



ANNUAL REPORT

For the year ended March 31, 2015

OUR MISSION



To support, educate and advocate
for adults with
acquired brain injuries
and their families; and to
increase community awareness
about acquired brain injury



OUR BOARD of DIRECTORS



*Don Anderson
Board President*



*Patrick Corney
Board Secretary*



*Anne Wrona
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Director at Large*



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OUR STAFF



*Krissi
Spinoza
Executive
Director*



*Kathy
Smith
Client
Services
Manager*



*Anna
McLauchlan
Manager of
Administration
and
Volunteer
Coordinator*



*Leah
Gabriel
Intake
Coordinator*



*Alex
Gilchrist
Case
Manager*



*Leidi
Fortner
Case
Manager*



*Geoff Moffett
Case
Manager*



*Alex
Scurfield
Intake Coor-
dinator*



*Carmen
Eisenhauer
Facilitator,
Music Pro-
gram*



*Katusha
Dmitrieva
Facilitator,
Creative
Arts
Program*



*Emily
Steeves
Accounting
Clerk*



MESSAGE FROM OUR PRESIDENT THE ONLY CONSTANT IS CHANGE

In the 12 months since our last Annual General Meeting the Victoria Brain Injury Society has demonstrated that there truly is no constant except change.

I assumed the role of Board President in November following the departure of Murray Langdon whose growing family and new career opportunity left him with too few hours to continue on with the good works he oversaw in the preceding 12 months. In addition, board members Michael Jakeman, Anastasia Pavlova and Lia Graham also had to step aside. We owe them our gratitude for their contribution to the board and their on-going support for the work of VBIS and the needs of survivors of acquired brain injury.



*Don Anderson
Board President*

New to the board this year is Yvonne Blum-Gabel who as chair of the Audit Committee acts as our treasurer. Sheila Needs, Shauna Leeson and Herbert Moore will also be bringing their enthusiasm, experience and dedication to VBIS in the coming year.

VBIS started 2015 under the guidance of our new Executive Director, Krissi Spinoza. We also had Geoff Moffett join the team as a Case Manager and Alex Scurfield come on board as an Intake Coordinator. Our determined and dedicated staff bolstered by a growing cadre of volunteers are what truly make the Victoria Brain Injury Society the success it is. Them, and of course our members and donors, whose support both financial and moral is the foundation of our organization.

Most recently, VBIS has joined with other like organizations throughout the province in support of the newly constituted Brain Injury Alliance. And in recognition of the necessary and important work of our organizations, the government of BC announced in May the contribution of \$3 million over 3 years to support program development and improved resources for survivors and community based service delivery agencies such as ourselves. In recognition of June as brain injury awareness month, the provincial government recently announced the creation of a one million dollar endowment fund in honour of the memory of Dr Gur Singh a Kamloops based neurosurgeon and lifelong supporter of brain injury services. This endowment fund will provide an additional \$40,000 annually to support individuals and programs.

While we cannot predict with any certainty what successes and challenges VBIS will face in the next 12 months we can be sure that the resilience we have demonstrated in the past will serve us well. And we can be equally sure that we will continue to seek and support the most appropriate and innovative client-centered services possible for those who access our services now and for those who we will welcome to our door in the future.

On behalf of the board of directors, thank you to our donors, members, volunteers and staff for all you do in support of those with ABI, their families and friends.

MESSAGE FROM OUR EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

"ALONE WE CAN DO SO LITTLE; TOGETHER WE CAN DO SO MUCH."

This has been a year of change for Victoria Brain Injury Society. Don has outlined in his report some of the changes that have taken place in the board and staff team. In addition, we've made changes to the intake process. After lots of staff discussion and careful consideration we've implemented a new triage system to try to ensure that we provide the right level of care to clients, you can read more about this new system in Intake Coordinator Alex Scurfield's report. Kathy's report outlines the fantastic growth that has been happening with our groups and drop-in services. And Anna's report provides an overview of the changes for volunteers.



Krissi Spinoza
Executive Director

The pattern of growth will continue this year: we are working on expanding the programs we offer. At the moment we are offering one-off workshops to gauge interest in a range of subjects from financial planning to scrap-booking, movement classes to verbal self-defense training. We hope to continue these one-off offerings and expand our services to offer clients more choice and support.

New programs require new funding so we are exploring additional fundraising ideas and forming partnerships with companies, donors and granters as well as working with current supporters and continuing our traditional fundraising endeavours. We had a groovy time at the disco and rock bands night and will be stretching ourselves with a summer-long yoga fundraiser as well as taking steps to get to our goal with a sponsored hike. We are tremendously grateful to everyone new and old that has supported us this year. Your generosity and compassion means that we can continue to offer a great service to brain injury clients and their families.

