

CNIB

DEAFBLIND COMMUNITY SERVICES

Year in Review 2018/19



A Year of New Horizons

From the Board Chair & Executive Director

A Year of New Horizons

Since 1958, CNIB Deafblind Community Services has been committed to empower adults who are Deafblind to live as safely and independently as possible. Our intervenors become their eyes and ears, facilitating communication and providing visual information to enable interaction with the world around them.



We provide Ontario's only literacy and basic skills program for adults who are Deafblind, and our Emergency Intervenor Services give people who are Deafblind round-the-clock access to the urgent resources they need to deal with an emergency.



This past year has been particularly significant. We've incorporated as a separate business entity, complete with a new brand identity. Thanks to our advocacy efforts, the Canada Food Guide is now offered in braille. And for the first time in history, Elections Ontario provided Intervenor Services for the provincial election.

We're quickly establishing ourselves on both the national and global stage as a leading provider of services for individuals who are Deafblind. We're working to develop a professional intervenor certification, and are now a member of Deafblind International, ensuring the voices of Canadians who are Deafblind are heard on a global stage.



To support service access, we've implemented a new recruitment strategy to hire more intervenors. Despite these advancements, inequity still exists. Our recent needs assessment for the northwestern region of Ontario identified approximately 70 individuals who require services.

And currently, provincially funded intervenor services for people who are Deafblind are only available in the province of Ontario. With over 360,000 Canadians currently living with Deafblindness, our goal is to see this change. To this end, we've started traveling across the country to identify the needs and gaps in services that exist across Canada for key stakeholders and people who are acquired Deafblind.



We're now entering into important discussions with provincial governments with the goal of ensuring all Canadians who are Deafblind have access to these essential services.

There is so much of life that most of us take for granted every day – grocery shopping, speaking to a doctor, banking, or simply having a social conversation. Why should it be any different for people who are Deafblind?

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Sherry Grabrowski'.

Sherry Grabrowski
Executive Director
Deafblind Community Services

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Kelly Kimens'.

Kelly Kimens
Board Chair
Deafblind Community Services

Greg's Story



Greg Barnett has committed his career and volunteer path to helping those who are marginalized live their best life.

Greg is also Deafblind himself – a unique disability – with a combined loss of hearing and vision. Born without hearing, Greg was raised by a supportive family who were committed to provide him the best specialized education possible.

As an adult, his vision progressively deteriorated. However, fueled by a passion for learning instilled by his mother, Greg challenged himself to pursue his goals. “Several years ago, I was at a really low point in my life,” he recalls, “due to a combination of chronic pain and low mobility along with the challenges of living Deafblind.”

Greg reached out to CNIB Deafblind Community Services for support. Having an intervenor to assist him in interacting and communicating with his environment means Greg can accomplish daily tasks many of us take for granted such as grocery shopping and banking. It broadens his ability to go further, to do more. Intervenor services allows Greg to maintain his independence and autonomy.

With the benefit of the support he received, Greg wanted to help others experiencing marginalization and isolation. He earned a Developmental Service Worker diploma and was employed by the Victoria Order of Nurses as a respite care worker, followed by over a decade with the Thames Valley District School Board working as an Educational Assistant. “I have friends and family, but I want to minimize the impact that I have on them as far as what support I need. With intervenor support I can keep my friends my friends, and my family my family,” he says.

