



ANNUAL REPORT 2024-2025

Wesway acknowledges with respect that our offices are situated on the ancestral lands of the Anishinaabe people, specifically the territory of the Fort William First Nation, which is a signatory to the Robinson Superior Treaty of 1850. Additionally, we respectfully recognize that our services extend across other traditional lands and Treaty Territories of Indigenous Peoples.

Our Mission

Wesway enhances the well-being of caregivers by:

- ▶ Offering personalized respite services,
- ▶ providing dedicated support, and
- ▶ advocating for a more responsive and inclusive community of care.

Our Values

Wesway:

- ▶ Embraces caregiver choice and respects their experience and lived wisdom
- ▶ Recognizes that caregivers are the “experts” in relation to their family member’s care
- ▶ Is flexible, innovative, and responsive to people’s needs
- ▶ Acts with kindness, care, empathy, and respect
- ▶ Inspires excellence through listening, learning and continuous quality improvement
- ▶ Commits to equity, diversity, inclusion and belonging

Wesway Board of Directors 2024-2025

Filomena Gregorash
President

Andre Korstanje
Past President

Heather Gray
Vice President

Tom Forsythe
Secretary/Treasurer

Directors

Verna Brannan

Brenda Coopman

Liisa Osala-Simi

Nancy Veal

Rosie Vita

Strategic Priorities



“Thank you for your support. Respite has afforded me time to ‘boost my battery’. It has helped me and I’m sure it will help others in the future.”

President's Report

As I come to the end of my ten-year term on the Wesway Board of Directors, it's a good time to reflect on the work we've accomplished together over the past year.

One of the most significant achievements has been the development and implementation of Wesway's strategic plan. This was a comprehensive process that began with external and internal analysis and extensive consultation with the community, families we serve, staff, volunteers, and key partners. The insights we received helped shape a new mission statement and four key strategic priorities that now guide our organizational direction.

To support this, a detailed work plan was developed with assigned timelines and clear ownership for each stage. Committees were created to ensure progress, accountability, and to focus on our priorities.

These priorities are deeply rooted in our core values and reflect our unwavering commitment to those we serve. By focusing our efforts in these key areas and by fully embracing equity, diversity, and inclusion, we are not only strengthening our organization but also reinforcing our ability to deliver the highest quality respite care to the caregivers who depend on us. As we forge ahead, these guiding priorities will help ensure that every step we take is grounded in purpose, compassion, and a vision for lasting impact.

Recognizing the importance of proactive planning, we established a Succession Planning Committee to begin addressing the future staffing needs of our organization. Preserving our corporate memory, history, and culture is essential to maintaining continuity and long-term strength. I'm pleased to share that this important work is already underway, with valuable contributions from three of our newer Board members, Rosie, Liisa, and Verna, who have joined Nancy, one of our long-standing members, in supporting this vital initiative.

And lastly, we also began reviewing policies on a monthly basis to ensure alignment with the strategic plan and to keep everything current and relevant.

As we plan for the future, we are actively seeking new Board members who bring fresh perspectives, diverse skill sets, and a passion for our mission. We welcome individuals with a wide range of professional and lived experiences and look forward to the valuable contributions that new members will bring to strengthen our Board and organization.

I'd also like to recognize Andre Korstanje, who is completing his ten-year term on the Board. Andre's commitment and steady presence have had a lasting, positive impact on Wesway, and his contributions will certainly be missed.

On behalf of the Board, I also want to thank Dana MacMillan, our Executive Director. Dana's leadership over the past year has been instrumental in moving the strategic plan forward and guiding the organization through a time of meaningful change.

As I conclude my term, I do so with great confidence in the strength and dedication of Wesway's Board of Directors. Their unwavering commitment to our mission and the valuable insight they consistently bring to the table ensure that Wesway remains in capable hands. I am certain the Board will continue to provide strong, thoughtful leadership as the organization moves forward.

Serving on the Wesway Board has been a privilege, and I want to thank each of you, Board members, staff, volunteers, and partners for your dedication and collaboration over the years. I look forward to seeing Wesway continue to grow and serve the community with excellence.

