



2025

ANNUAL REPORT

Rising Stronger Every Day

(519) 668 0023

www.daleservices.on.ca

345 Saskatoon Street, London ON, N5W 4R4

DBIS exists to support people with acquired brain injuries to enrich their lives through developing skills and making connections.



Ontario
Health

WHO WE ARE

OUR VISION

We build futures.

OUR MISSION

At Dale Brain Injury Services we provide a continuum of high quality, client-centred services to persons affected by an acquired brain injury. By providing services that are accessible, evidence-based and responsive to the changing needs of our clients, our community, and our partners, DBIS supports individuals to maximize their strengths and live healthy, meaningful lives.



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MA'S SUCCESS STORY

Murray's journey to independence has been a remarkable story of resilience, progress, and collaboration. After meeting with staff from Dale Services in June 2024, Murray was initially unable to return home after his Parkwood Inpatient stay and transitioned to a Long-Term Care (LTC) facility. At that time, the goal was to help him regain the skills and confidence needed to live safely in the community.

By February 2025, Murray had made significant strides in his recovery, prompting a request for DBIS reassessment from Comprehensive Outpatient Rehabilitation Program staff at Parkwood. It was clear that he had the potential to thrive more independently in the community again. An updated needs assessment in March led to his referral for the Rehabilitation Transition Support (RTS) program, which focused on rebuilding his independence and integrating him back into daily life.

RTS Program (April 22 - May 22, 2025):

Murray entered the RTS program with a clear focus on restoring structure to his daily routine. During his stay, he worked diligently on:

- **Functional skills:** Building confidence in his functional speech and day-to-day activities.
- **Routine and Structure:** Using tools like a whiteboard to schedule tasks, providing clarity and organization.
- **Safety and Confidence:** Engaging in extensive safety planning to ensure he was well-prepared for his transition home.

- **Community Integration:** Actively participating in the community and building connections, with a strong emphasis on preparing for life outside the structured environment of RTS.

Throughout his stay at RTS, communication between Murray, his caregiver, and the support team was key. Regular check-ins and collaboration ensured that Murray was not only progressing within the program but also becoming more comfortable with his new routines.

Successful Community Transition:

The final phase of Murray's journey was the 4-week transitional phase, where he received tailored support at home. This period focused on:

- **In-home Support:** Ensuring Murray's living environment was adapted to meet his needs.
- **Caregiver Education:** Equipping his family and caregivers with the tools and knowledge to continue supporting his independence.
- **Ongoing Communication:** Coordinating check-ins and ensuring follow-through with safety plans and daily routines.

Today, thanks to the combined efforts of the RTS team, Murray and his caregiver/family he has successfully transitioned back to his home, with a renewed sense of confidence, independence, and a clear pathway to continue thriving in his everyday life.



“ Our experience with the RTS program was absolutely awesome. In just one month, Murray gained the confidence and tools he needed to function independently. The program helped him rebuild the skills essential for living on his own and gave him the belief that he could succeed. The transition from the RTS program, home went incredibly smooth. Murray was so determined to make it happen, and he truly put all his learning and hard work into action!”

Heather (Partner) and Murray

STRATEGIC PRIORITIES

2023-2026

Continuously evolve the service model to meet client, family and system demands.

Strengthen/
Enhance our
Resources

Deliver
Excellent,
Accessible
Client
Services

Be a
Good
Partner

Develop and maintain sufficient human capital to achieve targets and innovate.

Modernize and improve the efficiency of operations.

Develop and maintain a culture of inclusivity and belonging.

Demonstrate and improve value to system/providers.

Investigate partnerships / integration opportunities.

MESSAGE FROM THE CHAIR & CEO



Sue Hillis
Chief Executive
Officer

The client stories in this Annual Report are a powerful reminder of why our work matters. We couldn't summarize it any better than Murray's partner does in his story, **"The program helped him rebuild the skills essential for living on his own - and gave him the belief that he could succeed."** At its heart, our organization exists for one reason: to improve the 'futures' of the people living with the effects of an Acquired Brain Injury in our community. Thanks to the dedication of our staff, the generosity of our funders and donors, and the trust of those we serve, we have been able to deliver compassionate, high-quality support to hundreds of individuals and families this year.

