Annual Report 2016/17

Focusing on our strengths. Preparing for the future.
We're seeing more and more younger stroke and aphasia survivors.

**ON THE COVER:** Supported Conversation group with clients Rebecca, Musa, and Nour, and volunteer Baljot.

**Aphasia**

Language involves the ability to speak and understand, as well as the ability to read and write. Aphasia is a language challenge related to an injury to the brain, most commonly stroke. This language difficulty masks the fact that people with aphasia are inherently competent and leads to an inability to participate in life's conversations and experiences. Aphasia puts every human relationship, every life role, and most daily activities at huge risk.

**The Aphasia Institute**

Founded in 1979 by Pat Arato, the Aphasia Institute is a Canadian community-based centre of excellence, pioneering programs and practices that help people with aphasia learn how to communicate in new ways and begin to navigate their own lives again. Through direct service, research, education and training, the Aphasia Institute has built an international reputation as a world leader and educator in aphasia.

**BRIDGE:** Monday, 1:30pm Social isolation is one of the biggest risks associated with aphasia. Games like bridge in our **Supported Conversation** setting help renew activities that are lost because of aphasia. They build partnerships, normalize social interaction, and strengthen friendships.
Preparing for the Future

A dynamic organization does not rest on its laurels...

...but builds on past achievements to prepare for the future. In the third year of our four-year Strategic Plan, the Aphasia Institute reached a number of significant milestones in the areas of direct service, education and training, and research and development, just as new challenges await us.

Younger and younger people are developing strokes accompanied by aphasia. We are also starting to see more people with Primary Progressive Aphasia (PPA), a degenerative brain condition. Both groups and their families require new and innovative approaches – skills-based sessions designed for our younger clients and collaborative partnerships with dementia specialists for our PPA clients.

Our research and development efforts include collaborating with North York General Hospital in applying evidence-based methods to improve the acute care experience of patients and families faced with stroke and aphasia. And because little is known about health care usage and costs for people with aphasia in Ontario, the Aphasia Institute also undertook a ground-breaking study with the Institute of Clinical and Evaluative Sciences. Our findings have led to discussions about the potential for a larger study.

We take pride in our achievements in education and training locally, nationally and internationally, but there are geographic and financial barriers to continuing with our present approach. If we're going to strengthen our knowledge exchange, our future plans must include a focus on distance education and e-learning.

Our remarkable staff and volunteers, valued community partners, donors and supporters, and most of all our clients and their families have all played a key role in helping us to deliver exceptional local service and to share what we have learned with others across Ontario, Canada, and internationally. We are grateful to Central LHIN and the Ontario Ministry of Health and Long-Term Care for funding our direct service, and we are committed to generating additional revenue to fund our mission to share our work with others and learn from this sharing.

This year, we will develop a new strategic plan to address the changing demographics of our population. We'll explore new opportunities in aphasia care and continue to keep our promise to people with aphasia and their families: We help you navigate your life... one conversation at a time.

The future is exciting. We look forward to sharing it with you.

Jane Brenneman Gibson, Board Chair
Aura Kagan, Ph.D., Executive Director

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Our Unique Synergy

Direct Service

Research

Education and Training

Strategic Goals 2014-17/18

Knowledge Exchange

Social Enterprise

Stroke and Aphasia

Engage with the Stroke Community to Improve Stroke and Aphasia Services

Expand Knowledge Exchange to Promote Quality and Accelerate Learning, Reach, and Impact

Develop a Mission-Related Social Enterprise Program to Contribute to Sustainability and Growth

Enabling Goals

- Develop our Quality Staff and Volunteers in a Team Learning Environment
- Strategically Communicate and Market the Institute
- Increase and Diversify Revenue
- Develop Efficient and Effective Information Management and Technology

Values

- Respect
- Compassion
- Collaboration
- Creativity
- Excellence
The purpose of life is to discover your gift; the work of life is to develop it; and the meaning of life is to give your gift away.

Our clients come to the Aphasia Institute each with their own gifts. Because of their aphasia, however, those gifts are often not readily apparent. When you walk through our doors, you’ll see many successful examples of people with aphasia rediscovering their gifts or discovering new ones, and then sharing those gifts with others around them.

Both Tita and Chris are active participants in our Volunteer Resource Program, giving their time and their gifts to others in their own communities.

“I love the arts – photography, painting, and singing. And I love gardening. The Aphasia Institute gives me the confidence to share these passions with other people. I can express to the world exactly who I am and it makes me feel alive again.”

– Client Tita

“I love people and have always had a generous spirit. Aphasia took away my ability to laugh and share and help others in a meaningful way. The Aphasia Institute helped me to connect with people once again. That’s a gift I can now give to others.”

