



Safety in Numbers



200+ opioid and substance poisonings reversed



659,843 syringes safely recovered and disposed



39 clients started on treatment to cure hepatitis C virus (HCV)



5,139 condoms distributed to prevent HIV/HCV transmission



1,300+ people engaged in 2SLGBTQIA+ community events



3,956 naloxone kits provided to prevent opioid-related deaths



152 clients living with HIV supported by our services

The contents of this Annual Report cover the Fiscal Year of April 1, 2025—March 31, 2026 unless otherwise stated.

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A woman with dark hair, wearing a black blazer and a red knitted scarf, is speaking into a microphone. She is smiling and looking slightly to her right. The background is a vibrant red wall with large, white, blocky text that reads "THE 'H' IN HIV STAND FOR HUMA". A large, faint, white heart shape is visible behind the text. The lighting is bright, highlighting the speaker and the text.

THE
"H"
IN
HIV
STAND
FOR
HUMA

PHOTO: Board Chair Lila Desjardine at Red Scarf 2025.

Care is the Whole Point

An Executive Message

Regional HIV/AIDS Connection (RHAC) has been caring for the communities we serve since 1985. The organization we are today started during the early years of the AIDS crisis as a small group of community members who did everything they could, simply because they cared—often when no one else would. Over 40 years later, that founding spirit of courage, care, and compassion continues to lead our frontline response to HIV, hepatitis C, and the toxic drug crisis.

Fiscal 2025 began as a celebration of RHAC's 40th anniversary. However, the year closed with an abrupt and devastating loss: In March 2026, RHAC was notified of the provincial decision to end funding for Carepoint. This would ultimately lead to Carepoint's closure in June 2026. As London's only supervised consumption site, Carepoint was a vital source of support, safety, and community for people who use substances. The closure has presented a difficult transition for clients, staff, and the local community. However, RHAC remains engaged in a Continuity of Care Plan to ensure the people who relied on Carepoint can still turn to RHAC for the dignified care they deserve.

More recently, RHAC announced a planned leadership transition with the temporary return of Executive Director Brian Lester. As it turns out, the last time that Brian addressed an Annual Report as Executive Director would not be the last. At the time of that address in 2022, Carepoint had not yet completed its relocation to what we hoped would be a permanent site:

“Once completed, the Carepoint program at 446 York Street, while a work in progress, will provide a well-designed and modern service delivery space...while offering the opportunity to move in new and exciting directions as we work to address HIV/HCV prevention, provide support to diverse populations, and address the pervasive overdose crisis in London.” As predicted, Carepoint proved to be a powerful response to the toxic drug crisis in the years to come. The service reversed more than 200 drug poisonings in 2025 alone. That same year, London recorded zero new HIV infections related to substance use.

Despite several transitions, RHAC does not find itself in unfamiliar territory. In many ways, the agency is responding to realities we recognize all too well. Since closing Carepoint, the site at 446 York Street has continued operations as our Counterpoint Needle + Syringe Program, which first opened in 1991. Meanwhile, John Gordon Home is providing the same comforts of home it first offered residents in 1992. Our past has always presented an important path forward. Whether it's the return of a former Executive Director or services that resemble a time before Carepoint, the present state of RHAC is rooted in the familiar foundations that have sustained our mission across four decades. Over the years, we have grown and adapted to meet the needs of our community. We also remained constant: Never losing sight of the values, principles, and people at the heart of our mission. We continue to deliver quality and compassionate care to serve clients, residents, and program participants with the best supports possible. Simply put: Care is the whole point of what we do. It always has been, and always will be. On behalf of the Board and Leadership of RHAC, thank you to the clients and community members entrusting their care to our dedicated staff and volunteers.

Lila Desjardine
Board Chair

Brian Lester
Interim Executive Director

PHOTO: Executive Director Brian Lester at Red Scarf 2019.