A Year of Impact

We are proud of the year we have had:

- Overall 94% client satisfaction with their experience at DBIS.
- Continued our rating trend of over 90% (92%) client satisfaction with DBIS ensuring that our services/supports are aligned with what clients have stated that they value most: dignity, rights, independence, and respectful, confidential care.
- Reduced number of complaints and incidents.
- Redesign of our Community Transitional Support services to provide more people with more services.



Nigel Gilby
Chair, President
Board of Directors

The Power of People

None of this would have been possible without the extraordinary efforts of our team members – the front-line staff, the leaders who support them and the back office teams who are our foundation, all of whom go above and beyond every single day. Our success is driven by the extraordinary dedication of our staff, and volunteers. Their compassion fuels every interaction. Their commitment ensures that care is not only accessible, but personal.

Looking Ahead

As we look ahead, despite challenges we face with fiscal constraints, we remain committed to advancing health equity, deepening our commitment to support changes in our healthcare system, building more community connections, and ensuring that every person who comes through our doors feels respected, cared for, and valued. We are continuously amazed by the resilience of our clients who chose the new slogan for our t-shirts "Rising Stronger every day" and are honoured to walk alongside them on their rehabilitation journey.

The final insight to summarize our year are the words of Kent (who was a candidate in this year's federal election – story included)

What advice would you share to anyone who is beginning their acquired brain injury journey?

Stick with it, you can't give up. If you keep trying, you'll get it.

Sue Hillis, CEO
Nigel Gilby, Board Chair



PROGRAMS & SERVICES

Assisted Living Services: 24/7 residential services in a structured, safe environment within the London community. Short term to lifelong.

Caregiver Support Services: Services include residential and in-person respite options, counselling, caregiver support groups, virtual coffee chats, information sessions and a Caregiver Facebook group.

Community Transitional Services: One-to-one transitional support, rehabilitation and service coordination to individuals in their home or community and are offered for up to 12 months.

Consultation and Training: General education to service providers about Acquired Brain Injury (ABI) (including stroke). Services are available in **Elgin, Oxford, London/Middlesex, Huron, Perth, Grey and Bruce Counties.**

Group Services: Services are flexible and provided in a group setting focusing on individual and group goal achievement, increased independence and quality of life. short-term, transitional, or lifelong basis.

Life After Stroke: 6-month rehabilitation-focused adult day program for individuals who have experienced a stroke. Referrals are made from Parkwood Hospital's Community Stroke Rehabilitation Team.

Residential Transitional Services: Short term, up to six months, community based assessment and transitional rehabilitation in a structured 24/7 residential environment

Respite Services: Short term, to provide care partner a break from caregiving duties, provided either in their home or in a DBIS residential setting in the London area.

Short Term Case Management: Designed to quickly respond to individuals requiring immediate supports to prevent or resolve a crisis situation. Short term, generally weeks.



RISING STRONG PHILOSOPHY

The Rising Strong framework is a strengths-based philosophy that shapes how we support clients, caregivers, and team members, as well as how we see ourselves. The philosophy focuses on building what's strong rather than fixing what's wrong, helping each person recognize their resilience and capacity to live a meaningful life, even when faced with challenges. It is a way of thinking and working that continues to shape how we grow together as a community.

The framework is made up of six keys for success. They include: **(1) HOPE**, a belief system that things can change; **(2) KINDNESS**, an act of helping ourselves and others to feel cared for and valued; **(3) FUN**, an activity that brings about enjoyable experiences and feelings; **(4) CONFIDENCE**, believing in one's own abilities to succeed and make positive changes; **(5) DETERMINATION**, the ability to manage your emotions and focus on actions to achieve; and **(6) GROWTH**, the process of striving to be a better version of yourself.

Rising Stronger Every Day, our theme for the 2024–25 Annual Report, reflects this philosophy in action. Our featured client stories show how embracing these keys for success can lead to meaningful change.



