



At the Heart of Home Care . At the Heart of Home Care . At the Heart of Home Care . At the Heart of Home Care . At the Heart of Home Care .



Creating More Independence

2019 Annual Report



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Vision

High quality care delivered with great heart –
for every person, every time, everywhere.

Mission

Creating possibilities for more independence,
championing the needs of our clients and families
and delivering high quality, integrated care.

Core beliefs

Our care must be:

- **Client-driven** because what matters most to clients and families is what counts
- **Inclusive** and committed to serving the most vulnerable in our communities
- **Inspired** and creative delivered by a skilled team that has tremendous heart
- **Integrated and collaborative** to unearth innovative answers to complex challenges
- **Spectacular** and continuously focused on quality improvement and safety

President and CEO message



Carol Annett
President and CEO,
VHA Home HealthCare

VHA's Annual Report provides a rear view mirror reflection of many of our activities and accomplishments in 2019. However, as I write this, we are in the midst of the COVID-19 pandemic, grappling with a myriad of complex issues with no clear playbook, no end in sight and last year feels like a lifetime ago. Despite the many challenges this situation presents, the way VHA's spectacular team and our health and community care partners have come together to share resources and best practices, driven by the united goal of continuing to provide great care for those in need and keep our health care providers safe, is nothing but inspirational.

Coordinated efforts driven by shared goals lies at the heart of our work this past year and always. Our strategic goals to be *More Connected* to our partners, *More Attuned* to the voices of our clients and families and to explore *More Inspired Solutions* were very much in focus in 2019 with the transformation of health care in Ontario in full swing, particularly in the development of the first Ontario Health Teams (OHTs) along with other integrated care initiatives. As a leading home and community care provider with almost a century of experience, VHA has an important role to play in influencing the implementation of OHTs to ensure the needs of our clients, families and service providers remain at the forefront. VHA is now a significant partner in five of the first OHTs that were announced in 2019 and we are working closely with developing groups in all regions where we provide service. We look forward to building on this foundation to make care better and more integrated for everyone.

2019 also involved the development of VHA's new Strategic Plan 2020-2025 – *CARE to Transform*. As we drive our new strategic initiatives forward, we remain laser-focused on providing high quality care which is at the centre of all we do – for every person, every time, everywhere.

The human suffering caused by the virus is overwhelming, but there are silver linings to be found – the lessons learned we can take action on, the acceleration of virtual care, the novel and creative ways of working together and delivering service, the new relationships fostered and existing ones made stronger. The future ahead is bright – no doubt about it – because of the people who care deeply about, and contribute to, our mission – our terrific staff, service providers, volunteers, service and client partners, and funders.

Board Chair message



Karen Singh
VHA Board Chair

2019 was certainly a busy and exciting year for VHA. And as we adjust to a new world in 2020, we are learning what it means to work together to protect those who are most vulnerable. Everyone has a part to play in responding to the COVID-19 pandemic.

This lesson is well understood at VHA. In 2019 we took the time to engage the diverse views of our clients, families, staff, service providers, partners and funders to develop VHA's 2020 – 2025 Strategic Plan: *CARE to Transform*. This plan continues VHA's focus on the needs of clients and families, while looking to the future to champion sustainable solutions that enable health, independence and well-being, and to play an essential role in the redesign and orchestration of our future health care system.

In addition, in 2019 we continued to implement many initiatives centred on our priority areas of focus: children with complex medical needs, palliative care and cognitive impairment. And we continued to develop new partnerships with the introduction of the first Ontario Health Teams (OHTs). VHA has long had the reputation as a valued and trusted partner which paved the way for VHA's significant role in many of these OHTs. This participation positions us well to continue to advocate for the needs of our clients and families as well as our service providers as the transformation of Ontario's healthcare system continues.

Alongside these significant initiatives, VHA continues to serve the most vulnerable through community support programs such as hoarding support and extreme cleaning services that help clients to stay safe in their homes and avoid evictions. This work will be even more important as we face the challenges of 2020.

We could not continue this work and face the challenges ahead without the point-of-care staff and service providers, office support, leadership team and volunteers at VHA who never waver in their commitment and dedication to providing quality care to our clients and families. I am in awe of VHA's tireless efforts to provide essential care to help keep people out of hospital and at home where they most want and need to be, and am optimistic about all we will achieve together to make care better for everyone now as we face this pandemic together and into the future.

Inclusive care for every person, every time, everywhere

A rainbow warrior brings awareness to VHA

In 2015 VHA took a significant step that clearly defined the organization as a trailblazer. We proudly committed to becoming 2SLGBTQI+-inclusive and holding awareness training for everyone in the organization from leaders to the frontline. (2SLGBTQI+ is an abbreviation that stands for '2-spirit, lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, transsexual, queer, and intersex.)

VHA turned to **The 519** – a not-for-profit city agency dedicated to the full participation of 2SLGBTQI+ communities – for the training, and leZlie lee kam, a dynamic self-described “queer senior” assisted with our training.

