



arbi making life better
Association for the Rehabilitation of the Brain Injured

Proud History, Bright Future

ARBI Strategic Plan
2016-2021

MESSAGE from the BOARD PRESIDENT

From a humble start in a church basement, ARBI has been quietly transforming the lives of brain injury survivors and their families for almost 40 years. It is a privilege to witness the remarkable achievements of our clients and the resilience they demonstrate in embracing a new future. ARBI's approach is based in neuroscience and practiced with deep compassion; ARBI is so often the place where clients and families find renewed hope.

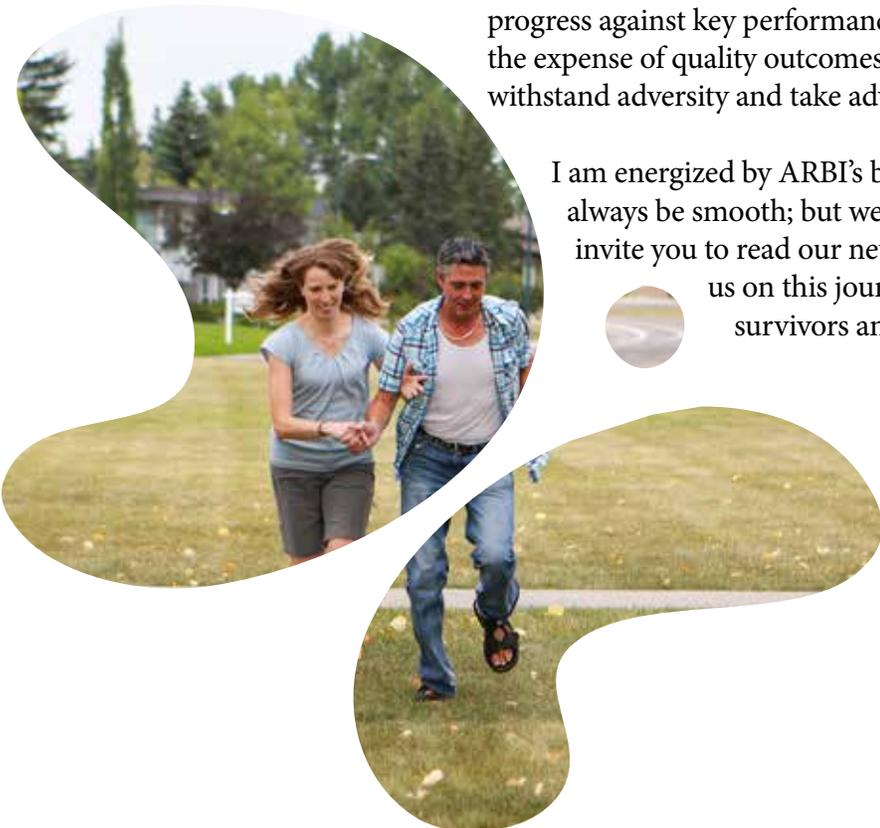
ARBI remains committed to the mission that has guided it since the beginning, providing rehabilitation to brain injury survivors and supporting them in their reintegration into the community. With the wisdom that comes from decades of experience, ARBI takes seriously its responsibility to contribute to the larger conversation about brain injury and to advocate for survivors. I am proud that ARBI's voice has grown to be respected in the medical community, and that ARBI's influence is felt through its many volunteers and partners.

Over the past year, ARBI's Board of Directors has worked closely with the leadership team to develop this strategic plan. At the heart of it, ARBI's strategy is to grow to serve more clients. Growing will include, in part, expanding capacity to do more of what we do now, as well as developing new ways of serving clients. Growth will require us to strengthen our many partnerships, raise our profile and leverage resources for maximum benefit.

As chair of the Board of Directors, I commit that we will monitor ARBI's progress against key performance indicators to ensure growth is never at the expense of quality outcomes for clients. We will keep ARBI strong to withstand adversity and take advantage of opportunities.

I am energized by ARBI's bright future. We know the road ahead won't always be smooth; but we know with certainty it is the right road. I invite you to read our new strategic plan and to consider joining with us on this journey of transforming the lives of brain injury survivors and their families.

Bruce Murray



MESSAGE

from the EXECUTIVE
DIRECTOR

ARBI is at an inflection point. Demand for our services is growing and the nature of that demand is becoming increasingly complex. As a result, the decision we faced this year was this: do we continue on the path we've traveled for years, providing rehabilitation and community integration support to about 100 survivors of brain injury each year? Or do we acknowledge the changing world and evolve in order to make the biggest possible difference? I am proud to say ARBI chose this harder path; our new five-year strategic plan directs us to serve more clients and develop new programming to meet emerging, complex needs.

