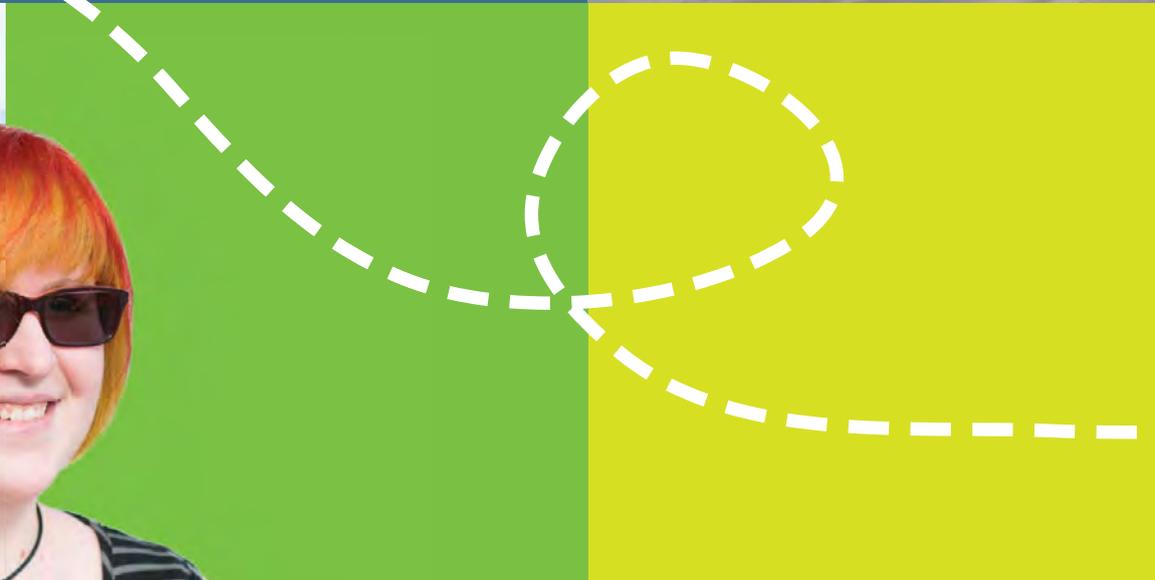




Coast-to-Coast

COMMUNITIES



CNIB Annual Report 2015-2016
cnib.ca/2016



Our mission

To ensure all Canadians who are blind or partially sighted have the confidence, skills and opportunity to fully participate in life and no Canadian loses their sight to preventable causes.

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United across the nation

Letter from the President & CEO,
and Board Chair



From the harbours of Newfoundland to the plains of Saskatchewan, from the Alberta Rockies to the Canadian Shield, CNIB is proud to call every part of this country home.

For almost 100 years, we've worked on the ground in communities right across Canada – helping blind and partially sighted Canadians build the skills needed to lead full, independent lives. What started as a small cluster of CNIB offices has since grown into a nationwide presence, 57 locations strong.

Now, as we move forward with our four-year strategic plan, the Path to Change, we feel our coast-to-coast identity more than ever. The end of the 2016 fiscal year marks the midpoint in this plan, which sees us working with provincial governments to integrate post-vision loss rehabilitation therapy into the continuum of health care.

Just like Canada's citizens across the country, every Canadian province is unique – and our strategy to achieve the Path to Change has varied from region to region as a result. What hasn't varied, however, is our unity on this goal: our collective and unflinching resolve to ensure all Canadians have equal access to the rehabilitation services they need to be independent, as well as the charitable programs that can so greatly enhance the quality of someone's life.

As you read this report, you'll learn more about our progress on the Path to Change in each Canadian region. You'll also learn more about our achievements from the past year in communities from coast to coast.

None of this would have been possible without your support. And so, we thank you: Our many supporters and champions across Canada.

John M. Rafferty
President & CEO
CNIB

John Matheson
Chair, National Board of Directors
CNIB

From sea to shining sea

Our national highlights



We provided more than **560,000** hours of services to our clients across Canada in the last year.



CNIB was proud to welcome and serve more than **8,000** new clients last year, up **6%** from the year before.

CNIB is proud to be a national organization that serves people in communities large and small, right across Canada. Here, you'll learn more about our national achievements – designed to improve the lives of Canadians who are blind or partially sighted for generations to come.

Walking the Path to Change

Over the last year we've made tremendous progress on our strategic plan, the Path to Change, as we work to integrate post-vision loss rehabilitation therapy into each province's health care continuum. Throughout this report, you'll see how we've progressed on our Path to Change goals in each region nationwide.

That success to date has allowed us to power forward on a bold new vision for our charitable future – enabling us to start laying the groundwork for an exciting array of new programs and services. Developed in close consultation with our clients, volunteers and staff, these services will run the gamut from peer support and mentorship, to employment, technology, children and youth support, as well as public education and advocacy programming to overturn the stigma and barriers faced by Canadians with vision

loss. To learn more about the Path to Change, visit cnib.ca/pathtochange.

Bringing accessible literature to public libraries

No Canadian should be dependent on a charity to uphold their basic human right to read. CNIB has long been Canada's main provider of alternative format library materials, including audio, and braille. While CNIB continues to produce this material in partnership with the Government of Canada, the delivery into the hands of Canadians who are blind or partially sighted ultimately belongs with public libraries. That's why CNIB, in collaboration with Canada's public libraries, helped to develop the Centre for Equitable Library Services (CELA) last year.

CELA is a new non-profit organization designed to ensure Canadians with print disabilities have access to equitable library service, right through their local public library. CNIB has been strongly advocating for government to integrate accessible library services within the public library system for many years. The launch of CELA represents not only a huge step toward that goal – but an historic victory on the journey to full equality in this country. Learn more about CELA at celalibrary.ca.

