

# ANNUAL REPORT 2024-25

**Musqueam, Squamish and Tsleil-Waututh Indigenous Peoples have always lived on the land where our office is located, calling this place home since time immemorial. We also recognize Katzie, Kwantlen and Semiahmoo Peoples where our Surrey programs and services take place, as well as other Indigenous Peoples who call these spaces home.**



proudly founded as AIDS Vancouver in 1983

As a settler-led organization, we recognize our responsibility to the Indigenous people who access our programs, the local Indigenous communities, and the Indigenous Peoples who are leaders within the HIV response today.

# we are **RIBBON COMMUNITY**

Ribbon Community was founded in 1983 as AIDS Vancouver. We changed our name, purpose, and values in March 2024 after a year-long conversation with 100+ people living with HIV about how we can support our communities into the future.

Over the past year, **1,437 people accessed one or more Ribbon Community service**, and hundreds more people connected with us through the Rapid Access Addictions Clinic and our community events. This report highlights the ways our dedicated team of staff, contractors, volunteers, funders, donors, and partner organizations came together to support and empower clients. **This year, we supported and empowered:**

- **1,015 people living with HIV**
- **384 women, including trans and cis women**
- **165 Indigenous people**
- **147 Latin@ people**
- **99 Two Spirit, non-binary, and gender diverse people**

These numbers tell a small part of our story, impact, and reach. For well over 40 years, we have seen the power of communities working together, and we are pleased to share how we are continuing that work as Ribbon Community.



## **PURPOSE**

We support and empower our communities in overcoming the impacts of HIV and HIV stigma.

## **VALUES**

We honour every journey.

We nurture meaningful involvement of people living with HIV.

We welcome our communities.

We are accountable.

# message from the **BOARD OF DIRECTORS**

Dear Ribbon Community,

This year was the first full year we operated as Ribbon Community, after 40 years of operating as AIDS Vancouver. Other than an understandable sense of loss over the "AIDS Vancouver" identity, this change to our name, purpose, values and logo has sharpened our focus on the ways we support and empower both people living with HIV and the much broader communities impacted by HIV stigma. Through this change, our programs and services have remained a stable source of support and empowerment for well over 1,000 people. We also updated our spaces, transforming them from endless white walls to incorporate colour, HIV history, and better welcome those who access our programs. These physical changes are most evident in the Grocery program space thanks to the generous estate gift from past volunteer Craig Sabasch.

Beyond shifting to our new name, this year we focused on ensuring our community could stay up to date about the programs and services our communities rely on, and that these programs are aligned with our new purpose and values. Each month, print and digital program calendars were available online, via social media, in our clinics, and at our office.

We also received contracts from the Provincial Health Services Authority HIV/HCV Funding that is awarded to community-based services as of late 2024. As a result, we launched new program areas: food security for women living with HIV, peer support, case management, and counselling for newcomer women living with HIV, and a provincial project to ensure people living with HIV are part of relevant policy decisions about care, treatment, prevention, and the social services that support and empower these communities.

Our continued financial stability provides a solid foundation for us to continue to support and empower our communities for years to come. Thank you for being part of Ribbon Community,



Michael Leclair, Danielle Fiddick

## **BOARD volunteers**

**Chair:** Michael Leclair

**Vice Chair:** Danielle Fiddick

**Treasurer:** Rob Godding

David Chacon

Marissa Wright

Mike Hamata

Mostafa Bondok

Noor Bajaj

# INDIGENOUS COMMITTEE

The Indigenous Committee provides direction and support for initiatives that honour, welcome, and respect Indigenous Peoples at Ribbon. The Committee focuses on identifying and hosting cultural programming, including special events and ongoing programs such as arts and crafts. Through the past year, the Indigenous Committee:

- **hosted four pipe ceremonies followed by a feast shared with participants honouring:**
  - summer solstice (June)
  - children and families harmed by residential schools (September)
  - commitment of the Indigenous Committee members who stepped down from their roles (December)
  - Two-Spirit Day, in collaboration with CBRC
- **gathered community at an Indigenous-centered Pride BBQ and storytelling stage**
- **collaborated with BCCDC to recognize Indigenous AIDS Awareness Week**, with a panel of Indigenous leaders and knowledge keepers in collaboration with the GIPA/MEPA Program
- **cleansed and prepared Ribbon's new first floor space, the 'Sockeye Room', with cedar brushing and a meal** as it transformed from an Overdose Prevention Site to a programming space

For the first time, the Committee held an open call for new members. As a result, six new members joined the Committee in January 2025, transitioning leadership from the original members.

