

2023-2024

# Annual Report



**COMMUNITY INCLUSION**

**UNITY & WORKING TOGETHER**

**COMMITMENT**

**HONESTY & INTEGRITY**

**ACCOUNTABILITY**

**RESPECT & DIGNITY**

# TRUST

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## Land Acknowledgment

“We would like to acknowledge the Indigenous Peoples of all the lands where we each find ourselves today. We would like to take a moment to acknowledge the importance of these lands where we make our homes and do our work. We do this to reaffirm our commitment and responsibility to Indigenous people and their cultures from coast to coast. Please take a moment of reflection to acknowledge the harms and mistakes of the past, and to consider how we can, individually and collectively, move forward in support of reconciliation, justice and respectful collaboration.”

## Reconnaissance des territoires

“Nous aimerions reconnaître les peuples autochtones de toutes les terres où nous nous trouvons aujourd’hui. Nous aimerions prendre un moment pour souligner l’importance de ces terres où nous nous trouvons et où nous accomplissons notre travail. Nous le faisons pour réaffirmer notre engagement et notre responsabilité envers les peuples autochtones et leurs cultures d’un océan à l’autre. Veuillez vous joindre à moi pour un moment de réflexion, afin de reconnaître les torts et les erreurs du passé et de réfléchir à la façon dont nous pouvons, individuellement et collectivement, aller de l’avant à l’appui de la réconciliation, de la justice et de la collaboration respectueuse.”

Algoma is in Robinson-Huron Treaty territory and the land on which our community is located is the traditional territory of the Anishinaabe



## Mission Statement



Community Living Algoma supports people with intellectual disabilities. We are committed to the advancement of a community in which all people:

- are recognized as full citizens;
- achieve personal dignity;
- enjoy the benefits and responsibilities of independence; and
- are supported to reach their full potential

## Énoncé de mission

L'Intégration communautaire d'Algoma appuie les personnes qui vivent avec une déficience intellectuelle.

- Nous nous engageons à l'avancement d'une communauté dans laquelle tous sont reconnus comme citoyens à part entière;
- atteignent la dignité personnelle;
- jouissent des bienfaits et des responsabilités de l'autonomie et reçoivent un soutien dans le but de réaliser leur potentiel.

## Vision Statement



All People Belong, Join the Journey



# Values (Service Principles)



**We believe...**

**Respect and Dignity** - In respecting each other's individuality, dignity, right to privacy and to make independent choices.

**Trust** - In developing trust as the foundation for all relationships.

**Honesty and Integrity** - In being honest in all of our relationships and acting with integrity in all that we do.

**Unity and Working Together** - In the importance of being collaborative with all our stakeholders and working together to achieve the very best for each person supported.

**Community Inclusion** - In activity contributing each day to the building of inclusive communities that are accepting of all their members.

**Accountability** - In being accountable for the quality of our programs, acting professionally and carrying about all of those we support and work with.

**Commitment** - In being passionately committed to supporting people to achieve inclusion, personal dignity and full citizenship.



# President and Executive Director's Report



## Trust is our Cornerstone for Future Building

Last year, on the cusp of our 70th anniversary milestone, we spoke about how the ‘road to success is always under construction.’ We spoke of the continuous change and improvement, which is to be expected and to be experienced, towards our end goal of achieving the best quality of life for people supported.

Our history reminds us that the foundation of our organization was built upon trust. Imagine, for seventy years, people supported and families entrusted us to provide quality supports by ensuring people are safe, healthy and well, goals and dreams are being pursued and achieved and people are included in their community. The importance of trust remains a constant, even though many changes have occurred throughout our last seventy years.

Now that we are in our 70th anniversary year, we believe it is important to add another critical line of view: objects in the mirror are closer than they appear. Specifically, the object we are referring to is trust. It is important because, while we continue to move forward, we cannot lose sight of what constitutes trust and what is necessary to ensuring it continues to take us in the future.

In order to convey trust to the outside world, it must already be alive and well inside of our organization. In order for the outside world to have trust in us, they have to see that we are walking-the-walk and talking-the-talk in terms of our Values, Mission and Vision.

Trust is about relationships and, specifically, the perspective awarded to those partnerships. It is about expertise and consistency in delivery. It can also be somewhat fluid as it subjective, built on personal experience or through examples.



An organization where trust ‘lives’ is one of respect, innovation, creativity and credibility. Trust is necessary in order to achieve sustainability and, ultimately, goals. It is about confidence, or faith, in an organization to deliver what it claims. Time and time, again.

Trust includes social context, plus past behavior and practices. It also includes successes, failures and measurements of everything from accessibility to applicability. Reveals can also include data that may not be measurable and timelines. Every piece of information has to be taken into consideration, and stored somewhere, as the scope and dynamics of the journey can change or evolve.

There are various ways in which an organization can frame its history. Loss of trust is a scar in the historical timeline of an organization. Mistakes, however, can provide opportunities for growth or learning experiences that have been missed, ignored or edited. It can incite creativity. Reflection means contemplation. What was applicable, then, may not be now, however, it is cause to examine if there are parallels, or to identify specific actions that may have contributed to the development of trust.

We want our experience, wisdom, innovative thinking and commitment to continue to assist us in identifying new pathways of belonging and community citizenship for all people. Our commitment on person-centred support has been the goal of this process.

In the spring 2024 roll out of anniversary events, we spoke of authentic citizenship and it remains our stronghold in every event we have hosted or participated in. In order for it to occur, trust must be nurtured, grown and continuously evaluated. Trust is a cornerstone. It is also the future. Without trust, there is no future and the past comes into question.

Thank you for your past trust in us. We pledge to continue to strive to earn, and maintain, that level of confidence in our delivery of supports to people.

