

Traverse the distance to independence

Annual Report 2021-2022

Programs

SUPPORTIVE HOUSING FOR ADULTS WITH PHYSICAL DISABILITIES

Union Lane, Kitchener

Strasburg Road, Kitchener

SERVICES FOR ADULTS WITH ACQUIRED BRAIN INJURIES (ABI)

ABI Transitional Living

Stanley Avenue, Kitchener

Gordon Street, Fergus

ABI Group Home

Tagge Street, Kitchener

ABI Adult Day Program

Opportunity Centre and

Beginnings, Westheights Drive, Kitchener

ABI Outreach Services

Waterloo Region

Wellington County

ABI Affordable Housing

Bowman Street, Waterloo

Management Team

Senior Team

Toby Harris, CEO

Aaron Willmott, Director Client Services

Alyssa Nelson, Manager Human Resources

Program Managers

Jim Izzard, Transitional Living

Sabrina Jesso, Residential Services

Karen Liphard, Community Services

Financial Controller

Brenden Bellai, CPA, CA, Senior Manager, RLB Chartered Professional Accountants

Site Service Coordinators

Brandi Easton

Alicia Elvins

Jaime Harper

Dan Holisek

Ashley Kosmowski

James Rolls

Board of Directors

Stephen Gross, President

Gayle Asselstine, CPA, CMA,

Secretary-Treasurer

Adrienne Farrell

Len MacIvor

Margaret Penner

Welcoming new Board Members in May 2022

Jeannine Erb

Shakir Machhiwala

Thanking our outgoing Board Members for their invaluable contributions to Traverse Independence

Dr. Nicole Didyk

Zack Enriquez

Deb Randall

Our Mission

We maximize our clients' ability to live independently by providing support services for adults with a physical disability or brain injury.

Message from the CEO

As I think back over the past year and reflect on what we have achieved together I do not think about the pandemic. I think about the vast knowledge we have gained, the partnerships we have forged, and the things we have accomplished. Our health and safety practices are tighter than they have ever been, we know things about personal protective equipment that would astound the average person, we have the most beautiful gardens developing at our sites and we have served our clients well, despite all odds. Time at home, time together, and time to focus enabled all of this. It was hard, it was exhausting, but we did it together with everyone playing their part.

When I look forward, I see excitement about new programs, clients and staff settling into old rhythms and baby steps to return us to a sense of comfort. I see hope, joy and a shared vision. During the upcoming year, we will step forward together as we put the past behind us and focus on the future.

There are no words that can express my gratitude to staff, clients, families/caregivers, and the board of directors for their incredible faith in our leadership as we manoeuvred through the muddy waters of COVID. We have accomplished greatness in the past year – it is as simple as that! Thank you everyone for what you do every day to support our organization. Your resilience, dedication and loyalty are appreciated.

Toby Harris,
CEO

Milestones

2021 saw 12 employees hit milestones in their years of service at Traverse. They will be honoured at our fall 2022 gala which we hope to hold in person this year.

20 Years

Jason Gallipeau and

Sithandone Phommasenh

15 Years

Aaron Willmott and Diane Vicujnik

10 Years

Karen Liphard

Nancy Nowakowski

Kyla Core, Maria Wheeler

Shannon Rolley

5 Years

Jaime Harper, Tara Legg, Sohiala Nazary

Message from the Board President

Traverse has weathered another year of COVID with determination, commitment and flexibility. On behalf of the members of the board, I want to thank the staff and management team for their great work. It has not been easy, often challenging, to know what to do next, and filled with great service to our clients and excellent collaboration with partners.

Traverse continues to be in excellent condition as an organization. The board regularly reviews the finances, policies and processes of the organization and is proud to say that all is well.

We have begun a process to address Diversity, Equity and Inclusion that will be a longer term process that we believe is especially important for our organization. Accreditation planning has also begun, both at the organizational and board level. We look forward to the progress we will make in the coming year.

I want to thank the members of the board for their good and hard work. They have brought their wisdom, experience and skills to the many diverse issues we have faced. Sadly, we said goodbye to Zack Enriquez, Dr. Nicole Didyk, and Deb Randall. I am grateful to the members of the board for their commitment to the work of the organization and the processes of the board.

