

# VON Annual Report



Story on page nine. PHOTO: Contributed (Lacey Hill Photography)



## 2023-2024



# BOARD CHAIR AND CEO MESSAGE



**Cyndy De Giusti**  
**Board Chair**



**Jo-Anne Poirier**  
**President and CEO**

We are very pleased to share with you some of VON's tremendous accomplishments from throughout 2023/24. They are a testament to the dedication, expertise and hard work of our staff and volunteers. They are a result of tireless advocacy, calling for change that will allow us to better meet the needs of more clients in their communities and that will ensure the long-term sustainability of our sector as demand increases. They are made possible by the relationships built and nurtured with our sector partners and by the trust and respect shown by our colleagues in the Nova Scotia and Ontario governments.

One of our notable advocacy activities this year was our "Home Care is Health Care" campaign. When people think of health care, they typically think of care delivered in institutional settings like hospitals or clinics; the health care provided in homes and in local communities rarely comes to mind.

The campaign helped spread awareness of the crucial role of home and community care in a strong healthcare system.

The home and community care sector is capable of delivering the necessary supports to help our growing population of seniors live comfortably at home and avoid hospital and long-term care stays. We could not hope for a more convincing demonstration of this than our successful expansion this year of proven programs and services and the launch of new pilot models of care. You can read more about these innovative pilot programs on pages 10 and 11.

This year, the rising costs of groceries, gas and housing continued to put additional strain on all Canadians, including seniors on fixed incomes. Unprecedented inflation should not inhibit the opportunity to age at home.

We continue to provide VON programs and services based on need, rather than ability to pay. Programs like CAPABLE, Meals on Wheels and SMILE can make the difference between premature admission to long-term care and aging at home with dignity.



Of course, VON is a registered charity, and we would not be able to assist as many clients as we do without our funders and donors, who continued to give generously despite the current financial pressures.

We also want to express immense gratitude to all of our volunteers, who provide us with much more than hours of their time. As trusted members of their communities, they are ambassadors for VON and advocates for their friends and neighbours.

Unfortunately, post-pandemic, demand for our services has been increasing much faster than we have been able to rebuild our volunteer base, so this year we were thrilled to recruit more than 100 new volunteers, thanks to our new online recruitment campaign.

We are thankful for all that we as a team achieved this past year. We look forward to continuing to work together to serve clients and to highlight the important role of home and community care in our healthcare system.



“**When people have health care available in their communities, and in ways that are convenient for them, they are more likely to seek and receive the treatment they need when they need it and stay healthier.**”

From the Government of Ontario's  
*“Your Health: A Plan for Connected and Convenient Care”*

# 2023-2024 AT A GLANCE

## Q1

- #VONConnect rolls out in our North Bay and Porcupine sites as part of the beta testing process for our transformational software. See page 18 for more info.
- VON expands community nursing care clinic on Bayers Road in Halifax. See more on page 8.
- “Together, we are making a difference”: VON celebrates VON Week across Ontario and Nova Scotia.



- Ric Bresee, MPP for Hastings-Lennox and Addington, marks Seniors Month by participating in a Meals on Wheels delivery route in Napanee, ON.
- VON helps to launch a new and innovative neighbourhood model of care in Sarnia. See more on page 11.

## Q2

- Clients of VON Chatham-Kent’s Kids’ Circle program spend a week at Kenesserie Camp taking part in a mix of traditional camp and bereavement support activities.
- VON launches an awareness campaign, “Home Care is Health Care,” in print and online. See more on page 16.
- The 25th annual Memorial Garden ceremony is held in Sarnia-Lambton; 13 names are added to the Memorial Wall of over 2,000 departed loved ones.
- The Lieutenant Governor of Nova Scotia hosts a reception at Government House to recognize and thank VON donors, volunteers, board members and staff as part of the VON Connect campaign.



## Q3

- VON receives a donation of \$100,000 from 14 credit unions in Nova Scotia in support of the VON Connect Nova Scotia campaign.



