



DeafBlind
ONTARIO SERVICES

Collaborative

Engaging others makes us better. Each of us has something to learn and something to teach.

Leaders

We set the standard and promote excellence in our field.

WE ARE

Limitless

We believe in endless possibilities.

Passionate

We are driven to empower the people we support and to celebrate their uniqueness.

Resilient

When faced with challenges, we adapt and grow - becoming stronger together.

ANNUAL REPORT

DeafBlind Ontario Services
2021-2022

OUR MISSION, VISION & VALUES

Mission: DeafBlind Ontario Services supports individuals who are Deaf, hard of hearing, non-verbal and deafblind with an array of services so they can live and thrive within the community.

Vision: Enriching lives one touch and sign at a time.

Values:

We are **Passionate**

We are driven to empower the people we support and to celebrate their uniqueness.

We demonstrate being passionate by:

- Embracing challenges and opportunities with energy and enthusiasm;
- Extending the reach of the people we support into the community, where they can achieve their goals, dreams and aspirations;
- Creating and providing unique opportunities to learn and grow; and
- Motivating and encouraging our co-workers, as well as the people we support, to challenge themselves every day.

We are **Collaborative**

Engaging others makes us better. Each of us has something to learn and something to teach.

We demonstrate being collaborative by:

- Fostering partnerships with the people we support, their families, other community resources, government, funders and organizations with similar goals—locally, nationally and around the world;
- Committing to open communication and transparency when working with each other and our partners; and
- Supporting each other and seeking input from others for solutions that benefit all.

We are **Leaders**

We set the standard and promote excellence in our field.

We demonstrate being leaders by:

- Constantly evolving and striving for excellence in everything we do;
- Mentoring, educating and encouraging ourselves and others;
- Generating and being receptive to new ideas;
- Advocating for people's rights, beliefs and dreams; and
- Holding ourselves accountable to the people we support, families, employees, funders and other stakeholders.

We are **Resilient**

When faced with challenges, we adapt and grow—becoming stronger together.

We demonstrate being resilient by:

- Providing holistic services that are responsive to the ever-changing needs of individuals supported;
- Being proactive in identifying and addressing circumstances that may present challenges; and
- Learning from setbacks and being persistent and flexible in our efforts to find creative, workable solutions.

We are **Limitless**

We believe in endless possibilities.

We demonstrate being limitless by:

- Being courageous, open-minded and creative; and
- Empowering each other to go outside the box and achieve goals and dreams.

OUR STRATEGIC PLAN

Throughout the past year, DeafBlind Ontario Services has forged ahead on the current Strategic Plan, informed by three overarching strategic principles: Exceptional Service, Engaged Employees, and Enriched Collaboration.

Exceptional Service

Providing Exceptional Service inspired our foundation and continues to guide our growth. We strive to be the provider of choice for Deaf and Intervenor Services in Ontario and ensure people supported receive Exceptional Service.

In the past year DeafBlind Ontario Services has worked to achieve success in this strategic principal by:

- Adapting and revising our service model so that we can remain innovative leaders in our field and sector.
- Implementing an objective centric risk management approach within the organization.
- Implementing the Certified Deafblind Intervenor Specialist (CDBIS) Certification Process.
- Continuing to explore flexibility of scope in our service model.
- Continuing to seek out new ways to optimize the benefits of employing technology.

Engaged Employees

Our employees are our strength! We strive to build a culture of Engaged Employees and empower all levels of our dynamic team through the implementation of a Communication and Engagement Strategy.

No sector was spared the impact of COVID-19, and our employees came together during these challenging times. More than ever, DeafBlind Ontario Services is committed to building and sustaining our culture. In late 2021, our employees engaged in an “Employee Commitment Survey” as part of the application process for the Canadian Nonprofit Employer of Choice™ (NEOC) Award. This award is a tool that measures a nonprofit’s leadership attributes, HR practices and employee perceptions, all while building a preferred employer brand. We attained this prestigious award for a 4th time in 2021, and will commit to examining the benchmark report received to construct a plan of action for continuous improvement.

Enriched Collaboration

We will maintain our current partnerships and build new relationships at the provincial, national, and international level to foster Enriched Collaboration. We value collaborations and recognize that external partnerships and meaningful exchange help us to learn and grow. Fostering Enriched Collaboration will ensure we continue to provide the best support possible.