Introducing the world's first affordable braille display

A refreshable braille device is a unit that displays braille characters, usually with round-tipped pins raised through holes in a flat surface. Until recently, the average refreshable braille display machine retailed for around \$3,000 – putting it out of reach for many people here in Canada and around the world. That's why CNIB was thrilled to join forces with nine other blindness organizations worldwide last year to develop the world's first affordable braille display, the Orbit Braille Reader. At a price point of under \$500, the Orbit will make at-home braille literacy attainable to untold thousands of people, without breaking the bank. CNIB was proud to provide research and development funding – as well as our expertise and testing services – to bring this ground-breaking product to life.

Championing the Marrakesh Treaty for barrier-free books

After extensive advocacy work to bring this milestone to pass, CNIB was thrilled when in March 2016, the federal government announced its official commitment to ratify the Marrakesh Treaty – and with it, to break down longstanding barriers for three million Canadians with print disabilities to obtain literature in alternative formats.

Developed by the World Intellectual Property Organization, the Marrakesh Treaty centres on making changes to domestic copyright laws to allow sharing of accessible reading materials between nations. Currently in Canada, only an alarming seven per cent of published works are available in a format that can be read by people with print disabilities, including braille, audio and large-print. The ratification of this treaty will allow Canadians with print disabilities to have access to a wider range of published literature than ever before.

Clearing Our Path for an accessible society

Architectural design shouldn't create barriers that hinder safe use of a space or limit independent travel. That's why CNIB developed the first print edition of Clearing Our Path in 1998 to provide information on creating accessible environments for people with vision loss. It's become an invaluable tool for architects, designers, building owners, planners, standards bodies and others in making indoor and outdoor spaces universally accessible.

Thanks to Government of Canada funding, Clearing Our Path was recently adapted for digital format and is available online for the first time. Our hope is that by sharing this expertise with a wide audience, the built environment will become more accessible for everyone. Visit clearingourpath.ca to learn more.



Top: Celebrating the ratification of the Marrakesh Treaty
Right: Prime Minister Trudeau with CNIB staff member Leona Emberson



BC & Yukon



BC is home to 22% of Canada's Vision Mate volunteers, and 19% of our volunteers are also clients.



Each year, we make three trips to the Yukon to service 144 clients in Whitehorse and surrounding rural areas.

Progress continues along the Path to Change

Over the past year, CNIB British Columbia continued down the Path to Change by laying a strong foundation for successfully integrating post-vision loss rehabilitation therapy (PVLRT) into the publicly funded continuum of care. Our efforts will continue to accelerate leading up to the next provincial election in 2017, when we'll ask each party to formally commit to correcting the funding imbalance for PVLRT in BC. We look forward to the exciting developments that will unfold over the next year.

Helping teens prepare for the future

When we launched a pilot program in 2015 aimed at helping young adults with vision loss transition into adulthood, we had no idea what kind of impact it would have. Today, we're thrilled that the outcomes from the Transition Peer Support Program have been so positive that we're able to expand it to two additional regions. Young people who've participated in the program have reported an increase in confidence, skills and independence, and a number have gone on to enroll in post-secondary education in addition to securing employment.



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Last year, we spent more time with those in need of our services, with a 27% increase in our interactions with our clients.

Ensuring accessibility for British Columbians with vision loss

While advancements in technology can be life-changing for people with vision loss, the price tag can be prohibitive. The Ensuring Accessibility for British Columbians with Vision Loss Program bridges that gap by helping individuals access technologies thanks to investments from generous funders. In the words of 17-year-old Travis: "It's exciting to now have the ability to read in comfort thanks to The Ruby [portable video magnifier]... I will rely on it as I enter post-secondary studies when my reading needs will increase." This program is truly transforming lives.



Meet Maggie Wherle

Eight-year-old Maggie Wherle bubbles over with enthusiasm when talking about her favourite books, and can't resist bouncing in her seat.

"Right now I'm reading 'The Lord of the Rings', but I've also read the whole 'Harry Potter' series and I just finished 'The Hitchhiker's Guide to the Galaxy'," says Maggie, who was born blind. "I think reading all of these books gave me the influence to write."

Maggie, who is a BC native, took first prize for her age category in CNIB's national braille creative writing contest last year for her story, "The Underground Festival", a fantasy world where dragons soar and the dirt shimmers silver.

Like any new language, braille takes time and practice to learn. CNIB offers braille instruction in BC in accordance with an individual's personal goals. Whether that means learning the basic alphabet or becoming an advanced reader of literature, CNIB helps people like Maggie get there.

"Braille is the one thing that gives me access to what other people can see," says Maggie. "Without it, I don't feel like I'd fit in."



Alberta & the Northwest Territories



In 2015, more than 18,000 clients were registered for CNIB programs and services across Alberta and the Northwest Territories.



We also provided more than 3,400 hours of service to blind or partially sighted Alberta children and their families.

Champions taking action for the Path to Change

In 2015, our Alberta team was thrilled to launch the CNIB Champions advocacy group, consisting of 50 CNIB clients and supporters who are passionate about the need to integrate post-vision loss rehabilitation therapy (PVLRT) into the continuum of care. Throughout the year, these Champions participated in a series of advocacy campaigns during which they met with Members of the Legislative Assembly, wrote letters and spoke at various events and forums. We will continue this important work until full PVLRT integration is achieved in Alberta.