- VON Oxford celebrates 30 years of the Ingersoll Adult Day Program.
- VON participates at the Ontario Community Support Association (OCSA) conference in Toronto.
- For the 20th year, VON is recognized as a Best Practice Spotlight Organization by the Registered Nurses' Association of Ontario.
- Over 200 safety kits are distributed to staff and volunteers who are on the road for VON Nova Scotia.
- More than 100 people honour lost loved ones at the Sakura House Hospice annual Lights of Love event.
- VON and the NS Department of Seniors and Long-term Care launch the CAPABLE project. See more on page 13.

## Q4

- The 11th Handbags for Hospice event raises \$365,000 to support VON's Sakura House.
- Eight registered nurses with VON Ontario begin a 12-month training program to become certified in wound, ostomy and continence care.
- VON care providers come together for four days to share knowledge and gain new skills, during Professional Development Days in Nova Scotia.



- VON NS takes part in the Better Safety, Better Care campaign along with various government departments and provider organizations.
- Our 100th new volunteer signs up following our recruitment campaign on social media.
- VON recognizes NS Lions Clubs for their cumulative donation of \$30,000 over the past year.
- The Ontario Government announces funding for VON to create a new "hub-and-spoke" primary care clinic.



# ACROSS THE MILES



In 2023-24, VON provided:



**1,320,185**  
HOURS OF NURSING CARE



**1,698,625**  
HOURS OF HOME SUPPORT



**20,121,335**  
STUDENT BREAKFASTS\*  
\*ONTARIO ONLY  
**932,129**  
DELIVERED MEALS

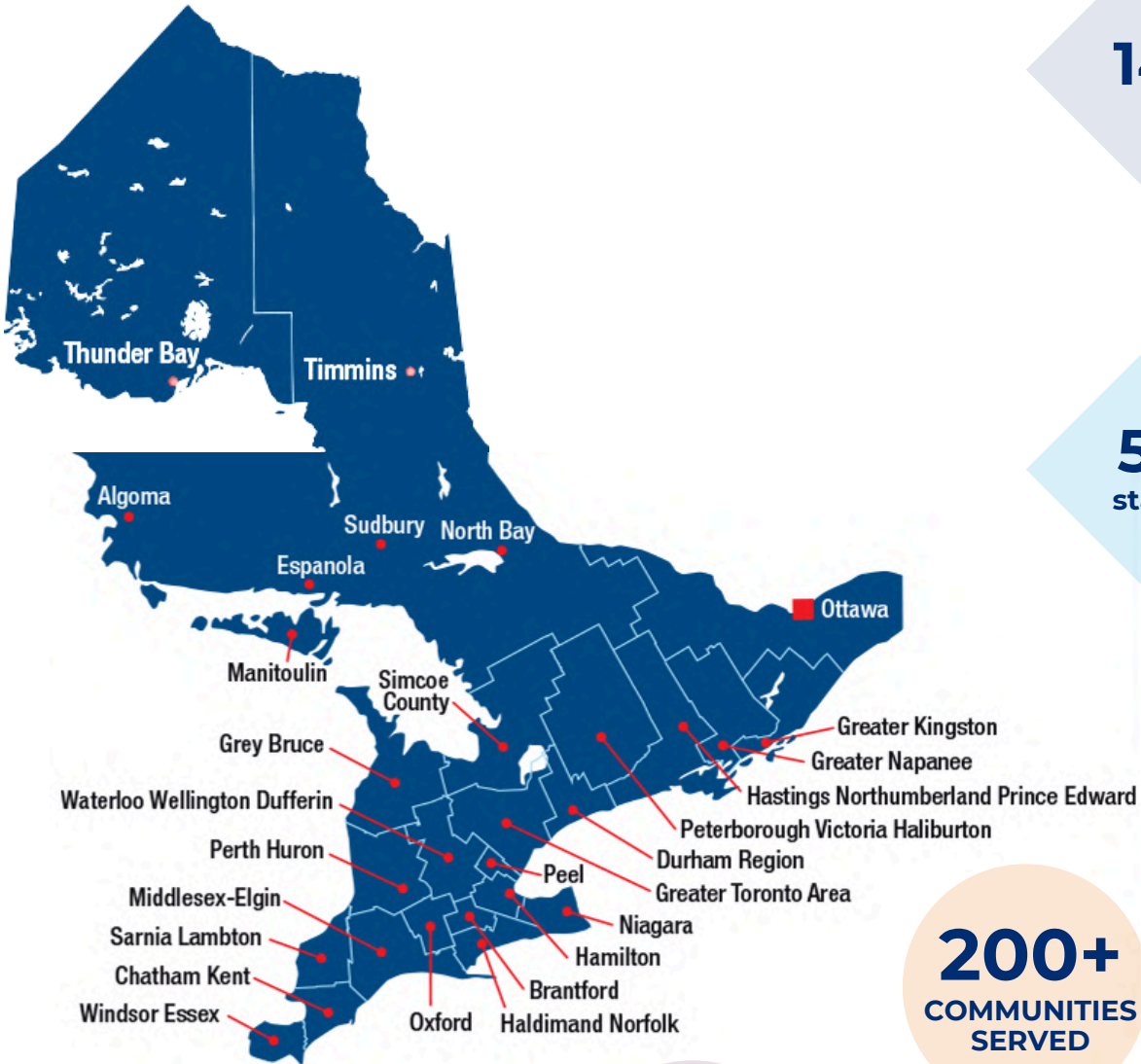


**279,822**  
DAYS OF ASSISTED LIVING\*  
\*ONTARIO ONLY

**662,597**  
HOURS OF ADULT DAY  
PROGRAM RESPITE



**66,080**  
RIDES



**14,400+**  
donors

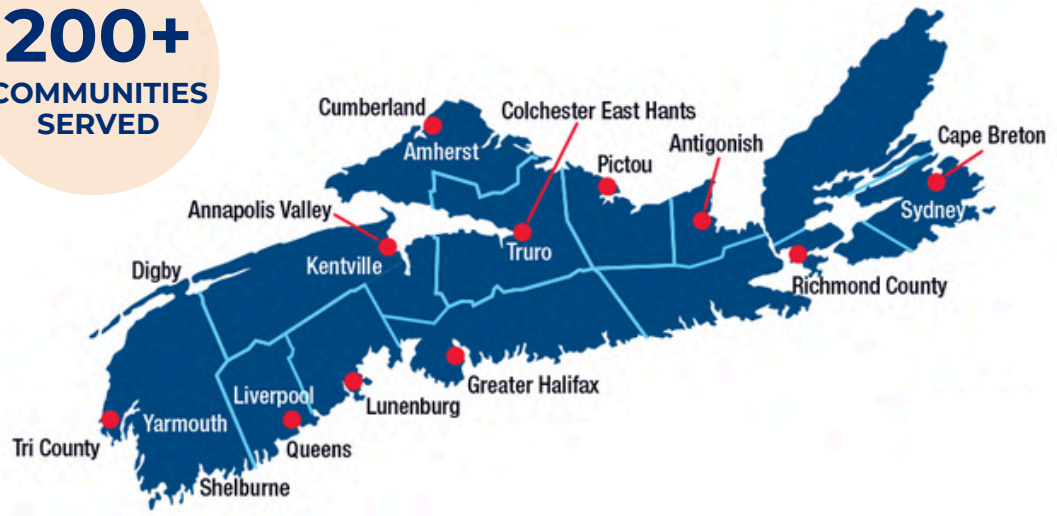
**4,300+**  
volunteers

**5,600+**  
staff members



**200+**  
COMMUNITIES  
SERVED

**60+**  
PROGRAMS/  
SERVICES





# IMPROVING CARE



## New and expanded VON clinics increase access to primary care

### Interdisciplinary primary care clinic serves Grey Bruce, Ontario

In March, VON was pleased to receive funding through the Province of Ontario's Integrated Primary Care Teams initiative to create an interdisciplinary primary care clinic. The clinic will help serve marginalized residents and the growing number of residents without access to primary care in the Grey Bruce area. It will be set up in a hub-and-spoke model, with the "hub" in Port Elgin and the "spokes" in Durham, Meaford and Wiarton.