Kent's Determination in Motion

Kent was skiing in Lake Tahoe with the skis he had gotten for Christmas, when on his very first downhill run, he had an accident and fell into a coma for a week. As he recalls, "from the beginning, I had to learn how to walk; I was in a wheelchair for a while. I also had to learn how to talk, forming complete sentences. My memory was a huge issue; I didn't remember much!" When Kent first came to DBIS, he spent time at the clubhouse, catching up with peers and having lunch.

Recently, he was the London–Middlesex Liberal Candidate in the 2024 election. With an MBA from Queen's University and a long-time interest in politics, he hadn't considered campaigning until the Liberal Party called to ask for his vote, sparking his political journey. Growing up in the area, he knew it well, and when the new Middlesex–London riding was created, he knew he had to run.

Asked about challenges during the campaign, Kent remained positive: "I had many people assisting me and I would have had an assistant who would have been a great help. My iPhone has been awesome for memory, I write everything down." Kent's story is one of determination and confidence. His advice to anyone beginning their acquired brain injury journey: *"stick with it, you can't give up. If you keep trying, you'll get it."*

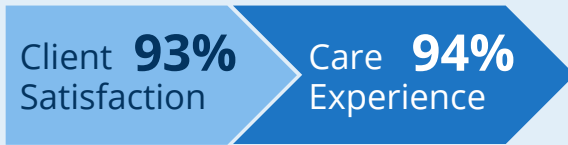


CLIENT EXPERIENCE SURVEY

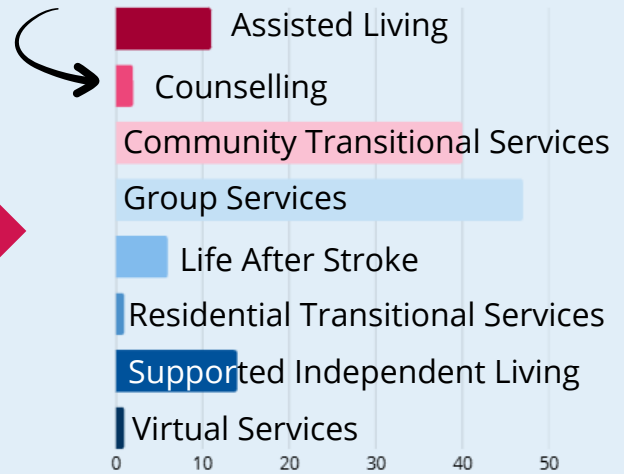
2024-25

We continue to collect client satisfaction and experience data to; identify gaps, inform improvement efforts, understand the needs of the people we serve, improve overall satisfaction and experience, and to assess the impact of organizational changes over time.

119 Responses



Number of Surveys Completed by Program

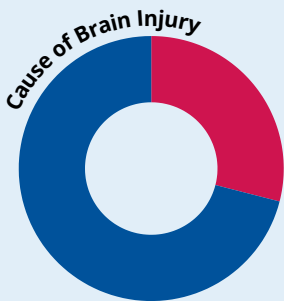


“ When I ask a question, I always get a good answer.
 Wonderful staff (friendly, supportive, caring).
 Provided positive, ongoing encouragement even for small gains.

ADMISSIONS NUMBERS

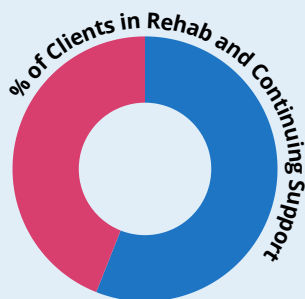
In 2024/25, 774 people accessed 1,266 services, 104 more clients than last year. The share of clients receiving more than one service doubled from 20% to 40%. Service numbers have generally risen over the past four years (720 in 2021/22, 556 in 2022/23, and 670 in 2023/24), reflecting our efforts to review Service Plans regularly and add services as needed to support clients and caregivers.