Bringing music therapy to little ones across Alberta

For children who are blind or partially sighted, music therapy is a sensory experience that stimulates their minds and sparks their creativity. Children as young as one and two participate in the CNIB Music Therapy program once a month in Calgary and Edmonton. The music therapists incorporate song, repetition, instrument exploration, movement and relaxation into every session, allowing the children to develop their emotional and physical health as well as social skills – not to mention a love for music.



 facebook.com/cnibalbertanwt

 twitter.com/cnib_abnwt



Our dedicated volunteers generously donated 57,200 hours of their time last year to help promote vision health and support people living with vision loss.

Reaching out to remote communities

Many people who live in remote communities can find the challenges of vision loss to be even more daunting as support can be difficult to reach. That's why our specialists travelled across Alberta and the Northwest Territories last year to provide low vision clinics, assessments and rehabilitation therapy to people with vision loss in isolated communities. What's more, many participants were then connected to additional services to help them continue to build their independence and confidence.



Meet Marlon Adarme

Marlon Adarme was an engineer at a Calgary oil and gas company until his life completely changed virtually overnight. Suddenly, Marlon lost his vision to diabetic retinopathy, and, just as quickly, he had to give up his job.

While his wife was at work and his kids were at school, Marlon spent his days at home, unsure of how to cope. His family was unable to provide the level of care he needed and considered sending him back to their home country, the Philippines, so that other family members could better care for him.

When Marlon came to our CNIB office in Calgary, he was introduced to a CNIB specialist who taught him to do things for himself again – from preparing meals, to identifying commonly used items, to navigating around his home. He was also provided with a white cane, along with training to help improve his confidence while travelling in the community.

A month later, Marlon came back to us with a smile on his face, saying not only had CNIB provided him with a better perspective on living independently, but he now felt more hopeful about keeping his family together.



Saskatchewan!



Our specialists supported 1,600 people who are blind or partially sighted across the province over the last year.



Saskatchewan-based volunteers delivered nearly 5,000 hours of CNIB service last year – equivalent to three full-time employees.

Champions lead the way on the Path to Change

Over the past year, our Saskatchewan team has made steady progress toward the goal of fully integrating post-vision loss rehabilitation therapy (PVLRT) within the continuum of health care. This effort has been led, in large part, by the efforts of 22 CNIB Champions across the province – individuals who are passionate advocates for equality for people who are blind or partially sighted. The result was 50 interventions or meetings with Members of the Legislative Assembly and provincial election candidates, and a commitment from the Saskatchewan Party to support PVLRT integration in the last election.

Bringing vision rehabilitation to remote Aboriginal communities

In the winter of 2016, CNIB's Saskatoon team piloted a new Aboriginal Telehealth program to deliver rehabilitation services to isolated Aboriginal Canadians who are adjusting to vision loss in rural Saskatchewan. The pilot program served individuals across 10 Saskatchewan reserves, with sessions delivered through the Province of Saskatchewan's Telehealth system via satellite in hospitals province-wide. For the first time since their vision loss, participants learned a number of skills and techniques required to help them lead fuller, more independent lives.



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 twitter.com/cnib_mansask



We were proud to provide more than 10,000 hours of service last year to people in Saskatchewan who are blind or partially sighted.

Successful eye safety campaign through strong partnerships

Through a partnership with WorkSafe Saskatchewan, CNIB delivered 90 eye safety sessions in the province over the last three years, teaching Saskatchewan residents to better protect their eyes from injury. As a result, eye injuries have moved from a top three injury down to seventh in the province. In addition, through an agreement with the Saskatchewan Roughriders, WorkSafe Saskatchewan, Weber Supply, 3M and Sherwood Coop, all organizations worked together to sell Rider-branded sun/safety glasses, with proceeds going to local CNIB services.



Meet Ashley Nemeth

“I want people to see my ability not my disability,” says Saskatchewan resident and CNIB client, Ashley Nemeth.

As a CNIB spokesperson and an advocate for people with vision loss, Ashley’s mission is to break down the misperceptions society has about blindness.

Born with ocular albinism, Ashley’s journey with CNIB began when she was a teenager. After struggling with her independence as a child, she started to find her stride when we taught her how to travel with a white cane, and how to cook and shop by herself. That was just the beginning.

Now, as a mother of three children, Ashley does everything any stay-at-home mom would do. In her spare time she volunteers for CNIB, writes a fantastic blog to raise awareness about the abilities of people with vision loss, and tries to hit the slopes on her snowboard whenever she can.

“Breaking down misperceptions is the first step so that more people with disabilities have the same opportunities as people without disabilities,” she says.



Manitoba



Over the last year, more than 500 volunteers throughout Manitoba generously contributed 7,200 hours of their time to our organization.



CNIB worked directly with almost 2,000 blind and partially sighted Manitobans last year, and delivered 12,000 total hours of service.

Advocacy continues for the Path to Change

CNIB's Manitoba team has had meaningful and productive conversations with provincial government about the integration of post-vision loss rehabilitation therapy (PVLRT) into the continuum of health care – thanks in large part to our strong team of 17 community Ambassadors and Champions. Working hand-in-hand with CNIB, these passionate individuals have been on the frontlines of the issue, advocating for the integrated model of PVLRT in Manitoba. Positive conversations continue and we look forward to further progress over the year to come.

Introducing children to new experiences

This past year, CNIB Manitoba partnered with Odysseo Touch Tour Experience by Cavalia and the Maple Leaf Monster Jam Tour to introduce the equestrian and monster truck experience to children who are blind and partially sighted. A group of 17 CNIB clients, aged seven to 12, along with their siblings and parents, participated in the Maple Leaf Monster Jam Touch Tour, and 13 older children were able to participate in the Odysseo Touch Tour Experience by Cavalia. Both experiences provided an opportunity for the children involved to enjoy an interactive and sensory experience – and memories to last a lifetime.



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Our generous donors in Manitoba contributed \$413,000 last year to support our rehabilitation and charitable programs.