The clinic adds to the extensive network of VON nursing and nurse practitioner-led clinics that already exist as part of the province's primary healthcare system.

### Halifax nursing clinic expands to improve home care capacity

VON nursing clinics and our "clinic first" approach—which sees us offer in-clinic care to residents who are mobile, freeing up capacity for those who require in-home care—is also making a difference in Nova Scotia, where we opened a newly expanded nursing clinic in Halifax in April, 2023.

Community nursing clinics allow nurses to see more than two times as many clients in the time required for a single home visit.



# VON nurses step in to care for toddler with complex needs

At their 20-week ultrasound, excited new parents Chris Roberts and Esther Blair hoped to find out whether they were having a boy or a girl. Instead, they discovered their baby girl had a congenital diaphragmatic hernia (CDH).

Elena was born a fighter. She spent several days on artificial life support (ECMO), developed a brain bleed, underwent dialysis and surgery and spent months in hospital. When it was time for Elena to come home, her parents worried about how they would keep her safe.

VON nurses stepped in to help. They provided care for Elena five nights per week, allowing her parents much-needed sleep. They also provided daytime/evening respite periods on two days of the week.

Today, Chris and Esther are pleased to say that they aren't just surviving, they are thriving.

"We are able to cope with all this so well because of this ecosystem we have where VON comes in, gives us that little break we need," says Chris.

Elena loves her VON nurses so much that her parents try to get her to sleep before they arrive. Otherwise, she'll want to play with her nurses for hours.

"We've developed amazing relationships with our nurses and we trust them and we know when we leave they've got it," says Esther.

VON is well known for exceptional care and services, both in people's homes and in our communities. We are profoundly grateful to be able to support people of all ages who have health needs in their everyday life.

"VON's nurse practitioners, nurses and other members of the healthcare team play a critical role in improving access to care and advancing health and wellness in our communities," says Dr. Cindy MacQuarrie, VON's Chief Nursing Officer.



## VON selected to lead multiple pilot programs across Nova Scotia, Ontario

This year, VON was awarded pilot funding to help co-design a number of innovative models of care in support of the provincial governments' priority to increase opportunities for people to age at home with appropriate supports.

Most seniors want to be supported to age safely and healthily at home, which also makes good economic sense for the healthcare system. This year, funding was made available in both provinces to explore innovative new models that enhance support for clients to age in place.

Building on our long history of providing outstanding, person-centred care in local homes and communities, VON jumped at the chance to lead these projects.

## VON pilots Cluster Care model

In Nova Scotia, VON was selected to work with the Nova Scotia Provincial Housing Agency and Nova Scotia Continuing Care on a one-year "Cluster Care" pilot, providing care for clients living in two public housing buildings in Truro.

On-site teams offer care and services to support a community of independent older adults to increase their quality of life. Clients receive personal wellness checks and one-on-one assessments. Clients also participate in social activities and receive assistance with transportation, garbage removal and navigating additional external community supports. Having staff on site caring for the buildings' residents ensures clients have access to consistent care.





## Neighbourhood Hub model pilot

VON helped to launch a “Neighbourhood Hub” model of care in Sarnia, Ontario that sees a consistent team of staff provide personal support services in a defined geographical area with a high concentration of home care clients.

Clients benefit from a consistent care team, frequent check-ins (virtually and in person) and a reduction in missed care. Unscheduled services are also available for clients’ emergent care needs, supporting decreased emergency room visits and increasing the opportunity for clients to remain at home rather than moving to long-term care. Staff members benefit from predictable hours and a defined work area, with less need for travel.