## Honouring the roots of the Indigenous Committee

Ribbon Community worked with Sandy Laframboise to establish an Indigenous Programming Committee in early 2022. Under Sandy's leadership, this Committee was originally tasked with creating and promoting new Indigenous-specific programs. Today, the Committee also suggests ideas and input into other aspects of our work to support and empower Indigenous Peoples. The Committee meets twice per month, and Committee members participate for a time-limited term.



## INDIGENOUS committee members

2024: Albert, Corrine, George, Grace, Rob

2025: Beverly, Brenda, Matthew, Terry, William

Indigenous Committee initiatives are supported by a variety of funding sources, including the City of Vancouver and the New Horizons for Seniors Program.

# PEER NAVIGATORS

As people with lived and living experience, Peer Navigators are an essential part of Ribbon Community's work to support and empower our communities. Peers are part of interdisciplinary teams at John Ruedy Clinic, Positive Health Services, Rapid Access Addictions Clinic, Oak Tree Clinic, the VCH STOP team, and the team at Ribbon Community. Each and every day, peers leverage their own experiences to bridge gaps between health care services and the people who benefit from these services.

This year, Ribbon was a site for a research project that provided us with a Youth Peer Navigator, and received a contract from the PHSA HIV/HCV funding awarded to community-based services allowed us to provide peer support to women living with HIV throughout BC.

**552**

**PEOPLE LIVING WITH HIV ACCESSED PEER SUPPORT IN VANCOUVER**

**108**

**PEOPLE LIVING WITH HIV ACCESSED PEER SUPPORT AT POSITIVE HEALTH SERVICES**

Peers work one-on-one with people who are newly diagnosed with HIV, people who are not benefiting from HIV care, and people looking to change their substance use. In addition, Peer Navigators also facilitate, host, and coordinate peer support groups, education sessions, and community events. Peer Navigators collaborate with external partners and other teams Ribbon to create accessible, welcoming spaces for people to access support and care.

This year, the Peer Navigators were able to welcome community members to the following programs:

- Spanish-language peer support (Vancouver) and English-language Peer support group (Surrey) occurring twice a month
- substance use goal setting groups at St. Paul's and Ribbon, including a Spanish-language pilot group
- monthly discussion and education group in Vancouver, offered in English and Arabic
- monthly bannock distribution at the Rapid Access Addictions Clinic and John Ruedy Clinic
- Love Positive Women celebration, including care packages mailed to women throughout British Columbia

**16**

**PEER TEAM MEMBERS**

**455**

**PEOPLE ACCESSING THE RAPID ACCESS ADDICTIONS CLINIC CONNECTED WITH RIBBON PEERS**

As part of our transition to Ribbon Community values, the Director of Peer Services became the official host of the monthly community service providers meeting that has been hosted at Ribbon Community for years. This change is one shift as we put our values into action as they relate to the meaningful engagement and contributions of people living with HIV.

# CASE MANAGEMENT

Ribbon Community case managers work one-on-one with community members towards specific goals that support and empower each individual client. This team has social work leadership, although not all case managers are social workers. Case management is available to people living with HIV and HIV-negative people; by phone and in-person; and in English, Cantonese, French, and Spanish.

Across our case management team, we support and empower client with a range of services including supporting mental health and substance use needs, securing and maintaining housing, completing Persons With Disability applications, navigating legal concerns, supporting partner and family care, and providing support throughout immigration processes.

## HIV prevention case management

Over the year, we refocused our work on HIV-specific goals with each and every client. With this shift, we introduced client-specific plans that consider social determinants of health and factors from pleasure to inequities that push and pull people into circumstances where HIV can be passed. Sex-positivity and harm reduction shape our approach to HIV prevention across communities including Indigenous Peoples, Two-Spirit, queer, and trans people; sex workers; people using substances in sexualized, social, and survival settings; and newcomers to Canada.