Changes are also taking place in more visible ways. We're expanding into the unit next door. This will allow us to run more programs and offer clients a wider range of services. In addition, administration volunteers will have more space to work and each Case Manager will have an office.

Our physical expansion is perhaps the perfect metaphor for all the changes that taken place this year. Changes take time, they can be messy and noisy. It can be disorienting to have new walls erected and paint colours changed. It doesn't always look like you'd imagined and changes require us to adjust our habitual patterns of behaviour but ultimately, by working together as a team, we adjust to change and use it as an opportunity to grow.

The team at VBIS (staff, volunteers, supporters and clients) have worked together to support each other during these changes. People have all contributed great ideas that have helped make these changes possible. I look forward to us being able to enjoy our new space together and continuing to grow as an organization. A huge thank you to everyone for their patience, understanding and great ideas to help make these changes successful. I feel honoured to be part of such a wonderful team and I'm excited to continue working together in the year ahead.

With gratitude, Krissi Spinoza, Executive Director



MESSAGE FROM OUR CLIENT SERVICES MANAGER ALL IN A YEAR'S WORK

This past year has seen change and growth within our small yet sturdy organization.

VBIS welcomed Geoff Moffett to the case management team in October 2014, initially to cover my medical leave until January 2015. Geoff's contributions to the team and ability to meet and build rapport with clients, new and old, were well received. In January, a decision was made upon my return, to carve a permanent place for Geoff on the team and with the board's support VBIS was able to create a third part-time Case Manager position.



*Kathy Smith, MSW RSW
Client Services Manager*

Our front desk and intake system has grown magnificently over the past year, with the hiring of Leah Graham in spring 2014 and Alex Scurfield in September 2014. Both Leah and Alex have co-created and maintained a system of client reception and intake/assessment that is of the highest quality of client-centred care. With their support at the front end, our clients are personally invited to connect with a team of professional case workers who provide compassionate and person centred service.

Our groups continue to offer great knowledge and guidance to the clients. The womens' drop-in session has seen a resurgence and caring peer support volunteers are leading the way by inviting community members to attend the drop-ins and offer classes in scrap booking and the like. We also had the great fortune of having Janelle Breese Biagioni – author and grief counselor, and manager for housing for BI survivors – deliver an inspiring workshop for women with BI. A.C.E., with Case Manager Leidi Fortner – recently visited the inner harbour via water taxi. Our walking group is going strong and completed a second year partnering with other survivor teams for the Brain Tumour Foundation's annual Spring Sprint. Way to go, VBIS Brain Stormers! Creative arts, the music program, ABI 101, Youth Supporting Youth, and Coping Skills have all maintained good numbers over the past year. The family support group has been in re-development this year and will see a welcome back to our group supports by autumn.

As peer support volunteers comprise a critical piece of client service, well trained volunteers are always in need. Case Manager and Peer Support Coordinator, Alex Gilchrist began delivery of this year's 10-week training series in May 2015, and to date the training has been well attended by volunteers both new and seasoned. Alex is receiving technical and logistic support from our Master of Educational Psychology practicum student, Kyla Berry. Kyla has volunteered with VBIS in the past and sought our agency when time came to identify her field placement.

Kyla has been a valuable asset to our client services delivery, working with individuals, groups, and intake coordination. Her practicum continues through the summer and no doubt she will be busy supporting Alex in the creation of a peer support training manual.

As we looking ahead to an expansion of our offices, our client services will continue to grow and flourish in the new spaces. This next year will see new opportunities for community connections, continued personal support and healing. Recovery is within our reach. Kathy Smith, RSW

CELEBRATING COMMUNITY CONNECTIONS



Disco and Rock Bands Evening

Dancing for Brain Health



CAP Christmas party



Appreciation Week—complete with our volunteer walk of fame and supporters ceiling!



Victoria Day Parade 2015



Chinese New Year celebrations!



MESSAGE FROM ONE OF OUR INTAKE COORDINATORS CHANGING THE CLIENT INTAKE PROCESS

It has been year of change for the intake system at Victoria Brain Injury Society (VBIS). When VBIS first created an Intake Coordinator role back in June of 2014, the focus was primarily on reception duties.



