



Creating More Independence

# Annual Impact Report 2022

# MESSAGE FROM VHA'S CEO AND BOARD CHAIR



**Dr. Kathryn Nichol**  
President & CEO



**Ian Brunskill**  
Board Chair

## As we look back on the year 2022, we are inspired by the way VHA's team members rose to meet the challenges that we faced.

The year started with the most challenging wave of COVID-19 – Omicron – which was felt across the health system with a high burden of illness and significantly reduced health human resources capacity. It was no different in home care. All levels of leadership at VHA came together to ensure we continued to have the right infection prevention and control practices in place to protect our clients, families and our team members, to make difficult but necessary decisions to ensure those who needed us most received care and to quickly put a team in place that was dedicated to being in continuous communication with all of our clients, families and funders on the state of the situation. While this wave of COVID eventually passed, the shortage of health and home care workers continued well into the year (and indeed we haven't fully recovered yet) which required considerable efforts and creative approaches to managing the increased demand for health and personal care outside of institutions.

Despite these issues, we were able to drive our work forward through collaboration, innovative solutions and focused effort on our mission of creating possibilities for more independence, championing the needs of our clients and families and delivering high quality, integrated care. Over the course of the year, we helped/provided services for more than 113,000 clients through over 3.5 million episodes of care.

An important area of VHA's focus for the last several years has been helping to prepare for and build a more integrated healthcare system in Ontario and, in 2022, we had significant achievements in this area. We were proud to be involved in 18 Ontario Health Teams and numerous integrated care initiatives with leading healthcare organizations including University Health Network, Michael Garron Hospital and The Hospital for Sick Children. These initiatives, which help keep Ontarians out of hospital and safe in their homes and communities, demonstrate the essential role home care plays in our healthcare sector.

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We were so proud to work with a group of clients, families and caregivers to bring our client portal [myVHA](#) to life in 2022. We know the portal will make communicating with our team, viewing schedules and accessing information so much easier for clients, families and staff. Take a look at our [2022 Client Voice Report](#) to learn more about how including the expertise and experience of our clients has benefitted the care and services we provide.

2022 also saw great progress in achieving our research vision of using our data to drive evidence-informed improvements to how home care is delivered, investing in powerful partnerships to maximize our impact and to creating home care scientists that will shape our future. Please take a moment to read about this exciting work in [VHA's Research and Innovation Report 2022](#).

**As ever, our people are at the heart of all we do, and in a year such as this, the supports VHA provided to our team members were more important than ever.**

We were really pleased to introduce a new Employee and Family Assistance program that was focused on mental health and wellness through a virtual-first and employee choice model. We invite you to have a look at [VHA's Diversity, Equity and Inclusion Report](#) that celebrates the diversity of our team and the efforts we have taken to build and sustain a culture of inclusion. In 2022, we were so pleased to be able to hold our first in-person staff and service provider recognition event in three years to honour and celebrate the spectacular care that our team provides to their clients and families.

Our VHA team includes a dynamic and diverse Board of Directors comprised of thirteen dedicated volunteers who commit their time, expertise and intelligence to ensuring VHA is a fiscally and operationally sound, strategically-focused social enterprise. In 2022, our Board undertook a thorough review of our governance practices to ensure we have the proper governance in place to support a stable foundation while also positioning VHA to take a proactive approach to the changes and opportunities that lie ahead.

With the challenges and accomplishments of 2022 in our rear view mirror, we are excited for the year to come. We look forward to all we will achieve together and the valuable contributions we will make to the health and lives of our clients and families and to our health system in the year ahead.







## **Partnership with UHN provides seamless transitions with clients at the centre**

**In 2022, VHA entered its third and biggest year yet of partnership with the University Health Network (UHN)'s Integrated Care (IC) program.**

The Integrated Care program was launched in 2019 to provide an evidence-based model of care aimed at improving the client, caregiver and care provider experience. In collaboration with UHN, VHA's Lead Homecare Agency and Service Provider role enables clients to have a seamless care experience transitioning from hospital patients to home. Once clients are in stable condition at the hospital, they can be sent home with additional support from VHA care providers, freeing up space in the hospital while allowing clients to be where they are most comfortable.

Jennifer Chen, visiting nurse at VHA, cares for the UHN IC program clients in their homes across the Greater Toronto Area. She witnesses the positive client outcomes seen as a result of this program on a daily basis.

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**“We are the eyes and ears of physicians and surgeons once our clients return home from hospital,” says Jennifer. “Most clients need instruction and assurance so they can properly rest and relax for an effective recovery.”**

The UHN IC Program provides care to both medical and surgical patients. The current medical population is General Internal Medicine clients including those with Congestive Heart Failure, Chronic Obstructive Pulmonary Disease, and COVID+ care needs. The team also provides care to thoracic, vascular, cardiovascular, orthopedic, and most recently transplant surgical clients.

