

VISION LOSS REHABILITATION™

CANADA

Aim Higher: Championing Community and Progress

ANNUAL REPORT 2023/24





Letter from the Board Chair and President & CEO

This year has been filled with remarkable achievements and exciting developments, and we are eager to share these highlights with you.

We were thrilled to receive international acclaim, winning the prestigious Global Techquity Impact Award! Additionally, we had the honour of presenting our inaugural VLRC Distinguished Community Partner Award, recognizing the invaluable contributions of our partners who share our vision and dedication to improving the lives of people who are blind or partially sighted.

This year also marks the launch of our Accessibility and Inclusion Champions Network (AICN), an initiative aimed at promoting inclusivity and accessibility in our community. In Nova Scotia, we received accreditation from CARF International (Commission on Accreditation of Rehabilitation Facilities).

One of the most heartwarming moments of the year came from our Summer Intervention Program. Two of our young clients, little girls with bright futures, shared their testimonials about the positive impact the program has had on their lives. Their stories are a poignant

reminder of why we do what we do and the difference we make in our community.

These achievements are only possible due to the hard work and dedication of our staff, volunteers, Board of Directors, clients, and funders. We extend our deepest gratitude to each one of you for your support and commitment to our mission.

As we reflect on the past year, we are filled with optimism and enthusiasm for the future. We are looking forward to launching our four-year Strategic Plan. It's an ambitious plan that will guide us as we continue to innovate, grow, and enhance our services to meet the evolving needs of our community.

Together, we are making a difference, and we look forward to achieving even greater milestones in the years to come.

Jennifer Urosevic
President and CEO

John Magill
Board Chair

HIGHLIGHTS

Partnerships, achievements and new initiatives from coast to coast

TECHQUITY AWARD

VLRC was honoured with the HLTH Foundation's Global Techquity Impact Award for our pioneering efforts in leveraging artificial intelligence technology to enhance access to vision-saving diabetic retinopathy screening for Canadians. This prestigious award recognizes our commitment to overcoming geographical, cultural, and socioeconomic barriers faced by populations with persistent health disparities.



COMMUNITY PARTNER AWARD

In July 2023, we presented the first VLRC Distinguished Community Partner Award to the Ophthalmology Department of Kingston Health Sciences Centre (KHSC) in Kingston, Ontario. KHSC was recognized for its significant contributions to improving the lives of people who are blind or partially sighted. As the first winner of this award, KHSC embodies the qualities of a strong and inclusive support system, making a positive and profound impact on individuals living with vision loss.



VLRC ACCESSIBILITY AND INCLUSION CHAMPIONS NETWORK (AICN)

With the launch of the VLRC Accessibility and Inclusion Champions Network (AICN), we will reinforce our commitment to ensuring every member of our community feels valued and supported. Looking ahead, we will present our 2024-2028 Multiyear Accessibility Plan, which aims to create a more inclusive community. This plan includes empowering staff and the Champions Network to provide feedback, implementing an Inclusion, Diversity, Equity & Accessibility (IDEA) toolkit, and offering targeted training and awareness programs.

Summer Intervention Program Testimonials

Veronica and Rhea are two girls with unique stories about the impact of VLRC's Summer Intervention Program in Newfoundland. This program provides tailored support and compassionate guidance to those navigating visual impairments. Despite their age differences, Veronica and Rhea share a common thread: the transformative influence of dedicated intervenors and individualized approaches.

Veronica, at just 2 1/2 years old, faces daily challenges due to congenital cataracts. However, with the help of the program's interventions, she has found happiness and progress, which has led to her developing independence and confidence. Additionally, the journey of 13-year-old Rhea emphasizes the program's role in nurturing personal growth and skill mastery.

Through these narratives, we witness hope and empowerment emerging from the Summer Intervention Program. Veronica and Rhea's experiences are an example for others who are navigating visual impairment, demonstrating the power of compassion, dedication, and personalized support.

Here are their stories.



Rhea and her intervenor Charlotte Cave



Rhea's Story

13-year-old Rhea shares a first-person account of her experience with the program in Newfoundland:

"Spending time with my Intervenor Charlotte was the highlight of my summer! She seemed to understand when I needed a bit of extra help and encouraged me when she saw I was able to be independent! We made such a great connection, and all our time together was fun, even if we were working on some routine tasks.

Tying my own shoes has been a long-term goal. When Charlotte thought of making a board with a lace on it to practice, it made all the difference and I am now tying my shoes like a pro!

Hanging out with Charlotte through the Intervenor Program made my summer complete!"



Rhea’s mom, Susan, also has glowing remarks about her daughter’s intervenor experience:

“My daughter Rhea has participated in the SIP through VLRC for the last five summers; it has become something she looks forward to each year!