*Alex Scurfield
Intake Coordinator*

We quickly recognized that our system was not meeting the needs of our clients. By early 2015, we had 70 people on our waitlist. 70 people waiting to access our services and we were booking new client intake orientations nearly six months in the future. That was 70 people too many and six months too long. Clients needed our help right away. The decision was made for VBIS to take on the challenge of reshaping the client intake process. The goals were to vastly reduce both the number of clients on the VBIS waitlist and the time it takes for a client to experience care.

The changes commenced with the development of an innovative intake form for potential new clients. This new form allows VBIS to efficiently and effectively assess the needs of incoming clients in an individualized manner. The personalized intake provides a much higher level of insight into the needs of the incoming client and ensures we can quickly determine how VBIS can best meet the client needs. We are also able to triage needs within the system. Clients are now more able to obtain the support, information, and education appropriate to their need, in a timeline that is aligned with their situation.

The new intake methodology has allowed us to adjust our approach to incoming clients, creating more client friendly orientations and more personalized decision-making. The intake process formally identified a new type of client, which has been labeled “community stream”. Now the Intake Coordinator is able to identify potential clients who were not in immediate need of a Case Manager but who would still benefit from being able to access our drop-in classes and peer support sessions. By removing non-critical community members from the Case Manager list, we have been able to double the number of new client intakes per month. This means we have dramatically altered the number of people we are able to help and the time which they receive that help.

As the Intake Coordinator at VBIS, developing, integrating, and evaluating this change into our intake procedure has been both a rewarding and challenging experience. It has taken time to generate new procedures, new forms and implement these changes in a client orientated manner, in an environment where change brings challenges to our clients. It has also meant that we have assumed a more demanding role, shifting the Intake Coordinator role to one of an assessment role. What do we hear this client saying their needs are? How can VBIS support those needs? The Intake Coordinator is the first person a client comes into contact with when they come to VBIS. It has been incredibly fulfilling to witness the impact of this new intake system on a daily basis. We get to see the relief sweep over someone’s face, and witness firsthand the peace of finally being heard by someone who ‘gets’ their situation, someone who validates their struggles and challenges in day-to-day life after a traumatic brain injury.

Here is to looking forward to another year of change, growth and constant amelioration.

Respectfully Submitted, Alexander Scurfield



MESSAGE FROM OUR VOLUNTEER COORDINATOR A YEAR IN THE LIFE OF A VBIS VOLUNTEER

It has been a year morphing for the administration and volunteer office!

We have adjusted our sails in integrating and developing the Intake Coordinator role into the Society organization and working together in keeping the administration flow clean and even improved. We have dealt with computer system challenges which have been eradicated in the last couple of months; it is really quite pleasant not having to deal with a computer hoop every day – I could get very used to this! We also had events such as the Annual Summer BBQ, Christmas week fun, and the Volunteer Appreciation week to prepare for and are very grateful for all the support of community organizations and businesses in helping us to lay on quite the feast to make these occasions even more special – what better way – other than fabulous company and some music maybe – than via a satisfied tummy to call an event successful!



*Anna McLauchlan
Manager of Administration
& Volunteer Coordinator*

Throughout all of all our challenges of the past year, we have had our amazing team of volunteers helping to ensure everything is happening here and assisting our clients in a multitude of ways. They do everything from helping in reception, to research, to data entry to assisting clients one-on-one for special functions and needs, to serving as Board members – and everything else in between. To add to this, they have stepped up when we were every ‘thin on the ground’ for a variety of reasons, from our all-time low of 68 team members as we built up the team to our current 89 (ranging from one-off event volunteers, to weekly shift volunteers, and some volunteers who are on leave for the summer or other personal reasons). They are true superstars and we, as staff, cannot thank them enough.

All our volunteers have their own stories of what brought them here and, without exception, they all have a deep desire to not only help, but to understand the world of brain injury more. Added to that, they often talk of wanting to utilize this knowledge in their career path and goals, and they want to explore and expand their skills sets in all ways. It is heart-warming to know that they come fully anticipating that this the right place to explore and get all this exposure. It is also the pinnacle of satisfaction for me when a person with brain injury gets into volunteering and they blossom as they ‘learn about their new brain’ as they often describe it.