Positive Impacts for People Living with HIV

This year, our social and practical supports served a total of 152 clients living with HIV. Navigating supports and social services was made easier for clients with more than 1,200 service coordination sessions and 265 referrals to health and wellness supports. RHAC also made sure that clients could stay connected to the care they needed, such as medical appointments, by facilitating 502 instances of transportation assistance. In collaboration with community partners, RHAC organized 54 financial counselling sessions, which included connections to the London Goodwill Career Centre Tax Clinic to make tax filing even more accessible and help clients secure social assistance and housing benefits.

Quality Care + Support at John Gordon Home

Our John Gordon Home (JGH) program is where residents are provided transitional housing and health supports to address chronic conditions related to HIV and hepatitis C. This year, JGH was home to a total of nine residents. The 'Home with a Heart' was also open to students training as tomorrow's healthcare leaders. JGH was pleased to welcome four personal support worker (PSW) students from CLI College, an Addictions and Community Services Worker student from CDI college, and six Occupational Therapy students from Western University. Meanwhile, an Ontario Ministry of Health grant administered through Meals on Wheels London supported our PSWs in completing online training on Basic Pharmacology in Mental Health and Substance Use to enhance our staff response to complex care needs. By the year's end, JGH assisted four residents in moving on to independent living.



Advancing Wellness for World Hepatitis Day

In collaboration with London InterCommunity Health Centre (LIHC), we welcomed over 360 community members to our third annual World Hepatitis Day Wellness Fair. The event offered participants an opportunity to learn more about hepatitis C prevention and testing while connecting to local service providers, including: Atlohsa Family Healing Services, Family Service Thames Valley, John Howard Society of London and District, LIHC's Youth Outreach Workers and Options Clinic, Middlesex-London Health Unit (MLHU), Ontario Aboriginal HIV/AIDS Strategy (OAHAS), and St. Leonard's Community Services London and Region.

Breaking Down Barriers for Sex Workers

RHAC's Sex Worker Initiative for Safety and Health (SWISH) engaged 83 clients across 420 service interactions. SWISH also provided training to 274 service providers across 25 organizations to help providers identify and address barriers that limit sex workers' access to support services. In 2025, SWISH presented at the Canadian Alliance to End Homelessness Conference in Montréal to share recommendations for effectively supporting people engaged in sex work.

Increasing Access to HCV Testing + Treatment

In collaboration with London InterCommunity Health Centre (LIHC), our Hepatitis C Care Team conducted 306 tests for hepatitis C virus (HCV) across 58 testing events, ultimately connecting 39 individuals to hepatitis C treatment. Through a new partnership, Medpoint Care Pharmacy on Dundas Street became a connection point for individuals to access monthly testing events, receive appointment reminders, and access wraparound supports.

Feeding the Needs of Clients

Food security and nutritional supports are crucial to the health and wellness of clients living with HIV. Throughout the year, our monthly food pantry for clients was visited 744 times, while JGH continued to serve daily meals to residents. RHAC also hosted our annual Holiday Dinner for approximately 100 people in an effort to reduce isolation and loneliness for clients during the winter season. Volunteers prepared a festive dinner of turkey and ham, ensuring that clients could enjoy a warm holiday meal.

Respecting Truth + Reconciliation

RHAC is committed to addressing colonial and anti-Indigenous barriers to community health. In addition to recognizing Indigenous HIV/AIDS Awareness Week and the National Day for Truth and Reconciliation, RHAC continued to engage with Indigenous partners and programs throughout the year, including the lighting of a community fire in honour of Overdose Awareness Day. In collaboration with Ontario Aboriginal HIV/AIDS Strategy (OAHAS) and Chippewas of the Thames First Nation, our Truth and Reconciliation Committee was pleased to host Inuk artist Vanessa Brousseau's Red Dress Workshop in February. Using seal skin and beading techniques, staff and community members had the opportunity to create their own Red Dress pins (right) as meaningful symbols of awareness for Missing and Murdered Indigenous Women, Girls, and 2SLGBTQIA+ people. Participants were able to have important discussions about the continued impacts of colonial violence on Indigenous health.



