

Bruce House Annual Message

The Bruce House annual message is an opportunity to open our doors and share with you the work we have done over the last year, HIV/AIDS updates, and the successes and challenges we face as an organization. It is a chance to acknowledge the remarkable volunteers who honour us with their precious time, caring, kindness and talents. It is a time to show our deep appreciation to the donors who are instrumental in keeping our doors open. It is a time to welcome you into our home.

The focus of this annual message is to highlight our efforts over the last 27 years of providing homes to people living with and affected by HIV. When in the past we referred to Bruce House as “more than a house” it was usually interpreted in terms of providing more than a “roof over one’s head”; and references the various types of services and support given to those we house. While the above is literally true what is not always evident is that we truly provide “more than a house”—we provide *homes*.

A home can be different things for different people. For some it can mean a place to feel safe and secure. For many it may be a place to live as a family together. For others it can mean a place of refuge and healing. Still others may think of a home as a place to belong to community or a place to welcome friends and family or merely a place to hang one’s hat. A place to sing out loud in the shower, or lounge in your favourite chair. Think of what you yourself would view as a home. Imagine the components of what a home must be for you to truly feel “at home”. Can a home be a place? An organization? Or does it just need to be something or somewhere that you feel safe and secure and welcomed regardless of where you’ve been, what you have experienced, and where you are coming from?

A home requires work—bills to pay, chores to do, maintenance, and its share of worries. We worry about funding changes, such as those at the Public Health Agency of Canada; where virtually the same sum of money previously avail-

able for HIV/AIDS now also funds Hepatitis-C services and “sexually transmitted and blood-borne infections” (STBBIs). We advocate for our clients when they lose services elsewhere, such as the cancellation of psychological services for people with HIV at the Ottawa Hospital—something the Ontario AIDS Network members have identified as a worrisome trend across the province. A home is not something that is built and then forgotten, but a place that requires constant work.

As the needs of our clients change, so does the home they need us to provide. As people live longer with HIV it is often other health concerns which become prominent—from injury to illness, a home is a place to heal, recover, and rest—provided that home can adapt to their needs. Caring for People aging with HIV has been a concern on the horizon for years now, and that horizon approaches quickly.

For over 27 years Bruce House has been a home for so many. A home for those who were sick and dying, a home for those shunned by family and friends, a home for those in crisis... and a home for one to live and thrive and place to come to peace with one’s self.

We as an organization have provided a home to not only people living with HIV and/or AIDS but to a countless number of people who found refuge in our mission and wanted to be part of that feeling of home. They came to work, to volunteer, and found themselves coming home.

Today we honour those who have been part of our home and for those who continue to be part of our home. Whether you are living with HIV or not, there’s a home for you at Bruce House.

Welcome Home.

J.J. (Jay) Koornstra
Executive Director

Lynne Cioppa
Chairperson, Board of Directors

“ Home isn’t where you’re from, it’s where you find light when all grows dark. ”

—Pierce Brown

In Memory of Our Sweet Friend
Eileen Murphy



This Annual Report is dedicated to the memory of our sweet, dear friend and family member Eileen Murphy who devoted over 20 years of love, commitment, compassion, joy, laughter, wisdom and so much more to Bruce House and the Ottawa LGBTQ Community. You are deeply missed.