Our volunteers do have their own stories, and I would love to highlight just one for now. Veronica has been with us since May 2013. Veronica says that she feels a sense of purpose here; she loves the flexibility and she also refers to that all-important skill development as being an important part of her experience:

“During my time at VBIS I have embodied many volunteer roles, from working reception to documenting statistics, and from conducting research to intake coordination. I have been able to perform such a wide range of duties because of the flexibility at VBIS; any volunteer has the ability, and is even encouraged to change their primary tasks. This allows for a versatile experience that is very difficult to find elsewhere in common volunteering positions, facilitating varied skill development and keeping things interesting. Some of the possible skills that can be enriched at VBIS are computer related, social and practical. Though I am a student, I have found that working in statistics at VBIS has actually really improved my competency in programs like excel. Additionally, even if a volunteer’s task is to document statistics, they will often have interactions with the many faces of VBIS, including staff, other volunteers with similar interests, clients with a diverse range of brain injuries and supporting family members. These interactions, however brief, have certainly helped me (and I’m sure many other volunteers) to improve social skills and to gain a firmer understanding of the complexities of brain injury.”

“Suggestions for how to improve our current systems are always highly appreciated and genuinely considered. This gives us volunteers a chance to make tangible changes that we can witness being implemented from our own ideas, and contributes to a real sense of purpose when volunteering at VBIS. We are always provided with reasoning for the tasks we are completing, and there is always more to do. I feel incredibly useful when I come in for a shift, and this provides me with feelings of self-worth and helpfulness; there is never a dull moment at VBIS!”

Another volunteer recently left to pursue her career, having graduated from University, and summed up her experience at VBIS: “VBIS allows me to take a few hours away from my school work or anything else going on and see some great people and do some really meaningful work! VBIS is always so positive, and watching people grow and succeed in their lives is truly heartwarming.... VBIS really showed me what non-profit is truly about..... the ultimate goal is just to make someone’s day a little brighter, even if it’s just one day a week. It makes a huge difference that money can’t buy.”

Respectfully submitted, Anna McLauchlan



FINANCIAL SUMMARY



	2015/16	2014/15
REVENUE		
Brain Injury Program—VIHA	136,886.40	136,886
Grants	113,767.93	126,787
Fundraising	10,837.42	70,088
Donations	51,562.40	20,208
Contract Funding	1,930.00	6,759
Advertising	4,450.00	2,880
Other	2,246.74	0
	321,680.89	363,608
EXPENSES		
Wages and Benefits	248,620.00	226,164
Rent and facilities	31,329.00	31,417
Fundraising	5,349.00	23,186
Office	28,617.00	21,509
Telephone	3,466.00	3,058.00
Contract Facilitators	6,020.00	6,995
Program Support	5,515.00	4,364
Amortization	4,178.00	3,851
Utilities	0.00	3,058
Insurance	3,180.00	2,178
Repairs and Maintenance	2,088.22	2,131
Professional Development	958.88	1,160
Dues, Fees and Licenses	728.27	820
Interest and Bank Charges	1,044.00	778
Advertising and Promotion	1,311.73	755
Miscellaneous	2,365.93	0
	342,405	328,366
	REVENUE IN EXCESS OF (LESS THAN) EXPENDITURES	(20,725) 35,242

THANK YOU TO OUR SUPPORTERS

The generosity of our supporters is the lifeblood of the Victoria Brain Injury Society. All of our programs, as well as the personal growth and recovery of our clients, are dependent on the continued support of the businesses, agencies and charities listed below. We thank you!



United Way
Greater Victoria
Community Partner

vancouver
foundation



VICTORIA
FOUNDATION
75 YEARS AND COUNTING



coastcapital
SAVINGS



Each year the Victoria Brain Injury Society hosts and/or participates in a variety of events.

The following businesses have been instrumental in providing services, products and donations that have made these events possible for us during this last fiscal year.

Action Motorcycles
AJ's Organic Café
Art's Bakery Ltd
B&C Food Distributors
Boston Pizza
Bubby's Kitchen
Butchart Gardens
Caffe Fantastico
Canadian Superstore
(COBS Bread (Harris Green))
Cobbs Bread (Shelbourne Plaza)
Country Grocer
Firm Management Corp
Fol Epi Bakery
Goldstream Bicycles
Heat Savers Fireplace & Patio Co
Ink and Toner Medic
Lifestyle Markets
Little Cheese Shop
Market on Yates

Mary Winspear Centre
Mings Restaurant
North Park Bicycles
Ocean River Sports
Origin Bakery
Patisserie Daniel
Peninsula Coop
Red Barn
Rogers
Royal & McPherson Theatres Society
Save on Foods (Foul Bay)
Save On Foods (Tillicum)
Silk Road Tea
Theatre Inconnu
Tim Hortons (Hillside/Blanshard)
Victoria Symphony
Vita Health
WalMart (Langford)
Wellburn's Market
Wildfire Bakery



Victoria Brain Injury Society

EST. 1983



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