Filomena Gregorash
President

As I reflect on the past year, I do so with deep appreciation for the collaborative efforts of our Board, staff, volunteers, and community partners. I feel a strong sense of pride in what we have accomplished together. This has been a year marked by meaningful accomplishments, emerging challenges, and an unwavering commitment to our mission. Through it all, Wesway continued to play a vital role in strengthening families and communities across our region.

Our efforts this year were shaped by our four recently established strategic priorities: *Improving Caregiver Services, Investing in Our People, Enhancing Our External Presence, and Creating a Healthy and Sustainable Organization*. These priorities have provided clear direction, helping us to align our teams, shape new initiatives, and make decisions that advance our mission. Our accomplishments reflect the collective dedication and passion of all involved in our work.

By focusing our efforts strategically, we have strengthened internal operations, built stronger relationships with partners, and ensured our services remain responsive, effective, and future-oriented. These priorities have laid a strong foundation for meaningful change, allowing us to better support caregivers, empower our staff and volunteers, elevate our organizational profile, and foster a resilient workplace.

While we celebrate our successes, we acknowledge that the year was not without its challenges. We faced changes in funding formulas and directives that impacted service availability, resulting in increased wait times for respite support. These delays placed additional strain on family caregivers, many of whom rely heavily on our services for their well-being. We recognize the impact this has had on caregivers and remain committed to advocating for improved access to respite, while continuing to support the strength and resilience of caregivers.

Looking ahead, we remain firmly committed to honouring and supporting the vital role of caregivers. We will continue to enhance our services, expand our outreach, and invest in organizational resilience to ensure we meet the evolving needs of caregivers in all of the communities we serve.

I would like to express my gratitude to our Board of Directors, staff, volunteers, and community partners for your unwavering support and commitment to our mission. Together, we are making a lasting difference.

Dana MacMillan
Executive Director

"This service is so valuable to me in caring for my father. I am very thankful. I am always telling other caregivers about this service. Thank you again!"



Enhancing Our External Presence

Visibility and partnerships are essential for building trust, increasing support, and extending our impact.

- Participated in several local, regional, provincial and international forums to ensure that we advocate for the unique needs of caregivers, while amplifying the voice of those we serve.
- Strengthened relationships with local, district and regional partners, including health care providers and Indigenous service organizations.
- Participated in system planning such as Urgent Response, Ontario Health Teams, Regional Network of Specialized Services and the Provincial Respite Services Network.
- Involved with the Ontario Caregiver Coalition in developing the *Building a Better Ontario for Caregivers by Supporting Caregiver Respite* Policy Brief. Wesway is highlighted within the report as an outstanding example of a family-responsive respite agency.
- Supported the creation of an Ontario Caregiver Support Benefit, which, if approved, would provide direct financial support for unpaid caregivers.

Creating a Healthy and Sustainable Organization

Sustainability underpins our ability to serve caregivers today and into the future.

- Through prudent budgeting and diversified funding, Wesway ended the fiscal year in a stable financial position despite ongoing sector pressures.
- Initiated a review of governance practices to enhance decision-making and oversight.
- Initiate a structured process to identify, assess, and develop mitigation plans for operational risks.
- Introduced AlayaCare, a new agency-wide 'end-to-end' software system to help automate those aspects of our support services that can be streamlined, allowing staff to focus on personalized, high-quality care.
- Established on-site IT support for timely access and better internal communications.
- Updated our cybersecurity protocols.



Treasurer's Report

As we reflect on the past year, I'm pleased to share that Wesway has supported more caregivers than ever before through our respite services. This milestone speaks not only to the growing need for caregiver support but also to the strength of our organization and the partnerships that sustain us.

The financial resources required to deliver these vital services are detailed in our Statement of Operations below, as well as in our audited financial statements. These documents reflect the ongoing investment in our mission by both government funders and community partners.

Wesway continues to receive annualized funding, which forms the backbone of our service delivery. Our annualized funding from the Ministry of Children, Community and Social Services, as well as Ontario Health (Ministry of Health), ensures the stability of our core respite services. This consistent support allows us to provide our ongoing respite services to families who rely on this essential service.

