

Durham Wellness City Taking Care of Me



There are many dimensions to being a whole person in recovery. Learning tools to manage mental health challenges or addiction challenges is one important piece of Recovery. But taking care of all aspects of ourselves is important. It's hard to manage my depression when I'm hungry, and hard to manage my anxiety when I'm sleeping in the woods, and hard to manage my addiction when I am in chronic pain. So, when we talk about Recovery, it's important to look at all the dimensions of our lives. At RI International, we look at the *Nine Dimensions of Wellness*: Emotional Wellness, Financial Wellness, Home and Community Living Wellness, Intellectual Wellness, Occupational Wellness, Physical Wellness, Recreational Wellness, Social Wellness, and Spiritual Wellness. We look at how we can take extra good care of ourselves in each dimension of our lives.

One of the ways that we take care of our **Physical Wellness** here at Durham Wellness City is by being informed about diseases and infections that can be transmitted through exposure to the blood or body fluids of someone who is infected. These can include: HIV (the virus that causes AIDS), Hepatitis, Herpes, Chlamydia, Gonorrhea and Syphilis. Every few weeks, local agencies come out to Wellness City to provide information about these diseases and to offer free testing for those who would like to be tested. These agencies also provide safer sex supplies such as condoms, dental dams, lubricant, etc. Knowledge is power – if we know how to prevent infection, we can protect ourselves and keep ourselves well, and if we know that we have caught an infection, we can seek out the medical care needed to keep ourselves healthy.

Durham Wellness City just hosted an education and testing event in celebration of National Black HIV/AIDS Awareness Day. Staff and volunteers from the Triangle Empowerment Center came to Durham Wellness City and provided on-site education, safer sex supplies, and testing for HIV and STIs. Any person who chose to get tested was given a goodie bag. Over 60 people attended the event and we all enjoyed pizza and socializing together. People left with a much better understanding of some of the ways that we can all take better care of our **Physical Wellness** as part of our Recovery Journey.