2024-25

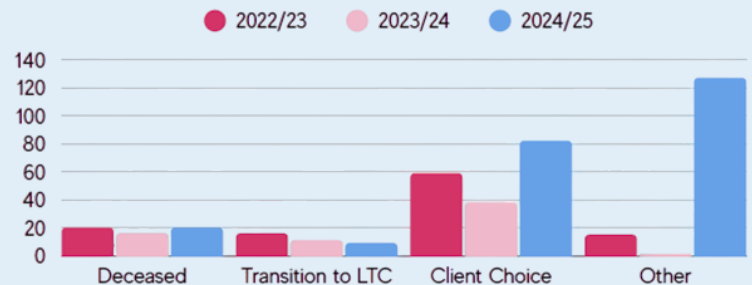


29%, Traumatic: sudden, external, physical assault damages the brain.
71%, Non-Traumatic: damage to the brain by internal factors, such as lack of oxygen.

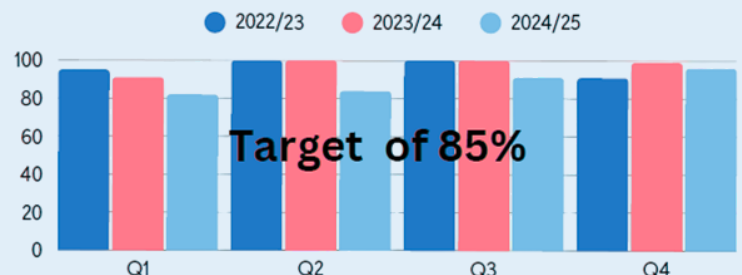
44%, Rehab Stream
56%, Continuing Support



Yearly Comparison - Reasons for Discharge



Admissions Experience Surveys - Yearly Comparison of Satisfaction



CONCUSSION WARRIORS

This year, Dr. Alan Lawrence and Natalie Woods offered a 6-week group program to address Persisting Post-Concussion Syndrome. The program, called Concussion Warriors, was delivered to seven individuals who continue to experience debilitating symptoms affecting almost all aspects of their daily lives.

This was a pilot project, designed to determine the efficacy of an approach drawn from the Positive Psychology model. The program was not focused on symptom reduction but rather on improving each member's quality of life through personal growth in spite of persisting symptoms. They were encouraged to reflect on aspects of their lives that they are able to control rather than on the persisting concussion symptoms that they are currently unable to control. The content of each session reflected the personal strengths incorporated in our **Rising Strong philosophy** namely *Fun, Kindness, Determination, Confidence, Growth and Hope*.

One outcome measure of the program was the participants' *self-rating of perceived control when dealing with activities of daily living*. At the first session, participants estimated how much of their lives was governed by their concussion effects and how much was under their own control. To obtain an estimate of the overall effectiveness of the program in improving self-efficacy and self-control, mean scores were calculated for initial and final ratings.



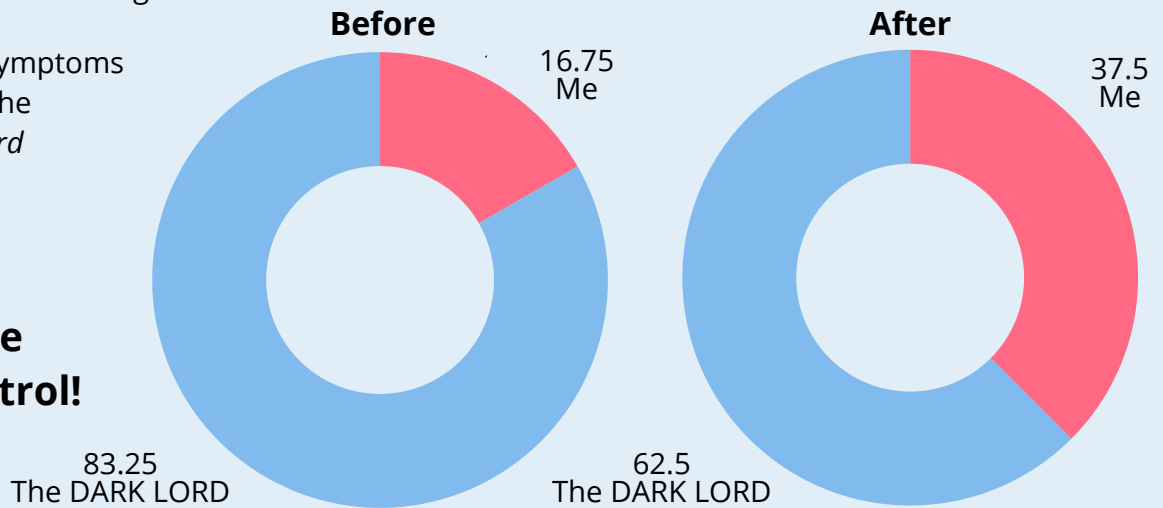
Dr. Alan Lawrence
Ph. D., C. Psych



Natalie Woods
MACP, RP

Concussion-controlled symptoms were personified using the metaphor of *the Dark Lord*