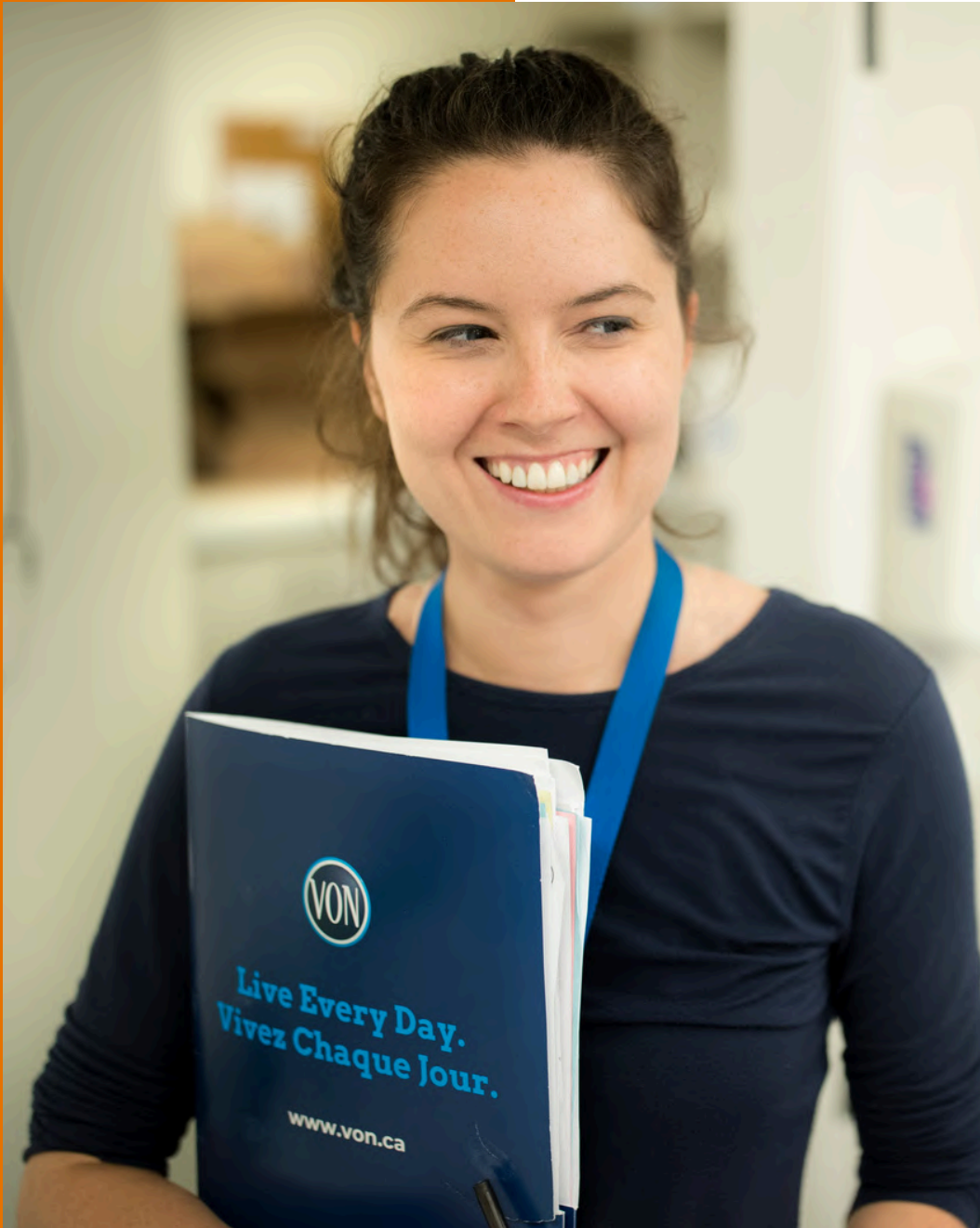
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**“I love this program. I have a renewed sense of purpose and I look forward to waking up and coming to work. I have fallen in love with being a PSW all over again.”**

”







## VON is recognized for 20 years of best practice

VON has again been recognized by the Registered Nurses' Association of Ontario (RNAO), Ontario's leading nursing association, as a Best Practice Spotlight Organization (BPSO). This makes the 20th year that VON has received BPSO status, meaning that VON has demonstrated commitment to evidence-based practice and quality patient care.