Respectfully submitted by,

Brad Symboluk  
President

John Policicchio  
Executive Director



# Algoma Community Vision Advocates (ACVA)



## Mission Statement

*The Algoma Community Vision Advocates take pride in advocating in our community through education, open communication, and leading by example. We hope to better ourselves and our community by growing and exploring solutions for shared issues.*

Over the past year, the Algoma Community Vision Advocates (ACVA) have demonstrated exceptional dedication and effort, meticulously planning and executing a series of impactful events and initiatives. As we transitioned into the new fiscal year, the team invested significant time and energy into organizing major projects, including proclamations, a series of Awareness Month activities like Success Day, and appearances at community BBQs and events in August and September, hosted by CLA. Their commitment also extended to an internal meeting with a board committee to reaffirm expectations of respect and the development of a comprehensive educational workshop in September. Much of the latter part of the 2023-2024 fiscal year was focused on strategizing for these large-scale events and enhancing professional development, reflecting ACVA's commitment to advancing inclusivity, awareness, and community engagement.





## Algoma Community Vision Advocates (ACVA)

Recognizing the importance of expanding their membership, ACVA set a priority goal of recruiting two new members by the end of the year. This goal was successfully achieved with the addition of Hannah and William from Sault Ste. Marie. In January, the team also reviewed and redefined their roles: Deborah and Gordon resumed their positions as Treasurer and Chair, respectively. William stepped into the Vice Chair position, working alongside Gordon to gain valuable experience and insights. Meanwhile, Hannah, with her enthusiasm for digital design, took on the role of Social Media Coordinator, playing a key role in enhancing the team's online presence and engagement.

A standout achievement was the presentation of proclamations to five municipalities for Community Living Awareness Month. These proclamations are more than symbolic; they are pivotal in advancing our Mission to promote inclusivity and understanding across the Algoma region. As the proclamations take place early in the year, they provided new members with their first opportunity to experience the role of being a key advocate on a municipal level. ACVA's proactive approach fosters important dialogues and calls to action, ensuring that the voices of people with disabilities are recognized and supported.

ACVA has also played a crucial role in new hire orientation throughout the 2023-2024 fiscal year, participating in every session hosted. During these orientations, ACVA representatives actively engage with new hires, outlining their roles within the CLA community and setting clear expectations for mutual respect. They seize the opportunity not only to introduce the organization's Values and Mission but also to have meaningful conversations with new hires about the impactful work they will be involved in. This interaction helps new team members understand the importance of their roles and fosters a sense of connection and commitment from the start.

The dedication and planning the team invested in their events have already yielded impressive results. Their hard work and strategic efforts have laid a strong foundation for continued success, and the positive outcomes thus far reflect their commitment. Looking ahead, the team is excited to build on this momentum and share the results of their endeavors in the coming year.



## Education Committee

Once again, I take this opportunity, as Chairperson of the Education Committee of Community Living Algoma, to express my appreciation to the members of the committee. Their planning and advocacy efforts for inclusion and belonging for all children, youth and adults with an intellectual disability are heartfelt. Thank you as well to the support provided by staff for the Education Committee to conduct their bi-monthly meetings during the entire 2023 and first part of 2024 calendar years.

The Education Committee was excited to have Dr. Shelley Moore present to both our education and community partners on October 24, 2022. Both the Algoma District School Board and Huron-Superior Catholic District School Board co-sponsored and staff participated in this event.

They further built upon this momentum by committing to Dr. Moore's five-part learning series around diversity, equity and inclusion involving numerous staff from across their respective schools throughout the 2023-2024 school year. Participants reviewed research-based inclusive education systems and structures. They also reflected on their unique and situated contexts (classroom, school) to be able to respond to community needs in meaningful ways that maintain the integrity of the diversity. Lastly, educators engaged in situated, ongoing, collaborative and inquiry-oriented professional development and reflected on, determined, enacted and adjusted actions taken that shift practices to support inclusion and equity in their classrooms and schools.

A news-style video highlighting how to be inclusive, along with many examples of how it is put into practice at their school, saw students in the Grade 2/3 class at Our Lady of Lourdes Catholic Elementary School, in Sault Ste. Marie, receive the 'Together We're Better' Inclusion Award as part of February's Inclusive Education Month. The Grade 2/3 submission was a video presentation entitled '*Breaking News – Live from Lourdes*'. It demonstrated a creative and insightful understanding about the importance of inclusion in everyone's life. The Huron-Superior Catholic District School Board students, taught by Nadia Zanatta (Vice Principal) each received certificates presented by Community Living Algoma (CLA). The school was also recognized for their role in promoting and fulfilling an inclusive school environment.

The Education Committee is very proud to continue to provide annual support for the Marion Arthur Memorial Scholarship and the Mario Tosello Memorial Scholarship. These two scholarships are awarded to two students continuing their education after high school by enrolling in the Community Integration through Co-operative Education Program at Sault College.



## Education Committee

Two members of the Education Committee are active members of the Special Education Advisory Committees (SEAC) of the Algoma District and Huron Superior Catholic District School Boards. During monthly meetings, each member brings forward both Information & Topics for Discussion/Questions related to relevant and timely initiatives occurring throughout the school year. Presently, the SEAC Representatives from the CLA Education Committee are Jacques Ribout and Margaret Barbeau.

This year, Community Living Algoma continued to work with our education partners to ensure that children and youth with an intellectual disability are included in any and all school-related activities and events related to curriculum, instruction, assessment, extracurricular, transportation, etc. We also worked collectively with school personnel, families, students, and other agencies regarding pupils who are suspended, expelled, or excluded from school to have the opportunity to continue with their education, while out of school, and also be afforded the opportunity to return to their respective school within a reasonable period of time.

Our Education Committee will also be reviewing and making recommendations to SEAC groups regarding "Goals/Priorities for the 2024-2025 School Year".

