

Board Chair's Message

This past year brought no shortage of challenges—rising costs, growing demand for services, and sector-wide uncertainty tested our resilience. Through it all, Cool Aid continued to move forward, guided by our mission and sustained by the dedication of our staff, partners, and supporters.

Two major accomplishments defined the year: the launch of the Crosstown capital campaign and the opening of 154 units of supportive and affordable housing at that site. With phase one complete, we've now turned our attention to phase two—fundraising to complete the Dr. Joe Haegert Community Health Centre and other wellness projects that will further strengthen the community.

Another key milestone was the closure of Queens Manor, an aging building that had

become unsafe and costly to maintain. In July, residents from Queens Manor—along with others experiencing homelessness—moved into The Lily, a new, purpose-built housing community designed to meet a range of complex needs.

For more than 55 years, Cool Aid has worked to address some of the most persistent and complex issues in our community—homelessness, mental health and substance use, and social exclusion. These challenges continue to evolve, often beyond our control and without simple solutions. Meeting them requires not only compassion and commitment, but also strong, sustainable systems.

In response, this year demanded careful financial management. We engaged in tough but necessary conversations and

made strategic decisions to ensure long-term sustainability. This included a focus on providing funded services, diversifying revenue, strengthening our brand, expanding our digital reach, and investing in philanthropy to support stable, intentional growth.

As we look ahead, we know the challenges won't disappear—but neither will our determination. With the ongoing support of our staff, partners, and community, we'll

continue to do the important work of supporting those who need us most.

Sincerely,

Tim Fitzgerald,
Board Chair



HOME



This year marked several major achievements in our work to provide purpose-built, safe housing to those who need it most.

In December, we took possession of Crosstown and just two months later, the first affordable housing tenants moved into their homes. The 54 units of supportive housing welcomed occupants in April 2025, and we look forward to sharing more about how they are building community and finding stability in next year's report.



210
NEW UNITS
OPENED THIS YEAR

In July 2024, 56 residents moved into The Lily, a new home for people with a range of supportive needs—including individuals facing complex mental health and substance use challenges. The building also features a dedicated floor for women.

Again this year, we connected with many seniors seeking our services. This steady need is shaping how we plan and deliver all that we do, and we are constantly looking at how to evolve our housing models to better support aging residents.

Finally, our unit turnover efforts made a measurable difference this year. Vacancy rates dropped to approximately 3%, an encouraging sign that more people are being housed quickly and effectively.

HEALTH

Our Community Health Centre (CHC) continued to provide low-barrier, compassionate care to an increasing number of people who face significant barriers to accessing traditional health care.

Our mobile health clinics remained a cornerstone of this work, delivering essential services directly to underserved people at more than 14 unique locations each week. Our mobile health and outreach teams saw 12,399 health encounters and connections to care this year.



52,320
HEALTHCARE
ENCOUNTERS

mobile clinics and health centre

We also advanced our hepatitis C program, offering targeted testing and treatment to 581 people at highest risk. The team's peer-focused approach remains central to reducing barriers and improving outcomes.

Though ongoing funding for our high-demand dental clinic continues to prove challenging, our hardworking team saw 3,310 patients last year, 182 of whom were new to the clinic.

And finally, the health team is excitedly preparing for the Dr. Joe Haegert Community Health Centre at Crosstown. Once complete, the new centre will offer a second brick and mortar location for us to support more people through integrated, trauma-informed services. Ground-breaking is targeted for later this year.



WELLNESS

This year, our wellness programs continued to provide essential services while fostering connection, resilience, and recovery for those we serve.

Our food services team delivered 325,000 meals across our programs, ensuring that clients had consistent access to nutritious food. With rising food insecurity, this work remains critical.

Again this year, we grew our talented and dedicated volunteer base. 300 volunteers provided 7,773 hours of service picking up and delivering food donations, providing pet therapy, facilitating group activities, running fundraising and information booths, supporting special events, and serving meals.



2,467

COUNSELLING ENCOUNTERS

Our REES (Resources, Education, Employment, and Support) programs provided participants with the tools, training, and support needed to move toward personal and economic stability. A total of 270 work opportunities were made available through our Casual Labour Pool, while 571 individuals were assisted in accessing income benefits, health resources, and other social supports.

Counselling services remained in high demand, offering trauma-informed mental health and substance use support to individuals navigating complex life experiences. Our counsellors provided one-on-one support, helping more than 400 people build capacity and healing in an accessible, non-judgmental environment.

In 2024, the Downtown Community Centre faced rapid growth and increased demand for resources, leading to a temporary suspension of drop-in services in September. Despite this, essential programs, including Indigenous



cultural support, 2SLGBTQI+ programs, youth life skills training, and wellness activities, continue. Extensive planning is underway to re-open the Centre as a sustainable and accessible resource promoting wellness, recovery, connection, and community.

DONOR SPOTLIGHT



Al and Lorraine Kemp



Carl and Sue Stovell

We are deeply grateful to the individuals and families who help make our work possible. Every contribution—large or small—helps build more accessible housing and health care options.

This year, we extend special thanks to the Kemp and Stovell families for their generous gifts of \$100,000 each in support of the Crosstown project and the Dr. Joe Haegert Community Health Centre. Their contributions are part of a growing wave of community support that is turning Crosstown from a vision into a reality—building on the safe, affordable housing that is already there to provide health care and other supports for those who need them most.



53%

SENIOR RESIDENTS



3,612

DENTAL VISITS



570

NEW HEALTH PATIENTS

mobile clinics, outreach and health centre

FINANCIALS

- 73%

Government Funding

\$ 33,944,712
- 11%

Rental & Other Income

\$ 5,186,364
- 9%

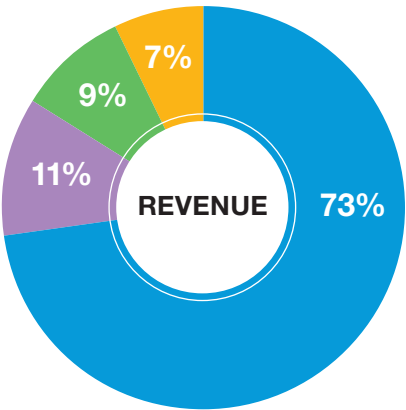
Health Centre Revenue (Pharmacy and Dental)

\$ 4,392,403
- 7%

Donations and Grants

\$ 3,081,798

Total revenue: \$46,605,277



- 45%

Housing

\$ 21,308,876
- 27%

Health & Support Services

\$ 12,441,446
- 17%

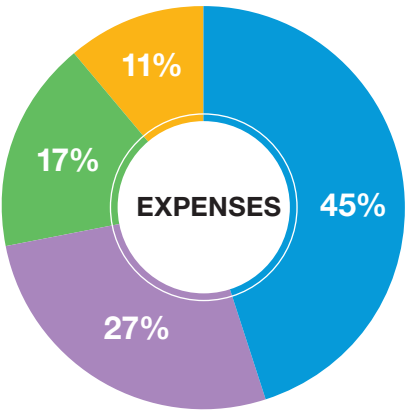
Shelters

\$ 8,078,246
- 11%

Administration

\$ 4,972,928

Total operational expenses: \$46,801,496



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