Most recently, VON has implemented best practice guidelines on palliative care, falls prevention, people- and family-centred care, preceptorship in nursing and adopting e-health solutions.



## CAPABLE improving safety at home

In partnership with Nova Scotia's Department of Seniors and Long-term Care, VON became the first organization in Canada to implement CAPABLE, an interprofessional, evidence-based program developed by the Johns Hopkins University School of Nursing in Baltimore, Maryland.

As people become more frail, the risk of serious injury or even death in the home increases. Falls can be especially dangerous for those over the age of 65.

**CAPABLE (Community Aging in Place, Advancing Better Living for Elders) is designed to help seniors stay safe and remain independent in their own homes longer.**

The CAPABLE team (a nurse, an occupational therapist and a handy person) works closely with the client over several months to set specific goals to adapt their homes and daily activities to make day-to-day life safer and improve their independence and overall well-being.

The program was made available to eligible seniors in Preston Township, Halifax and Kings County.

Modifications can include: installing grab bars, raising toilet seats, securing shelves, reviewing medications, improving lighting, repairing steps and recommending exercises to improve strength and mobility.





# OUR PEOPLE MAKE THE DIFFERENCE

Our greatest resource and most important investment is our people—the staff, volunteers and student learners who are committed to understanding and meeting the needs of our clients and their families, who embody our values of respect, compassion and excellence and who wake up every day seeking to make a difference in one of the more-than 200 communities we serve.



## Teams deliver care despite Mother Nature's challenges

Unprecedented wildfires in Nova Scotia in May and June caused mass evacuations and destroyed over 200 homes. In July, heavy rainfall caused flash floods across the province that damaged or washed out many roads, highways, driveways and bridges.

Then, in February, the province received its largest snowfall in more than 20 years. All this only a year after the province was hit by Hurricane Fiona!

During and immediately after the blizzard, staff checked in with as many clients as possible over the phone and prioritized visits to the most vulnerable, which required wading through snow drifts, and in some cases, shoveling out walkways.

Throughout these events, staff did their utmost to ensure the safety of each other and our clients, working tirelessly to ensure relocated or evacuated clients could receive the care they needed in alternate locations.



**“It gives me a sense of pride to help somebody else who isn’t able to help themselves. People are relying on you to come and give them a meal. For some of them, it’s their only meal of the day.”**

Kersi volunteers with the Meals on Wheels program in Peel, Ontario twice a week.



**“I am very thankful and appreciative that you entrusted my abilities. This has been so great for me to stay busy. I never would have guessed it would be so much fun.”**

Basil volunteers several days a week driving VON clients in Lunenburg, Nova Scotia.



**“The client told me that SMILE has been life-changing for her. She feels more in control of her life and of her home and feels a night and day difference in her happiness and well-being.”**

Colin Murphy, a case coordinator with the Southeastern Ontario Seniors Managing Independent Living Easily (SMILE) program, after a quarterly check-in with one of his clients.



# DONORS MAKE IT POSSIBLE

## “Home Care is Health Care” campaign inspires generosity

In the fall of 2023, we launched a “Home Care is Health Care” campaign to raise the profile of VON as a home care leader and increase awareness of the wide range of programs and services that we offer as an essential part of the healthcare system.

In Nova Scotia, we partnered with SaltWire publications to feature (in print and online) personal stories of Nova Scotians who have been impacted by the health care VON provides in homes, clinics and communities. We followed with an online advertising campaign in both Ontario and Nova Scotia.

The campaign was successful in creating brand awareness, bringing in online donations and inspiring generosity across both provinces. Of note, we received a donation of \$100,000 in October from 14 credit unions in support of the VON Connect Nova Scotia campaign. In March, we recognized NS Lions Clubs for their cumulative donation of \$30,000 throughout the year.