We have taken many steps this year to prepare our organization for growth. We've implemented recommendations arising from detailed program and organizational reviews and transitioned to a new management team.



Knowing the challenges we face are large and complex, we've continued to reach out to partners who share our vision. We've tapped into the wisdom of our employees and volunteers to design new programs aligned with our mission.

Preparing for growth has also meant recognizing that which should not be changed. ARBI is blessed with skilled and compassionate employees and with volunteers whose energy and passion set the standard for the not-for-profit world. Our approach to training volunteers to work with clients has stood the test of time. Our core intensive rehabilitation program

continues to transform lives. Science blended with compassion has always been our secret sauce. Our growth will build on these strong foundations.

We are excited — and humbled — by the challenge ahead. We will be seeking partners who can help us move further along the road to financial sustainability, and partners who can ensure those who need us most, can easily find us. We hope you will read our strategic plan and be inspired to help us achieve our vision in which every survivor of a brain injury lives the best life possible.

Mary Ellen Neilson

Our Mission ARBI transforms the lives of individuals with acquired brain injury through rehabilitation and community integration.

Our Vision Everyone with a brain injury lives the best life possible.

Our Values **Quality of Life:** All individuals deserve to live their best possible lives and can be active community participants.



Dignity and Respect: We treat each client with respect and dignity at all times.

Hope: We believe that every client and every family deserves to have hope for the future.

Diversity: We embrace diversity in our clients, volunteers, board and staff; we believe our differences bring us closer together.

Advocacy: We advocate for our clients and their families to help make life better.



Integrity: Our staff and volunteers are caring, and they help clients reach their goals in an atmosphere of integrity, caring and trust.

Teamwork: Our positive culture values teamwork, internally amongst clients, staff and volunteers and externally through collaboration with partners and other agencies.

ARBI: AN OVERVIEW

ARBI serves individuals with moderate to severe acquired brain injuries. A brain injury affects not only the individual—families, too, are forever changed. ARBI supports clients with rehabilitation and services to help them transition back into their communities, and surrounds families with practical and emotional support.

The ARBI operating model is unique in that we train and deploy talented volunteers and practicum students to work with clients. The lessons learned at ARBI — the technical skills and compassionate approach — help shape health care professionals and leaders of the future. ARBI plays an increasingly important role in the health care community, participating in applied research that advances the practice of brain injury rehabilitation.



About 160,000 Canadians sustain a brain injury each year. Approximately 20 per cent of ARBI's clients have acquired their brain injuries due to trauma — such as a car crash, a fall, or while participating in sports. The remaining 80 per cent of our clients acquired their brain injuries as a result of stroke. About 400,000 Canadians are currently living with long-term disabilities as a result of stroke, and that number is expected to increase by 80 per cent to 726,000 over the next two decades. (*Heart & Stroke Foundation of Canada, 2011.*)



This trend is substantiated by ARBI's own experience: referrals resulting from stroke have increased by 20 per cent over the past three years.

While demand for our services grows, we are also seeing shifts in what clients need from us. Many of our clients are more frail, and have more medically-complex needs, than we saw in the past. Another client group is younger and more able-bodied, and come to us with severe cognitive challenges. This increasing complexity of client needs drives a growing requirement for social work and psychological services at ARBI.



Just as our clients adapt to new realities, so must we. Our traditional On-Site program continues to serve many clients well, but we recognize that new treatment models must be developed to better serve different client populations in ways that best suit their needs.

ARBI currently serves approximately 100 clients per year through three core services; On-Site, Outreach, and Community Integration. A key element of our new strategic plan will see each of these services evolve so we can serve more clients more effectively.

On-Site: Our traditional On-Site program offers one-to-one



rehabilitation assessment and treatment, implemented by trained volunteers and supported by staff at ARBI. Approximately 30 per cent of our clients are served through this program.

Outreach: Our Outreach program offers one-to-one rehabilitation assessment and a program that is delivered by a trained family member or support worker, in the client's place of residence or in the community. About 30 per cent of ARBI's clients are currently served through Outreach. We expect this to grow significantly, driven by changing client needs and our desire to stay connected with and supporting clients long after they leave our facility. Growth in our Outreach service is not constrained by the limits of our physical facility.



Community Integration: Community Integration programs (CIP) offer leisure and vocational support for groups and individuals, both in-house and in the community. This program is facilitated by Recreation Therapists. Programs are offered to current On-Site and Outreach clients, and to program graduates. Currently about 40 per cent of ARBI's clients are served through CIP, with waitlists in excess of six months. We anticipate this will be ARBI's most significant area of growth, particularly as Community Integration programs have the potential to address the social needs of clients whose needs are otherwise not being met due to physical accessibility issues and the lack of suitable programs elsewhere.