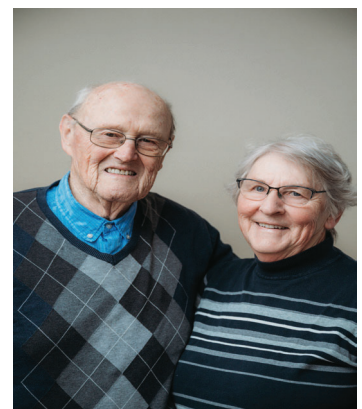
In addition, fiscal year funding from Ontario Health enabled us to continue to operate the Wait-at-Home program and expand our outreach to include supporting senior families who have been waiting for services. This targeted support has been critical in meeting the diverse and evolving needs of our community.

Through collaborative fiscal year partnerships, we were also able to respond to urgent situations for families caring for a child with Autism by providing timely and flexible respite support.

We continue to work closely with the Nishnawbe Aski Nation and Nookiwin Tribal Council, with fiscal year funding provided by Indigenous Services Canada under Jordan's Principle. While recent changes to funding formulas and operating principles have reduced flexibility and overall resources in this area, Wesway remained committed to our promises. We successfully upheld our service commitments, reaching more caregivers than in previous years.

The continued support we receive from various funding streams, provincial, federal, and community-based, is a strong affirmation of the trust placed in Wesway's ability to adapt and deliver our much needed respite services. We received confirmation of some of our fiscal year funding very late in the year, resulting in a surplus situation for Wesway.

Tom Forsythe
Secretary/Treasurer



Respite Home

A variety of respite services are available in Wesway's comfortable home-like settings. With the support of trained Respite Workers, small groups of participants enjoy social and recreational activities tailored to their interests, while being supported with their daily life routines.

In-Home

Wesway's Respite Workers perform the daily care routine typically provided by the family caregiver. This support may be carried out in the family home, or if preferred, the worker may accompany participants to activities outside of the home.

Volunteer

Every week or two, Community Friend Volunteers share their time with an individual and together they enjoy a few hours of social or recreational activities in the community. Host Family Volunteers provide longer periods of respite by welcoming an individual into their home.

Family Directed Respite Funding

Family caregivers decide how they would like to receive their respite and Wesway reimburses the approved costs. Families are able to use the funding in a wide variety of ways.

With the support of our fundraising efforts, generous donations, and Ministry funding, Wesway was able to provide approximately 45,312 hours of crisis respite support to 206 individuals and families. Since no one can predict when an emergency might occur such as death, illness, or other extraordinary situation, Wesway strives to support families through some of life's most difficult respite care challenges with our crisis support.



Statement of Operations

(For the year ended March 31, 2025)

REVENUE

Adult DS Support Services	\$ 976,093
Children's DS Support Services	\$ 915,422
Respite Services	\$ 278,462
Autism Spectrum Disorder Program	\$ 77,152
Complex Special Needs	\$ 89,044
Community Support	\$ 5,211,137
Assisted Living - Wait at Home	\$ 1,215,931
Assisted Living - Client Billing	\$ 197,599
Enhanced Pandemic Funding - MCCSS	\$ 39,382
Enhanced Pandemic Funding - MOHLTC	\$ 208,999
Other Revenue	\$ 10,434,041
Amortization of deferred revenue related to capital assets	\$ 72,865
Total	\$19,716, 127

EXPENDITURES

Adult DS Support Services	\$ 1,164,076
Children's DS Support Services	\$ 1,155,219
Respite Services	\$ 318,566
Autism Spectrum Disorder Program	\$ 110,221
Complex Special Needs	\$ 89,044
Community Support	\$ 5,809,940
Assisted Living	\$ 1,748,890
Other Programs	\$ 9,045,946
Other Miscellaneous	\$ 154,506
Total	\$19,596,408
Surplus	\$ 119,719