We are aware of the great work of staff in supporting our clients, despite the challenges and changes that have occurred. Well done. And we want to thank our CEO Toby Harris for providing excellent leadership during a tough year. Also, thank you to the management team for keeping the board up-to-date with the important operational issues that affect the governance of the organization.

I believe Traverse has come through this stronger than before and with new and exciting opportunities to support clients with ABI in our services and in the community. This is because of the skill and passion of our staff. I recently had the opportunity to visit one of our sites and meet a few of our clients. They spoke of how safe and supported they feel in their home. For me, that says so much. Well done all, and thank you.

Stephen Gross

President of the Board

Curbside Appeal and Veggie Gardens

At the first signs of spring, staff and clients at our Stanley Avenue Transitional Living site sprang into action. They looked at the state of the gardens around the buildings and concluded that a major cleanup was needed.

What started with shovels and dirt mixed with a good amount of sweat equity turned into a major embellishment project. Staff and clients combined their efforts and transformed the yard into a veritable garden. Their limited budget was increased many times over with donations of seeds, grow lights, pots, soil, annuals, perennials, and ornaments from local nurseries and garden centres. Many neighbours answered the call to donate clippings and transplants from their own garden; the response was beyond all expectations, proving once again that team work makes the dream work!

This summer clients, staff, and passersby will be able to enjoy the beautiful flowers and the greenery. There is even a water part where pink flamingos are dipping their toes.

Our staff and clients at the Traverse ABI group home on Tagge Street, just down the street from Transitional Living, were inspired by the gardening extravaganza at Stanley Ave. They decided to follow their lead, give the side garden a do-over and plant a vegetable garden where they can see the veggies grow from the patio. They are very proud of their achievements, and cannot wait for the harvest later this summer.

A Client's Second Chance

At a very young age Michael sustained a brain injury from an assault. Over the years this has presented challenges for him to live independently. He lived on his own in the community for many years and in 2013 he accessed Traverse Independence Outreach supports. Through the Outreach program he was able to gain some independence at home, learning how to cook simple meals and do his laundry.

Michael lived in his apartment until it was turned into a condominium building. This forced him to move a few times. He stayed in Supportive Housing for a little while, but he felt that was not a good fit at the time. He then moved in with a close friend. In 2020 Michael was back on the waitlist for Supportive Housing due to some issues with his living arrangements. We offered him a unit at our Affordable Housing site on Bowman Street in

Waterloo where he lived for a few months until he realized that he required more support. In 2021 he switched to the Transitional Living Program in Fergus and, with the support of our staff on site, worked on skills to become more independent.

In 2022 an apartment became available at our Strasburg Road Supportive Housing location in Kitchener. We were convinced it would be the perfect fit for Michael. He is now fully settled in, lives quite independently, but still has the supports he requires. He is close to his friends and can enjoy the city he knows and loves. Michael is well known at Fairview Mall and has returned to his friends and 'family' there. He is enjoying his new apartment and hopes to stay with us at Strasburg Road for years to come.

Quote:

"Since coming back here I have more privacy and freedom. I can go to the mall and the Opportunity Centre. I enjoy my Transformers collectibles and watching Transformer movies in my apartment. And everyone is so nice. I like it."

Michael

Human Resources Update

While this year was another challenging one from a HR perspective because of the pandemic, I cannot say enough good things about our employees and their dedication to our clients. While we did see the return of some employees due to the lifting of single employer cohorting, we were also challenged with filling shifts when staff had to isolate or couldn't come to work due high risk COVID-19 exposure or having caught the virus themselves. To try to keep the spread of COVID-19 at a minimum, we also had our own sites cohorted as best we could for much of the 2021-2022 fiscal year. Credit is due to the employees who took on extra shifts and worked many more hours than they normally would to cover vacant lines and shifts. We have such tremendous team members here who are always willing to help each other out and who make sure our clients are always cared for.

In the past fiscal year, we have successfully added and retained 27 new employees, 21 of which are attendant care workers. This is an increase over the 18 employees added to the Traverse team in the previous fiscal year.

We have achieved an amazing level of diversity in our workforce, giving us many different points of view in caring for a diverse group of clients. A special survey showed us that, in addition to Canada's official English and French, our staff speak 22 additional languages! It is an amazing bonus for our clients that we can serve them in other languages they may speak.