A new legacy is created by generous supporters

CNIB was honoured and tremendously grateful last year when Glenn and Cindy Hildebrand set up an endowment at the Winnipeg Foundation to support our work. Glenn first became involved with CNIB in the early 1980s when he was a broadcaster in Brandon, and now serves as both CNIB Manitoba Board Chair and a member of the CNIB National Board of Directors. The couple's strong belief in leaving a legacy of social responsibility was behind their decision. Our deepest thanks go to Glenn and Cindy for their wonderful contribution, as well as their continued leadership and support.



Meet Derek Lackey

Manitoban Derek Lackey used to have perfect vision. He was a journeyman plumber who had just received his Red Seal, enabling him to work in any province, and he'd recently become engaged. But three years ago, everything changed when he lost his sight from a retinal detachment caused by complications from diabetes.

He says his initial reaction to losing his vision was, "How do I get started? Where do I go from here?" He turned to CNIB for support, and started to quickly regain his independence. He excelled at learning to use a white cane, and is now working on CNIB's technology training programs.

Sports were always a big passion for Derek, but after losing his sight, he wasn't able to move as fluidly and his joints were tight as a result. He decided to try yoga, and found it really helped. A friend challenged him to try archery and, never one to sit back and rest, he took that challenge and discovered he loves it.

"Taking up archery has taught me that there isn't anything you can't do; it's how you adapt it," says Derek.



Ontario



Last year, more than 1,700 volunteers across Ontario contributed almost 89,000 hours of their time to bring our work to life.



Our CNIB Ontario Ambassadors attended 425 events in the last year, raising awareness and telling their stories to more than 23,000 people.

An exciting Path to Change announcement

We are thrilled to announce that CNIB and the Ontario Ministry of Health & Long-Term Care have reached an agreement about long-term funding for post-vision loss rehabilitation therapy. By mid-2017, these rehabilitation services will be fully funded by the government and efforts will be underway to integrate them into the public health care system. We will then be able to focus on charitable programs that complement and enhance these rehabilitation services – addressing the practical and emotional needs of Ontarians with vision loss, enhancing quality of life and creating a more inclusive society.

Dedicated support for Ontarians who are deafblind

Building on our continued commitment to supporting people who are deafblind across the province, CNIB has created a new division dedicated specifically to these individuals. Thanks to provincial funding, we operate the largest CNIB program in Canada for people who are deafblind, serving 400 Ontarians who have both vision and hearing loss. Our 109 staff members work one-on-one with deafblind clients, acting as their eyes and ears to help them communicate and integrate into their communities, and achieve as much independence as possible.



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 twitter.com/cnib_ontario



The CNIB Eye Van visited 30 Northern Ontario communities last year, enabling 4,200 patients in remote areas to receive a one-on-one exam from an eye doctor.

Fighting for the rights of people with print disabilities

We're proud to announce that one of our most hard-working volunteers, Dorothy Macnaughton, recently won the Ontario Library Association's 2016 Les Fowlie Intellectual Freedom Award for her years of advocacy for people with print disabilities. Dorothy began serving on the CNIB Library board of directors in the 1990s and played an important role in the creation of the Centre for Equitable Library Access (CELA), a partnership between CNIB and public libraries nationwide. Dorothy now chairs the CNIB Northern Ontario Board of Directors.



Meet the Thomson family

Shortly after she was born, Megan Thomson acquired a neurological vision disorder as a result of a brain injury. Since then, CNIB has been a lifeline for not only Megan, but her whole family.

One of Megan's favourite parts of CNIB is our Lake Joseph Centre, commonly known as "Lake Joe", which provides a blend of rehabilitation and recreation in a safe, inclusive environment. Whether it's kayaking, swimming, or arts and crafts, Lake Joe offers it all – in a place specially made for people with vision loss. The Thomson family has been going to Lake Joe for "Family Week" since it was first recommended to them six years ago.

At Lake Joe, Megan has thrown herself into tubing and rock climbing, while her family has had a chance to meet and get to know other families facing some of the same challenges as them.

"As parents, we're supposed to be a support system," says Megan's mom, Andrea, "but I think we unconsciously set limits at times, so being able to see others succeed is enlightening."



Quebec



Our TechnoVision 2015 conference brought more than 350 people together to learn, share and explore the world of assistive technologies and vision loss services.



Last year, more than 500 Quebecois received emotional and practical support through our peer support groups.

Our unique Path to Change

While post-vision loss rehabilitation therapy (PVLRT) is subsidized by CNIB donations throughout the rest of Canada, in Quebec these crucial services have been integrated within the continuum of care and funded by the provincial government for decades. Because of this, our Path to Change goals are more focused on the evolution of our charitable programs. As we move forward, we're evaluating our Quebec services to pinpoint how we can continue to develop these offerings to improve quality of life for our clients and create a more inclusive society in our province.

A new spin on technology training

Over the past year, CNIB Quebec has completed the rebuild of its training and adaptive technology programs, which give people who are blind or partially sighted remote training in the use of computers and assistive technologies that can make a big difference in their lives. Clients now have the opportunity to access self-guided interactive webinars that allow them to go at their own pace, with follow-up training that's tailored to a person's abilities and level of comfort. We're thrilled to find that this new approach to delivering technology training has resulted in increased satisfaction from those we serve.



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 twitter.com/incacnib



A Dining in the Dark event held at the well-known Montreal restaurant Impasto gave participants the enlightening experience of dining without vision to guide their way.