Championing Community Health

In 2025, the Alliance for Healthier Communities celebrated contributions to health, equity, and community wellbeing with the Transformative Change Awards. Our Carepoint program was honoured as one of the Consumption and Treatment Service (CTS) sites chosen to receive the joint Community Health Champion Award. This award served as a meaningful recognition of the vital role supervised consumption services have played in community health and safety.

Harm Reduction as Healthcare

Serving a total of 38,888 visits, RHAC's harm reduction programs continued protecting the health of people who use drugs by helping to reduce the harms associated with substance use. We supported the reversal of 221 drug poisonings and distributed 3,956 naloxone kits to prevent opioid-related deaths. Throughout the year, we also distributed 53,312 harm reduction kits containing resources and sterile supplies that supported safer substance use.

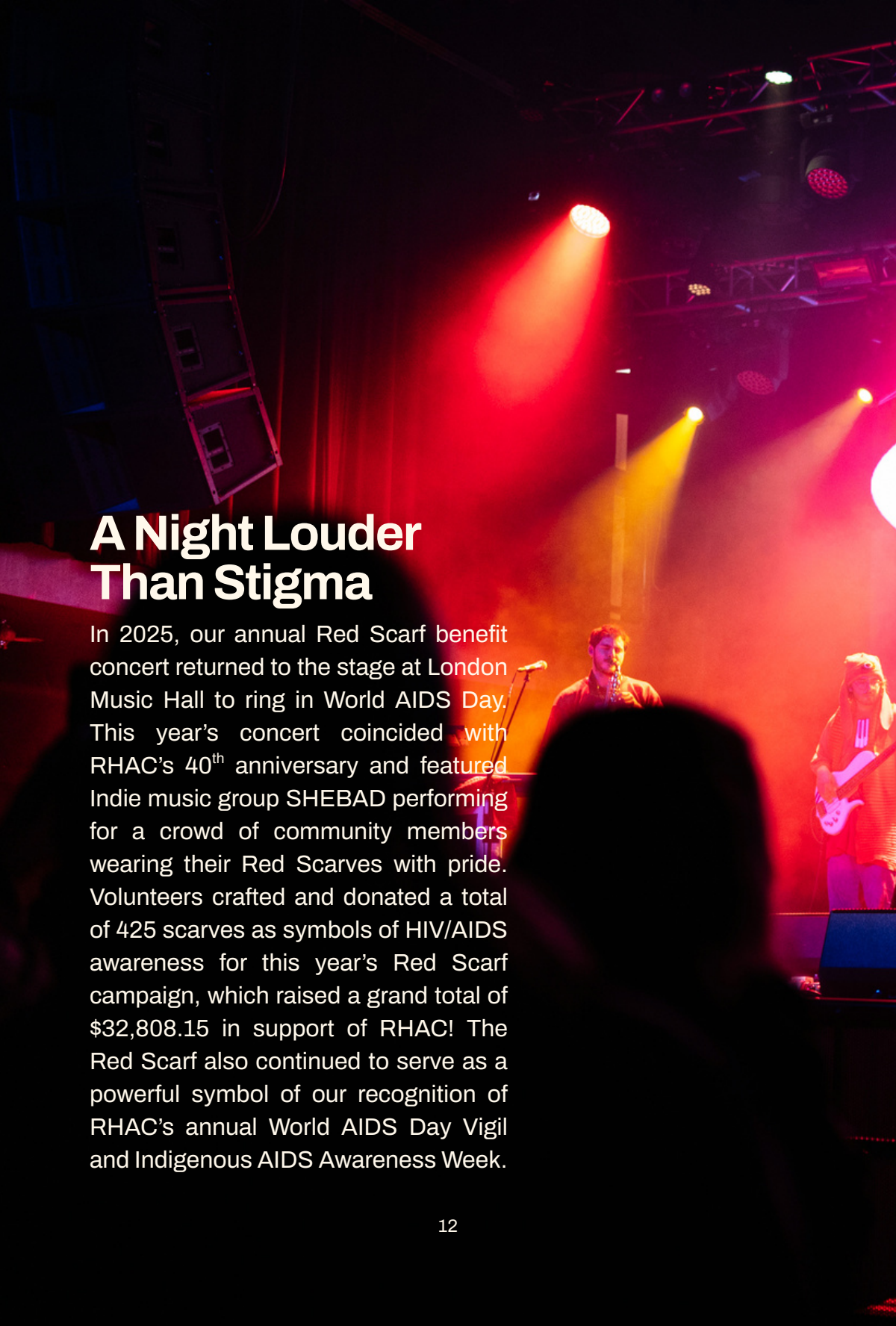
Continuing Supports for People Who Use Substances

