



1925 – 2005  
*80 years of compassionate care*

*complex care, simple comforts*

*caregiving from the 1920's  
to the new millennium*



*Visiting Homemakers Association Founder Mrs. Barbara Blackstock Cody*

## *President and Board Chair Report*

Riding her bicycle through Toronto's east end in 1925, visiting the sick and the needy, Barbara Blackstock, a young public health nurse and VHA's founder, was a woman with a mission. A Victorian dynamo and social activist, she was driven by a credo to serve others — a credo that remains at the heart of this organization in 2005 as we celebrate its 80th anniversary.

It is hard to sum up 80 years of compassionate care. It amounts to millions of service hours as well as millions of lives touched. Countless families have benefited from the complex care and simple comforts provided by VHA throughout its long history. Today well over a thousand staff — with hearts as big as Barbara Blackstock's — keep her vision alive as they provide the essential home care supports that allow people to maintain their independence and remain in the community as long as possible.

The facts and figures you'll find in this Annual Report reflect numerous achievements and significant growth in service volumes but they can't ever begin to tell the stories of the people behind them — their strengths and vulnerabilities in the face of illness and disability. Their stories are compelling and poignant — the young mother recovering from major surgery and living with her three children in a shelter to escape an abusive partner; the newcomer to Canada recently diagnosed with cancer coping with his chemotherapy treatments alone with no family or friends; the elderly woman with dementia at threat of eviction because she hoarded a lifetime of belongings and can no longer keep her apartment habitable; the teenager who sustained massive injuries from an accident and is totally dependent on others for his care and whose parents are exhausted from providing that care around the clock.



*... with great spirit and with commitment  
to providing quality care*

VHA is a great organization with an excellent reputation that does meaningful work — work that matters and makes a real difference in people's lives. However as we look back on our past with pride, we know we can't rest on our laurels — there is much work ahead of us. There are opportunities for improvement, processes to refine, better practices to implement and new programs and services to develop that will best meet the changing needs of our clients.

Reflecting on the past year's achievements, it is readily apparent that our success is due to the contributions of many dedicated and caring people. We want to acknowledge and thank our staff who truly are the backbone of VHA as well as our volunteers, service partners, referral sources, funders and donors.

Annual Reports are a challenge to produce as life moves forward. We are already on to 2006 and looking to the future. Health care transformation in Ontario is well underway, and we are heartened by the signs that home care is front and centre on the agenda. Change however is inevitably accompanied by challenges. We are confident that VHA will respond and adapt to these changes as it has over its 80-year history — with great spirit and with commitment to providing quality care.



A blue ink signature of Vikas Sharma, written in a cursive style.

Vikas Sharma  
Board Chair



A blue ink signature of Carol Annett, written in a cursive style.

Carol Annett  
President/CEO

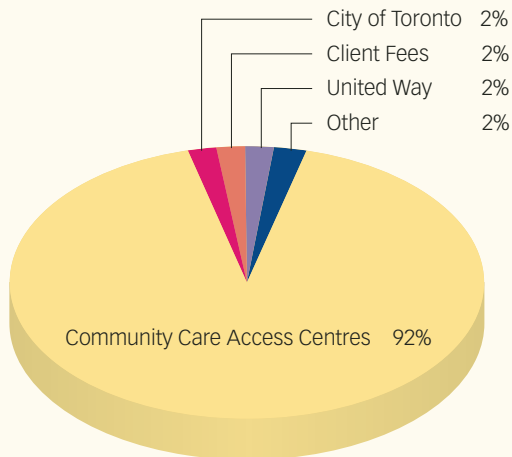


*supporting health, well-being  
and quality of life*

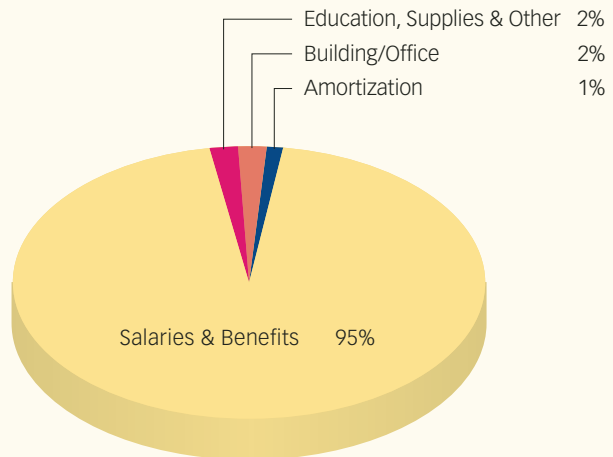
## Facts and Figures

- Over **1,000** staff delivered **1.44 million** hours/units of nursing, personal support and homemaking services to over **11,000** individuals of all ages with acute or chronic illness/disability
- **57** evictions were prevented by providing extreme cleaning services and follow-up support
- **3,000** hours of parent relief services were provided for at risk families with children birth to six years of age
- **43** tenants were housed with severe mental illness at Adams House — a transitional housing initiative for those at risk of homelessness. Two tenants returned to the community and independent living
- **37,465** hours of charitable home support services were provided to **1,016** individuals and families in crisis without the financial means to purchase assistance and who are ineligible for government funded services or in need of supplementary support to remain at home