Increasing support for caregivers and loved ones

Vision loss affects not just one person, but the whole family. That's why we've developed and launched a new support program in Quebec for the loved ones and caregivers of people who are blind or partially sighted, called **Seeing with the Eyes of the Heart** (Les yeux du cœur). Through this program, participants learn new techniques to meet the challenges of their caregiving role, and manage the emotions they may be facing. This program breaks the isolation caregivers can sometimes feel, while allowing them to take some time for themselves.



Meet Caroline Héroux

At the age of 23, Caroline Héroux opened her eyes to a world of darkness. She'd been diagnosed with diabetic retinopathy just five months earlier – and now suddenly she'd lost her sight. Although a series of operations managed to restore about 50 per cent of her vision, it remains very blurry.

Early on, the biggest challenge for Caroline was dealing with feeling embarrassed and weak about her vision loss. Because she couldn't do as much anymore, many of her friends walked away from her – even some close friends. Then, with courage and the help of CNIB, she was finally able to overcome these challenges.

She participated in a CNIB support group and slowly but surely, rebuilt her confidence. The experience was a springboard for her: before long she was also volunteering for CNIB, leading support groups, and taking our technology training courses.

Caroline is a living testament to how transformations can happen for people who lose their sight – even when they don't expect it. She started to use CNIB's services, then spread her wings to enjoy a rich life and help others.



New Brunswick



CNIB provided nearly 19,000 hours of direct support services to New Brunswickers who are blind or partially sighted last year.



Last year, 149 dedicated volunteers across New Brunswick contributed nearly 3,500 hours of their time to our organization.

Making gains for seniors on the Path to Change

This year's focus has been on integrating post-vision loss rehabilitation therapy (PVLRT) within the continuum of care, particularly as part of New Brunswick's Home First Seniors' Strategy. This hard work has begun to pay off, with increased funding secured from the Department of Social Development and an opportunity for funding from the Department of Health. In September 2015, CNIB joined a pilot project to provide coordinated rehabilitation to high-risk seniors. We will continue to build these partnerships as the project expands in the coming year.

Helping youth achieve success in high school and beyond

In May 2015, Francophone and Anglophone youth with vision loss from across the province participated in CNIB's second annual youth retreat in Shediac, New Brunswick. The weekend gave these young people a chance to learn valuable skills to help them achieve success in high school and beyond. Participants had cooking competitions, volunteered for a food bank, worked on pre-employment skills, learned self-defense and shared experiences in a facilitated discussion group. Feedback was positive and the retreat is expected to grow in the years ahead.



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Dining in the Dark fundraising events in Fredericton, Miramichi and Moncton raised more than \$23,000 last year for CNIB programs and services in New Brunswick.

Opening doors to employment for working-age adults

CNIB was proud to expand its services for the working-age population in New Brunswick last summer with the introduction of provincially-funded consultation services for employment counsellors, employers and post-secondary institutions. This means that individuals with vision loss facing barriers to employment can now more easily access rehabilitation, assistive technology and other supports to help them find and maintain meaningful employment – including workplace assessments, employer sensitivity training and orientation to the work environment.



Meet Lida Currie

New Brunswick resident Lida Currie has always been the type of person who thinks about others more than herself, especially when it comes to her family. So when she and four of her eight siblings found out they shared a serious eye disease, retinitis pigmentosa, Lida immediately took on the mothering role.

She gathered as much information as she could about the disease so that her siblings and she would be educated about what was to come. Next, she contacted CNIB and started not only participating in our programs, but also volunteering so she could help others.

At every step of the way, we were there for her. Our staff showed her how to get around more safely on her own as her vision declined. We also taught her how to use assistive equipment and technologies, like an iPad and specialty magnifying glass. Since then, she's been a connection to CNIB not only for her siblings, but anyone she meets who may need our help.

"If someone says they're losing their vision, I send them straight to CNIB," she says. "The support is there for the asking."



Nova Scotia & PEI



2,236 Nova Scotians and 366 Islanders received crucial vision loss services from CNIB in the last year.



CNIB supporters raised more than \$60,000 at Dining in Dark events last year in Charlottetown, Sydney, Kingston and Halifax.

Raising our voices for rehabilitation funding

In November 2015, more than 100 people with vision loss held a rally at the Nova Scotia Legislature in response to the provincial government's decision to cut funding for post-vision loss rehabilitation therapy (PVLRT). As a result of their advocacy, the Nova Scotia Minister of Health acknowledged that PVLRT should be treated as a health service and reinstated the funding. Meanwhile in PEI, discussions with provincial government are ongoing. In both provinces, government funding for PVLRT still does not cover the costs to deliver services to Nova Scotians and Islanders.

Reducing eye injuries across Nova Scotia and PEI

In response to an increase in eye injuries among young workers aged 15-24, CNIB's Eye Safety Tour targeted skilled trade students at community college campuses in Nova Scotia and PEI. With the goal of creating a culture of eye safety among students entering industries with a high risk of eye injury, CNIB delivered 10 eye safety workshops to 570 participants across five Holland College campuses; and 15 eye safety workshops to 1,330 participants across all 13 Nova Scotia Community College campuses.



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78 Nova Scotians and 14 Islanders are currently matched with a CNIB client as a Vision Mate – helping with reading, household tasks and running errands.

Helping parents gain practical skills and overcome isolation

Last year, parents from across Nova Scotia and PEI (as well as New Brunswick, Newfoundland and Labrador, and Ontario) participated in CNIB's Parenting with Vision Loss program, which is based in Halifax. By focusing on everyday parenting activities, the program enhances parents' confidence and enables them to gain practical parenting skills. Moms and dads shared their vision loss stories, discussed the decision to have children and the public perceptions of parenting with vision loss, as well as overcoming isolation.