She was uniquely qualified as someone who had gone through seven years of home care from five different organizations, none of them VHA. “My experience had not been good and so to come to VHA and see how motivated they were to create awareness of 2SLGBTQI+ issues was so exciting,” she says.

The fiery advocate doesn't shy away from spreading tough messages about acceptance and understanding of the 2SLGBTQI+ population, but keeps it fun by showing up with her dancing cane “Lilly”, bold and colourful clothing, and a robust, expressive laugh that lights up a room.

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“If somebody had come to my home when I was receiving care and they were wearing a rainbow lanyard (like that given to VHA graduates of the training), they wouldn't have had to say anything; just by wearing it I would have known there is support and understanding and that would have given me hope.”

LeZlie has become an integral part of VHA, providing guidance on inclusive communications, processes and policies, and as a member of our Client and Carer Advisory Council for many years, advising and lending support to a number of initiatives across the organization.

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Critical care for families with children with complex medical needs

As the mother of a child with complex medical needs, Tonya Martin can boil down her experience into one crucial piece of advice for health care practitioners: be a good listener. “Most of us think we listen, but only about 20% of the clinicians, therapists and people I’ve interacted with really listen and understand,” she says. “With the others, they have an idea of what they want to tell you, or what you should be doing, before they’ve taken the time to understand our situation.”

Tonya and her husband didn’t immediately understand what 24/7 ‘eyes-on care’ would mean for their son Cayden (now 3) when he came home from hospital more than a year after his birth. Cayden has a neuromuscular disease that prevents him from swallowing, walking, talking and he can’t be very expressive with his face. But as the initial fog of fear wore off, Tonya and her husband realized he was not as fragile as he seemed: “There was extreme stress in the beginning, but at a certain point we stopped worrying and trusted that he was going to take his next breath,” says Tonya.

As she cuddles and plays with her little boy, the vigilant mom doesn’t downplay the team of professionals they depend on to protect and care for Cayden. A significant part of that care is provided by VHA in the form of night nurses, day nurses, therapists and home support services.

“When they first arrive it’s a steep learning curve, especially with the night nurses who don’t see him during the day and can’t get to know him,” she says. “But over time, we develop a deep connection built on trust and confidence.”

Tonya didn’t set out to become an advocate for children with complex needs but now is glad to share her story. “For a long time we were fighting fires on all fronts, but I’m happy to say that things are better now,” she says. “There is nothing super-hero about us as parents of Cayden. We’re just a regular family who has fantastic supports – our community, our families and of course the remarkable help, skill and relationships provided by our VHA nurses.”

Volunteer for hoarding support program helps to change lives

“As my clients reach a goal, I’m reaching a goal, too,” says Stephanie Ford, a volunteer with VHA Home HealthCare’s Hoarding Support Program since the fall of 2018.

Over the course of just 12-weeks, the time allotted to each volunteer assignment, Stephanie has changed the lives of many in the GTA. Hoarding presents a unique set of challenges, says Stephanie, but VHA’s client-centred approach enables her to connect deeply with those in her community to identify varying needs.

Hoarding, which is now classified as a clinical diagnosis, can cause incidents of injury in the home, collapsing floors, infestations, and fire hazards. It often leads to eviction and can take a heavy toll on mental health, physical health and relationships.

VHA’s Hoarding Support Program connects trained volunteers with qualifying residents who are struggling with hoarding behaviours.

Prior to her start with VHA, Stephanie worked for Toronto City Council for 25 years, where she enjoyed helping Torontonians with a wide range of challenges. Some of the residents Stephanie had contact with at that time suffered with hoarding behaviours and she began to learn tools to help them.

Many of Stephanie’s clients have aspired to create safer and healthier environments at home for years but have lacked the necessary support

needed to achieve their goals. “With the support of this program, I see my clients gaining confidence from one week to the next. Seeing their happiness and knowing they are feeling successful is really rewarding for me,” says Stephanie. “They’re so grateful to be a part of this program and appreciative that we are able to help.”

“It is a wonderful opportunity for me to make a positive change in someone’s life. It’s very empowering.”

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“When you provide care from the heart and patients pass away, you feel the pain and you need to be able to talk about it. VHA helps us to do that.”

Support programs and research initiatives to bolster our team

Palliative Care PSW Latha Jaya is embracing every opportunity to learn and grow

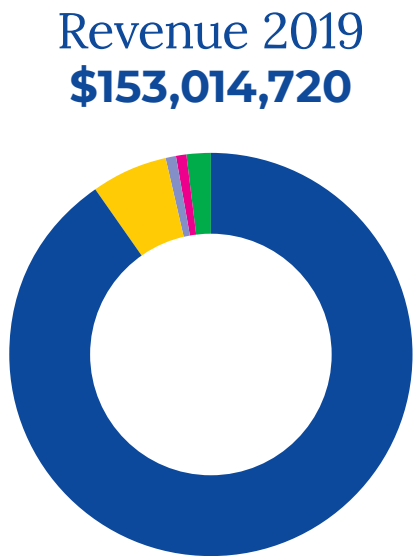
For people who think working with palliative patients must be difficult and draining, PSW Latha Jaya has a simple response – nobody likes death, but there is beauty in being with people at this stage of life. “This is a very unique kind of care,” she says. “It’s physical, but it’s also emotional and spiritual and that excites me.” The encounters Latha has with palliative clients might be brief, but they have a staying power. “You always remember your palliative clients.”