In March 2026, RHAC was notified of the provincial decision to defund our Carepoint Consumption and Treatment program. After considering every available course of action, it became apparent that the program would be unable to maintain services without provincial support and funding. Ahead of Carepoint's closure, staff worked diligently to support clients through the transition. During this period, RHAC remained engaged with community partners to develop a continuity of care plan that ensured people accessing Carepoint remained connected to alternative supports.

Saving a Seat for Overdose Awareness Day

For International Overdose Awareness Day, community members were invited to dedicate a chair in memory of lives lost to the toxic drug crisis (right). Displayed at our York Street location, the chair is not a place to sit, but a seat reserved to honour loved ones.





A Night Louder Than Stigma

In 2025, our annual Red Scarf benefit concert returned to the stage at London Music Hall to ring in World AIDS Day. This year's concert coincided with RHAC's 40th anniversary and featured Indie music group SHEBAD performing for a crowd of community members wearing their Red Scarves with pride. Volunteers crafted and donated a total of 425 scarves as symbols of HIV/AIDS awareness for this year's Red Scarf campaign, which raised a grand total of \$32,808.15 in support of RHAC! The Red Scarf also continued to serve as a powerful symbol of our recognition of RHAC's annual World AIDS Day Vigil and Indigenous AIDS Awareness Week.



PHOTO: SHEBAD performs at London Music Hall for Red Scarf 2025. The Red Scarf benefit concert was presented by Kim Mullan (Broker, Sutton Group Select Realty Inc., Brokerage) and proudly supported by sagecomm. A special thanks to Gold Sponsor Computata Systems London.

PHOTO: Red Scarf 2025 was hosted by popstar and drag performer Priyanka (right) with a special guest appearance from local drag queen Dulce (left).





PHOTO: A Taste for Life 2025 announced itself across the city with the appearance of larger-than-life cutlery.



Dining to Make a Difference

Presented by TD Bank Group, our annual A Taste for Life event made for a special celebration of RHAC's 40th anniversary. Supported by Kim Mullan (Broker, Sutton Group Select Realty Inc., Brokerage), the event welcomed community members to 21 restaurant locations, raising \$39,529.24 in support of RHAC.

Moving Our Mission Forward with Volunteers

From supporting annual fundraising events to assembling harm reduction kits, a total of 210 volunteers drove our service delivery forward by contributing approximately 9,500 hours to our mission!

Culturally-Safe + Faith-Based Connections

RHAC continued working alongside African, Caribbean, and Black (ACB) communities to create culturally-responsive connections to HIV prevention, care, and awareness. In September, we hosted our first bilingual presentation in English and Kiswahili, representing an important extension of our Education team's outreach to the 25 ACB community members who attended this event. Collaborating with Indwell, we co-organized a Black History Month event at Thompspon Road Apartments, which invited participants to connect with each other and share their experiences connected to immigration, housing, healthcare, and other themes in a culturally affirming space. We were also welcomed to places of worship, including House of Destiny Church and Open Door Christian Fellowship, to start meaningful conversations that made way for ongoing prevention and awareness efforts related to HIV, sexual health, and stigma.

Education + Engagement

During the year, RHAC's Education team engaged 136 community partners through community development activities, ranging from awareness and capacity building to HIV education and prevention. Multiple presentations to college nursing students allowed RHAC to equip future generations of healthcare leaders with the skills and knowledge to offer quality HIV care. Additionally, we introduced our services to staff at Single Women in Motherhood (SWIM), Northwest London Resource Centre, and Glen Cairn Community Resource Centre to support future referrals and community engagement opportunities. Our team also connected with women and gender-diverse people experiencing incarceration to improve access to sexual health and harm reduction resources.