*Sending you so much love,
Your family at Bruce House*

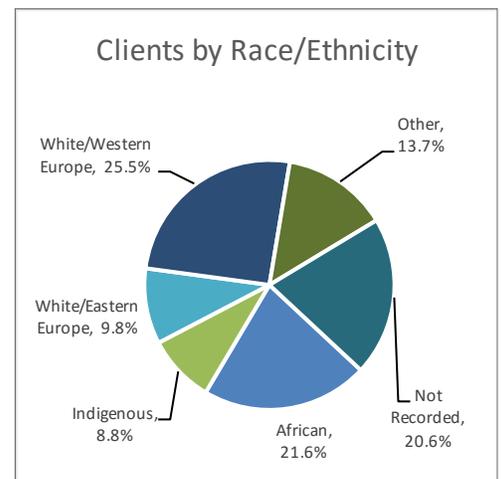
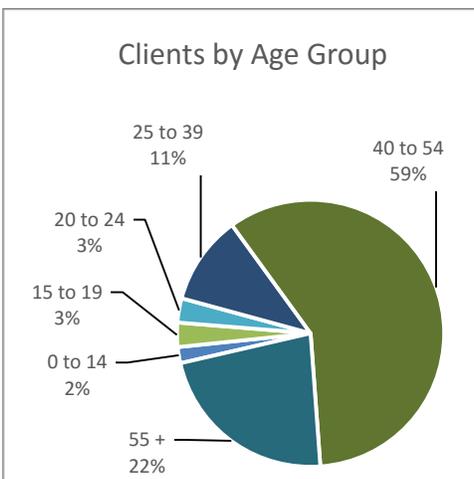
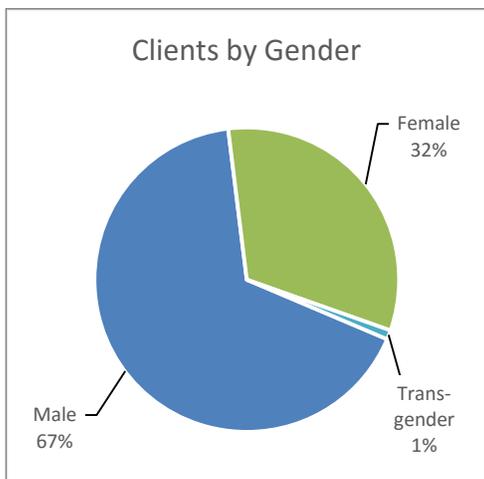
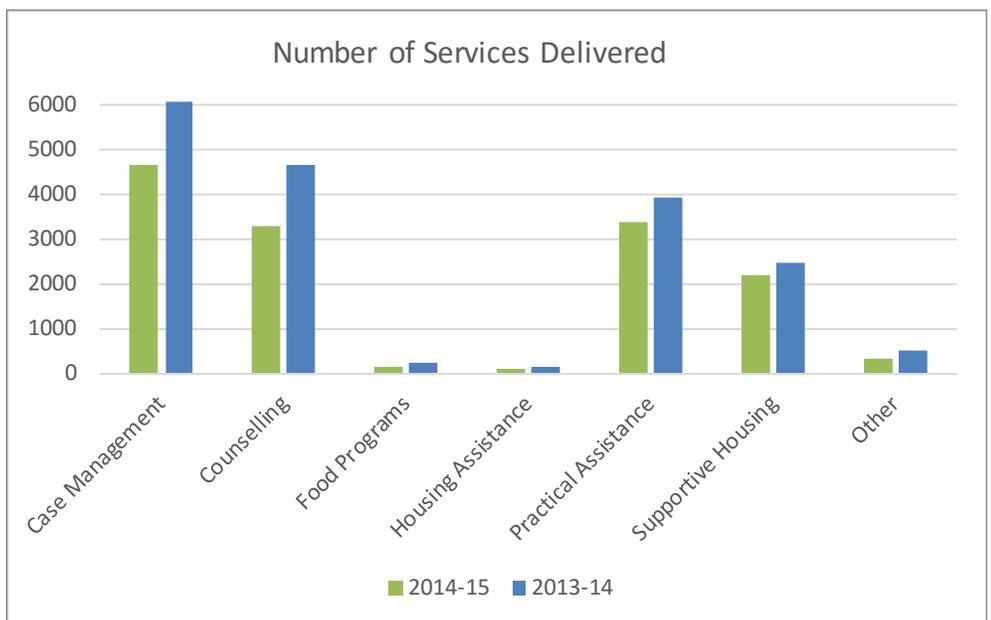
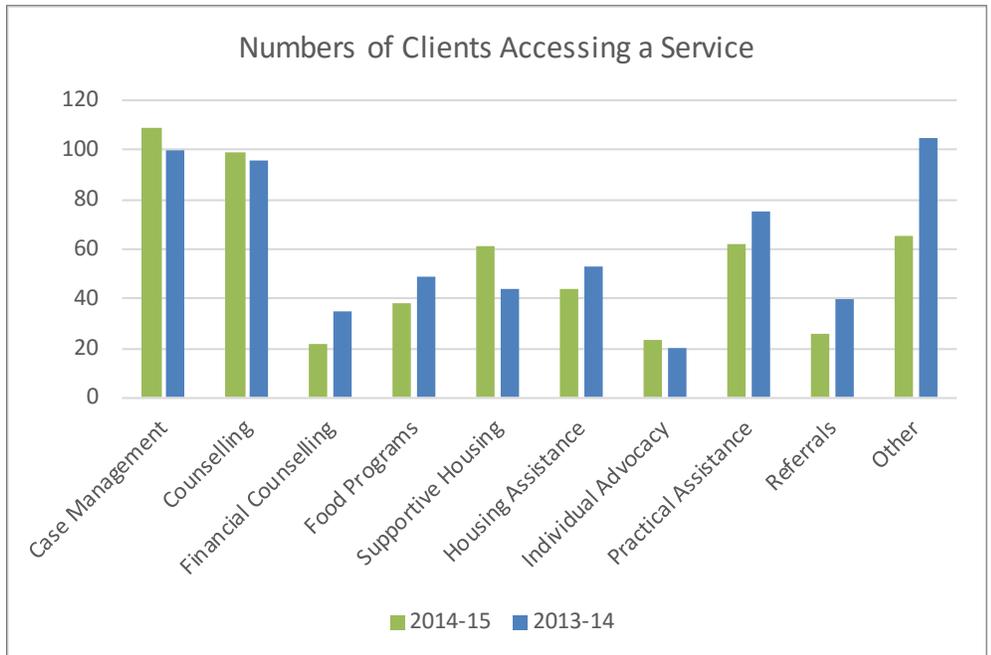
Program & Services

