



## WE-SPARK Strategic Plan 2025-30

# Executive Summary

WE-SPARK Health Institute is a vibrant hub of health research efforts in Windsor-Essex. A University of Windsor Senate-approved institute, WE-SPARK brings together Erie Shores HealthCare (ESHC), Hôtel-Dieu Grace Healthcare (HDGH), St. Clair College (SCC), University of Windsor (UW), and Windsor Regional Hospital (WRH). Together, WE-SPARK members have elevated health research and maximized assets and expertise from across the region. The Institute is locally known as a catalyst for health research that facilitates knowledge sharing between researchers, hospitals, postsecondary institutions, and the health and biosciences sector.

**WE-SPARK Health Institute is at a pivotal moment in its development.** After five years of foundational work to establish the Institute and build momentum, WE-SPARK has achieved strong research and clinical impacts, and built a thriving network. Now, as they look toward 2030, their renewed focus on values, vision, and mission showcases their commitment to driving transformative change. The identification of five strategic priorities and three key areas of strength promises a targeted approach to their growth and efforts. This plan has the potential to significantly advance health innovation and positively impact the health of the community.

The Strategic Plan 2025-30 aligns with and extends the efforts accomplished through the previous WE-SPARK Strategic Priorities (2019) with a **refreshed vision and mission**:

## THE VISION

A thriving and engaged research community driving innovation and advancements in health.

## THE MISSION

Enhance the health, well-being, and care of people through transformative research, evidence-based interventions, and knowledge translation.

# STRATEGIC PRIORITIES (2025-2030)

To achieve the vision and mission, WE-SPARK has developed a plan that provides an overarching structure to drive impact and increase sustainability. In its next phase, WE-SPARK seeks to elevate health research in Windsor-Essex with five strategic priorities:



**S1: Expand and Enhance Strategic Partnerships and Collaborations** to broaden WE-SPARK efforts and impact.



**S2: Grow Focus Disciplines and Sectors** to maximize resources and strengthen the identity of the Institute.



**S3: Leverage Research Expertise and Focus on Paths for Translation,** producing meaningful laboratory, clinical, and applied research that benefits human health.



**S4: Advocate for a Sustainable Funding Model** to ensure WE-SPARK researchers have the resources they need to bring improved health outcomes to Windsor-Essex.



**S5: Define and Integrate Roles and Structures** to strengthen collaboration and sense of belonging among members.

As part of these strategic priorities, WE-SPARK is introducing three focus areas and three cross-cutting themes that represent its research strengths (Figure 1).



**Figure 1:** WE-SPARK focus areas and cross-cutting themes



Source: Stiletto Analysis

These focus areas and cross-cutting themes offer WE-SPARK an opportunity to highlight its greatest research strengths and create a cohesive identity for the Institute, one that reflects the unique demographics, resources, and location of the Windsor-Essex community. Through the collaboration of its partner institutions and its member researchers, WE-SPARK has transformed

the research landscape of Windsor-Essex. With focused goals, and with the right mix of supports and funding, WE-SPARK is poised to progress beyond its role as catalyst to that of convenor. In the next five years, the Institute has an important opportunity to elevate the accomplishments and the ongoing potential of the entire Windsor-Essex health research ecosystem.

**The WE-SPARK Strategic Plan 2025-30 articulates a five-year path for the Institute. Extending beyond its work as a catalyst for research, WE-SPARK has an opportunity to provide regional leadership as the main ecosystem convenor.**

As a leading translational research institute with a focused disciplinary approach, WE-SPARK will leverage health research in Windsor-Essex and advance research, teaching, and commercialization.