I want to conclude by expressing my sincere appreciation to the Education Committee members once again for sharing their thoughts, ideas, and wisdom with us and for ensuring inclusion for all children and youth within the education system is achieved. I also want to take this opportunity to thank the many professionals within the education system who do their best to ensure flexible and adaptable classroom environments and classrooms exist to meet the individual needs of all their students. Much appreciation is extended from all the Education Committee members to the staff at Community Living Algoma, particularly Sergio Iacoe, who provides the necessary materials, information and support for the Education Committee to succeed.

Jacques Ribout (Chair)	Margaret Barbeau	Linda Headrick	Marilu Horton
Marilu Horton	Anna Rendell	Rosanne Zagordo	Sergio Iacoe (staff support)

Respectfully submitted,

Jacques Ribout  
Chair, Education Committee



## Quality Enhancement Committee

The Quality Enhancement Committee (QEC) is a sub-committee of the Board of Directors responsible for making recommendations to the Board regarding Community Living Algoma's (CLA) continuous quality improvement efforts. The committee monitors and reviews the effectiveness of services and supports, as well as compliance with Ministry standards and licensing requirements.

The QEC applies The Council on Quality and Leadership (CQL) Personal Outcomes Measures philosophy to its work. CQL has been a leader in partnering with human services organizations and systems to define, measure, and improve the quality of life and services for children, youth, and adults with intellectual and developmental disabilities. Personal Outcome Measures are a learning tool that ensures CLA's services are defined by the individuals we support.

### Key Initiatives Reviewed in 2023-2024:

- **Quality Assurance Strategy (Key Performance Indicators);**
- **Personal Outcome Measures Interviews and Workshop; and**
- **Ministry Compliance – Quality Assurance Measures**

As part of its compliance requirements, the QEC also reviews CLA's Abuse Policy annually.

In April 2023, CLA launched its second Quality Assurance (QA) Strategy, utilizing Key Performance Indicators (KPI). This plan, developed under the QA Policy, aims to improve the organization's overall supports and working conditions. Data is collected and analyzed monthly to measure the quality of CLA's supports and services, identify areas for improvement, and set future direction. The Board of Directors and QEC members review the collected data, provide recommendations, and offer feedback where appropriate. This plan covers the period from April 2023 to March 2024.

Personal Outcome Measures (POM) is a widely recognized tool for assessing an individual's quality of life. It is a discovery process that helps CLA identify opportunities and measure the effectiveness of supports and services to meet the needs and goals of the people supported and their families. The primary focus for the 2023-2024 year was on outcomes related to social capital. Social capital acknowledges the importance of relationships and social networks in contributing to an individual's physical and mental health and overall quality of life. This focus encompasses outcomes in relationships, respect, and community engagement.



## Quality Enhancement Committee

The QEC also monitors information and results from all Ministry Compliance Inspections. Over the past year, there was one Compliance Inspection in September 2023. CLA successfully completed this inspection, which included the review of:

- Policies and Procedures
- Board of Directors Meeting Minutes and Member files
- 10 home inspections
- 21 staff files
- 43 files of people supported
- 3 Behaviour Support Plans

The goal of the QEC for 2024/2025 is to continue focusing on the Quality Assurance Strategy by reviewing and recommending actions based on data and feedback collected in the past year. The committee will concentrate on recommending strategies to enhance the quality of life for the people we support through ongoing work utilizing Personal Outcome Measures. This includes identifying opportunities to improve the personal outcomes and well-being of the individuals supported by CLA.

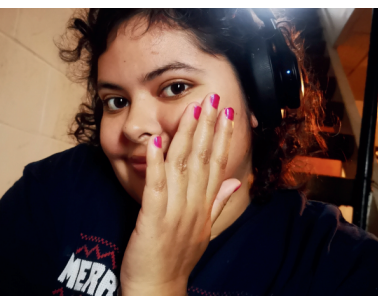
The committee would like to thank CLA’s Board of Directors for their ongoing support and commitment to quality improvement. We also extend our appreciation and thanks to the late Mac Headrick, who, until his passing in January 2024, showed long-term commitment, continued support, and advocacy. He will be dearly missed.

Special thanks to our 2023-2024 committee members for their dedication:

Linda Headrick-Chair	Anke Lansky-Johnson	Emily Kelly
Ann Ficociello	Paula Summers	Jennifer Wiwchar (Staff Support)

Respectfully submitted,

Linda Headrick  
Chair, Quality Enhancement Committee



## Human Resources & French Language Services Committee

The Human Resources and French Language Services Committee, as per the Purpose and Responsibilities of the Terms of Reference, is responsible to monitor, review and make recommendations to the Board of Directors of Community Living Algoma with regard to the effectiveness of human resources and French language services and supports provided by CLA for individuals with an intellectual disability.

Recruitment strategies, promotions, performance management and performance standards, staff development, labour relations updates, Health & Safety, attendance management and overtime reports are reviewed. The committee also provides updates to the Board regarding progress in meeting regulation 284/11 of the French Language Act (FLSA). We are committed to ensuring we comply with O. Reg. 544/22, which entrenches “the active offer” in the requirements to meet the FLSA and completing the FLA Quality Improvement Plan (QIP) covering the period 2023 – 2026.

The Human Resources and French Language Services committee continues to review and improve processes, in compliance with legislative requirements of the Ministry of Children, Community and Social Services. CLA is required to ensure that French language services are provided to the public and people supported when requested and to work collaboratively to determine how FLS will be provided across CLA.

French language service system planning can help identify existing capacity and potential gaps in service delivery. In collaboration with the ministry, CLA has been working to ensure we are meeting our responsibilities by doing our best to provide fluent French/English speaking support staff when requested. In doing so, CLA ensures all correspondence provided to the public is translated to French, identify key positions to deliver services in French at an advanced proficiency, ensuring FLS is a standing item in all team and management meetings and to ensure collaboration with Francophone stakeholders

In February of 2024, unionized employees of CLA ratified a three year collective agreement. The agreement is effective April 1, 2023 to March 31, 2026.