Meet Normand Richard

Normand Richard admits that his journey to accepting vision loss was a long one. When he was seven years old, he remembers having difficulty seeing the chalk board and reading books. It would be another 30-odd years before the PEI resident learned he had optic nerve damage – but still, he had a hard time coming to terms with it.

Another 10 years went by before Normand finally accepted help from CNIB and began his journey of moving forward. After some convincing, he allowed our staff to teach him how to walk independently with a white cane – reminding him that using a cane isn't a symbol of weakness as he'd believed, but a tool for independence. Before long, he was learning to use a computer and he built enough confidence to enroll at the Collège de l'Acadie in PEI so he could complete his GED.

Today, Normand is learning how to cook; he has his own website and is writing a book about his life, with proceeds going to his local church.

"You have to accept your disability," he says. "CNIB is there to help you. Nobody should think anything else."



Newfoundland & Labrador



Newfoundlanders and Labradorians who are blind or partially sighted received more than 23,000 hours of service from CNIB in the last year.



Last year, 281 guests attended Dining in the Dark events across the province, generously raising \$36,875 for our programs and services.

Leading the way on the Path to Change

Newfoundland and Labrador is playing a strong leadership role as the second provincial government in Canada, after Quebec, to take responsibility for post-vision loss rehabilitation therapy (PVLRT) through the continuum of care. In a fantastic win for the Path to Change, the Department of Health and Community Services agreed to provide sustainable funding for PVLRT last year through Eastern Health, a regional health authority with provincial responsibility for health care services.

Bringing assistive technology to those who need it

People with vision loss in remote communities often have very little opportunity to try out assistive devices that could make a big difference in their lives. That's why CNIB was pleased to bring this hands-on experience to them last spring through an assistive technology tour across Newfoundland and Labrador, delivered by CNIB with funding from TELUS. CNIB staff and volunteers set up technology fairs in 11 communities to demonstrate the latest assistive technologies for people who are blind or partially sighted.



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CNIB's eye safety program delivered the message of vision health and safety through 66 workshops with more than 2,700 participants last year.

Learning life skills that aren't taught in school

Growing up with vision loss can mean facing challenges other kids just don't understand. That's why, as part of our annual Summer Intervention Program, CNIB was proud to deliver an Expanded Core Curriculum program for youth with vision loss at our St. John's Centre and in the community. Through this program, young people with vision loss aged 10-17 learned key skills that aren't taught in schools, like cooking, travelling safely throughout the city, shopping independently and socialization.



Meet Holly Bennett

Despite being born with low vision, Holly Bennett is a visual artist through and through. She's had a love for art since she was a little girl. And this fall, she'll be entering her first year at Grenfell campus of Memorial University's art program in Corner Brook, which accepts only a handful of applicants.

"People are always amazed at how much talent I have for someone who's visually impaired," says Holly. But unlike most, our team at CNIB isn't amazed; we're just plain proud. We've been working with Holly since she was a little girl, and she's never been one to let vision loss get in her way.

Holly and her family have been involved with CNIB throughout her childhood – as she learned to walk with a white cane, grow into an independent teenager, and eventually, took her first tour with CNIB of the Grenfell campus she'll soon be attending.

She says she's nervous about moving away from home, but she's also thrilled to achieve her dream of going to art school. Meanwhile, we'll be cheering her on every step of the way.

Our incredible volunteers

make it all possible



Our volunteers are the lifeblood of CNIB. From the caring Canadians who work directly with our clients as Vision Mates, to those who answer the phones, narrate accessible audio books, organize events or share their own experiences of vision loss with others as peer support group leaders, we simply couldn't keep our doors open without them. To all of our volunteers across the country, we send a heartfelt **thank you!**



Giving and gaining

As a full-time university student, it isn't always easy for Justin Buttar to find the time to volunteer. But he does, with pleasure, in his role as a Vision Mate for CNIB.

For the past 18 months, Justin has been visiting regularly with a CNIB client in his local area in Vancouver, BC. Because of her vision loss, she can have trouble doing daily tasks and getting out and about. As her Vision Mate, Justin helps her with small things like reading, shopping and just talking – but it all makes a big difference in her life.

The best part is, Justin feels like he's gained as much as he's given.

"I am astounded at the knowledge that I have gained from this volunteer experience," he says. "My client is caring, understanding and appreciative of the time I take to spend with her. I am continually inspired by her determination and outlook on life."



A shoulder to lean on

As someone who has experienced vision loss herself, Linda Bosch knows how important support groups can be after a loss of sight. For Linda, connecting with other

people who knew what she was going through was a lifeline when she needed it most.

"The group originally gave me a reason to get out of my house once a month when

Join our volunteer team

Volunteering with CNIB means being at the forefront of innovative programs, hands-on services and research for Canadians who are blind or partially sighted.

- **Make a lasting difference in the lives of Canadians** who are blind or partially sighted, often working directly with our clients.
- **Build friendships with CNIB clients, staff and other volunteers.** Put your people skills to good use by sharing experiences and supporting others in achieving their goals.
- **Meet your personal and professional goals** with opportunities to grow through challenges, goal setting, risk taking and overcoming barriers.

To learn about opportunities in your community, call us at 1-800-563-2642 or visit cnib.ca/volunteer.



my vision loss continued to decline," says the Brockville, Ontario, resident. "...It was a great opportunity to socialize and get to know others who are living with vision loss."

Now Linda is paying it forward by volunteering as a CNIB support group leader, helping other people talk through the challenges they're facing with their own vision loss – sharing tips, techniques, experiences and, when it's needed, a shoulder to lean on.

"It's given me a chance to volunteer and give back to an organization that I have benefitted from, and a program that has been so important to me," she says.



Nationwide, our volunteers contributed the equivalent of more than **34,000 work days** last year.