Financial Overview

MCCSS/MCYS
\$2,375,555

MOHLTC-CSS
\$6,636,067

Internal Billing
\$197,599

Other and Amortization
\$10,506,906



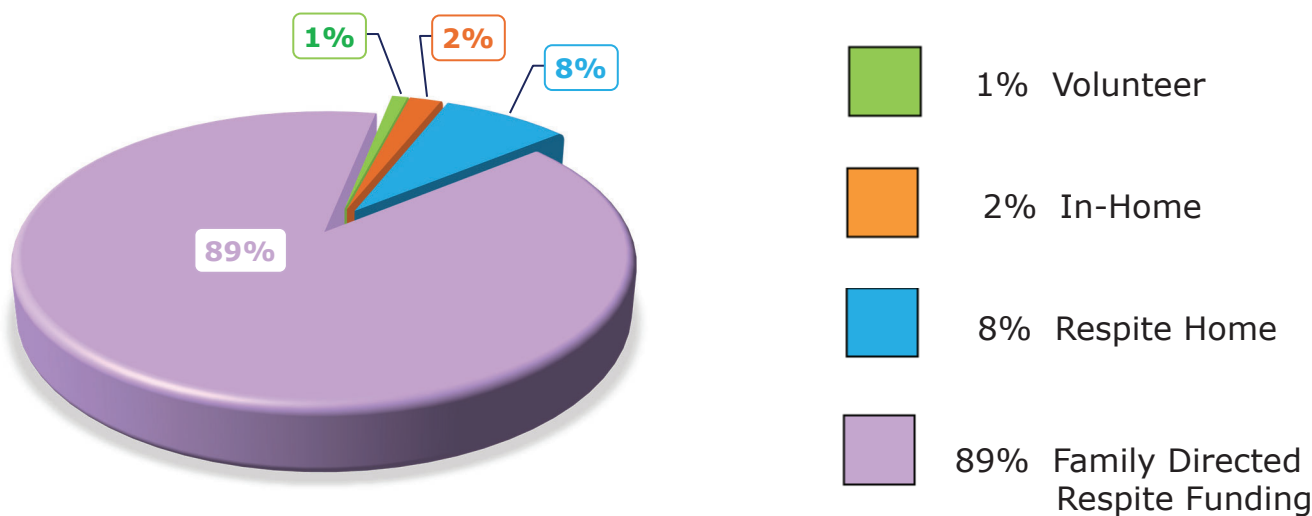
New Funding

Additional Funding of \$2,546,600 in 2024/2025 to support families waiting for service, included in "Community Support".

Snapshot of Services 2024-2025

Individuals Served - 1,921

Hours of Service - 1,355,275



“The help received is so heart warming and professional. I am so grateful for your compassion, assistance and helping me learn about help. This is a new world to both of us. Thank you!”



1 in 4 people identify as a caregiver in Canada



1 in 2 people will become a caregiver in their lifetime

Key Developments and Achievements

Improving Caregiver Services

Wesway remains committed to enhancing the quality, accessibility, and responsiveness of our caregiver support services.

- Offered a varied menu of respite services to meet the unique needs of the individuals and families we support.
- Adapted quickly to emerging, unforeseen crises, providing urgent respite responses.
- Successfully launched new respite opportunities, a day service for adults, and support for senior families who were waiting for services.
- Strengthened partnerships that support service delivery, such as working with EMS to find collaborative solutions and supports that divert individuals from non-emergency Emergency Department visits, working with children's organizations in the east and west to support children with Autism and their families in times of crisis, and outreach within Thunder Bay, the District and the Region to ensure that we reached those who can assist us in getting the word out to even the most isolated caregivers.
- Began a review of our eligibility for services, focusing on a current state analysis of our eligibility practices, strengths, barriers to access, and limitations, with a view to improvements.
- Received positive feedback from Wesway's caregiver survey. It showed that our caregivers experienced increased satisfaction and a stronger sense of support, with 99% reporting that they are:
 - pleased with the quality of support Wesway provides,
 - satisfied with our services, and
 - treated with dignity and respect.

Investing in Our People

Our team is the heart of Wesway. Investing in our staff and volunteers ensures the sustainability and excellence of our services.

- Implemented targeted and timely recruitment strategies, resulting in a 10% decrease in staff turnover rates.
- Negotiated a new four-year Collective Agreement focusing on improved wages and additional benefits to improve the retention of staff.
- Enhanced staff and volunteer appreciation activities that recognized milestone years of service.
- Hired an HR Specialist with a dedicated focus on EDI.
- Invested in succession planning and development.
- Transitioned RRSPs for staff to better growth/pension options.
- Provided new volunteer opportunities within our Respite Home services.
- Deepened our learning, training and educational opportunities for staff.

*“This program is a life changer. I cannot begin to explain.
I would be lost without this respite.”*



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