– Client Chris

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– Client Chris
Due to popular demand, the Debate Club returned this year, giving our clients with communication challenges a safe conversation space to debate topics like current events, politics, religion, and social values.

With our Toastmasters Gavel Club having reached its capacity, we needed a second club! Our committed and dedicated staff, clients, and volunteers made this possible and we now have two gavel clubs under the same communicatively accessible roof.

An exciting year for our Direct Service: The expansion of one program due to increased enrollment; the return of another due to renewed interest; and the introduction of two new programs designed to meet the changing needs of our aphasia population.

Strengthening Conversation Pathways

An exciting year for our Direct Service: The expansion of one program due to increased enrollment; the return of another due to renewed interest; and the introduction of two new programs designed to meet the changing needs of our aphasia population.
SKILLS PROGRAM  The Skills Program was developed in response to requests by our younger clients who want to go beyond the regular conversation groups to focus on specific written and oral communication goals (e.g. giving directions, following a recipe, recounting an important story).

LIVING YOUR BEST LIFE  While we continue to offer Living Your Best Life for our Primary Progressive Aphasia (PPA) clients, this year we collaborated with the Alzheimer’s Society to ensure that people living with PPA have access to the best services and programming to meet their evolving needs.

Did You Know?

- We’re seeing more and more younger stroke & aphasia survivors. Although we still don’t know why this trend is occurring, we are committed to doing more research and providing better support for this younger population.

- Unlike other forms of aphasia, PPA is a degenerative brain condition. It is a rare neurological syndrome in which language capabilities become slowly and progressively impaired while other mental functions remain preserved. Clients with PPA have no history of stroke and no apparent signs of other brain injury.
Improving the Patient Experience

Upgrading our health services assessment tools to respond to the different needs of health care organizations.

Making a difference in the acute care setting by partnering with more hospitals.

Working in collaboration with policy makers to become advocates for aphasia health care funding.

Did You Know?

As our clients share their stories with us, one need becomes clear: We must help hospitals and health care centres improve the patient experience for individuals living with stroke and aphasia.

Reciprocity In Action

The relationship between our clients, our volunteers, and our research is uniquely reciprocal. Research shows us how to best respond to our clients’ changing needs; the research participation of our clients and volunteers informs the development of our products & services; our products & services benefit our clients and their families, as well as people with aphasia around the world.

ICES (Institute for Clinical Evaluative Sciences) In partnership with ICES, we completed a comparative analysis of the health care costs and services associated with two groups of Ontario stroke survivors: one with aphasia and the other without. The result of this research: The stroke population with aphasia showed an increased use of health care services and costs - doubled in many cases - compared with the general stroke population. This project was the first of its kind in Canada.

CAMS (Communicative Access Measures for Stroke) One of the few tools to capture the “patient voice,” CAMS evaluates the degree to which a health care facility or unit is communicatively accessible for people with stroke and aphasia. With its beta testing completed, the first version of CAMS was released publicly in early 2017.

BOMPA (Basic Outcome Measurement Protocol for Aphasia) BOMPA is a quick assessment tool used to track the progress of people living with aphasia. With its pilot phase completed, BOMPA will now move forward to the research stage.

SCA™ ACUTE is a research project designed to improve awareness and care for aphasia patients from the very beginning of their stroke journey in acute care. Because it means so much to them, our clients, volunteers, and staff agreed to fund the SCA™ Acute project through our I Care fundraising campaign. This project, in partnership with North York General Hospital, has now received full ethics approval and project activities have begun.
Impact On A Global Scale

TRAINING The Aphasia Institute travels to and hosts health care professionals from all over the world, teaching our conversation techniques and how to apply them in clinical settings (assessment, counselling, group work, communication partner training).

Highlights:
- **Personal Support Worker Training** (3 sessions, 160 PSWs from home care organizations) – a *new audience for us!*
- **Regional Stroke Network Training** (2-day training for health care professionals)
- **Your Life workshops** (2 workshops)
  Trained activationists and recreationists on how to help people with aphasia tell their own life stories using our Your Life toolkit
- **Pilot Webinar**
  Introduction to SCA™ for speech-language pathology students

RESOURCE PRODUCTS
In 2016, we launched two new aphasia-friendly resources, available in our web store:
- **Talking to Your Doctor Toolkit**
- **Talking to Your Speech-Language Pathologist**

Did You Know?
- One of the keys to delivering and developing our world-renowned training programs and aphasia resources is the knowledge exchange that occurs between trainer and trainee. By sharing our expertise and listening to the unique needs of clinicians from all over the world, we continue to provide leading-edge aphasia resources and services.
Annual Appeal

Our 2016 Annual Appeal featured our client, Dennis, a Toronto lawyer and stroke survivor. By joining our Toastmasters group, Dennis overcame his greatest fear: public speaking. Dennis also reminded us that research is at the heart of what we do. Our generous donors contributed more than $38,000 this year, supporting our current research projects (see Research and Development page of this report) and helping to improve the patient experience and quality of life for people living with aphasia.