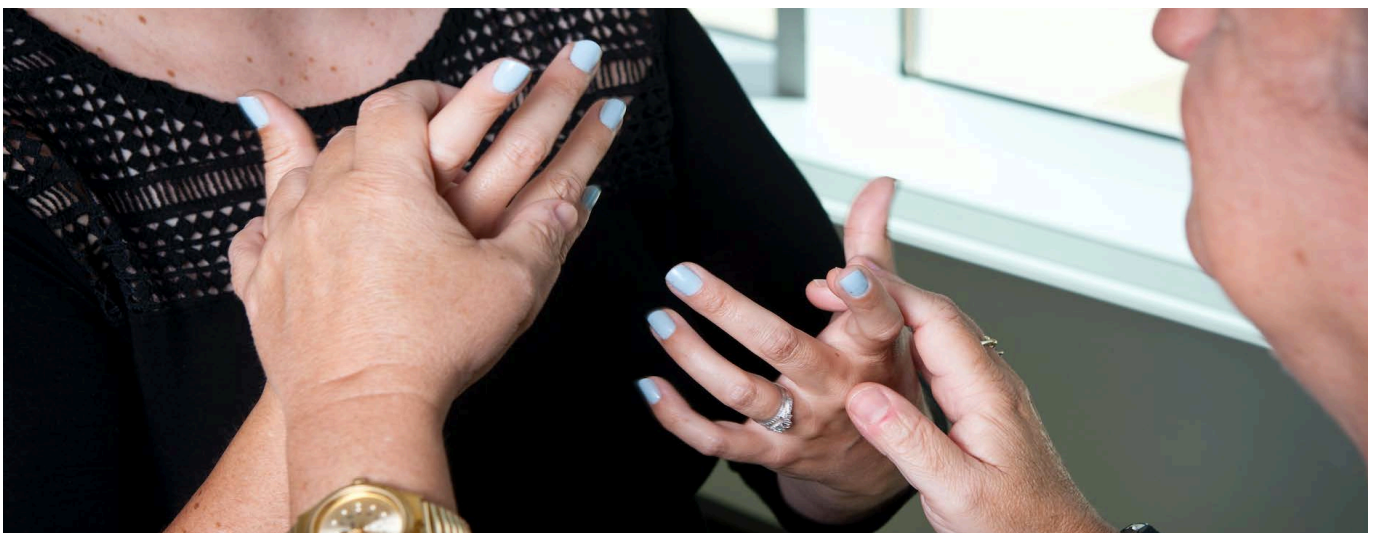
“Sometimes I’ll just go on a hike with intervenor if I don’t have any errands to run,” he says. “It’s nice to be in the company of somebody who, on a very intimate level knows what it’s like to be Deafblind. I never feel judged or embarrassed. I feel safe. I feel empowered.”

He's now enrolled in a college program with the goal of becoming a certified personal trainer to help people with barriers reach their fitness goals. But attending college comes with its own set of barriers for someone who is Deafblind.

Fortunately, he was able to receive specialized training from CNIB's Deafblind Community Services' Literacy Program - the only literacy and basic skills program for Deafblind adults in Ontario. It provides instruction with content delivered based on student's preferred communication method – such as American Sign Language (visual or tactile), the two-hand manual alphabet, or VoiceOver.

“They take a holistic approach,” he says. “[The literacy instructors] make sure that the clients are in a good headspace. That they have all the resources at their fingertips. It reminds me of what my mom did for me when I was growing up.”

“One of the biggest challenges [of being Deafblind] is isolation and sense of self-worth. CNIB Deafblind Community Services has really helped me make peace with the fact that I am enough. That I am working hard, and I am a worthy person.”



By the Numbers

Our Reach and Impact - Ontario (FY 2018/19)