## Human Resources & French Language Committee

CLA has also made a concentrated effort to reduce “Forced Overtime”. Efforts on this front is continuous to ensure that we have the right resources at the right location and right time. This effort supports better work conditions for employees and creates a productive environment for people we support. Management with the assistance of HR has also focus efforts on supporting employees to reduce absenteeism which has an effect on individual teams supporting people.

Going forward retaining and recruiting qualified employees will continue to be a challenge. The sector continues to rely on the compassion of employees. The sector has experience a lack of interest by Gen Z however, we have had positive experiences with new Canadians. The challenge for CLA continues be finding ways to manage five (5) generations of employees in the workforce.

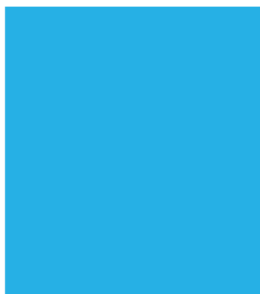
Opportunities and challenges continue to exist for training, development and knowledge transfer with 54% of its workforce with less than 5 years of experience. In addition, with 34% of our staff with over 20 years this creates little to no middle cohort of employees which present challenges for knowledge transfer and training into the future. CLA will continue to implement initiatives that will focus on closing the gap to improve our employee’s ability to deliver quality of life to the people we support.

In fiscal 2023-2024 CLA submitted as required by government its French Language Services (FLS) Quality Improvement Plan for fiscal year 2023-2024 to fiscal year 2025-2026. CLA reviewed a number of areas and made changes to programs and processes to support implementation of the plan and enhance French Language Services in our region.

Jacques Ribout (Chair)	Ann Ficociello	Danielle Valiquette
John Prgomet (Staff Support)	Danielle Cicchini (Staff Support)	Amy Francella (Staff Support)

Respectfully submitted,

Jacques Ribout  
 Chair, Human Resources & French Language Services Committee



## Finance Committee

As Chairperson of the Finance Committee, I want to express my appreciation to the Committee members for their governance of CLA’s financial resources and to staff for their support to the Committee in conducting their monthly meetings.

One of the Finance Committee’s responsibilities is to review and monitor our revenues and expenditures, each month, at a very high level and to make recommendations to the Board of Directors, as necessary. On behalf of the Finance Committee, I am pleased to report that this past fiscal year, the end-result was a positive financial position for the organization.

The Committee also has the responsibility of making recommendations to the board on requests made for the use of Fundraising and Donation Funds for the people we support. In this past year, we reviewed several requests and were pleased to have offered financial resources for specialized equipment and furniture. Although our Fundraising and Donation funds are not increasing, we appreciate having the opportunity to lend financial assistance when, and if, required to people and the families we support.

Each year, the Finance Committee members take great pride in recommending financial support to the Give-A-Gift Program. This program provides for the purchasing of a gift(s) for people who would not otherwise receive one at Christmas. In this past fiscal year, we saw this gift amount increase to \$100.

The Committee undertook the task of re-investing excess non-MCCSS funds from our Specialized Purposes Fund. In addition, we have assisted in the capital disposal of some vacant properties utilized by CLA. Some of these properties belong entirely to CLA with proceeds of these sales to be designated by the Board of Directors, outside of MCCSS funding. This past year, properties located on McNabb and Salisbury were sold.

The Committee also works with our community partners to maximize usage of some of our vacant properties by entering into occupancy agreements. Two such leased properties are located on Queensgate Boulevard and Shannon Road.





# Finance Committee

The Finance Committee closely monitored the **#5toSurvive campaign**, launched late last fall and through early spring. CLA joined with 125 Community Living type of organizations across the province, to advocate - independently and collectively - for people to sign a petition in favour of supporting a five percent funding increase in developmental services core funding from the provincial government. The Developmental Services sector has not benefitted from any significant cost-of-living increases in MCCSS funding over the past 30 years. Although the #5ToSurvive provincial campaign did not result in the sector receiving the full five percent (5.0%) request from the Ontario Government, we did receive confirmation in July 2024 about an increase in annualized funding to address the escalating costs of providing supports and services that we have been experiencing.

Once again, my sincere appreciation to the Finance Committee members, staff support and to the Ministry of Children, Community and Social Services for their ongoing financial support of Community Living Algoma.

Brad Symboluk (Chair)	Kris Zanatta	Leslie Dunseath	Matthew Consack
John Policicchio (Staff Support)	Lisa Krug (Staff Support)	Nicole Clark (Staff Support)	Sabrina Wade (staff support)

Respectfully submitted,

Brad Symboluk  
 Chairperson, Treasurer and Finance Committee



# Community Partners Award

## Dwellwise

The Community Partner Award is presented annually to honour Community Partners who are making a positive difference in the lives of people with intellectual disabilities. The commitment made by the Dwellwise Group - this year's recipient - is significant as they are a business that has contributed to a culture of inclusion; to a community of acceptance; and respect for people.

Community Living Algoma has been working with Dwellwise Group as people transition from large congregate care settings to living inclusive within their community. Dwellwise Group's mission is to build strong, long-lasting relationships with their tenants and business clientele and fulfillment of that mandate is what led to Ben Cicchelli and David Toppan, of Dwellwise, as being selected as this year's recipient. We thank Ben and Dave for their outstanding commitment to working with people supported, and their families, to help them reach their dream of finding a place to call home. Living in everyday places, among their community, represents fulfillment of long-term goals and an enhanced quality of life.

Our partnership started with the Brookfield Manor housing development on North Eden Road; then, from this success, moved towards people having the opportunity to lease two units at Treasure Park on Ruth Street. All these units are single-level and accessible.