In 2021-2022, DeafBlind Ontario Services continued to evolve and implement its government relations strategy. This strategy focused on building relationships with MPP’s, MP’s and community partners.

Another focus is the organization’s research roadmap that prioritizes projects that support the three strategic principles at the national and international levels. Connections were fostered and research conducted with various Canadian universities and colleges on sensory loss. Our Integrative partnership with PHSS and Community Living Chatham-Kent continued with a formal evaluation conducted in early 2022. The focus of this partnership is on strengthening the collective abilities of the three organizations, with a goal to share knowledge and explore efficiencies.

2021-22 also saw the development of the “Deafblind Advocacy Group Canada” - members who are deafblind were recruited from BC, QC, and ON to create an advocacy toolkit for people who are deafblind.

DeafBlind Ontario Services’ current 3-year strategic plan, *Together We Thrive*, ends in 2022. Earlier this year, the Board of Directors began the process of developing a new Strategic Plan to guide the organization for the next 3 years (2023-2026). The new plan will be launched in late fall 2022.

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MESSAGE FROM OUR BOARD CHAIR & CEO

Over the past year, DeafBlind Ontario Services has been tested and challenged in many ways. Once again, our employees have shown incredible dedication to the people we support. Our organization could not have accomplished all we have without our employees, whose passion and commitment got us through this past year.

Despite a second year of the pandemic, we celebrated many things, while learning from our challenges.

Our amalgamation with Array Services was the most notable success. Bringing services to people who are Deaf, hard of hearing and non-verbal has meant increased learning opportunities for our employees and created positive change throughout the organization.

The National Occupational Classification Code now includes the roles of intervenor and deafblind intervenor. This stemmed from our work with the Intervenor Services Human Resource Strategy several years ago and has now come to fruition. This code means further awareness about the role of an intervenor and will assist in our recruitment efforts.

We remain thankful for the continued temporary wage enhancement by the Ontario government this past year that recognized our intervenor and Direct Support Professional heroes as essential workers.

We are also proud to have attained Non-profit Employer of Choice designation for a fourth time – this award recognizes non-profit organizations whose people leadership and vision translate into exemplary talent management practices, supporting successful mission delivery in the communities they serve.

We are committed to raising the professionalism of intervenor services and will continue to recognize professional certification through our pay structures. We continued our work towards a new certification process for intervenors in collaboration with CNIB Deafblind Community Services under the Academy for Certification of Visual Rehabilitation & Education Professionals (ACVREP). Intervenors now have the opportunity to become certified and recognized as a professional in the field of Intervenor Services.

The pandemic continued to put a strain on the people we support and our employees. We are grateful that although we had some positive COVID-19 cases, none were serious enough to require hospitalization.

Recruitment has been a challenge for our organization and many other sectors. Several strategies have been employed to alleviate this challenge, as well as new retention strategies to encourage people looking for a meaningful career to consider working with those who are Deaf, hard of hearing, non-verbal and deafblind.

Looking ahead, we are optimistic about our future as we have begun the process of developing our new Strategic Plan, creating new goals for the future under three pillars: Services, Employees and Collaboration. You will read more about this plan that will guide us from 2023-2026 later in this report.

In order to remain innovative leaders in our field and sector, an update of our service model and client services infrastructure is underway. The foundation of the new service model is called 'Living My Best Life' and is supported by Four Pillars: My Wellbeing, My Experiences, My Independence and My Relationships. The concept of 'Living My Best Life' came together through employee feedback combined with research of person-centered models of similar local, provincial, and international organizations.

Our integrative partnership with PHSS and Community Living Chatham-Kent continues. The mission of the integrative partnership is "Through collaboration, strengthen the collective abilities of the organizations, explore efficiencies, and positively impact the people and communities we serve." The partnership was evaluated this past year, and renewed direction for the coming year established.

The strength, resilience, and collective efforts of all those connected to DeafBlind Ontario Services have helped keep us going every day of this past year. Reflecting on this past year, we also look ahead to brighter days.