Rhea and her intervenor Charlotte made a summer “Bucket List” and worked their way through it. There were activities like baking, tying shoes, tie-dyeing shirts, swimming, shopping, and painting. As always, Rhea enjoyed the one-on-one attention and excelled at tasks she had sometimes struggled with before. Keeping up mobility and tech skills when parents suggest it isn’t cool, but add a fun, skilled, and committed teenager, and it rocks! A win-win!”



Rhea, age 13



Veronica,
2.5 years-old

Veronica’s Story

Viktoria and Jonathan, parents of Veronica, shares their experience with the program in Newfoundland:

“The Summer Intervention Program has been a very positive experience for our family. We have been privileged to participate in it for two years in a row.

Our 2 1/2-year-old daughter Veronica was born with a congenital cataract causing blindness in her right eye. She had surgery at four months old to remove the cataract, but is still legally blind in that eye. Veronica’s fight for sight includes patching 6-8 hours every day to strengthen the vision in that eye.

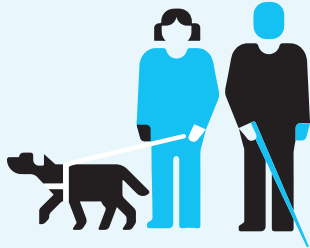
As a busy work-from-home mom with a five-year-old son as well, patching has become a daily struggle. Luckily, Veronica has been happy to patch and do visually stimulating activities with her intervenors, which has alleviated a lot of stress for me and the family. [Each year] the intervenors have been wonderful and have helped Veronica become more independent and confident with day-to-day tasks. They’ve been such a fun distraction that Veronica hardly ripped any patches off during the whole program!

We are so thankful for this program!”

By the Numbers

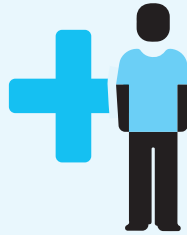
Vision Loss Rehabilitation Canada proudly serves people with vision loss from coast to coast. Here's a snapshot of our impact last year:

Reach and Impact



87,500

Total registered clients



8,600

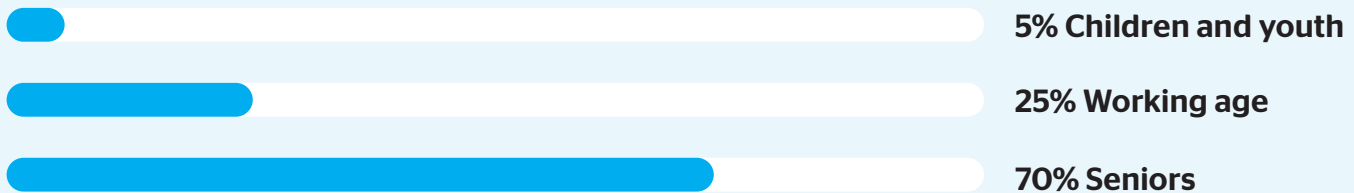
New clients registered last year



100,000

Total service interventions performed last year

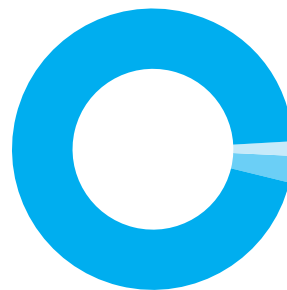
Clients by age



Financials

Vision Loss Rehabilitation Canada takes pride in upholding the highest standard of ethics and accountability in stewarding the funding we receive from our provincial government partners.

Our financial statements for the fiscal year ending March 31, 2024, were prepared in accordance with Canadian accounting standards for not-for-profit organizations and were audited by Ernst & Young LLP.



Operating Revenue

Government Funding: **95.4%**

Gifts from Registered Charities: **1.6%**

Third-Party Fees: **3.0%**



Operating Expenses

Client Service: **94.2%**

Administration: **5.8%**

Board of Directors

Our Board of Directors is comprised of industry leaders in various fields across Canada, all of whom are dedicated to supporting our vital mission.

Board Chair

John Magill

Finance Committee Chair

Daniel Zbacnik

People & Culture Committee Chair

Shelagh Maloney

Service Quality Committee Chair

Betty Nobel

Governance Committee Chair

Dr. Tanya Packer

CNIB Foundation Member Representative

John M. Rafferty

Board Members 2023/24

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Rob Nightingale

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Susan Scott Gabe



VISION LOSS REHABILITATION™

CANADA

Vision Loss Rehabilitation Canada (VLRC) is a not-for-profit national healthcare organization and the leading provider of rehabilitation therapy and healthcare services for individuals with vision loss.

Visit Visionlossrehab.ca

Email info@vlrehab.ca

Call 1-844-887-8572

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Stronger Together



Together, we support and stand by
Canadians who are blind, partially sighted,
or Deafblind.