Today, as we continue together through each project, we learn more about how we can do things a little differently each time, depending on the needs of each person. We have had opportunity to be included from the ground up on the development process, specifically including the accessibility design and understanding the custom requirements for individuals to live in their 'forever home.' The continued trust of this partnership further extends to the role they play as responsive landlords who ensure properties are safe and well-maintained.

We value this partnership and appreciate Dwellwise for their strong commitment to assisting Community Living Algoma in fulfilling their mission statement "where all people are recognized as full citizens, achieve personal dignity, enjoy the benefits and responsibilities of independence, and are supported to reach their full potential."

We look forward to the next project!

Respectfully submitted,

Paul Mariotti, Andy Boucher, Bill Lamont, Bobby Matte, Noel Grojean, Bruce Rodger plus the CLA Team members at North Eden and Ruth Street along with Renee Tomasetti (Service Manager).



## Volunteer of the Year Award

### Emily Scarpino

Community Living Algoma is pleased to honour volunteers, from across the District of Algoma, who are making a positive difference for people with intellectual disabilities. The personal commitment made by volunteers is significant. Volunteers make valuable contributions whether it is volunteering their time, effort, knowledge or resources.

This year, we are honouring the volunteer contributions of Emily Scarpino. Emily's role at St. Ann's Villa involved identifying, creating and planning inclusive activities and events over a 10-week period. Emily showed initiative in the planning of three-to-four, daily activities. She showed her commitment and dedication in ensuring that these activities were representative of the residents' interests and their abilities by conducting individual surveys. She also asked participants about their expectations and goals.

Emily offered activities that focused on movement, health, mental health and overall wellbeing. The activities were offered during the day and evening to accommodate people's schedules. Activities included: stretching, body movement with balloons, painting, game nights and movie nights. Mindfulness session and get-to-know-you sessions helped people to get to know each other, personally and socially.

All residents were encouraged to participate so that there was a mix of people supported by Community Living Algoma as well as other citizens from the building complex. Participants included seniors, people with varying abilities and people with disabilities. This inclusive mixture strengthened the relationships between the residents and created new relationships. The activities provided people with a reason to go out and gather.

Each week, the posting of a new activities' schedule was received with much enthusiasm and many registrations. At the conclusion of Emily's term, the people at St. Ann's Villa collectively hosted a 'thank you party' for Emily. This time, the gathering was for the participants to show their appreciation for her efforts as well to show their gratitude for the enjoyment, camaraderie and overall well-being they experienced during her tenure. Participants also indicated that her contributions would be 'truly missed.'

Congratulations, Emily!

Respectfully submitted,  
Marcia Chindamo, Service Manager  
Jenn Wiwchar, Director of Services & Quality Assurance



Volunteer of the Year

## Champion of Inclusion Awards

Both the **Algoma District School Board** and the **Huron Superior Catholic District School Board** have demonstrated strong leadership for inclusion and have gone above-and-beyond the board to help changes lives for people with autism spectrum disorder and an intellectual disability.

During the past three years, the ADSB and the HSCDSB have individually partnered, and worked collaboratively, with Community Living Algoma on a number of initiatives that have displayed their respective commitments to building a more inclusive environment, within their respective school settings and the surrounding communities.

Both school boards co-sponsored and staff participated in the Dr. Shelley Moore 'Inclusion & Diversity' presentation in October 2022. They further built upon this momentum by committing to Dr. Moore's five-part series around diversity, equity and inclusion involving numerous staff from across their respective schools throughout the 2023-2024 school year. Further, ADSB and HSCDSB have been supporters of CLA's 'Together We're Better' Contest held each February as part of Inclusive Education Month activities. Submissions are received from K-12 students highlighting how their respective classrooms, extracurricular programs or school promotes inclusion of students with an intellectual or developmental disability.

Third, both school boards have been active participants in Community Living Algoma's summer employment program that runs during July and August. Each board has hired two full-time students, who are supported by Job Coaches employed by CLA, to complete work related to preparing schools for September start-ups.

Lastly, ADSB initiated a three-way partnership involving Sault Area Hospital (SAH) and Community Living Algoma as part of Project SEARCH during the 2023-2024 school year. Project SEARCH is a school-to-work transition program for young people with an intellectual or communication disability. The student intern program is located at SAH and involves daily instruction from an ADSB teacher and job coaching from a skills trainer provided by Community Living Algoma. The internship experiences take place in various departments located within SAH. Upon completion, student interns have gained the skills, independence, and confidence to make a successful transition into the world of work.

Respectfully submitted,  
Sergio Iacoe, Manager of Inclusion



# Together We're Better Contest

## Inclusive Education Month Contest Winner



Every February, as part of Inclusive Education Month, CLA launches our 'Together We're Better' contest. Schools and students, from K-12 across Algoma, are encouraged to share examples of how inclusion is practiced in their schools. This year's award was presented to Our Lady of Lourdes Catholic Elementary School, in Sault Ste. Marie.

The news-style video, highlighting how to be inclusive, along with many examples of how it is put into practice at their school, was submitted by students in the Grade 2/3 class at Our Lady of Lourdes Catholic Elementary School. The video presentation entitled '*Breaking News – Live from Lourdes*' was student-driven - from the ideas, components, and execution - highlighting their strengths, talents, and authenticity.



The Huron-Superior Catholic District School Board students, taught by Nadia Zanatta (Vice Principal) each received certificates presented by Sergio Iacoe (Manager of Inclusion) and Cindy E. Crawford (Co-ordinator, Marketing & Communications). The classroom has 20 students and each played a role or contributed to the creation of their submission. The classroom also received a \$200 prize in the form of a gift card.