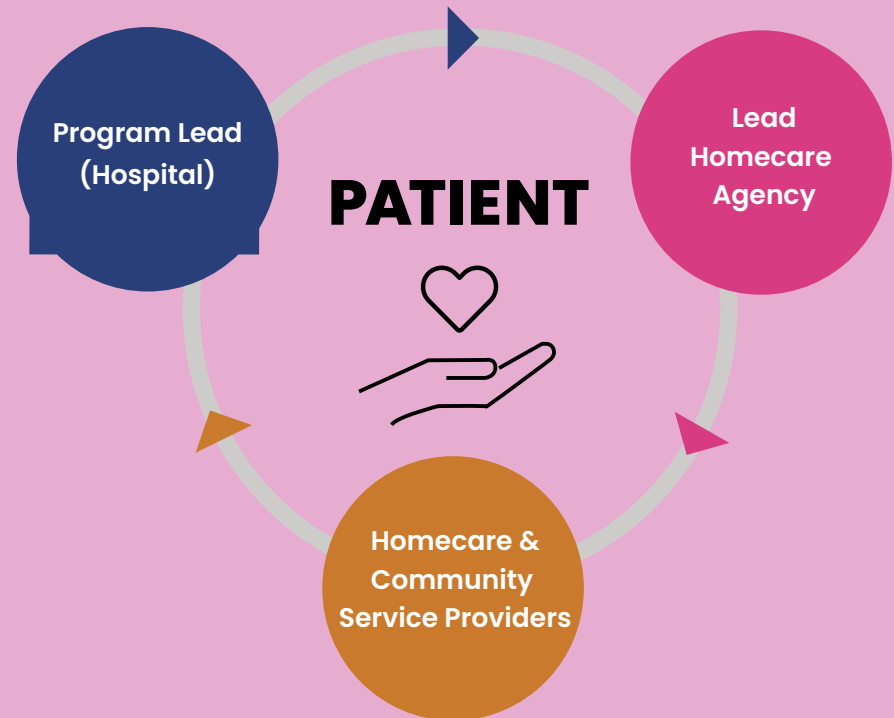
In-home services can include nursing care, personal support, occupational therapy, physical therapy, speech language pathology, social work and dietetics, or a combination of several. These services are customized to meet the unique needs for each client. Throughout the program, clients also have access to a 24/7 program phone line which includes on-call nursing support after hours and weekends.

Prior to joining VHA, Jennifer worked for over 9 years in a rehabilitation hospital where she helped patients gain back their strength and independence after a serious medical illness or injury. Becoming a nurse working with the UHN IC program felt like a natural fit.

**“Given the nature of many of these complicated surgeries and conditions, many people I see are struggling with pain and they are anxious about their symptoms. Clients are always very relieved to have the opportunity to ask questions. Our team also reports anything that is concerning to the IC team at UHN, where they can involve the client’s physician or surgeon if needed for further instruction,”** notes Jennifer.



The integration of care between UHN and VHA means that the entire care team works together and puts clients at the centre to make sure a seamless, high-quality experience is delivered during each and every transition from hospital to home.



# VISION, MISSION, CORE BELIEFS



[About VHA video: Driving the future of home care](#)

## 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
- **Spectacular** and continuously focused on quality improvement and safety
- **Integrated and collaborative** to unearth innovative answers to complex challenges
- **Inclusive and committed** to serving the most vulnerable in our communities
- **Inspired and creative**, delivered by a skilled team that has tremendous heart

**As a charitable not-for-profit organization led by a Volunteer Board of Directors, VHA is committed to:**

- Valuing and supporting our staff and care providers
- Fiscal responsibility
- Driving positive change in community support and home healthcare
- Ethical practices in all our operations



## **Providing evidence and data-based solutions to inform system-wide change**

**In 2022, under the recently combined VHA Research & Innovation portfolio, VHA continued to prioritize our investment in home care science.**

The work of this dynamic team focused on key areas of home and community care to help clients remain independent at home, promote safe and rewarding work conditions for our providers and support the goal of integrated care across sectors.

A highlight of this work was the groundbreaking research led by health economist and VHA researcher Dr. Katherine Zagrodney, in a unique partnership with the Ontario Community Support Association (OCSA). Due to funding differences between sectors, Personal Support Workers (PSWs) are paid, on average, \$5 less than their colleagues in long-term care. This analysis quantified the financial impact of raising home care worker wages to retain skilled providers and meet growing demand.