We also had new opportunities to promote this service in collaboration with clinical and community partners. As a result of this outreach and our additional focus, our reach and impact increased this year with **a 50% increase in new clients and a 33% increase in the number of clients we were able to support in accessing PrEP from the previous year.**

113

PEOPLE ACCESSED HIV  
PREVENTION CASE  
MANAGEMENT

57

NEW  
CLIENTS

24

CLIENTS  
BEGAN PrEP WITH HPCM SUPPORT

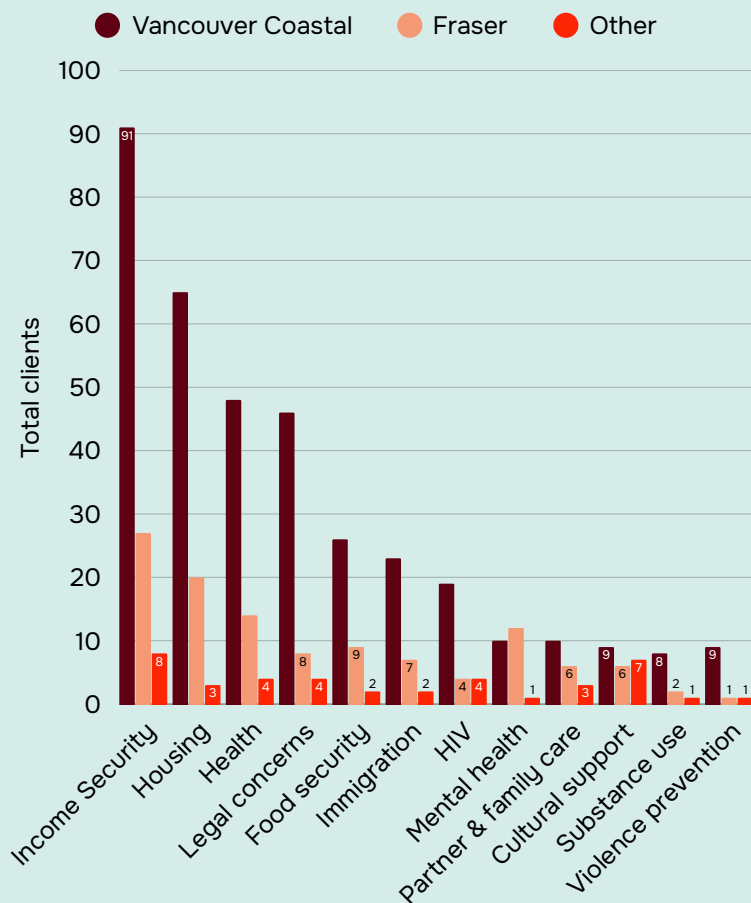
The HPCM program is funded by Vancouver Coastal Health. Ribbon secures additional resources to support HPCM clients through the donor-funded Financial Assistance Fund, the Income Tax Clinic and Dental Hygiene Clinic, hygiene supplies, and other basic necessities.

# Community case management

Five case managers based in the Lower Mainland are available to support and empower people living with HIV. This summer, we were able to open our community case management program to newcomer women living with HIV and their families throughout the entire province thanks to a new contract from the PHSA HIV/HCV Funding awarded to community-based services. This virtual program connected with seven women across all five health regions in the province in just a few short months.

Our approach to case management supports overall quality of life and wellbeing among people living with HIV. Through case management, Ribbon is able to secure housing, substance use treatment and detox beds, and Persons With Disability designations, and journey alongside people navigating transitions whether welcoming children, planning for end of life, or transitioning to federal benefits.

**Case management supports accessed by clients**



**542**

**PEOPLE LIVING WITH HIV  
ACCESSED CASE  
MANAGEMENT**

**165**

**NEW  
CLIENTS**

25% of case management clients are women (trans or cisgender) and 13% are Indigenous.

Community case management is funded at the health authority level. Ribbon has agreements with Vancouver Coastal Health, Fraser Health, and Provincial Health Services Authority (as of July 2024).

Additional funding and volunteer hours secured by Ribbon complement the services funded by these agreements and provides access to urgent financial assistance, Income Tax Clinic and Dental Hygiene Clinic, hygiene supplies, and other basic necessities.

# FOOD SECURITY

Since the beginning of the HIV epidemic, food has been an essential part of the response, providing nutrition, connection, and dignity to people. Our Grocery program has operated since 1986 to ensure people living with HIV who are living on fixed or limited income can still access nutritious food needed to live well with HIV.