The CLA Education Committee was pleased to see a creative and insightful understanding about the importance of inclusion in everyone's life. The classroom teacher and the school also each received a certificate of recognition for their role in promoting and fulfilling an inclusive school environment.

The class submission is available for viewing on YouTube at: [https://youtu.be/HR5OKQsS\\_Tk](https://youtu.be/HR5OKQsS_Tk).



Respectfully submitted,  
Sergio Iacoe, Manager of Inclusion,  
Cindy E. Crawford, Co-ordinator, Marketing and Communications



Class photo: Our Lady of Lourdes Catholic Elementary School's winning grade 2/3 class.



Photo is of Mike Oliveira, Principal, Our Lady of Lourdes Catholic Elementary School. School teacher Nadia Zanatta and Sergio Iacoe (Manager of Inclusion, CLA).



## Volunteers

At Community Living Algoma (CLA), volunteers are the heart and soul of our organization. Their dedication and commitment are essential to the success of our committees, supports, and the achievement of our overall mission. Volunteer involvement goes beyond participation—it is their passion and drive that fuel the success of our initiatives. Whether by providing valuable insights, encouraging social inclusion, or contributing to strategic planning, our volunteers help shape and execute projects that directly benefit the individuals we support.

We want to highlight the critical role volunteers play at CLA—including one-on-one support, student volunteering, and committee work—and the tremendous impact of their efforts.

Student volunteers bring fresh perspectives and enthusiastic energy to CLA. Their involvement in various activities enriches their educational experience while advancing our Mission. Through student volunteering, we bridge the gap between theoretical learning and practical application, offering students valuable real-world experience while benefiting from their innovative ideas and perspectives. We have witnessed the positive impact students can make when given the creative freedom to organize and facilitate group activities for all people, and we look forward to even more engagement in the coming year.

This year has also given us the opportunity to plan the next stages of our volunteer initiatives. For example, we are excited to expand our one-on-one volunteer; focusing on fostering meaningful relationships and helping individuals build deeper connections within their communities. Our goal is to provide more opportunities for people to engage in activities that align with their interests and strengths, creating a sense of belonging and rootedness. As we move forward, we will continue to prioritize inclusive and person-centered approaches that empower individuals to thrive in their communities.

We extend our heartfelt gratitude to all our volunteers. Their time and effort are deeply appreciated and play a crucial role in our success. Their work is essential to driving our Mission forward and ensuring we continue to provide exceptional support to those we support.

Respectfully submitted,  
Kira Beall, Staff Support



## Rights Review Commission

All individuals should have the ability to exercise their human and civil rights and define which rights are most important to them. A rights restriction occurs when a rule, action, or situation limits a person’s choices or decisions by controlling their environment, possessions, finances, relationships, or actions. The Rights Review Commission is an impartial body of volunteers from outside the organization tasked with reviewing and recommending plans designed to help individuals receiving services from Community Living Algoma retain or regain their rights. This report highlights the collective efforts and achievements of our team in meeting our objectives for 2023.

To start, a significant change was made to the Rights Review Commission procedure. Beginning in January 2024, the commission will no longer review psychotropic medications prescribed for regular or daily use by a doctor. This change reflects the understanding that such prescriptions are managed by healthcare providers, and CLA will not determine the necessity of regular medication usage. However, psychotropic medications prescribed on an as-needed basis (PRNs) will continue to be subject to the commission's review. This ensures that PRNs administered by CLA are used appropriately (e.g., through Behavioral Support Plans where applicable) and that effective safeguards are in place. This adjustment helps streamline the commission's focus while ensuring that individuals with regular prescriptions have their medication decisions managed by healthcare professionals.

In 2023, the commission placed special emphasis on reducing financial restrictions, recognizing that doing so could significantly restore independence for individuals. Financial restrictions were identified through the overall Quality Assurance Strategy and monitored using Key Performance Indicators. Although reducing all types of restrictions remains a priority, the focus on financial autonomy represented a key initiative this year.

Please note: it has been standard practice to report information according to the calendar year. In moving forward, and to align with the Quality Assurance Strategy’s formatting, the Rights Review Commission will transition to a fiscal year reporting model.

Respectfully submitted,

Kira Beall, Staff Support, Rights Review Commission

Larissa Richmond	Kali Bertolo	Ennis Rosalind
Evi McKee	Deborah Chadwick	Kira Beall (staff support)



# Communications & Marketing

Communications & Marketing touches on all CLA events or activities and plays a vital role in ensuring consistency in messaging. We are continuously striving to earn, and sustain, recognition as a valued resource on the developmental services sector and demonstrate that our information and events complements the efforts shown in our supports and services. Keeping the conversation going is essential to a dialogue with the people we support and their family or caregivers. It is also essential that we ensure resources are made available to management and staff.

## Linktr.ee

[Linktr.ee](#) is an app that features a menu of direct on-line links to Algoma events and activities. It was created as a resource for Direct Support Professionals, providing them with an easy-to-access list of sites that can be readily accessed when planning events and activities with the people they support. It is regularly-updated to include seasonal or time-sensitive events.

This resources can be accessed by a QR code and is linked within our media sites such as SharePoint and Instagram, and will allow viewers to to dozens of landing pages of events and activities across Algoma.

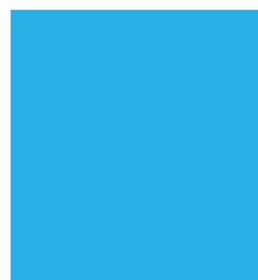


It can be accessed with this QR Code – open your cell phone camera and point it at the code, when the yellow link appears, tap it and it will automatically upload.(Do not click to take a photo).

## Newsletters

The Weekly Wrap-Up is an internal newsletter that highlights news of the week in addition to promoting events, workshops or other opportunities for community engagement. It is distributed, internally, via email and can then be found on ‘Insight’ – SharePoint the CLA Hub of information including resources, forms and essential links.