Queer Community Building

Alongside community partners, RHAC delivered a wide range of affirming events to diverse queer communities thanks to a year-long initiative called MAGICAL: Multicultural Accessible Gatherings Improving 2SLGBTQIA+ Affirmation in London. Funded by London Community Foundation, the project engaged 1,322 participants and 29 businesses across 18 events, activated 10 local venues as event spaces, and included 52 performers and artists. Most importantly, 100% of participants reported feeling more connected to community thanks to MAGICAL. During Pride season, the MAGICAL project supported grassroots organizers in delivering five free events for 2SLGBTQIA+ community members, including a film screening, a Queer Indigenous market, a summer solstice party, and live music shows. RHAC also continued to host our resource booth at local Pride festivals in Sarnia, Wortley, and Stratford. We further expanded our Pride month celebrations into July with two community events: A series of voguing workshops and a concert recital performed by local Queer musicians.

Improving Peer Training

Funded by Public Health Agency of Canada, our Peer Pathways project continued to deliver a training program that empowers ACB and 2SGBTQ+ peers to improve community access to supports and services related to HIV/HCV and other sexually-transmitted blood borne infections (STBBIs). Introducing a new hybrid version of this training module allowed us to fast-track standard training sessions at a more sustainable cost and in a more accessible format. The updated training module was delivered to three participants and resulted in the successful hiring of a new 2SGBTQ+ Peer Connector. This format built on the successful delivery of our standard three-day training for a full cohort of participants earlier in the year.