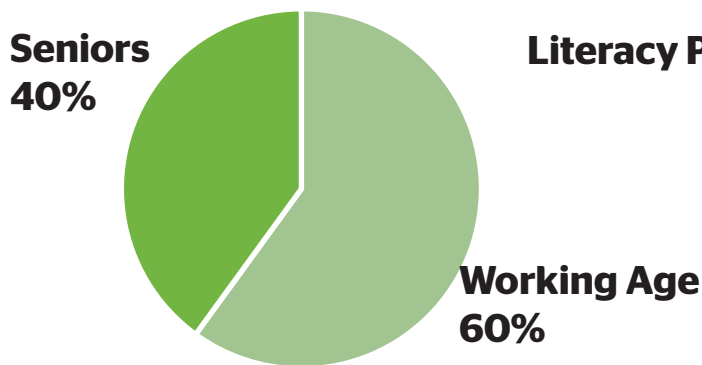
Total Service - Direct and Indirect



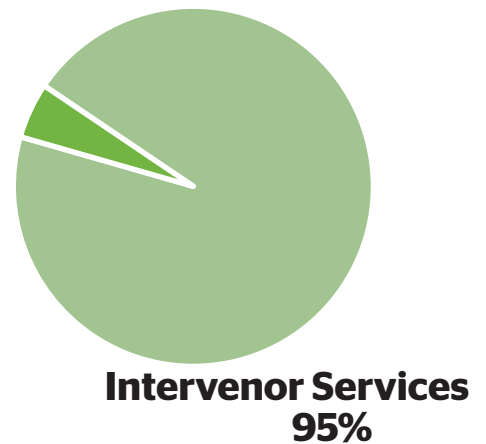
Emergency Services



Clients by age - Ontario



Service hours delivered - Ontario



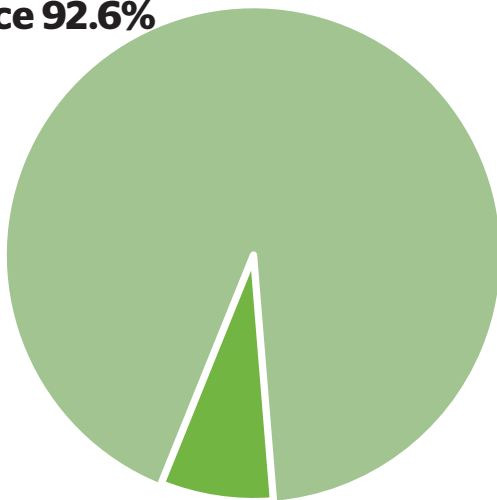
CNIB Deafblind Community Services

2018/2019 Financial Overview

CNIB Deafblind Community Services 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, 2019 were prepared in accordance with Canadian accounting standards for not-for-profit organizations and were audited by Deloitte LLP. Visit deafblindservices.ca for more information.

DBCS Operating Expenses

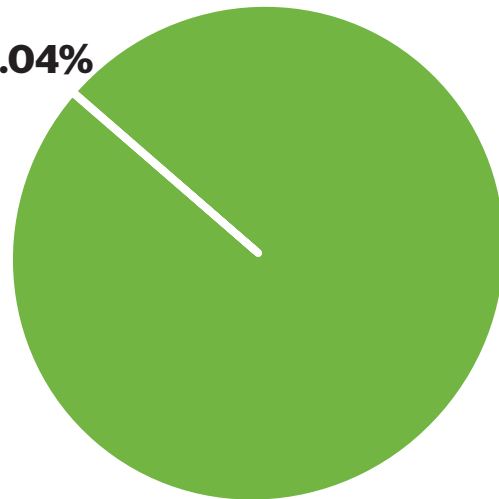
Service 92.6%



Administration 7.4%

DBCS Operating Revenue

Other 0.04%



Government Funding* 99.6%

*Funding is generously provided by the Ministry of Children, Community and Social Services. Funding for the Literacy Program is provided by the Ministry of Training, Colleges and Universities.

CNIB Deafblind Community Services Board of Directors 2018/19

Board Chair: Kelly Kimens

Shari Bancarz, Director

Denise Beaumont, Vice Chair

Robert Froom, Director

Penny Hartin LL. D (Hon), National Board
Liaison and Member

Penny Leclair, Director

Charlie Thompson, Treasurer

Veronica Trudell, Director

CNIB Deafblind Community Services is one of Ontario's leading providers of specialized support and emergency services for people who are Deafblind. Funded by the Government of Ontario, our Intervenor Services, Literacy Program and Emergency Intervenor Services enable people who are Deafblind to maximize their safety, independence and engagement with the world around them.



Contact Us for Additional Information:

- **Visit:** deafblindservices.ca
- **Email:** info@deafblindservices.ca
- **Call:** 1-855-862-6001

CNIB
DEAFBLIND
COMMUNITY
SERVICES