Our long-time program at Seymour St. continued this year, with the addition of a new monthly pop-up location in Surrey and partnership with Positive Living North, as well as on-demand programs available to women living with HIV elsewhere in the province thanks to PHSA HIV/HCV Funding awarded to community-based services.

## Seymour St. Grocery

Volunteers, including many community members, are an essential part of making the Grocery program possible. This team spent just over 1,000 hours receiving deliveries, stocking shelves, and welcoming clients.

Together, volunteers and staff worked harder than ever in response to a 7% increase in the number of bags distributed and 17% increase in the number of people accessing Grocery.

Our space also received a makeover, thanks to an estate gift from past volunteer Craig Sabasch. New shelving and paint, as well as windows that let natural light in, have helped us respond to the increased demand with a welcoming attitude.

## Food security for women living with HIV

Ribbon launched food security initiatives for women living with HIV and their families throughout the province in fall 2025. In less than six months, Ribbon:

- collaborated with the Afro-Canadian Positive Network to host a December pop-up grocery event and community gathering
- launched a monthly grocery program in Surrey, including delivery to families, distributing a total of 93 bags
- provided 19 pregnant women with nutrition support during pregnancy and postpartum
- provided emergency food boxes to four women living with HIV unable to access our regular locations



816

COMMUNITY  
MEMBERS  
BENEFITTED

7,217

GROCERY  
BAGS  
DISTRIBUTED

A BC Community Gaming Grant covers the cost of food and hygiene items distributed through the Grocery program, while Vancouver Coastal Health provides funding for salary and program operations.

We also gratefully receive donated food from several organizations including Whole Foods and Unfi Canada.

**UNFI**  
**CANADA**  
Better food. Better future.  
Meilleurs aliments. Meilleur avenir.

# FINANCIAL assistance fund

149

CLIENTS received  
direct financial  
support totalling

\$10,004

Ribbon Community donors make it possible for us to offer a year-round Financial Assistance Fund to address financial pressures among our clients. Eligible expenses for this long-standing program now include gender-affirming care and culturally-specific supports as we evolve alongside the communities that come to us for support and empowerment.

This program paid for 25 annual bus passes for low-income seniors, as well as a variety of other needs: housing, moving, identification, transportation, dental need, eyewear, and cultural food and medicines.

Kenneth Lackner

## SCHOLARSHIP



The Kenneth Lackner Scholarship program presented two \$2,500 awards this year, with one going to an outstanding volunteer, Rick Heffernan, and another going to a Ribbon client.

As a volunteer for over nearly five years at The Corner, Rick sees firsthand the impacts of systemic inequities when it comes to accessing HIV care and prevention. He has just completed his Master degree in Public Health at Simon Fraser University, and looking to use his experiences and skills to develop evidence-based harm reduction policies that support people impacted by HIV and those who use substances.

This scholarship is named after a past bookkeeper at AIDS Vancouver, provided a generous donation when he passed away that still funds this scholarship years later.

# THE CORNER

A longstanding collaboration between Vancouver Coastal Health and Ribbon Community, The Corner is a low-barrier drop in for male and gender-diverse people involved in sex work. This year, we also continued to offer peer-led contingency management called Substance Use Support Group. Thanks to support from Health Initiative for Men (HIM), participants produced a 'zine featuring original art and writing. Over 150 people accessed grocery, nursing care, food, and community at The Corner this year.



# FRIENDS OF MAY

Funded in part by the Government of Canada's Age Well At Home Initiative, Friends of May connects volunteers with seniors in our communities looking for connection and practical support. Named after our longest serving volunteer, May McQueen, this program offers both assistance with one-time tasks and projects, such as decluttering, and long-term visiting and practical supports such as housekeeping.

Most of the pairs are intergenerational, providing an opportunity for people aging with HIV to share their wisdom and experience with younger people. This opportunity for listening and learning is appreciated by seniors and younger volunteers alike.

**32** VOLUNTEERS

**67** PARTICIPANTS

**435** HOURS OF CONNECTION



**COMMUNITY** programs

# GIPA & MEPA

Ribbon Community received funding from the PHSA HIV/HCV community-based services program to launch a program by-and-for people living with HIV throughout British Columbia to have a voice in policies, funding, and delivery of clinical services. This program collaborated with the Indigenous Committee and BCCDC to: host a panel of Indigenous people living with HIV as part of Indigenous AIDS Awareness Week 2024, engage women living with HIV in knowledge translation with the Women's Centred Care Hub, and host an online forum with participants from across the province to identify key priority areas.