Over the past year, CNIB has gained more than **1,300 new volunteers** who are now generously donating their time and talents to our cause, right across the country.



Last year, our volunteers across Canada contributed more than **240,000 hours** to support CNIB's mission.

Your support

brings our work to life



It's only because of the generosity of our donors across Canada that we can continue to be there for people who are blind or partially sighted – day after day, year after year. We send our deepest thanks to the following individuals, corporations, foundations and service clubs who made an exceptional gift of \$5,000 or more in the last fiscal year.

Visit cnib.ca/thankyou to meet more of our outstanding donors!

A.W.B. Charitable Foundation
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The Adler and Lipkus Foundation
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Cenovus Employee Foundation
Central Okanagan Foundation
Chippawa Lions Club
The Anna & Edward C. Churchill Foundation
CKNW Orphans' Fund



Dining makes a difference

Thank you to the team at Browning Harvey Limited

Longtime supporters of CNIB, Browning Harvey Limited (BHL), have always felt a connection with our organization.

“We recognize the fine work done by CNIB,” says Anna Patten, Community Relations for BHL, a Pepsi-Cola bottling company in St. John’s, Newfoundland. “We have been moved each and every time a client speaks to the support they have received.”

After reading an article about a Dining in the Dark dinner held in Montreal, the team at BHL knew they had to bring the event – which gives guests the experience of eating a meal without sight – to their hometown in St. John’s.

“We thought this was a wonderful and fun way to support CNIB,” says Patten. “We are helping educate sighted individuals about the daily challenges that those with vision loss face.”

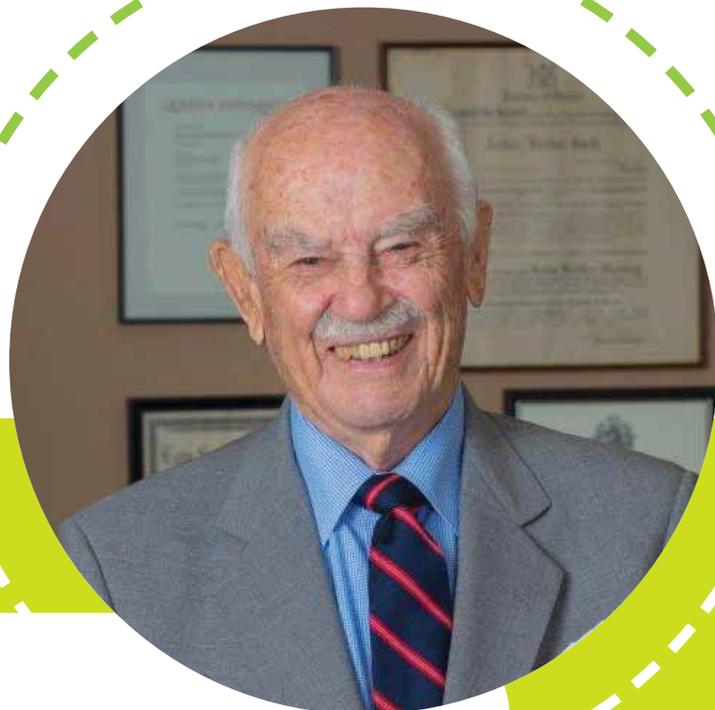
Since the first event a few years ago, the BHL Dining in the Dark fundraiser now takes place twice a year and is always sold out. With the event’s proceeds, BHL are supporting CNIB’s summer camp programs where kids of all ages can just be kids.

“It truly is a win-win experience!” says Patten.

Joan Clark
Coast Capital Savings Foundation
Community Foundation of the
South Okanagan
Community Initiative Fund
The Crabtree Foundation
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Healing the wounds of war



Thank you to longtime supporter Britton Smith

At 96 years young, World War II veteran Britton (“Britt”) Smith has been a CNIB supporter for decades.

Aside from his connection to family friend and CNIB founder Col. Edwin A. Baker, Britt learned how challenging vision loss could be from some of his fellow soldiers. After he was injured on the battlefields of Normandy, he got to know many comrades who’d lost their sight in action.

“I was in the hospital for six months after I was wounded in the war,” he says. “I remember we would go down to the local pub with some of the pilots who had lost their sight to help give them some exposure on how to manage now that they couldn’t see anymore.”

Seventy years later, Britt is still trying to be there for people who’ve lost their sight. As a long-time CNIB supporter, he’s helped to fund many projects within his community of Kingston, Ontario, and throughout the province, to benefit blind and partially sighted people in his area.

Britt’s generosity has also helped fund renovations at the CNIB Lake Joseph Centre, an all-ages camp for clients and their families, as well as to redevelop the teaching space at the CNIB Kingston location.

“It’s important to help CNIB because, in my opinion, it is one of the highest profile charities that does great work,” he says.

Ontario Trillium Foundation
 Jack and Lois Shirley O'Regan Charitable
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 Ottawa Association of the Blind
 Dr. George Papadakis, Finch Ave. Optometry
 Park Derochie Inc.
 Parkdale-Sherwood Lions Club PEI
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A special thank you

to our Friends for Life



Leaving a legacy gift for a charity takes a special kind of person – a person who cares deeply about making an impact in the lives of others, even beyond their own lifetime. We send our thanks to the following generous individuals who have committed to making a **Friends for Life** legacy gift for the future benefit of CNIB.

Alice Alderman
Cecile Allard
Denise Allard
Andrew Altilia
A. Anderson
Ralph Arrowsmith
Aldona Aukstikalnis
Anna Azzalini
Michael Bacon
Brian Bagley
Annie Baker
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Marjorie Battler
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Mrs. Korinne Bengert
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Shirley Grant
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Evelyn Green
John and Dorothy Green
Evelyn Griffiths
Wendy Guillemaud
Chander Gupta
Daya Gupta
Bryan Gutteridge
Harold Hafenbrack
Carol Haines
James Hall
Andre Hamel





Marion's legacy

When Marion Smith made a legacy gift for CNIB almost 20 years ago, she had no idea she'd end up needing the charity's help herself one day.

