor, Psychotherapist, Alberta Black Therapist Network.
  - Dr. Damilola Iduye, Pan Canadian Nurses of African Descent.
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# FINDINGS

- A need for cultural sensitivity and competence among non-Black healthcare professionals.
- Under-representation of Black population in leadership roles within healthcare.
- Racial disparities and systemic issues
- Impact of religious organizations in health care.
- A need for post-secondary mentorship programs



## CONCLUSION

- The town hall sessions provided a better understanding of the underlying contributors to Black health inequities.
- We need more dialogue...
- You're all invited to Session 4....

# SESSION 4: POLICY IMPLICATIONS FOR ADDRESSING BLACK PEOPLE'S HEALTH: TOWARDS CREATING A NATIONAL BLACK STRATEGY

- **Tentative Date:** January 31 to February 2, 2025
- This session is the final town hall in the four-part series. It will be an in-person event at the 4th National Black Canadians Summit in Montreal, organized by the Michaelle Jean Foundation.
- Dr. Ato Sekyi-Otu and Dr. Bukola Salami will summarize the outcomes of the previous town hall sessions.

# PANELISTS for Session 4:

- Dr. Kwame McKenzie, CEO of the Wellesley Institute and full professor in the Department of Psychiatry at the University of Toronto.
  - Dr. Na-Koshie Lamptey, first Deputy Medical Officer of Health at the City of Toronto.
  - Dr. Akwatu Khenti, Special Advisor to the City of Toronto's Targeted COVID Equity Action Plan.
  - Dr. Barbara Hamilton-Hinch, Associate Professor, Recreation and Leisure Studies (Dalhousie University).
  - Representatives of the Public Health Agency of Canada (PHAC)
  - Representatives of Health Canada
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## WHAT IS NEXT?

- Funding at the Federal Level
- Further collaboration
- Input from the Black Communities

## WHAT IS NEEDED?



**THANK YOU!**

**QUESTIONS?**