“Before my stroke, I was terrified of public speaking. Now, thanks to the Aphasia Institute, it’s nothing to me. I love it.”

– Dennis, client

I Care

A grassroots campaign led by our clients, volunteers, staff, and board of directors, I Care raised $8,191 through 16 events – everything from bake and craft sales to pizza parties and dinner parties. For the second year in a row, our community unanimously chose to use the I Care revenue to support the SCA™ Acute Care research project.
We rely on our dedicated volunteers to help us help others!

9 volunteers were recognized with Ontario Volunteer Service Awards for their continuous years of outstanding commitment to our organization.

137 committed volunteers worked tirelessly to help deliver our programs to clients and their families.

35 new volunteers joined our team.

Volunteer Years of Service as of April 1, 2016

1 – 4 Years
- Sado Ahmed
- George Aldworth
- Anal Azeez
- Claudette Baril
- Craig Cameron
- Susan Cantlie
- Candace Chan
- Tamara Chemel
- Shingruf Chughtai
- Deena Couchman
- Hannah Coulter
- Serena Curtis
- Dana Davidson
- Emily Ding
- Tannie Fast-Vetter
- Rochelle Freymond
- Shehba George
- John Gofkeshi
- Francesca Granata
- Tamara Harris
- Anna Huynh
- Baljot Kalsi
- Brenda Lau
- Vina Law
- Robyn Lewis
- Joyce Li
- Diane Litchen
- Alex Loss
- Cristina Loss
- Tammy Lou
- Jessa Luna
- Don McKellar
- Vicente Melgoza
- Moira Minoughan
- Kania Mohan
- Nazia Mohsin
- Donna Mozaffarian
- Yann Myśliwski
- John Nussbaum
- Marra O’Brien
- Deena Oudhia
- Alessandra Pagliaccolo
- June Park
- Kate Pengelly
- Darshani Rampersaud
- Jennifer Raso
- Antonio Rodriguez
- Adrienne Smith
- Janessa Tam
- Sabrina Teles
- Bianca Terzi
- Gayle Wilmot
- Erv Witrock
- Kashini Yogananthan
- Tess Yudiv

5 – 9 Years
- Marilyn Berger
- Cynthia Blackman
- Valerie Chavovsy
- Lynne Czutrin
- Rose Kamnitzer
- George Kopulos
- Sybilla Mannsfeldt
- Cheryl Morris
- Dean Parker
- Gabriella Fataki
- Carol Pratap
- Marilyn Shama
- John Tonus
- Margaret Van Dijk
- Catherine Vaughan

10 – 14 Years
- Ruth Grant
- Sophia Hiliben
- Norma McVicar
- Joyce Ostler

15 – 19 Years
- Mary Botterell
- Jean Cameron
- Steve Gahbauer
- Judy Moore
- Myriam Shchter
- Urvashi Tanna
- Michael Wright

20 – 25 Years
- Anna Taylor

25+ Years
- Jane Thorson

In memory of
- Anne Neidhardt

In 2016, our signature annual fundraising event, the Walk, Talk ‘n Roll, generated close to $81,000, surpassing its goal. This funding goes directly to programs and services for our clients, including subsidizing those who otherwise would not be able to afford to participate.

For the fourth year in a row, we won the Toronto Challenge Supporting Seniors Award for the most registered participants. This showed once again that in addition to raising much-needed funds, the Walk, Talk ‘n Roll helps us build our community. We are indebted to everyone who supported this great event!

1,222 people donated.

200 individuals from our community participated.

Walk, Talk ‘n Roll

We rely on our dedicated volunteers to help us help others!
Gerry Cormier Communicative Access Award

Launched in 2010 and renamed in 2014 to celebrate the indelible contribution of the late Gerry Cormier, this award recognizes outstanding contributions to reducing barriers to full life participation for people living with aphasia. This year’s recipient is:

**The Communication Team, Department of Neurology, Rigshospitalet-Glostrup**

“The Communication Team” receives this award for their ongoing efforts to reducing language barriers in Danish hospitals by introducing and implementing the Aphasia Institute’s methodology, Supported Conversation for Adults with Aphasia (SCA™).