**The CLassic** is published quarterly and distributed via email in an instantaneous, interactive flipbook format or as a traditional print format via mail. It is distributed to people supported, their family, caregivers, CLA employees and other stakeholders. As an on-line publication, it features a flipbook format that is easy to ‘flip through’ and it allows for greater interaction via links or special features. Both current and back issues can readily be accessed thought CLA’s website link.





# Communications & Marketing

## Media Coverage

CLA advocates through media releases, radio advertising, exterior signage and online advertising. CLA carried a significant presence, across Canada, in the #5ToSurvive campaign that was an advocacy effort, by all 125 Community Living-type organizations to encourage people to sign a petition in favour of supporting a five percent funding increase in developmental services funding from the provincial government. CLA was specifically highlighted for its efforts in garnering media support that appeared in media across Canada. Typically, CLA also issues media releases in support of events such as the Education Awareness Month, May Awareness Month and the Annual General Meeting.

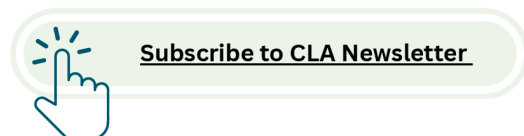
Our former Insight newsletter is now a platform that staff can access on SharePoint. Each week, the Weekly Wrap-Up features highlights of the week or promotion of events, 24/7. The CLAssic, a quarterly external newsletter, continues to be distributed to people supported, their family or caregivers and other interested stakeholders.

Radio commercials are written and recorded in-house and then sent out for production including a sound (music) bed. Radio spots are purchased at stations across Algoma.

**Social media** continues to grow in followers, both on Facebook and Instagram. Our website also attracts readers seeking information about CLA or people interested in applying for employment at CLA via a linked app called bamboo hr.



To subscribe to our free, quarterly newsletter, click here:



CLA's Communications & Marketing division is also a member of the Community Living Communications Network, as hosted by Community Living Ontario. In this role, we have provided on-line instruction and industry insight to Community Living members and outside agencies.

Respectfully submitted,  
Cindy E. Crawford, Communications & Marketing Coordinator



## DSP Week - September 10-16

DSP week really isn't a week or a month or a year – it can be a lifetime. During DSP Week, we take the time to thank our frontline staff for being a role model, mentor, guide, advocate and cheerleader. CLA recognizes that being a DSP goes beyond the roles and responsibilities, it is also about being a compassionate, kind, committed and knowledgeable person.

As DSPs, staff have a front-row seat as people reach milestone dates like birthdays; achieve personal goals; or experience their wishes or dreams. DSPs are cheerleaders whether it is to lift spirits in trying times and to celebrate the success stories. A DSP also puts in the time of a lived life that includes personal hygiene, meal preparation and accompanying a fan to a hockey game or taking a swimmer to the local pool or buying bait for a fishing trip. There is also community engagement such as meeting neighbours or working at a job or volunteering.

A Direct Support Professional is exactly that – a direct support to someone. CLA sees its role as the cheerleader, supporter and witness to the successes of our DSPs. We talk about how supporting someone with an intellectual disability benefits two people – you and the person supported. In fact, it also benefits the entire Community Living movement, as a whole. We are proud of our shared association.

During DSP Week, staff were encouraged to participate in contests to win prizes plus there were giveaways and, of course, a personal thank you gift. Congratulations to each and every one of our DSP staff on making a difference.

Respectfully submitted,  
Community Living Algoma



## Community Living Awareness Month – May 2023

May is Community Living Awareness Month. This is an annual month of recognition designated to raise awareness, educate and enlighten people about the Community Living movement that provides supports to people, with intellectual disabilities, across Algoma.

As part of the launch in April, municipalities across Algoma read proclamations recognizing May as Community Living Awareness Month. Participating municipalities include the City of Sault Ste. Marie, the Town of Blind River, the City of Elliot Lake, the Municipality of Wawa and the Township of Hornepayne. Depending on the municipality, proclamation meetings are also attended either in-person or virtually by a member of the Algoma Community Vision Council (ACVA).

Radio advertising and on-line advertising provide educational messaging throughout the month. In Sault Ste. Marie, Algoma’s Water Tower Inn featured green and blue lights during the first week of May and the same colours shone at CLA’s head office in Sault Ste. Marie throughout the month.

Regular social media messaging on Facebook, Instagram and the CLA website included posts about inclusion, diversity, advocacy and authentic citizenship. Resources are also provided, to the public, as to how to become involved as an advocate, community business or neighbour. Events or activities are also shared on-line and with other social service agencies to post on their sites or in their publications

In 2023, CLA hosted its first inaugural Awareness Walk, starting at the CLA office and continuing on a return walk along Northern Avenue. People supported, staff and other members of our community walked side-by-side in blue and green clothing. Positive encouragement was received by drive-by traffic or pedestrians. Participants carried Community Living Awareness signs – that were also available as lawn signs – to bring attention to this event.

Respectfully submitted,  
Cindy E. Crawford  
Marketing &  
Communications  
Coordinator



# Quality Assurance Strategy Annual Report (2023-2024)

**Welcome** to the annual report showcasing Community Living Algoma’s (CLA) robust Quality Assurance Strategy (QAS). This report provides a detailed analysis of the organization’s performance over the 2023-2024 fiscal year, highlighting key achievements and areas of improvement.

Through the use of Key Performance Indicators (KPIs), the organization can reflect on the successes achieved, as well as identify opportunities for growth. As advocates for inclusivity and empowerment, CLA remains dedicated to enhancing the quality of life for people with intellectual disabilities.

Join us on this journey as we celebrate the organization’s accomplishments and commit to continuous improvement in service delivery and community support!