Thank You

Funders

City of London

Employment and Social Development Canada

London Health Sciences Centre

London InterCommunity Health Centre

Middlesex-London Health Unit

Ontario Health West

Ontario Ministry of Health and Long-Term Care

Public Health Agency of Canada

Southwestern Public Health

Grantors

Lawson Foundation

London Community Foundation

Meals on Wheels London

Ontario Trillium Foundation

Western University

Women & HIV/AIDS Initiative

2025-26 Board of Directors

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Justin Henry, Vice Chair

Sydney Miller, Treasurer

Kerri Phillips, Secretary

Alexa Duggan

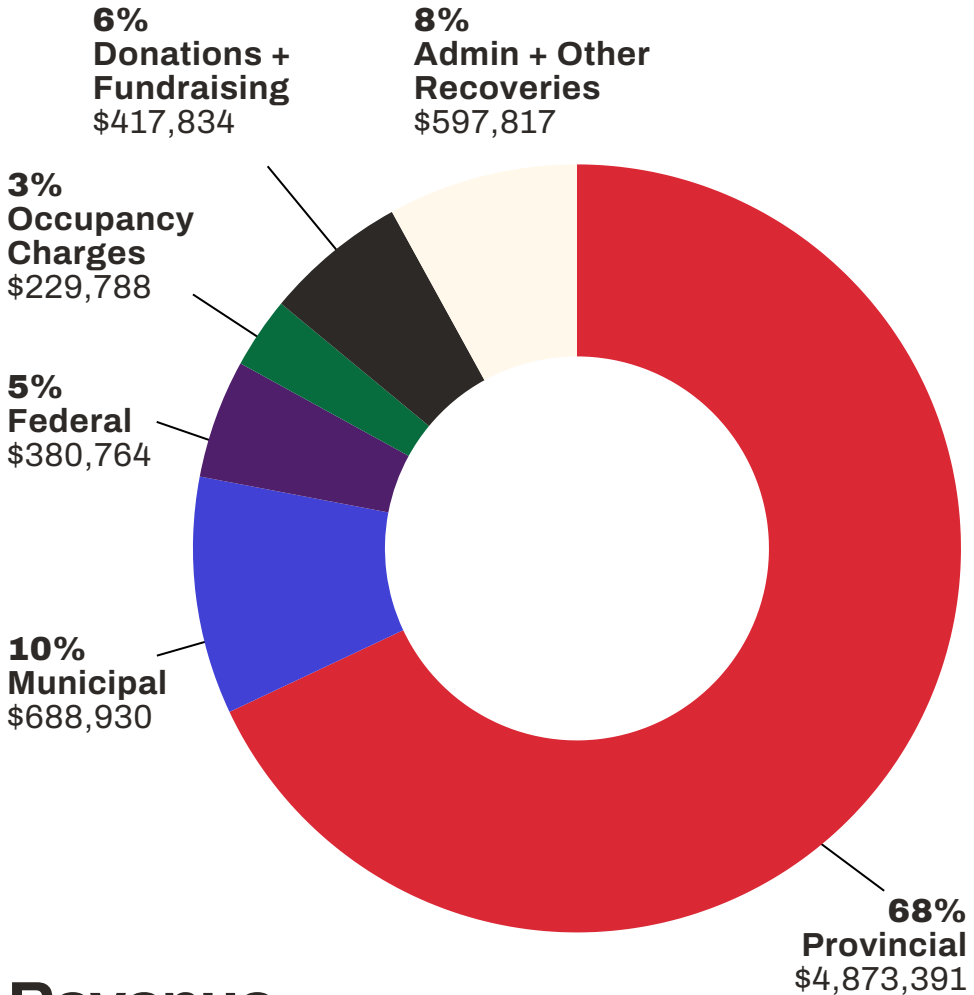
Matt Gleeson

Kian Nabavi

Raymond Sutherland

Lily Yosieph

Financials



Revenue

\$7,188,524

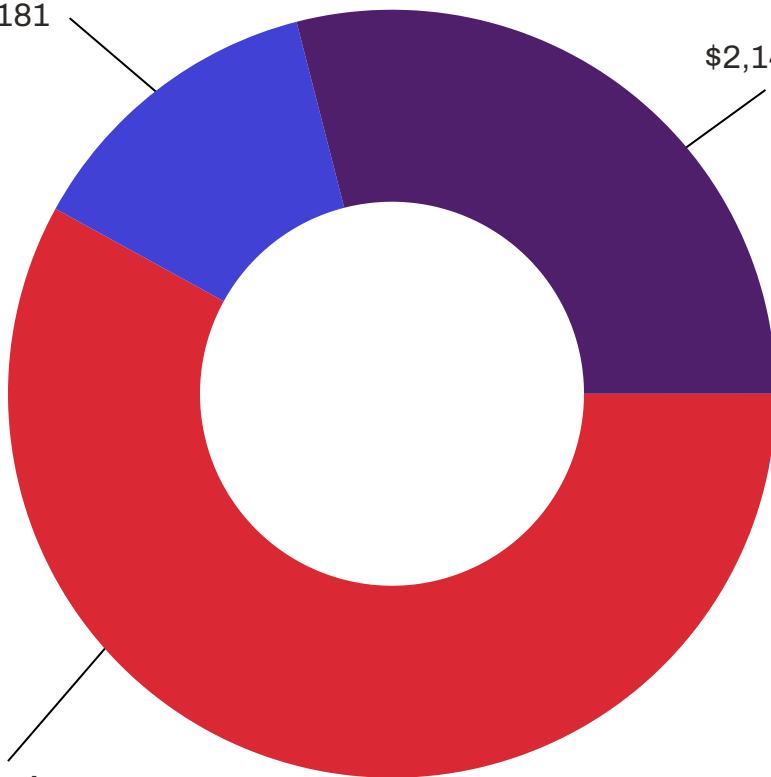
April 1, 2025—March 31, 2026.

Totals do not include in-kind donated materials.

13%
Program
\$953,181

29%
Fixed
\$2,141,638

58%
Staffing
\$4,281,419



Expenses
\$7,376,238

April 1, 2025—March 31, 2026.
Totals do not include in-kind donated materials.

Serving Elgin, Huron, Lambton, Middlesex,
Oxford and Perth Counties



With great respect, we acknowledge the regions we serve
as the traditional territories of the Anishinaabek, Haudenosaunee,
Lūnaapéewak, and Chonnonton Nations.