In her 17 years as a PSW, Latha’s passion for her work has never diminished but when she arrived at VHA 3.5 years ago she felt physically and emotionally depleted. Working full-time and being a single mother to three children had taken a toll. At VHA she started learning about the importance of self-care, to pause and seek support from colleagues. “When you provide care from the heart and patients pass away, you feel the pain and you need to be able to talk about it. VHA helps us to do that.”

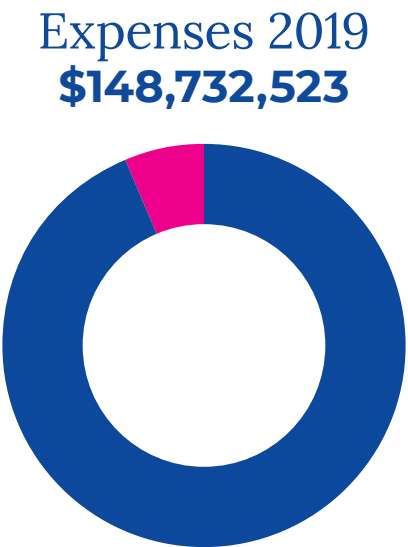
Latha’s confidence in her abilities to support palliative clients has also grown because of the way care is delivered at VHA. “It’s a circle of care,” says Latha. “If I see that something is wrong, I can advocate for my client with the OT, the nurse or a supervisor, really anyone on the team.”

Once shy and insecure, today Latha projects an “anything is possible” energy. She’s embracing every opportunity to learn and grow, including the chance to participate in a research project on reducing work-related PSW injuries. “Taking care of seniors is very physically demanding,” she says. “The movement sensors I wear give valuable feedback and I’m learning how to reduce my own risk for injury.”

VHA by the numbers



- LHINs 90.4%
- Client Fees 6.2%
- United Way 0.7%
- Municipal 1.0%
- Other 1.7%



- Salaries/Benefits Purchased Services 93.7%
- Building/Operations 6.3%

Surplus funds are reinvested in community support, innovation and research programs

110,986
clients admitted to care where and when they needed it

80
Client Partners provided their sage advice to co-design and/or improve services

3,255,705 units of service delivered

78,006 hours of community support services delivered to clients in need

3,139 staff and service providers

251

Hoarding Support clients received critical services through programs like VHA's Hoarding Support Volunteer Program and through the Toronto Hoarding Support Services Network, of which VHA is the lead

10,411 hours of parent relief provided



\$176,069

of VHA's Simple Comforts and Ideas to Action Innovation funds were used to support clients' essential needs and provide staff and service providers with the resources to kickstart a new innovative project

452*

Extreme Cleaning clients were able to stay safe in their home and avoid eviction

Our volunteers gave of their talents and enthusiasm to the tune of

6,255 hours of volunteer service



\$2.6M invested in research projects

28 innoVHAtion facilitators trained

32 active research projects

61 research partnerships

29 academic trainees

89 co-investigators

Spotlighting a few collaborative initiatives

“Alone we can do so little. Together we can do so much.”
– Helen Keller

In 2019, VHA staff and care providers were involved in numerous integrated care projects with many acute, primary and community care partners. Some of these were ongoing or developed with burgeoning Ontario Health Team groups, while others simply evolved through a combination of shared clients and common priorities with fellow health and community care organizations. The objectives varied, with some focusing on reducing admissions to, or time in, hospital to help reduce hallway medicine; while others worked to break down the silos and simplify transitions between care providers throughout the continuum of care; and some focused on enhancing care and supports in the community. All of the initiatives were born out of the unifying goal of making care better for clients and families and presented empowering opportunities for VHA staff and service providers to work and learn alongside sector partner colleagues.

Home at Last
to support hospital discharges

Postpartum Support Network

Nursing Clinics

Integrated Care
initiative for thoracic surgery patients

Hoarding Support Services Network

Community Hub
for accessing resources and services

House Calls
program for homebound frail elderly individuals

Home2Day
program for early hospital discharge for patients with chronic obstructive pulmonary disease

Journey Mapping
with clients and caregivers

Collaborative Evaluation
of winter surge initiatives

Perinatal Adjustment Program

Neighbourhood Care Teams

Mobile Clinics for flu vaccines and falls risk assessments

Emergency Department Rapid Return Home Team

Board of Directors

VHA Home HealthCare is governed by an independent volunteer board of directors that provides leadership, expertise and time to support VHA's vision, mission and core beliefs. We are indebted to this team for its tremendous commitment and wise counsel.

Karen N. Singh, Board Chair	Sheree Davis	Patrick Tallon
Adrienne Largo, Vice-Chair	Eitan Dehtiar	Cindy Veinot
Paul Moroney, Treasurer	Mike Kenigsberg	Karen Waite
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