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***“Our multi-disciplinary team of experts are working towards a common goal of advancing and driving change and making impactful improvements to clinical outcomes, client and provider safety and innovative models in integrated care.”***

“In addition to providing improved access to care at home, where most older adults prefer to be, our research shows that increased wages to reduce turnover and expand home care capacity would create substantial total healthcare system savings,” said Dr. Zagrodney. “Even with PSW wage parity, home and community care would continue to be the least expensive place to receive care—costing half as much as long-term care homes and one seventh as much as hospital care.”

This analysis will inform OCSA’s advocacy for wage parity between home and long-term care and help to influence other investment and policy decisions within our sector. VHA’s Research & Innovation Team will continue to prioritize evidence and data-based solutions that reflect the voices of our clients, caregivers and providers and align with our vision of home care.

To learn more about Research and Innovation at VHA, [please see our 2022 Report.](#)



# MESSAGE FROM CO-CHAIR, CLIENT & CARER ADVISORY COUNCIL



**Amr Elimam**  
Co-chair, Client and Carer  
Advisory Council

## Client & Carer Advisory Council Members

Amr Elimam, Co-Chair  
Margot Algie  
Vince Aliberti  
Nika Berdichevska  
Sonya Lockhart  
Paul Morse  
Debby Vigoda  
Michael Vince  
Laura Williams

## Championing the delivery of client-centred care

VHA's Client and Carer Advisory Council has been focused on supporting numerous strategic priorities across the organization this year. Digital transformation initiatives, such as the launch of the [myVHA](#) client portal, are helping to address the needs of clients and caregivers and provide enhanced supports for staff and service providers. Another exciting example of the ways VHA is improving the client and caregiver experience is the significant integration project undertaken in 2022 to bring personal support and coordination together in a "one team" approach. Client and family partners have played a crucial role in co-designing and supporting these initiatives and many others. The Advisory Council has also provided insights on key matters affecting the healthcare sector, including the human resource challenges and the shift to pandemic recovery. As always, we champion the delivery of client-centred care and serving the most vulnerable in our communities. I encourage you to learn more about the work of the council and VHA's client partners in our first ever [Client Voice Report 2022](#).

This is an exciting moment for me as I transition from my role as Co-Chair of VHA's Client and Carer Advisory Council to join VHA's Board. It has been an honour to work alongside my dedicated colleagues on the council, and I thank them for the time and energy they have and will continue to devote to collaborating with VHA's team members and supporting continuous improvements in care.



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***“I consider it both a privilege and a significant responsibility to be the first client partner to join VHA’s Board, and I am committed to remaining focused on what matters most to clients and families.”***

**—Amr Elimam**







## **Interdisciplinary team's “magic touch” improves health and comfort**

**For many Ontarians living with chronic illness or complex medical needs, navigating the health system can be challenging and it can feel difficult to access the care you need where and when you want it.**

But at VHA, interdisciplinary teams — individuals from different health professions including personal care, nursing and rehab therapy —work together to make sure clients receive all of the care they need, preventing trips to the emergency room and improving quality of life for clients while they live comfortably at home.

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For VHA Client Carol Harvey, this circle of care includes lead Nurse Lorelie Baysa Laurente and Personal Support Workers Latoya Benjamin and Elizabeth Cruzada. Together, under Lorelie's clinical leadership, the three home care specialists work together and make sure Carol receives care every day of the week.

Carol, 58, lives with diabetes and experiences mobility challenges. She lives in a supportive housing facility in downtown Toronto, where she moved after experiencing homelessness and living in and out of shelters for many years.

**"It provides a lot of comfort to know I have Lorelie, Latoya and Elizabeth to check on me," says Carol. "Beyond helping me with personal care, administering my various treatments, and helping with necessary chores around my home, we talk about life. That companionship means a lot to me."**

Lorelie has been a nurse at VHA for over 10 years and has been caring for Carol for 5 of those years. She recalls she was brought on to help monitor Carol's diabetes and insulin administration. Lorelie visits Carol at least 3 days a week and regularly checks in with the PSWs, who see Carol daily.

And, during her time as a VHA client, Carol notes she has seen remarkable improvements to her health and comfort. She feels Lorelie has the "magic touch," because Carol has seen significant reduction of swelling in her legs and healing of rashes on her skin under Lorelie's care.

**"As a team, we have great communication. When a PSW observes something that needs medical attention, they consult with me and I am able to see Carol right away to address the issue. There have also been instances where I have involved Carol's primary physician," says Lorelie.**

"Working in home care means we can be nimble and meet the needs of our clients wherever they are," adds Lorelie.