Welcoming students into our sites was a new initiative that allows them to complete a placement for their school volunteer hours. We also had placement students from a variety of higher education programs including Social Development Studies (University of Waterloo - Renison College), Social Services Studies (Conestoga College), Computer Programming and Analysis (Conestoga College) and multiple Personal

Support Worker programs (St. Louis and Conestoga College). Having placement students back at our sites is a win-win scenario; while they gain valuable experience during their time here, our clients benefit from having additional care and our employees have extra hands to help.

Financial Statements

Juggling numbers is very much a balancing act that over the years we have become very adept at. The challenges and costs resulting from COVID-19 have made us even more determined and confident to that we will be able to weather future financial storms and keep our organization financially sound.

STATEMENT OF OPERATION

2022

2021

Operations Eligible for Provincial Subsidy

Program Revenues	6,061,107	5,802,938
Program Expenses	6,061,107	5,802,938
Excess (Deficit)	0	0

Other Operations (including Fee for Service)

Other Revenues	313,199	549,410
Other Expenses	403,285	272,463
Excess (Deficit)	(90,086)	276,947

Excess (Deficit) of Revenues over Expenses

Operating Fund	(90,086)	276,947
Capital Fund	(43,646)	(41,660)
Excess of Revenues over Expenses (All Funds)	(133,732)	235,287

STATEMENT OF FINANCIAL POSITION

2022

2021

Current Assets	696,686	479,584
Property and Equipment	1,111,850	1,155,496
Mortgage Receivable	0	185,760
Total Assets	1,808,536	1,820,840
Current Liabilities	544,118	385,032
Mortgage Payable	38,842	76,500
Total Liabilities	582,960	461,532
Net Assets		
Unrestricted Assets	171,761	280,312
Invested in Capital Assets	1,053,815	1,078,996
Net Assets	1,225,576	1,359,308
Total Net Assets and Liabilities	1,808,536	1,820,840

BrainFx 360 Assessments in the ABI Intensive Case Coordination Program

Over the past year, the ABI Intensive Case Coordination program has provided BrainFx 360 Assessments to their clients. BrainFx 360 is a cognitive and functional assessment tool that is completed by an Occupational Therapist facilitated locally in partnership with Creative Therapy. This is a highly personalized assessment that identifies the participant's areas of strengths and weaknesses, while identifying the real-life impact and strategies to improve them.

Following is an example of a portion of the report that highlights the areas of challenge followed by the real-life impact and possible strategies.

Area of Challenge: Memory

Real Life Impact: In the workplace setting, Ms. S. needs to attend meetings, meet new people, and remember their names, including new children in the daycare and their parents, along with coworkers. Given her challenges in this area, she is currently unable to meet these expectations.

Recommendations:

- Writing things down during work or into agenda
- Asking speaker to repeat instructions
- Word patterns/tricks and repetition for recall
- Use audio recorder (with permission) such as a smart pen.

Program Report

Traverse clients in the ABI Group Home, and ABI Transitional Living sites receive a variety of services on both a scheduled and check-in basis throughout the day. These services are essential to our clients and continued on throughout the pandemic with all the required safety measures and Personal Protective Equipment in place.

At various times during Covid-19 our Day Program was closed to prevent spread of the virus. Staff of the ABI Day Program and Outreach program were at times redeployed to the residential sites to assist with services at those locations. Additionally, we were able to provide a variety of virtual services to support the Day Program clients during this difficult time.

Service by the Day

Program	2020/2021	2021/2022
Supportive Housing	10587	10473
Group Home	2190	2190
Transitional Living	5586	4505
Day Programs	1273	3684

Clients Served by the Day

Program	2020/2021	2021/2022
Supportive Housing	31	30
Group Home	6	6
Transitional Living	21	27
Day Programs	77	87

Outreach Service Hours

2020/2021: 17443

2021/2022: 7375

Outreach Clients

2020/2021: 102

2021/2022: 76

Our Outreach program was severely affected by the pandemic. We needed to redeploy staff to other sites and several clients cancelled their services outright.

Lastly, we had a significant reduction in the staff available to provide services. Despite all of this, we were able to provide virtual services to our clients and Outreach staff distributed food hampers to some of our clients by completing porch drop-offs.

Traverse Independence

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