ARBI serves a very vulnerable population, and is equally vulnerable in its ability to fund and sustain its operations. Funding, whether from government partners or general donations, has not grown at the same pace as demand for services. The economic downturn and other uncertainties have exacerbated the situation, and make it imperative that for ARBI to remain strong, we must move toward a more sustainable and predictable funding model.

Our Strategic Priorities

STRATEGY 1: Grow

Today, ARBI serves about 100 distinct clients and their families each year, helping them to reclaim their lives following an acquired brain injury. With intensive rehabilitation, community integration and family support, survivors and their families can live richer, more satisfying lives in their communities.

For our clients, community means a place that is accessible, safe and enriching — a place where they have purpose and a sense of belonging. For some, that means participating in ARBI's Community Integration programs supported by highly trained staff. For others, that means engaging in meaningful volunteer work or participating in recreational and leisure activities at their local community centres.

ARBI collaborates closely with community agencies, funders and stakeholders to ensure that each client receives the best support possible on his or her journey to recovery. Building on community partnerships will be key for ARBI to meet the rising demand for services.

With waiting lists for all of our programs and forecasts that the need for our services will continue to climb, ARBI must grow to meet the community need.

Over the next five years, ARBI will double the number of clients served while maintaining high-quality client outcomes.

To achieve this we will:

- Grow our On-Site program within our current facility by 25 per cent. Note: growth in the On-Site programs will generate growth in our Community Integration and Outreach programs.
- Increase the capacity of our Community Integration and Outreach Programs to meet the demand. We predict the growth in these programs will outpace the growth in our On-Site program because this is how we serve the growing number of ARBI alumni. We know that clients require support following their rehabilitation to successfully engage in the community and to maintain gains achieved during rehabilitation.
- Closely monitor and assess the impact of growth to ensure continued quality outcomes for our clients.
- Identify and establish the human resources and infrastructure required to support this growth, while ensuring we are operating as efficiently as possible to maximize our existing capacity.

25%
ON-SITE
PROGRAM
GROWTH



Mind the Gap(s)

BY

2021...

Research indicates that when an individual experiences a severe brain injury there is a window of opportunity during which, given intense rehabilitation, the greatest gains can be made. For a number of reasons, many individuals today receive inadequate therapy, or no therapy at all, during this critical time. We accept that there are systemic healthcare challenges that we may not be able to influence. There are also individuals with complex medical conditions who may not be a good fit for our program until they are medically stable. However, there is still much that we can do to have a positive impact on survivors' outcomes.

Other service gaps exist post-rehabilitation, when individuals transitioning back into their communities could benefit from enhanced support beyond what is currently available. ARBI is committed to closing these service gaps.

ARBI will develop and implement a new program model to support under-served individuals so they can achieve the best quality of life possible.

By 2021, we will see:

- Fewer individuals receiving no therapy at all, because they are being served by new programming.
- All On-Site clients positioned for success.
- More opportunities for On-Site clients to transition smoothly to the Community Integration Program, and ultimately to the community.

To achieve this we will:

- Redevelop the rehabilitation model so that even more clients receive services suited to their needs. These will include:
 - A program that offers a combination of individual and/or group rehabilitation for clients unable to participate in our traditional, intensive On-Site program. This will address each client's goals and rehabilitation needs at a more appropriate intensity. The program will provide more opportunities for social interaction, and exploration of leisure pursuits while improving the client's overall wellbeing.
 - A pilot fee-for-service program in the community, separate from ARBI's traditional model, for clients that will benefit most from short and intense intervention. The program will be implemented by rehabilitation professionals, with a primary focus on cognitive rehabilitation, communication and daily living skills.
- Work more closely with our residential living partners and other community organizations to better coordinate community integration support.
- Continue to offer more specialized groups for our Outreach clients at ARBI.
- Enhance collaboration with our partners to offer more community programming.
- Work with our partners to manage wait times to the best of our ability.

3.

Invest in Volunteers

Our volunteers are integral to who we are — even if we had unlimited funding, volunteers would be central to how we deliver on our mission and vision. Engaging the community in the delivery of health care will be a service model for the future. We are deeply committed to training and supporting our volunteers, providing meaningful opportunities for them. In return, these key team members bring energy, commitment and credibility to ARBI.

We will maximize the leadership potential of our volunteers by deploying them in a manner that achieves the best possible outcomes for our clients.



