



ANNUAL REPORT 2023-2024

CELEBRATING INCLUSION AND INSPIRING POSSIBILITIES.



Sue Desjarlais, PRESIDENT

On behalf of the Board of Directors I'm pleased to present you our Annual Report for the period of **April 1, 2023 to March 31, 2024**. Reflecting on the past year, I am filled with gratitude and pride for another year of accomplishments, advocacy, and advancements. The agency remains a leader in the Developmental Services Sector and a sought-after mentor to others.

In this annual report, you will find just some of our activities and achievements from the past year. From the tireless dedication of our staff and volunteers to the unwavering support of all our stakeholders, the power of collaboration and compassion is clear.

There are a few items I'd like to share here. This past year saw a new three-year Collective Agreement with CUPE Local 3137 ratified. Our employees are truly among the best in the Sector. Unfortunately, however, staffing capacity does remain an issue which is not unique to our agency or this Sector. We continue to exhaust all avenues to enhance our recruitment and retention practices.

Funding remains a challenge. Budgets are tight given inflation and cost of living increases. Our outreach along with provincial initiatives to increase base funding went unanswered by the Ministry. We are hopeful funding relief will be realized.

Moving away from challenges, we enjoyed celebrating with New Day – Leaders of Today their 20th anniversary this year. Our partnership with New Day has had such a wonderful and positive impact on the agency. They are active, involved, engaged and making a difference and are a valuable resource to the agency.

As we look ahead to the future, I am filled with optimism, and I have no doubt that we will continue to make a meaningful difference and inspire possibilities.

On behalf of the Board of Directors, thank you for being a part of our journey.

Currently ...

- Supporting over 700 people
- Over 700 employees (majority are members of CUPE Local 3137)
- \$47+ million budget
- 53 owned, 7 leased properties
- 68 owned vehicles including three hybrid minivans
- (KARE) Keeping a Respectful Environment – retrained all employees (692 over 28 classes) over the past year on this meaningful and updated orientation
- Providing 24 hour supported living options, Supported Independent Living, Host Family, Third Party Agreements, Community Participation Supports, Virtual Supports, Enhanced Specialized Services, Out of Home and In Home Respite.
- Over 150 people supported receiving employment supports with 66 people employed. We have now transitioned to an Employment Ontario service provider.



MCCSS COMPLIANCE INSPECTION – held during June, 2023

THE RESULTS ARE IN...

98.8%

The Agency was found to be **compliant** with **347 of 351** Legislative and Regulatory Quality Assurance Measures.

The areas of non compliance were minor with little impact as it relates to the outstanding support provided to people we serve.

Inspections included extensive reviews which included:

- Dozens of small group living/twenty four hour support homes
- Hundreds of individual records of people we serve
- Over 40 staff files
- All agency policies and procedures

OUTSTANDING!

Quality & Depth of Information included in Personal Outcomes Plans



WHERE WE EXCEL:

- Quality & Care of 24-Hour Small Group Living Homes
- Digital Record Keeping & Use of ShareVision our database

OVERWHELMING POSITIVE FEEDBACK:

The MCCSS Compliance Advisors were all incredibly complimentary of the agency's outstanding work including the exceptional support and professionalism seen in our Direct Support Workers!



Fundraising:

Events again increased public awareness and generated resources for non-gov't funded services. Our lineup included: Love to Give Popcorn Fundraiser; Charity Classic Golf Tournament; Giving Tuesday; Holly Jolly Jackpot Raffle; Ruthven Apple Festival (RAF); and the Jingle Bell Run, Walk and Wheel.

The RAF raised a record \$77,000 with the support of thousands who came out to enjoy the music, food, and craft vendors. Proceeds go to the purchase and maintenance of wheelchair accessible vehicles.

A new fundraiser - The Holly Jolly Jackpot Raffle, sponsored by St. Clair College, raised \$20,000+.

Once again, our Giving Tuesday campaign raised over \$12,000 for support technology and other specialty items for people we support. Thanks to Libro Credit Union for their ongoing support as our corporate matching sponsor.

Grants:

We continue to seek out meaningful opportunities for grant funding. Many projects are underway and two of note are:

- ▶ A Ontario Trillium Foundation Resilient Communities Grant focusses on our transition as the Ministry transforms to a new funding model.
- ▶ Long standing grant partnership with U of W's Dept. of Kinesiology's Adapted Physical Exercise has seen new research confirm the great transformative impact on participants, trainers and volunteers. This work has also seen a tremendous global reach.

Technology and Innovation:

Phishing is the number one cause of cyber incidents; therefore, we've implemented a trusted and ongoing cyber security employee training program.

Generative artificial intelligence tools like ChatGPT and Copilot are here. We educated our employees about the risks and opportunities of generative AI through hands-on, interactive labs. By using AI to complete administrative tasks and computer work, our support workers can free up time to provide direct support.



REAL Xchange:

Our online hub for knowledge sharing and collaboration amongst service providers, grew its membership to over 500 DS agencies and 1900+ professionals. Hosting 20 virtual events and webinars, we connected with 3000+ people, offering content on Equity, Diversity, and Inclusion; Community Wellness; Recruitment and Retention; Cyber Security; and more.

Recruitment and Retention:

'I Found It' at Community Living Essex County is the recruitment campaign established in collaboration with a consulting firm. Featuring CLEC employees in all photos and videos, these assets are being used to promote a career with us on major social platforms and LinkedIn.



Resources for the years ending March 31, 2024 and March 31, 2023 (in millions)

Revenues	2023/24	2022/23	Expenditures	2023/24	2022/23
MCCSS	39.6	37.5	Accommodation Supports	37.8	36.3
Fees for service	6.5	6.2	Employment/Community Participation supports	2.5	2.0
Fundraising/donations	0.4	0.4	In and Out of Home Respite	2.6	2.3
Other grants and revenues	0.4	0.7	Community Relations/Other	0.1	0.1
Investment income	0.8	0.4	Administration	3.8	4.0
TOTAL	47.7	45.2	TOTAL	46.8	44.7

WITH THANKS TO EVERYONE WHO HELPS US TO INSPIRE POSSIBILITIES.

YOU MAKE A DIFFERENCE!

Vision

A community that celebrates inclusion and inspires possibilities.

Mission

We are committed to supporting people with an intellectual disability to achieve their goals and dreams, empowering them to flourish as full citizens who are valued in their community.

Strategic Directions

- Transform services and enhance support offerings
- Expand key partnerships and strategic connections
- Strengthen the agency business model
- Enhance stakeholder engagement

With thanks and in recognition of ...

Our major funder – the Ministry of Children, Community and Social Services. And wish acknowledgement and appreciation to the Ontario Trillium Foundation.



Inspiring Possibilities

372 Talbot Street North, Essex, ON N8M 2W4
519-776-6483 | www.communitylivingessex.org



NEW DAY
LEADERS OF TODAY
Working Towards A Brighter Future

519-776-6483, ext 267
newday@communitylivingessex.org

ensemble
Strengthening Families Together

519-776-6483 x 225
www.ensembleunderstands.com

Board of Directors 2023/2024

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Liz Raffoul

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Claire Market (retired May 3/24)
Christine Meriweather

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Gary Belanger

**DIRECTOR, MARKETING
AND INNOVATION:**
Julie LaSorda