2014-15 brought much movement in and out of the Transition House. As people with HIV are living lives of greater longevity and quality we are seeing a trend towards a need for respite and/or convalescence. It seems that transition housing has taken on new meaning, with many clients applying for temporary housing until they can get back on their feet or catch their breath. Additionally, one of the greatest concerns affecting people with HIV is the social isolation that comes from being alone and detached from community. This has lead staff to consider an increased buddy or outreach program in the future, which would allow people in distress to remain in their homes.

The past year we have seen clients enter the Transition House from bouts in the hospitals, later to return to their own homes; some homeless upon being marginalized by family; those lacking appropriate supports in other parts of the country; wheelchair-bound people, with different abilities in need of supports; as well as transgender clients leaving violence and stigmatization.

Even as we assist clients in the Transition House and can often get them set up in our Supported Independent Living Program, we still manage to lose some of our best and brightest. This year we lost volunteers and clients alike. We grieve them and their memory guides us to continue our journey.

Bruce House has partnered with the University of Ottawa Community Legal Clinic. Several times per year students in the law program come to Bruce House to present on a variety of legal [cont'd](#)→



Program & Services
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issues. These presentations are interactive and interesting. Some of the presented topics have included the Ontario Disability Support Program, dealing with collection agencies, and HIV and disclosure in the workplace. The students are able to provide information, with individual legal advice available from the Legal Clinic at no charge.

There is the ongoing planning on developing what has internally been referred to as “the third program”—an enhanced support program for clients whose needs fall outside the services traditionally offered by the Transition House Program and the Supported Independent Living Program. While in the early stages, developing this program is part of the Bruce House commitment to expand and evolve our services as the needs of our clients evolve and change.

Richard Naster
Team Leader,
Transition House Program

Doug Cooper
Team Leader,
Supported Independent Living Program

Please see the Bruce House booklet or website for program information.

Fundraising

Over the 2014-15 fiscal year our fundraising efforts have been both successful and innovative, starting with a grassroots approach to developing relationships with our remarkable donors—some of whom have supported Bruce House for over two decades. We are so grateful for the community response to help us overcome financial challenges, and the fundraising events that pop up all over the city throughout the year on our behalf.