## COMMUNITY PROGRAMS



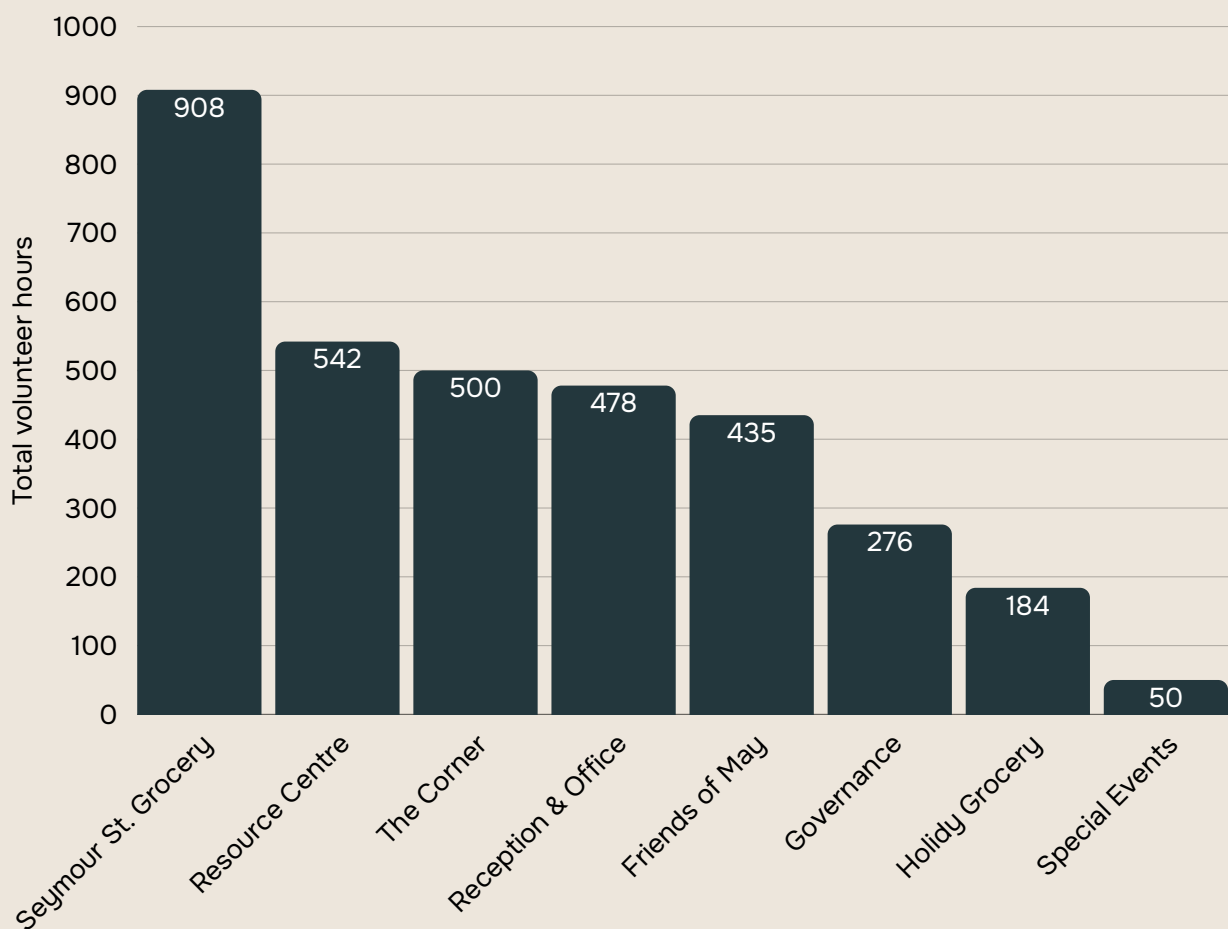
Each year, we offer a wide range of resources, learning opportunities, events, and collaborations. Here are this year's highlights:

- developed and delivered a webinar with HIM and PAN to increase access to information about long-acting (injectable) treatment and prevention options for service providers and community members
- collaborated with researchers to promote study opportunities, and share findings on a variety of topics including doxy PEP, impact of toxic drug poisonings, menopause, and experiences of newcomer women
- hosted a pop-up 'Polli and Esters' clothing shop, a clothing donation pop-up shop at Ribbon
- welcomed over 60 people to our first Ribbon Holiday Open House
- hosted an AIDS Walk at the Pacific Institution, creating an opportunity to offer people serving sentences accurate and stigma-free information about HIV, community connection, and a community event
- supported the annual AIDS Walk hosted by a dedicated community member in collaboration with HIM, QMUNITY, and the Vancouver Pride Society
- celebrated Love Positive Women with women living with HIV across British Columbia, including providing packages to women in Prince George and Victoria
- completed 178 tax returns through our Community Volunteer Income Tax program, representing well over 200 hours for volunteer contributions
- facilitated 1,163 hours of student learning through practicum partnerships with clinical programs in nursing, social work, pharmacy, and dentistry
- continued to promote undetectable = untransmissible messaging
- facilitated new volunteer-led programming including a monthly knitting program
- hosted community at the AIDS Memorial for the International Candlelight Memorial
- provided free dental hygiene services to 69 community members related to gingivitis, suspected cavities, periodontitis, and broken teeth

# VOLUNTEERS

Ribbon Community has always been more than one community, and today that is truer than ever. People who access our services, volunteers, donors, staff, partners, and our champions make our purpose come to life. **Increasingly, our work is powered by people living with HIV and other people who access our services, whether as volunteers, staff, or donors.** As we continue to nurture meaningful involvement of people living with HIV throughout the organization, we are grateful for community members who come forward to make our work possible.

## 117 PEOPLE VOLUNTEERED TIME AND TALENTS



**3,119**

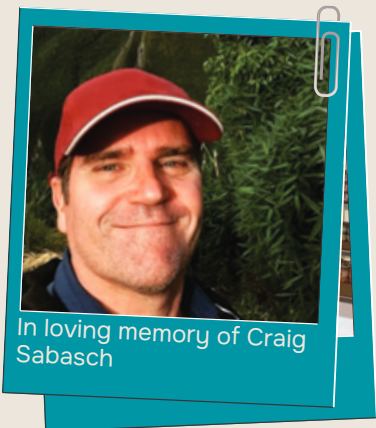
**HOURS OF VOLUNTEER SUPPORT POWERED OUR PROGRAMS**

# DONORS AND FUNDERS

The ongoing support of donors and funders is a crucial part of what makes Ribbon Community possible. Most programs and services we provide are funded through contracted services agreements with three health authorities in British Columbia. This year, we received ongoing contracts with the Provincial Health Services Authority for the first time in our organization's history, allowing us to offer additional supports outside the Lower Mainland.

Gifts from donors fund a range of activities that directly support clients in ways restricted funding from contracted agreements cannot. In particular, the Financial Assistance Fund is entirely donor-funded and this year we saw a 40% increase in the amount of assistance we provided compared to two years ago.

Another project made possible by a donor is the much needed update to the space where our Seymour St. Grocery program operates. An estate gift from past volunteer Craig Sabasch and contributions from his family allowed us to make changes so the Grocery space can receive natural light while maintaining privacy of people while they access the program, purchase sturdy shelving to make for a better stocking and shopping experience, and paint the space.