**14,410**

WONDERFUL DONORS



**26,466**

DONATIONS



**\$1,189,134**

IN LEGACY OR MEMORIAM



**\$6,087,727**

TOTAL DOLLARS RECEIVED



Home Care IS Social Connections



Home Care IS Access to Meals



Home Care IS Supporting Independence

**Home Care IS Health Care**



*Handbags for Hospice.*

## Fundraising events bring together generous donors in Ontario

Across Ontario, several key fundraising events gave us the opportunity to showcase the work of VON, connect with the communities we serve and inspire some generous donations.

Together, the Tim Hortons Smile Cookie Campaign and the annual events Hike for Hospice, Handbags for Hospice and Lights of Love raised almost \$600,000 to support end-of-life care at Sakura House.

- Handbags for Hospice raised \$365,000
- Hike for Hospice raised \$143,635
- Tim Hortons Smile Cookie Campaign raised \$60,400
- Lights of Love at Sakura House raised \$26,260

## A huge thank-you to these generous VON donors:

- Amy Roza
- Amy's Helping Hands
- Beverley Lynn Bessey
- Dr. Frances Gregor
- ENWIN Utilities
- Henry Heyink Excavating
- Hewitt Foundation
- J & W Murphy Foundation
- Marion Armstrong Family Foundation
- Mount Pleasant Group
- Nova Scotia Liquor Commission
- Nova Scotia Credit Unions
- Paul Leliveld
- Petro-Canada CareMakers Foundation
- Reciprocity Health Fund – Community Foundation of NS
- Red Cross
- Robert Johnston
- Rotary Club of Wolfville-Mud Creek
- Stantec
- The Millett New Minas Recreational Trust
- The Sobey Foundation



## Test launch for VON Connect, powered by AlayaCare, is a success, thanks to our teams

This year, we made significant progress towards an organization-wide digital health system. We kicked off the year by launching VON Connect, powered by AlayaCare, at our North Bay and Porcupine sites in Ontario. By using and constantly evaluating the software and workflows during this year-long phase, we could ensure that all processes and practices were optimized for its gradual roll-out across the organization. In October, we announced that Pictou, Nova Scotia would be the first site to launch the software following this testing phase, in May 2024.

Leaders at the North Bay and Porcupine sites acknowledged the challenges that come with change while praising their team for stepping up to ensure all future launches at other sites will be seamless and result in a successful unveiling of VON Connect, powered by AlayaCare.



# FINANCIAL REPORT

*Summary of Victorian Order of Nurses for Canada's consolidated revenue and expenses for the year ended March 31, 2024*

## General Fund

### Revenue

	<b>2024</b>		<b>2023</b>	
		<b>% of revenue</b>		<b>% of revenue</b>
Fees for service	252,401,199	73.9%	244,141,931	76.8%
Program grants	82,919,208	24.3%	67,823,977	21.3%
Miscellaneous income	4,508,702	1.3%	4,132,054	1.3%
Donations and Other	1,897,219	0.6%	1,881,404	0.6%
	<b>341,726,328</b>	<b>100.0%</b>	<b>317,979,366</b>	<b>100.0%</b>

### Expenses

		<b>% of expenses</b>		<b>% of expenses</b>
Salaries and benefits	270,909,277	80.8%	264,415,258	83.6%
Mileage and travel	15,337,166	4.6%	13,930,415	4.1%
Direct program costs	23,012,855	6.9%	12,586,477	3.7%
Bad debts	172,398	0.1%	131,843	0.0%
Occupancy costs	9,220,959	2.7%	8,683,888	2.6%
Administrative, office and general	9,441,110	2.8%	9,191,961	2.6%
Telecommunication costs	3,243,310	1.0%	3,567,998	1.5%
Information technology services	3,500,626	1.0%	3,284,551	1.0%
Amortization of capital assets	643,257	0.2%	658,549	0.7%
	<b>335,480,958</b>	<b>100.0%</b>	<b>316,450,940</b>	<b>100.0%</b>

### Net revenue for the year

<b>6,245,370</b>	<b>1,528,426</b>
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Charitable Number: 129 482 493 RR0001

VOLUNTEER



DONATE