## Background

In 2022, CLA launched the first QAS with the use of KPIs. This plan was developed as part of the Quality Assurance Policy to improve overall supports CLA provides and the working conditions of the organization.

CLA strongly believes that what gets measured gets done. Having KPIs ensures consistent growth as part of CLA’s commitment to continuous improvement for all stakeholders, to be transparent, and to make sound decisions for providing the best quality of supports and services.

This document encompasses CLA’s 2023-2024 QAS results collected between April 1, 2023 to March 31, 2024.

## Key Achievements

In the past year, CLA has achieved several milestones, showcasing the organization’s unwavering commitment to excellence and quality assurance.

Compliance rates soared from 68% to 95%, surpassing targets by 15% and marking a remarkable 40% increase.

Bathing supervision compliance reached exceptional levels, with three out of the four months achieving 100% compliance, with the fourth month seeing complete adherence to all indicators.



# Quality Assurance Strategy Annual Report (2023-2024)

	Measurement	Grade	Trend Line
Quality of Life	Overall Compliance	✓	
	Medication Errors	✗	
	Social Capital Index	✓	
	Financial Restrictions Reductions	⚠	
Workforce Excellence	Service Capacity	✗	
	Retention Rate	✓	
	Resignation Rate	✓	
	New Hires	⚠	
	All Overtime	⚠	
	Overall Sick Time	✓	



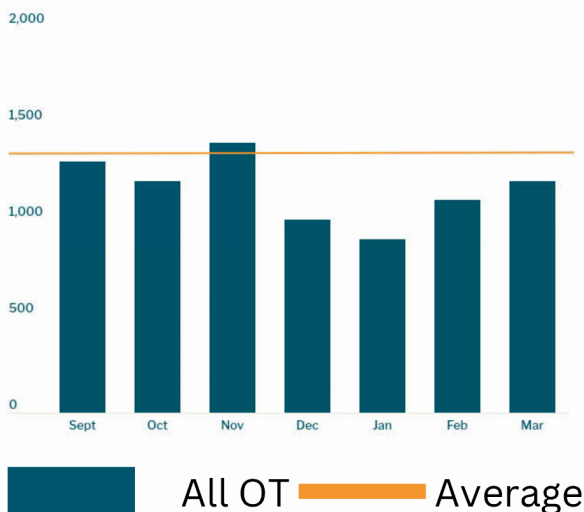
# Quality Assurance Strategy Annual Report (2023-2024)

CLA’s dedication to fostering community connections was evident in the Social Capital Index (SCI), exceeding 2019 scores by 1.6%. This demonstrates the organization’s success to rekindling relationships within the person’s community.

Moreover, employee retention resulted in an average retention rate of 97.9% per month, while the addition of 14 permanent staff members strengthened organizational capacity.

Despite challenges, CLA’s proactive measures led to a notable decline in overtime (OT) hours from September 2023 to March 2024, underscoring CLA’s commitment to operational efficiency and staff well-being.

## OT Sept - March



These achievements reflect CLA’s ongoing pursuit of excellence and dedication to enhancing the lives of those we serve.

## Summary

Overall, the organization made notable progress this reporting period. While there are still opportunities for improvement, there are several key areas where success was measured and should be acknowledged.

## Strengths

If a KPI met the target, the area is considered a strength. This reporting period, the organization’s strengths are identified in Compliance, the Social Capital Index, Retention and Resignation, and Sick Time.

Compliance consistently showed that the organization was meeting MCCSS QAM standards. Missed temperature readings drastically reduced, flagged temperature readings were regularly resolved satisfactorily, and bathing supervision protocols were all compliant.



# Quality Assurance Strategy Annual Report (2023-2024)

The organization’s SCL score showed that CLA is moving in the right direction to help people recognize their full potential within their community. More work needs to be done to help people interact with members of the community, however, overall people have seen SCL scores similar to those of pre-COVID.

Retention and Resignation numbers indicated that the organization did not see a drastic drop in employees. Overall, the organization’s capacity increased by 14 staff, aligning CLA better to address waitlist pressures and further meet our MCCSS set targets.

Sick Time had few deviations from the average. All targets for the year were met.

## Moderate Improvement

If a KPI did not meet the target, but positive trends were noted, the area is considered to have moderate improvement. Financial Rights Restrictions, New Hires, and Overtime are all considered to have met this criterion.

Financial Rights Restrictions had 7 out of the 8 planned restrictions eliminated, New Hires amounted to 93 out of the 99 target, and Overtime saw a significant reduction since September 2023. These are all positive signs, showing that while the actual target wasn’t met, CLA is headed in the right direction with these initiatives.

## Opportunity for Improvement

If the KPI did not meet the target, and no positive trends were noted, the area is considered to have an opportunity for improvement. Medication Errors did not once meet the monthly target, though it should be noted there were fewer errors in the reporting period than in the previous reporting period. Service Capacity also fell short of the intended target by 11%.

## Conclusion

CLA has much to celebrate in the identified strengths. By leveraging these and addressing areas of improvement, the organization can continue to enhance its performance and better serve staff and people supported!

Respectfully submitted,  
Jenn Wiwchar, Director of Services &  
Quality Assurance  
Tasha Mergaert, Data Analyst &  
AIMS administrator

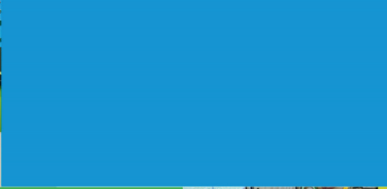
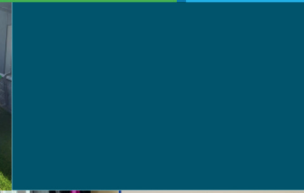


[Click here to read the full Quality Assurance Strategy Report](#)





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INCLUSION



UNITY &  
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[www.communitylivingalgoma.org](http://www.communitylivingalgoma.org) 



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