Respectfully submitted,



Lise Gagnon
Board Chair



Roxanna Spruyt
Chief Executive Officer

“Our organization could not have accomplished all we have without our **employees, whose passion and commitment got us through this past year.”**

2021-2022

BOARD OF DIRECTORS

Lise Gagnon, Chair
John Halman, Vice Chair
Tiffany Barker
Raymond Coutu
Emma LeBlanc

Linda Littell
Greg Paget
Katherine Caddigan
Kelly O'Neill
Donald Spink

UPDATES

BOARD COMMITTEES

Governance & Human Resources Committee Report 2021-22

Chair: Tiffany Barker

Members: Rick Boychuk, Linda Littell, Ray Coutu, and Lise Gagnon (Board Chair/ex-officio)

The Governance and Human Resources Committee develops and oversees the approach DeafBlind Ontario Services takes on matters of corporate governance and human resource policy, and makes recommendations to the Board with respect to such matters. This includes the following responsibilities: committee and board recruitment, director nominations/appointments, board and committee effectiveness and good governance, governance reporting and documentation, as well as leadership and HR oversight.

The Ontario Not-for-Profit Corporations Act (ONCA) was proclaimed into force on October 19, 2021. The sector has been waiting since 2010 for this new legislation. Ontario non-profits now under the Corporations Act have a three-year transition period to make the necessary changes to conform their governing documents to the ONCA. DeafBlind Ontario Services' by-laws and letters patent are undergoing legal review to ensure compliance with the ONCA.

In 2021-22, the Governance & Human Resources Committee completed the development of a refreshed governance manual, supported the orientation process for board and committee members, and successfully recruited a new Board member.

In the coming year, the committee looks forward to retaining and attracting volunteer board and committee members, and implementing the bi-annual board and committee evaluation.

Finance & Risk Committee Report 2021-22

Chair: Greg Paget

Members: John Halman, Emma LeBlanc, Brian Watkinson, Lise Gagnon (Board Chair/ex-officio)

The Finance and Risk Committee assists the Board of Directors in meeting its fiduciary oversight and related obligations in relation to financial management and reporting, risk identification and oversight and related matters to ensure DeafBlind Ontario Services is led and managed in the best interest of its mission. Committee responsibilities include regular reviews of financial and government reporting, oversight of an effective risk management framework, and the review of internal and external audit processes and relationships.

In 2021-2022, the committee supported the implementation of an Objective Centric Risk Assessment process. This process will be expanded and strengthened over the next two years to include quality assurance and third-party validation.

The committee oversees the completion of an activity-based costing (ABC) financial analysis which demonstrates how supported living costs at DeafBlind Ontario Services behave in relation to the amount of service delivered. This year, in addition to the Intervenor Services analysis, an ABC analysis for Deaf Services was completed, to align with the April 1, 2021 amalgamation with Array Services.

The committee will continue to monitor the 925 Water Street (Peterborough) redevelopment project and provide regular reports to the board.

Comments from the Chair of the Finance and Risk Committee 2021-22

It is my pleasure as Chair of the Finance and Risk Committee of DeafBlind Ontario Services to update the financial results for the fiscal year ended March 31, 2022 to people supported, volunteers, funders, donors and employees.

In the 2021-22 fiscal year, we continued our efforts to provide the highest standards of service to existing and new people supported. DeafBlind Ontario Services continued to operate in an environment impacted by the COVID-19 pandemic, and the organization received temporary wage enhancement funding and applied for COVID-19 Residential Relief Funds from the Ministry of Children, Community and Social Services. The additional support enabled us to better provide for everyone's safety.

The Ministry of Children, Community and Social Services (MCCSS) continued to invest funds through Partner Facility Renewal (PFR) funding or infrastructure improvements including accessibility, electrical, plumbing and mechanical systems, fire safety and other improvements of our residential locations. A total of \$195,901 was funded by the Ministry during the fiscal year.

Funds raised through gaming (bingo) continue to be part of the DeafBlind Ontario Services revenue.

On behalf of the Finance and Risk Committee, we are very grateful to all of our funding partners, donors, volunteers and employees whose continued support and commitment to our Organization has provided us with a solid financial position.

**We are driven to empower
the people we support and
to celebrate their uniqueness.**

SUMMARY FINANCIAL STATEMENTS

Statement of Financial Position Year Ended March 31,	2022	2021
	\$	\$
Assets		
Cash	436,909	511,186
Accounts receivable and prepaid expenses	803,794	738,209
Community Donation Fund Net assets designated for projects	56,998	59,366
Capital assets	11,162,353	11,604,560
Total Assets	12,648,428	13,355,061
Liabilities		
Accounts payable and accrued liabilities	1,233,215	1,740,809
Mortgage loans	895,462	1,002,046
Forgivable loans	4,824,539	4,824,539
Unamortized restricted transfers	2,113,034	2,364,264
Total liabilities	9,300,074	9,954,800
Net assets	3,348,354	3,400,261
Total liabilities and net assets	12,648,428	13,355,061