Having no children, Marion had decided to leave her estate to CNIB as a tribute to her late mother, who received support from the organization after losing her sight later in life.

Then, just like her mother, Marion lost her vision too.

Fortunately, Marion went to CNIB and learned to adapt to vision loss – with services like support groups, independence training and access to audio and braille books.

As for the gift she made in her will, Marion now knows first-hand what a difference it will make for CNIB's clients.

"There's a lot of people that need help from CNIB," she says. "What goes around comes around... and I hope more people will get involved in giving."

Louise Hamel
Elizabeth Hamilton
Antoinette Handler
Susan Hannan
Janet Harder
Michael Harper
Richard Haskell
H. Hassan
Joan Hayman
Jim & Doris Hearne
Eva Hennemann
Susan Herman
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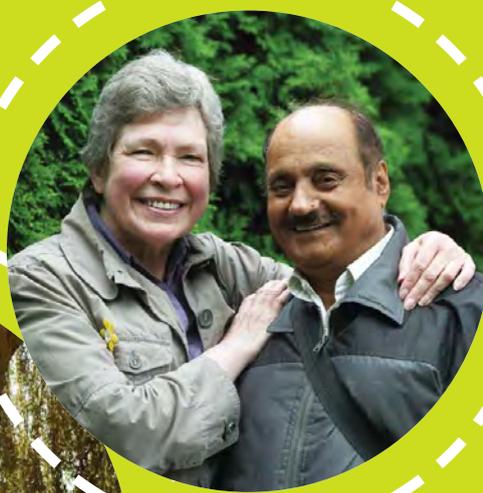
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Gertrude Wolfe
Vincent Wong
Marion Woods
Yi-Ling Wu
George Younan
Che Yu
Marina Zadoia
Carmen Zurita
"CNIB Volunteer Ambassador
and Peer Support"
"DON VE3 FCZ"
Anonymous (107)





What's your legacy?

Creating a gift in your will for CNIB is a simple way to build a legacy of change for Canadians who rely on our programs and services. Whether your estate is large or small, your future gift will make a profound difference for people living with vision loss.

Why leave a legacy...

For many people who believe in our cause, making a gift through their will allows them to contribute to CNIB in a meaningful way, without affecting their finances during life.

Through a gift in your will, you can:

- Reflect your own personal values
- Make a difference for Canadians living with vision loss for years to come
- Pay tribute to a loved one or friend touched by our work

To learn more, visit cnib.ca/legacy or call 1-800-563-2642 and ask to speak with our Planned Giving Manager.

Financial highlights



When it comes to investing your donations ethically and wisely, we are proud to hold ourselves to the highest standard. CNIB is a charter member of Imagine Canada Ethical Fundraising and Financial Accountability Code, and our financial statements were prepared in accordance with Canadian accounting standards for not-for-profit organizations, and were audited by Deloitte LLP.

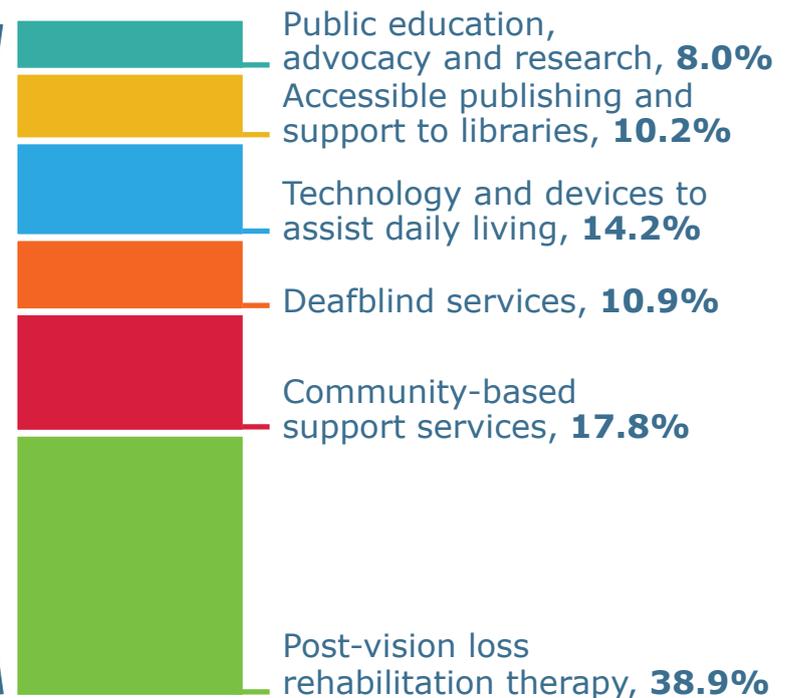
We invested more than \$55 million directly into services and programs for Canadians with vision loss last year. The financial support for these programs comes from government funding (41.4%), public support (38.4%), investments (2.6%), consumer product sales (6.4%), retail lottery and gaming (3.3%), fees for service (1.8%), and other fundraising initiatives (6.1%). What follows is an abridged version of our 2015-2016 financial highlights.

Distribution of expenditures



To explore our financials in their entirety, visit cnib.ca/2016.

Cause-related program expenses



Note: Social enterprise programs are not included in this diagram as they are self-funding and do not use donor dollars.

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To download an accessible version of this report and learn more about our year, visit **cnib.ca/2016**.

Charitable registration number: 119219459 RR0003