124%
increase in the
belief of self-control!



“I’m more hopeful now than before I started the group”

“I learned that concussion affected my life but doesn’t need to ruin it”

“The concussion affected my mind/body/life and I learned that I can make decisions for me and not let the concussion make them for me”



CAREGIVER RECOGNITION

Caregiving for someone with a brain injury can have a significant emotional impact on caregivers, leading to increased stress, anxiety, depression, and feelings of isolation and guilt. These negative emotional outcomes can stem from various factors, including the unexpected changes in the injured person's behavior and the challenges of managing their care, as well as the loss of personal time and social isolation.

DBIS aims to empower caregivers by helping them feel more confident in handling challenges, building resilience, and fostering a hopeful outlook, showing that it's possible to live a fulfilling life while managing caregiving responsibilities. Connecting with others in similar situations helps caregivers feel less alone and more understood. These supports reduce stress, burnout and feelings of being overwhelmed by offering breaks, someone to talk to and practical advice. When caregivers are supported, both they and the person they care for tend to do better emotionally, physically and in daily life.

SUPPORTS AVAILABLE

Weekly Virtual Coffee Chat Groups

Caregivers are provided the opportunity to support one another informally and share conversation and discussion of topics of interest to them.

Caregiver Self-Care Booklet

This resource allows caregivers to strengthen their capacity for coping with the challenges by emphasizing the importance of self-care.

Individual Counselling

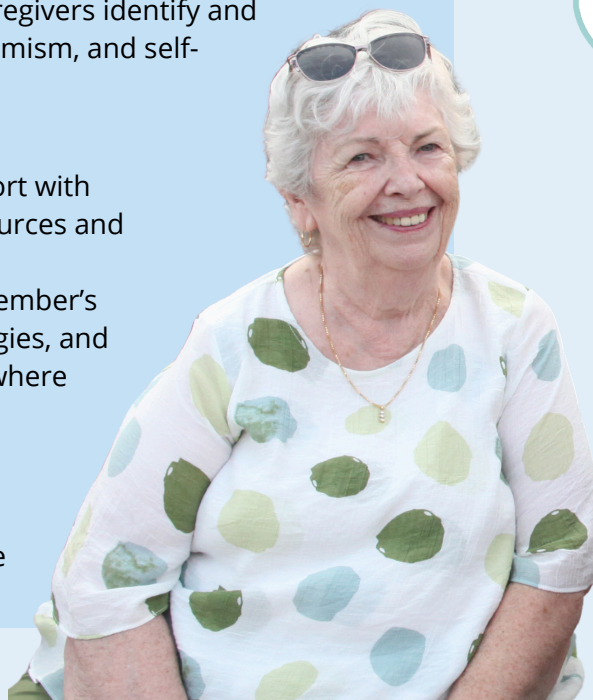
The approach used focuses on utilizing the Rising Strong Framework to help caregivers identify and improve strengths, hope, optimism, and self-confidence

Consultation & Training

These sessions provide support with such things as accessing resources and services, problem solving, understanding your family member's challenges, developing strategies, and addressing any other issues where you need assistance.

Respite Supports

Provided both in home and DBIS' residential setting in the London area.



VOLUNTEER RECOGNITION

Thank you to all of our dedicated team of volunteers at Dale Brain Injury Services! In every way, you embody the values of compassion, community, and care. Your presence continues to elevate the quality and spirit of the organization.