Through the generosity of foundations, individuals and those who attend our key fundraising events, Bruce House is able

to secure funding that is critical to the success of our programs. From the Taste for Life restaurants and the thousands of diners, to the community-led fundraisers and individual donors, we are tremendously grateful for the kindness and support bestowed on us.

We remain diligent in providing the best care for those in your community living with HIV. Thank you for believing in Bruce House, and helping us help others.

Jill Woodley
Fund Development &
Community Engagement



Generous support for Bruce House from the 100 Women Who Care Ottawa.

Volunteers

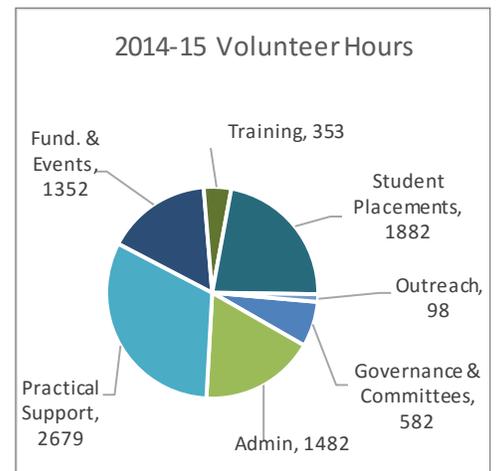
This fiscal year our devoted volunteers gave 6546 hours of their time to Bruce House. This is an amazing contribution—if volunteers were compensated at the entry-level hourly rate (excluding benefits) this would cost Bruce House nearly \$118,000. Volunteering should not be reduced to a dollar figure, however. Every volunteer is unique and each brings compassion, dedication, creativity, laughter and much more to their volunteer role. Bruce House is enriched by the personal gift of each and every volunteer.

We continue to increase our volunteer involvement in the context of the Greater Involvement of People living with HIV/AIDS (GIPA) and with Meaningful

Involvement of People living with HIV/AIDS (MIPA) by creating opportunities for personal development, employment opportunities, and increased self-esteem. Bruce House is a signatory to the Ontario Accord, demonstrating our commitment to the GIPA/MIPA principles and our philosophy of including individuals affected by HIV as key stakeholders in our work.

Thank you to all of our fabulous volunteers who allow us to provide many of our programs and services, and without whom we would not be able to deliver this level of care and support.

Linda Truglia
Coordinator of Volunteer Services



Treasurer's Report

Another busy year has been completed at Bruce House and our community based organization remains committed to providing the best possible services and care for our clients. With the efforts of our dedicated team of employees and volunteers, Bruce House has continued to be a relevant organization by offering the best possible health outcomes for our clients in a cost-effective manner. We live in a challenging environment and are regularly faced with rising costs and limited sources of revenue.