Statement of Revenue and Expenses Year Ended March 31,	2022	2021
	\$	\$
Revenue		
Province of Ontario subsidy	19,579,745	19,295,458
Amortization of restricted transfers and other	335,436	614,821
Accommodation and care service fees	926,906	905,968
Fundraising, donations and miscellaneous	560,400	874,804
	21,402,487	21,691,051
Expenses		
Salaries, benefits, training and recruitment	15,407,046	15,452,803
Amortization of capital assets	1,442,734	1,213,451
Programming, supplies and vehicles	1,218,433	917,810
Professional fees	1,600,113	1,373,965
Accommodation	1,172,542	1,042,947
Advertising, travel and other	612,876	418,718
Contribution to DeafBlind Ontario Foundation	-	2,289,443
Fundraising activities	650	-
	21,454,394	22,689,070
Excess/(Deficiency) of revenue over expenses	(51,907)	(998,019)

The above was summarized from the draft audited financial statements for the year ended March 31, 2022. The complete audited financial statements are available on our website at www.deafblindontario.com.

OUR NUMBERS

33

Years of service

30

New people supported (29 from Array Services)

9

People on waitlist

106

People supported in total

86 - Supported Living Homes & *Tremplin* program
11 - *Partnerships* program
11 - *Supported Independent Living* program

253

Skilled and talented direct service employees
*as of March 31, 2022

200 Full-Time Employees

14 Part-Time

39 Part-Time Relief

6.47

Average Employee Tenure

4

Four-Time winner of the Nonprofit Employer of Choice (NEOC) Award

Specialized Training

All training was conducted virtually this past year, due to the pandemic, both internally and externally.

TOUCH™ = Training Ongoing Unique Committed Holistic

26

TOUCH™ 1 trained employees

22

TOUCH™ 2 trained employees

Community Training

23

Introduction to Sensory Loss (2)

39

Communication 101 Bridging the Gap (3)

4

Individual Agencies

13

Sensory Integration (1)

26

Personality Dimensions (2)

2021-22

OUR --- **FRIENDS OF DEAFBLIND ONTARIO SERVICES**

Our 'Friends of DeafBlind Ontario Services' award recognizes individuals, groups or organizations who, over time, did one or more of the following:

- Contributed considerable personal time, effort and/or resources to support the mission of DeafBlind Ontario Services and/or people supported;
- Demonstrated excellence in leadership and initiative as a volunteer to DeafBlind Ontario Services;
or
- Extensively promoted DeafBlind Ontario Services and people supported within their community.

Past recipients include donors, supporters, community partners and volunteers. This prestigious award was established in 2008.

Friends of DeafBlind Ontario Services 2021-22:

- MP John Brassard
- Karine Rogers
- Kevin White, Energy Surfaces
- PARD Therapeutic Riding

We believe in...

OUR EMPLOYEE & VOLUNTEER SERVICE AWARDS

Volunteer Service Awards:

5 Years – Greg Paget, Linda Littell

10 Years – Janet Hollies, Jim Dadson

15 Years – Brian Watkinson, Lise Gagnon

Terry Patton-Markser

Daniel Perry

Sara Perry

Kat Tannock

Employee Service Awards:

5 Years

Ashley Albion

Vicki Beauchamps

Erika Becker

Mariah Burley

Brittney Che

Julie Chretien-Gobeil

Jasmine Peters

David Pettapiece

Lenni Phillion

Crystal Pigeon-Way

Janet Primosig

Sarah Grimbly

Shaneah Reid

Kassandra Robertson

Mercedes Stumpf

Samantha Vanbodegom

Patricia Wilkinson

10 Years

Juliette Coughlan

Jeannine Davies

Corrie Fildey

Jodi Fitton

Annette Miketic-Vedder

Laura McShane

Stephanie Medica

Debora Marsh

Katrina Paddley

15 Years

Shannon Allford

Jennifer Bowden

Mirjana Djuran

Amy Hazell

Todd Sheppard

Amy Zinck

20 Years

ILjubo Kresovic

Theresa Merrifield

Vera Mota

25 Years

Chris Coleman

Kelly Patterson

30 Years

Dona Pooley

Lorraine Simpson

endless possibilities.



Enriching lives one *touch* and *sign* at a time

DeafBlind Ontario Services
2021-2022

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