Our volunteer program offers a diverse selection of roles ranging from client engagement to weekly commitments, leadership roles, and assisting with special events and projects. Regardless of their role, each volunteer contributes to our collective success in supporting those we serve

OVER THE PAST YEAR OUR VOLUNTEERS HAVE:

Helped in this many program sessions	150+
Completed this many service hours	780
A satisfaction rating of	96%



WHAT OUR VOLUNTEERS ARE SAYING:

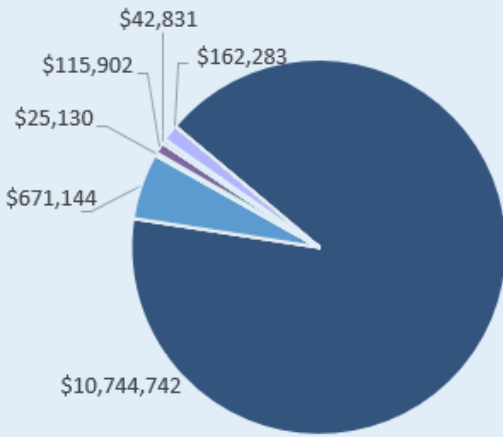
My interaction with the clients each week is so uplifting. I find all of them so positive considering what they have ensured and it's helped me put my life in perspective.

Connecting with the clients has been such a wonderful experience. Helping at the caregiver event was great and the annual fundraiser was truly a lot of fun.

FINANCIAL STATEMENTS

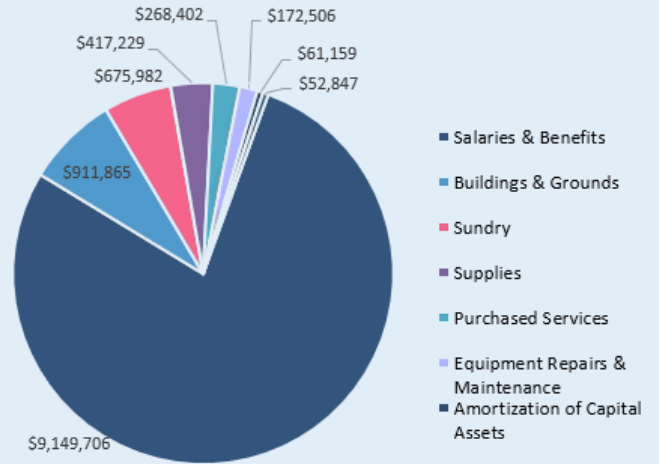
During the year, quarterly financial reports and financial statements were reviewed by the Finance Committee and the Board of Directors. In the spring of 2025 the 2024-2025 financial statements were audited by KPMG Chartered Accountants.

These graphs are a summary of the Revenue and Expenses for the year ended March 31, 2025.



Revenues 2024-25

- Ontario Health & LHIN Funding
- Client Fees
- Amortization of deferred contributions
- Other Income
- Donations & Fundraising
- Investment Income



Expenses 2024-25

- Salaries & Benefits
- Buildings & Grounds
- Sundry
- Supplies
- Purchased Services
- Equipment Repairs & Maintenance
- Amortization of Capital Assets

A copy of the financial statements is available upon request.

Highlights

We have made significant progress in the implementation of GoldCare as our centralized database system.

Caregivers overwhelmingly reported that DBIS contributes meaningfully to their loved ones lives. Overall score of 97% for service contribution.

The 2025 cross-program overall client satisfaction score is 94% highlighting the high-quality, person-centred service DBIS provides.

Programs have an overall 93% recommendation rate reinforcing DBIS' strong service reputation and positive client experience.

Service Statistics

Assisted Living

38

Clients

6743

Days

Group Services

168

Clients

6838

Visits

Outreach

491

Clients

27307

Hours of Service

2024-25 ANNUAL NUMBERS

DONATE TODAY

Help us to move forward,
together we CAN make a
difference!

With donations like yours we are able to enrich
the lives of our clients, survivors of Acquired
Brain Injuries (including Stroke).



Thank you to our generous community of donors!

Enriching Lives Fund

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ERRORS & OMISSIONS

Every effort has been made to ensure complete accuracy of the donor list.
We apologize in advance for any errors, please contact 519-668-0023 x1119 to advise.