To achieve this we will:

- Review and enhance our volunteer model to get the best outcomes for our clients, particularly as it relates to our new programs.
- Pilot new ways of training our volunteers.
- Recruit more volunteers in order to support our growth.
- Implement new ways to engage our volunteers in meaningful, long-term relationships that enrich our win-win partnership.
- Invite former clients and families to mentor other clients and families.



4.

Raise Our Profile

ARBI has transformed survivors' lives for more than 35 years by being an early adopter of the science of neuroplasticity.

The time is right for us to become respected influencers, targeting specific audiences, tailoring our delivery to ensure our message is heard, and engaging more fully in conversation with our community and leaders. We can have even greater impact if the depth of our expertise and the services we offer are better, and more-widely, understood.

We will position ourselves as a respected and informed voice in the larger conversation about brain injury and rehabilitation. We will play a leading role in advocating for our clients, their families and the brain injury community.

By 2021:

- The medical community will be fully aware of and value the services we offer, and see us as a strategic partner.
- We will be sought out and valued by our community partners for our collaborative and innovative approach.
- We will be invited to participate as a respected voice in matters related to brain injury.
- We will be a household name for those who need us and those who can help us.



To achieve this we will:

- Build and execute a plan for increasing our profile and reputation within the medical community.
- Continue to partner with respected individuals and organizations.
- Make a decision about rebranding.
- Strengthen and broaden relationships and ensure information gets into the hands of healthcare professionals who are well-positioned to link survivors with appropriate services.
- Establish an Advisory Council to help tell our story, raise our profile and engage the community.
- Recruit board members who are community champions and/or health care influencers who will help us build relationships that will lead to financial sustainability.
- Continue to collaborate with partners, institutions and associations that are involved with clinical rehabilitation research.

**Leverage
Our
Resources**

Our funders, our donors, our clients and partners know that every dollar we raise and invest supports the achievement of our mission and vision. Our activities and programs align with our mission, and make a significant difference in the community.

Our programs demonstrate excellence in execution, deeply impact individuals, fill an important need, and help create a strong and healthy community.

We will build both:

- Financial capacity, which is the ability to maintain day-to day operations, respond to short-term challenges, and pursue emerging opportunities; and
- Financial sustainability in order to expand our services and develop resilience against economic downturns.

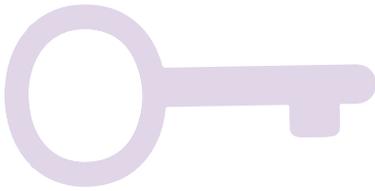
To achieve this we will:

- Continue to focus on multi-year commitments and strategic partnerships with both contract funders and donors.
- Increase fundraising through a continued focus on major gifts from individuals, foundations and corporations.
- Build an operating reserve of \$500,000 by the year 2021, so that we are resilient against sudden and unexpected losses or increases in expenses.
- Pilot one or more fee-for-service programs.

\$500,000

OPERATING
RESERVE
BY 2021

Key Performance Indicators



The successful implementation of our strategic plan will demonstrate to our funders, our donors, our clients and our partners that every dollar we raise and invest supports our values and mission. The following key performance indicators will measure how we are faring against what we've set out to do:

1. ARBI's growth will be measured by a year over year increase in the number of clients we serve, with the goal to double the number of clients served to 200 by the year 2021.
2. ARBI will establish a "Sustainability Fund" of at least \$500,000 by 2021. This fund will be available on an unrestricted basis to sustain the existence of ARBI in the fulfillment of its mission, and to ensure that ARBI can be proactive with new projects for the future.
3. High quality outcomes for our clients, and the engagement of our staff and volunteers, are key to ARBI's long term success and relevance. Surveys of these key stakeholders will provide continual feedback on how we're doing.



Acknowledgments

Thank you to our Board of Directors, you've been beside us every step of the way as together we developed the strategy. Your wisdom and gentle guidance throughout the process has been invaluable; and we are counting on you to hold us accountable to deliver on the strategy.

Thank you also to our excellent team of employees – your willingness to provide input, and to believe in ARBI and its future hold us in good stead to fulfill our mission every day for every client.

To our many partners, donors, and other key stakeholders; thank you for listening and providing your insights as we explored ARBI's future together. We look forward to many more discussions as we collaborate to implement on a shared vision that everyone with a brain injury deserves to live the best life possible.

We are forever grateful to the Calgary Foundation – Community Grants program for funding the development of this strategic plan. You have been a wonderful friend for many years, and we are honoured and humbled by your continued support and passion for ARBI.

And a particular thank you to our consultant Terry Gilbert, you have become a confidante and a partner throughout this process – we could not have completed this journey without you. As we endeavor to transform the lives of our clients, ARBI is now well-positioned to transform as well; never forgetting our compassionate roots, but now strongly and capably facing the future.