## **“It’s like a necklace”**

The pandemic shone a light on the importance of mental health awareness, and while many felt 2022 was a year of recovery, others continued to live in a state of crisis.

Recognizing these escalating needs in the community, VHA continued to prioritize specialized programming to reach several groups who are often overlooked and isolated when it comes to mental health support.

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Clutter and Hoarding Support Therapy is one area where services were expanded. For years, VHA has been a leader in providing trauma-informed coaching support to those experiencing challenges with hoarding. The new “Buried in Treasures” Support Group takes that relationship a step further by connecting clients receiving these in-home services with others experiencing similar challenges.

Since the support group was launched in 2022, it has become an important space for clients to discuss their experiences and goals.

“38 years is a lot to cut down on and I’ve managed to do a lot thanks to the hoarding classes,” says Jurij Luciw, one of VHA’s clients.

**As Client Yvonne Zilber remarks, “We look forward to our meetings. That’s the place we feel safe and understood. And no matter how bad it got, I knew on those days, I knew I would get support.”**

Another longstanding program that has continued to make a great difference in the community is the Child and Family Mental Health Support Program.

This program serves low-income families with newborns, children aged 0–4 years and multiples (twins, triplets, etc.) and families requiring short-term assistance in caring for their children while they address various issues in their situation.

“Having a baby is not an easy job and coming home from the hospital knowing you’ll be doing everything by yourself is even harder,” says Client Anita Mensah, who immigrated to Canada alone and has a newborn son. She added that her husband’s immigration to Canada has been slowed down due to the pandemic, so she does not have any family nearby.

“But with the program, my baby and I are in good hands,” Anita shares. Through the program, VHA Child and Family Support Worker Vivalda Lemos visits Anita and her son twice a week.

**“I like to think that by helping Anita, she will one day be able to help another new mom. It’s like a necklace where one link connects to the next — by receiving, one day you are going to be able to give,” says Vivalda.**

Vivalda’s work involves providing respite to new parents, focusing on the healthy development of the children, and connecting families with additional resources in the community.

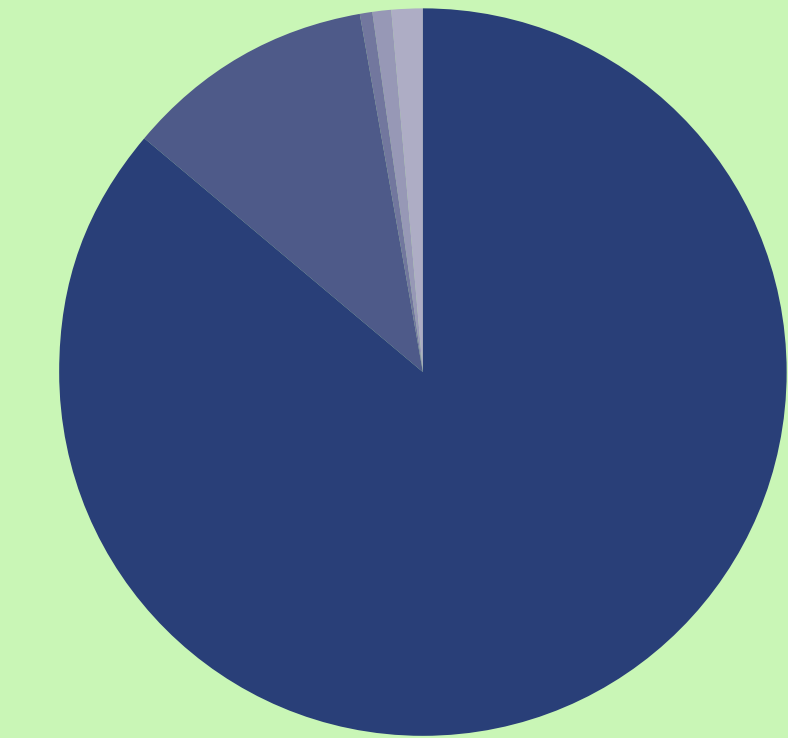
“I feel like we are connected to a community,” says Anita. “VHA has been able to step into the role of my family temporarily so I don’t feel like I’m all alone.”