**2005 Revenue**



**2005 Expenditures**



*... maintaining dignity  
and independence*



Mrs. Cassandra W., Age 89, June 2002 © Mark Nowaczynski

# *Highlights 2005*

## **Building Capacity**

- Provided enriched learning/placement experiences for students in medicine, nursing, personal support and social work
- Developed a new nursing preceptorship/mentorship program
- Restructured our management team, integrating our core client services – personal support, homemaking and nursing – aligned with our key customers in distinct geographic areas
- Provided 6,652 hours of in-house training and development
- Actively participated in policy and advocacy initiatives, such as Elinor Caplan’s review of the competitive bidding system used by the Community Care Access Centres (CCACs), extensive sector consultations on an improved procurement template and the setting up of Local Health Integration Networks
- Participated in a national patient safety culture survey and found our average positive response rate for most items was above both American and Canadian norms
- Ensured compliance with new provincial and federal privacy legislation
- Selected for our Extreme Cleaning Program to prevent evictions by the National Secretariat on Homelessness as a “2005 Promising Approach” to address homelessness
- Partnered with the TCCAC, McMaster University and other providers in a research project to evaluate an innovative home care rehabilitation approach to people who have had a stroke



## Investing In People

- Focused on implementing significant improvements to our Health and Safety Program which were recognized in the 2005 3M Health Care Quality Team Awards publication
- Ratified two new collective agreements further enhancing compensation and benefits to both field and office support staff, including the introduction of a comprehensive pension plan for front-line service providers
- Applauded the tremendous efforts of all our employees who are the backbone of VHA, but specifically our 132 long-service award recipients — 81 for 5 years; 32 for 10 years; 10 for 15 years; 4 for 20 years; 4 for 25 years and 1 for 30 years of excellent and dedicated service
- Launched a new “Heroes in the Home” Award to recognize the tremendous efforts of family members and friends caring for their loved ones in the community
- Enhanced our Ethics Program with the addition of an Ethics Advisor available for staff and client consultation as well as training, tools and supports for staff to deal with ethical issues and dilemmas encountered in their work
- Caught the United Way fever and leaped and bounded in the annual walkathon, climbed the CN Tower and surpassed our 2004 Workplace campaign results
- Celebrated 80 years of caring with a special AGM — highlighted by a multimedia show including historical photos and “oldie” songs performed by our Board Chair and staff
- Acknowledged the many contributions of Vic Parsons as he retired after 17 years of providing strong and dedicated leadership to VHA’s personal support/ homemaking services
- Shared our knowledge and lessons learned through various conference presentations

## Focusing on Growth and Technology

- Implemented a new technology platform (GoldCare) designed specifically for community based service providers
- Realized rapid and substantial growth (a 20 per cent jump in service volumes) resulting in increased revenues and reserves as well as the need to initiate a search process for new premises to support expanded operations
- Enhanced our records management and chart audit processes, including professional off-site storage of discharged files
- Renewed 100% of our service contracts (due to expire) with various funders
- Expanded our caregiver relief services, including the renewal of a grant program for at risk families with young children — birth to six
- Enhanced our internal client satisfaction surveying system including the purchase of new online survey software resulting in more than twice as many surveys being completed in 2005 than in previous years. 97% of clients surveyed would recommend VHA to family/friends



*Online access opens doors to home care*

**www.vha.ca** provides health care professionals and those in need of home care with helpful information at the click of a mouse.



*providing complex care  
and simple comforts  
with compassion*

# *Vision, Mission and Values*

## **Vision**

To be recognized as the best provider of home and community health support services in the province.

## **Mission**

To make a positive impact on every life we touch by providing complex care and simple comforts.

## **Values**

- **Client Focused Services** responsive to individual and family needs and preferences, respectful of diversity and delivered with competence and sensitivity
- **A Positive Organizational Culture** that values the contributions of its diverse workforce and fosters excellence through accessible supervision, consultation and professional development
- **Continuous Quality Improvement** through ongoing evaluation with the aim of exceeding standards of care
- **Cooperation and Collaboration** with our community partners and other stakeholders
- **Advocacy** in identifying service needs and effecting positive system change

As a charitable not-for-profit organization led by a volunteer Board of Directors, we all share a commitment to manage our resources with fiscal responsibility, to adhere to ethical practices in all our operations and to ensure, as we are able, that the most vulnerable in our community have access to our services.



*... making a positive impact  
on every life we touch*

# *2005 Board of Directors*

## **Officers**

Vikas Sharma, Chair  
Alan Ely, Past Chair  
Jeff Litwin, First Vice Chair  
Frances Zomer, Treasurer-Secretary

## **Directors**

David Barnes	Cynthia Majewski
Don Bell	Dr. John Nkansah
Joyce Gordon	Diane Pirner
Bill Hogle	Catherine Seguin
Susan Houston	Donna-Dale Smith
Dennis Long	

## **Senior Management Team**

Carol Annett, President & CEO  
Vic Parsons, Director, Client Services\*  
Susan Power, Director, Human Resources  
Brian Reddy, VP, Operations Support & CFO  
Deborah Simon, VP, Client Services & CNO

\*Retired July 2005

## *Thank you*

*to our many community partners, funders, donors and volunteers for  
their ongoing support without whom our work could not continue.*



Complex care, Simple comforts

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**United Way**  
of Greater Toronto