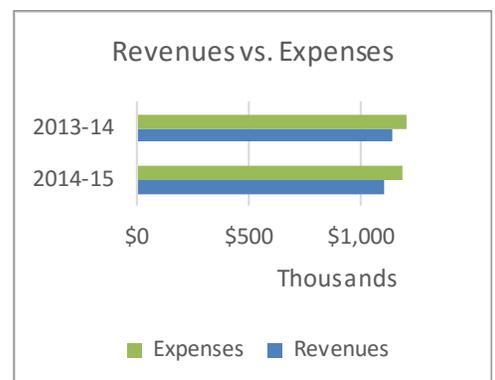
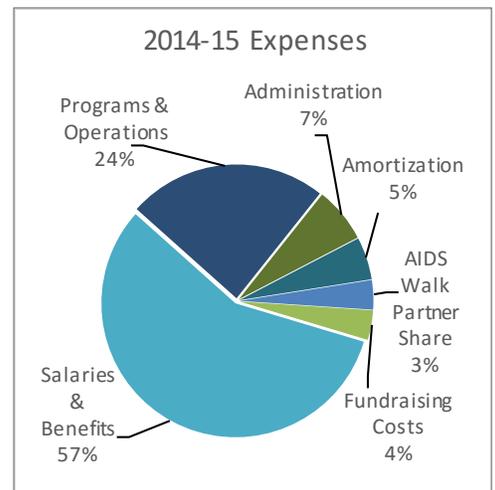
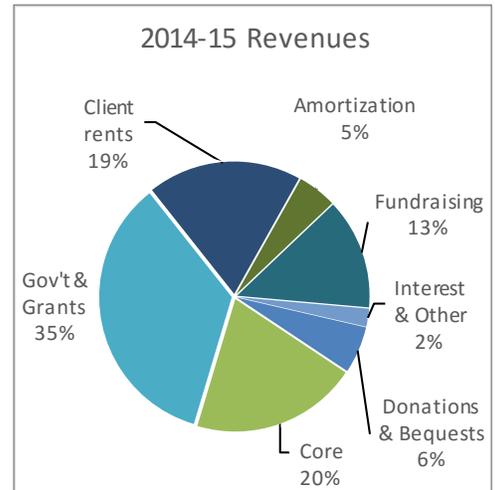
Although we have continued to offer all of our services, we have seen a decline in our revenue of over \$35,000 for the 2014-15 year as compared to the previous year. The total revenue for the year was below the budgeted expectations and the decline was mainly due to reduced donations and fundraising contributions. In light of this situation, the management and staff of Bruce House have stepped up to the challenge and found ways to reduce costs when and where possible and have continued to exercise care and prudence to manage the financial impact of unexpected events in order to respect the expenditure budget of the organization as closely as possible. By this hard work, Bruce House was able to trim approximately \$19,000 of expenses when compared to the previous year. The end result of these efforts for the fiscal year ended March 31, 2015 was a loss of \$75,700 which was in fact double of the anticipated loss for the year.

Although, we have yet to utilize the funds set aside in our internally restricted fund for contingencies (\$297,000), we have seen a significant decline in our total cash and investments by over \$62,000. Continued deficits would force the organization to use these contingency funds. Recognizing these results and that the contingency funds are meant to assist during short-term periods of financial difficulties, the Board has been reviewing proposed alternatives to contain the annual deficit tendencies and return Bruce House to an annual break-even position. Some of these initiatives will include a more detailed and timely budget process, a review of our revenue generated policies and practices and elaborating new strategies for obtaining government funding. We will of course use best efforts to maintain all established cost-saving measures in our programs and services as well as to the overall infrastructure costs of the organization.

On behalf of the Finance Committee, I would like to thank you for your continued support and for helping us in making Bruce House an important organization in our community

Marc Brabant
Treasurer, Board of Directors

The complete audited financial statements are available on request from the Bruce House office.



Sitting 'round the campfire at the 2015 Kitchen Party. Photo: Joan Anderson

“The ache for home lives in all of us, the safe place where we can go as we are and not be questioned.”
—Maya Angelou

Funders & Supporters

BRUCE HOUSE RECEIVES FUNDING FROM:

- Public Health Agency of Canada – AIDS Community Action Program (ACAP)
- Employment and Social Development Canada – Homelessness Prevention Initiative
- Ontario Ministry of Health and Long-term Care – AIDS Bureau
- Ontario – Consolidated Homelessness Prevention Program
- City of Ottawa – Domiciliary Residential
- Somerset West Community Health Centre
- MAC AIDS Fund
- The Snowy OWL AIDS Foundation
- Wesley and Mary Nichol Foundation
- Ontario REALTORS Care® Foundation
- The Community Foundation of Ottawa
- TD
- James Robin Findlay Fund

BRUCE HOUSE IS A BENEFICIARY OF:

- Swirl and Twirl
- Drag & Balls
- Bon Appetit
- 100 Women Who Care - Ottawa
- QBall Ottawa
- restaurants participating in A Taste For Life

“ **What is home? It's a place where people share and understand each other. Its relationships are nurturing. The people in it do not need to be perfect; instead, they need to be honest, loving, supportive, recognizing a common humanity that makes all of us vulnerable.** ”

—Gladys M. Hunt



Family portrait.

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TRANSITION HOUSE PROGRAM
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