**\$44,670**

**CONTRIBUTED BY  
INDIVIDUAL DONORS**

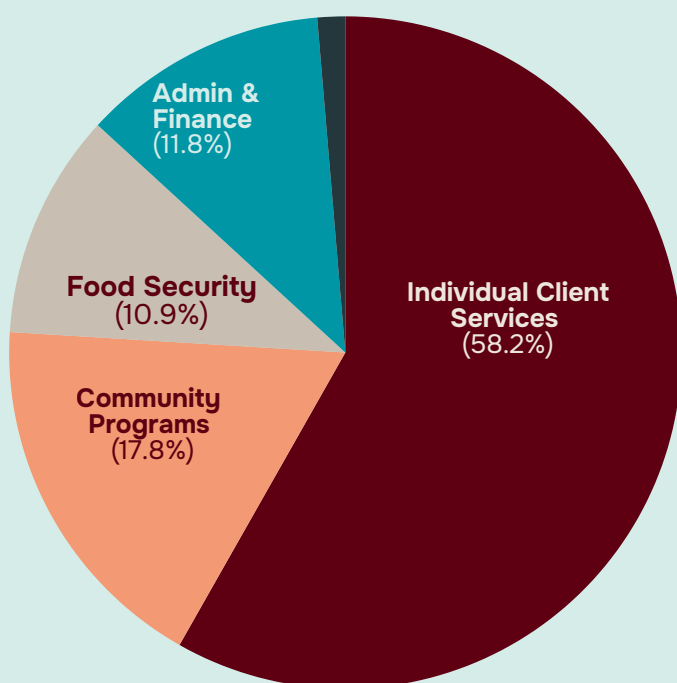
Nearly 25% of donations were **directly distributed to clients** through the Financial Assistance Fund.

# STAFF AND CONTRACTORS

Over 40 people contributed to our work at Ribbon Community as paid staff or contractors over the course of the year. Casual, part-time, and full-time team members worked together across all our program areas to offer programs and services needed in our communities. Senior leadership is provided by Sarah Chown (Executive Director), Glyn Townson (Director of Peer Services), and Laura Imayoshi (Director of Programs).

# statement of OPERATIONS

	2025	2024
<b>Revenues:</b>		
Grant-Provincial	\$ 2,816,470	\$2,405,759
Grant-Federal	178,367	90,853
Grant-Other	69,033	274,137
Donations & Fundraising	167,643	315,511
BC Gaming	110,000	19,473
Expense Recoveries	19,166	10,774
Interest Income	41,014	47,053
Investment Income	26,085	16,856
Amortization of deferred contributions relating to capital asset	21,626	21,626
	3,449,404	3,202,042
<b>Expenses:</b>		
Individual Client Services	2,006,795	1,934,787
Admin & Finance	408,162	377,421
Food Security Services	374,148	368,334
Community Programs & Services	612,243	477,109
Amortization of capital tangible assets	46,072	48,679
	3,447,420	3,206,331
<b>Excess(Deficiency) of revenues over expenses</b>	<b>\$ 1,984</b>	<b>\$ (4,288)</b>
Unrealized gain(loss) on carrying value of investments	8,278	25,657
<b>Excess(Deficiency) of revenues over expenses</b>	<b>\$ 10,262</b>	<b>\$ 21,369</b>



This year saw an increase in revenue, driven by **three new funding agreements with the Provincial Health Services Authority** to support and empower people living with HIV across British Columbia, not just within the Lower Mainland.

Like last year, our **biggest investment was providing Individual Client Services** (including peer navigation, case management, and the Financial Assistance Fund), which reached over 1,300 people this year. The proportion of spending across all three of our program areas (Individual Client Services, Community Programs, and Food Security) remained similar to the previous year.

# statement of FINANCIAL POSITION

	2025	2024
<b>ASSETS</b>		
<b>Current Assets:</b>		
Cash	\$ 1,546,366	\$ 1,546,639
Investments	585,851	546,689
Accounts receivable	29,099	146,449
GST recoverable	15,584	11,391
Prepaid expenses	18,548	9,714
	<b>2,195,448</b>	<b>2,260,881</b>
Assets under capital lease	-	3,101
Tangible capital assets	21,945	37,053
Leasehold improvements	9,801	29,402
	<b>\$ 2,227,194</b>	<b>\$ 2,330,438</b>
<b>LIABILITIES</b>		
<b>Current Liabilities:</b>		
Accounts payable & accrued liabilities	\$ 266,811	\$ 275,888
Deferred contributions	1,202,686	1,257,733
Deferred contributions relating to capital assets	11,817	33,443
Current portion of capital lease obligations	-	1,555
	<b>1,481,314</b>	<b>1,568,620</b>
Deferred wages payable		
Sick leave and severance benefits payable	24,700	50,900
	<b>1,506,014</b>	<b>1,619,520</b>
<b>NET ASSETS</b>		
Invested in capital assets	19,929	33,012
Unrestricted	501,251	456,538
Internally restricted	200,000	221,369
	<b>721,180</b>	<b>710,919</b>
	<b>\$ 2,227,194</b>	<b>\$ 2,330,438</b>

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