Team Members

**Hysse Birgitte Forchhammer**  
Chief Neuropsychologist, Team Leader  
**Helle Iversen**  
Medical Chief of Staff, Stroke Unit  
**Line Larsen**  
Medical Chief of Staff, General Neurology Unit  
**Lise Randrup Jensen** SCA-SLT  
**Hanne Jantzen** Research SLT

Team Associates

**Caja Andresen** Hospital SLT  
**Signe Feddersen** Hospital SLT  
**Alice Gacinga** Hospital SLT

Ambassador Award

The Ambassador Award was launched in 2005 to recognize outstanding contributions to the Aphasia Institute community. This year we award two recipients.

**Moira Minoughan**  
For her ongoing volunteer dedication and support to our clients, programs, and research projects, and in particular her commitment to our iPad program.

**Gayle Wilmot**  
Because of her incredible commitment to our Creative Expressions program, and for her creation of the exceptional videos that showcase our clients as they would like to be seen (as competent adults having fun).

Pictured, from left to right: Signe Feddersen; Dr. Aura Kagan; Caja Andresen; Alice Gacinga; Hysse Forchhammer
The Pat Arato Community Partner Award

The Pat Arato Community Partner Award recognizes our community partners and their leaders whose funding, subsidy, and expert advice show a deep belief in the work we do on behalf of people living with aphasia and their families.

The year’s recipient is:

**Harmonize for Speech Fund**

When Pat Arato established the Aphasia Institute nearly 40 years ago, funding was nonexistent – until Pat was introduced to a man named George Shields. This introduction would form a life-long friendship and provide the Aphasia Institute with a long-standing supporter and one of its first donors.

When George met Pat Arato, he was a member of a Toronto-based charity called the Harmonize for Speech Fund, whose mission was to raise money for children with speech problems. This talented and energetic group of male singers saw in Pat a kindred spirit. They were inspired by her energy and disheartened by the serious lack of funding for adults with speech issues. George convinced the other members that their fundraising efforts aligned perfectly with the work of the Aphasia Institute.

Harmonize for Speech became a funder and has helped support the Aphasia Institute’s music fund every year since 1982. At a recent Harmonize for Speech board meeting, the group watched some of our Creative Expressions music videos (see the Annual Report section of our website for links). They were inspired by how much our music program has grown and how relevant and powerful it still is after all these years.

We are grateful to George Shields and his colleagues at Harmonize for Speech for their longtime belief in the work we do for people with aphasia and their families.

[www.harmonize4speech.org](http://www.harmonize4speech.org)
Financial Statements

A word from our auditor

To the Directors of the Aphasia Institute:

The accompanying condensed statements of financial position, revenues, expenditures, and net assets are derived from the complete financial statements of the Aphasia Institute as at March 31, 2017 and for the year then ended on which I expressed a qualified audit opinion, which is a common practice with respect to charitable organizations, in my Independent Auditor’s Report dated June 19, 2017.

The fair summarization of the complete financial statements is the responsibility of the Institute. My responsibility, in accordance with the applicable Assurance Guideline of CPA Canada, is to report on the condensed financial statements.

In my opinion, the accompanying condensed financial statements fairly summarize, in all material respects, the related complete financial statements in accordance with the criteria described in the Guideline referred to above.

Since these are condensed financial statements, readers are cautioned that these statements may not be appropriate for their purposes. For more information on the Institute’s financial position, results of operations and cash flow, reference should be made to the related complete financial statements.

Peter Tsui, CPA, CA, LPA

Copies of the complete audited financial statements are available upon request.

Silvia Gomes, Treasurer

Financial Key Highlights

For the year ended March 31, 2017, the Aphasia Institute had a net loss of revenue over expense of $8,102.

For a complete review of the Audited Statements as of March 31, 2016, please see the Annual Reports page of our website: www.aphasia.ca.

From Our Treasurer...

In 2016/17, the Aphasia Institute had a deficiency of $8,102 of revenues over expenditures.

Revenues decreased year over year resulting primarily from a decrease in funding from grants, donations, and sales of resource materials. This decrease was mitigated by an increase in training and education revenues and investment income. The total expenses of the Institute decreased year over year.
Mission
Give hope to people with aphasia and their families by developing and sharing innovative solutions that reduce language barriers to full life participation.

Vision
There are no barriers to living successfully with aphasia.

For more information on our initiatives, how you can participate, volunteer, sponsor, or to make a donation to support the work of the Aphasia Institute, visit www.aphasia.ca.

OUR THANKS:
GRAVITY DESIGN INC. (Graphics & Layout)
GARRY PORTER (Photography)

OUR FUNDERS
Human-Resources and Social Development Canada
Ressources humaines et Développement social Canada
Ontario Government
Toronto Government

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