[Video: Child & Family Support Worker Vivalda builds community](#)

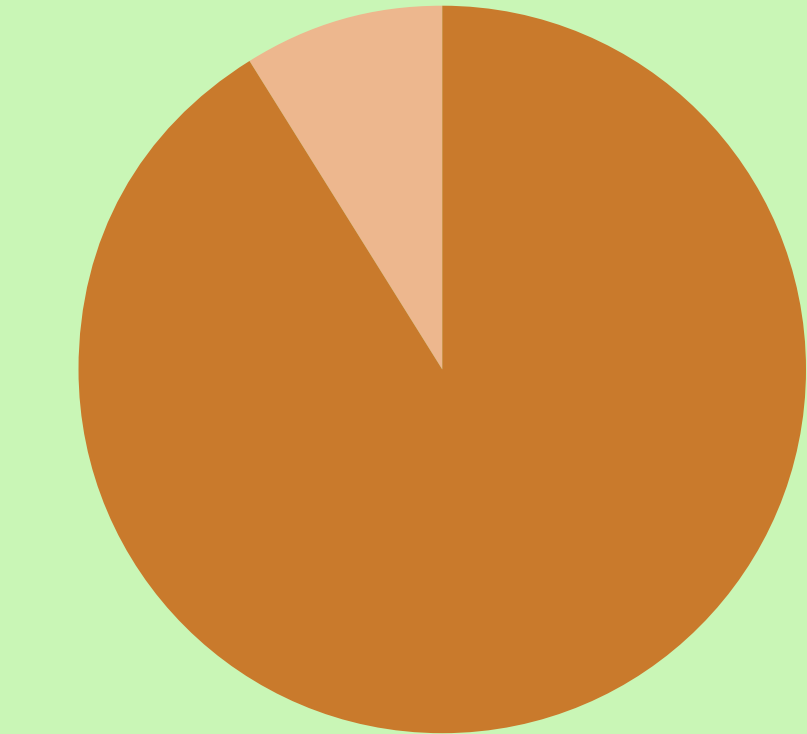
# FINANCIALS

## Revenue



Home and Community Care Support Services	86.2%
Healthcare Partners and Client fees	11.0%
United Way	0.6%
Municipal	0.9%
Other	1.2%

## Expenses



Salaries, Benefits and Purchased Services	91.2%
Building and Operating	8.8%

# BY THE NUMBERS



**2,869**  
staff and service  
providers



**3,573,927**  
episodes of care



**113,742**  
clients admitted  
to care when and  
where they need it



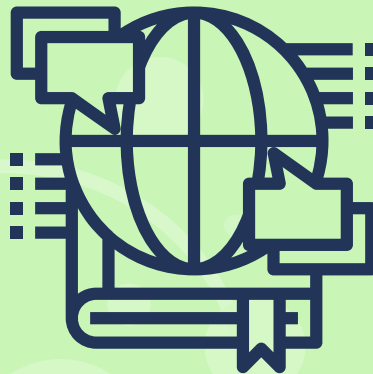
**38**  
client and carer  
partners actively  
engaged, **100%**  
of whom felt their  
involvement  
was valued

**97%** of staff and service providers would recommend VHA to friends and family who require care

**86%** of team members would recommend working at VHA to a friend

**90%** of team members rate VHA as a good, very good or excellent place to work

**91%** of 'office staff' are satisfied with VHA's flexible approach to remote work



**87 languages** are spoken by VHA staff and service providers

**86%** of VHA staff and service providers identify as women

**78%** of VHA team members identify as Racialized

**33%** of VHA staff and service providers identify as an internationally educated health professional

To learn more about Diversity, Equity and Inclusion at VHA, [please read our 2022 Report.](#)





## RESEARCH AND INNOVATION

**44** active research studies

**\$5.6 M** in grant funding received with partners

**27** client and partner providers engaged in research

**49** academic trainees

**12** grant applications approved

**11** manuscripts accepted



## COMMUNITY SUPPORT AND MENTAL HEALTH PROGRAMS



**58,825 hours** of community support services delivered to clients in need



**92 volunteers** engaged in providing support for our clients and families



**3,951 hours** of volunteer service provided by our volunteers who gave of their talents and enthusiasm



**12,574 hours** of support for families in crisis



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



**6,397 hours** of caregiver support



**346** extreme cleaning clients were able to stay safe in their homes and avoid eviction



**4,866 hours** of parent relief provided



Creating More Independence

VHA Home HealthCare  
30 Soudan Avenue, Suite 600  
Toronto, ON M4S 1V6

[www.vha.ca](http://www.vha.ca)



VHA Home HealthCare would like to acknowledge that we are living and working on Indigenous land. This includes the territories of the Un-ceded Algonquin Anishinaabe, the Attawandaron, the Anishinaabeg, the Haudenosaunee, the Lunaapeewak, the Mississaugas of the Credit and the Wendat peoples.

Registered Charitable Number: 108185141RR0002  
VHA Home HealthCare has no corporate or other affiliation  
with VHA Health & Home Support, also known as VHA Ottawa

