

Annual Review 2005-2006



Take another look at CNIB



What Does It Mean to Have Vision?

Message from the President and Board Chair



Jim Sanders



Dick Hale-Sanders

By now you've probably noticed our new appearance. Fresh, modern and welcoming, our new look reflects more than just an aesthetic change – it is a sign of an organization that has entered a whole new era.

Today's CNIB is vastly different from the CNIB that was founded in 1918. But we are also worlds apart from the CNIB of 10 years ago.

And that's because in 2006, we took a bold step and challenged conventional views of what CNIB does and whom it serves. We challenged ourselves, and then you, to think of CNIB in an entirely new way. We also dared to see vision differently: as a spectrum, from full vision to no vision, with most of us falling somewhere in between. We reached out and became much more inclusive. The CNIB of today is committed to the vision health of all Canadians.

What does it mean to have such a vision? Our new outlook has taken many innovative forms. In 2006 we funded leading clinicians looking at ways to prevent, treat and cure eye disease, and conducted our own groundbreaking research on the unmet needs of Canadians with vision loss. We showed global leadership by funding education for people with vision loss in Africa, and national leadership by providing expertise on accessible design in some of Canada's most important public spaces. We engaged in a state-of-the-art, collaborative effort to create a nationwide network of accessible library services. And we provided the first-rate rehabilitation services we are known for (as always, our core business), helping more Canadians than ever to reclaim their lives after losing some or all of their vision.

Welcome to the new CNIB.

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Jim Sanders".

Jim Sanders, C.M.
President & CEO

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Dick Hale-Sanders".

Dick Hale-Sanders
Chair, National Board of Directors

The Evolution of CNIB

Original Purpose 1918

With Canada's social safety net decades in the future, and blind veterans returning from World War I, CNIB is incorporated to meet basic but urgent needs – by providing food, clothing and residences. In its inaugural year, CNIB has 27 employees serving 1,521 people, mostly out of Toronto, although two itinerant teachers provide

rehabilitation training in other parts of Canada. In the 1920s, CNIB starts a job placement program with limited success, but its own factories, broom shops, and concession stands flourish.



Evolving Purpose 1950

With 17,000 clients, CNIB at mid-century is starting to come into its own. Its offices, vocational centres and residences are found in major Canadian cities, giving people with vision loss greater visibility in the community. Prevention is a priority, and a research program has begun. CNIB has achieved significant success with the 1930 Blind Voters Act (allowing a blind person to vote with the assistance of a sighted person) and legislation around mandatory eye drops for newborns. In 1956, the

organization co-sponsors a course for blind computer programmers. With innovations such as this, it is not surprising CNIB is becoming well known on the international stage.



Current Purpose 2006

CNIB is committed to research, public education and vision health for all Canadians, including 600,000 people with significant vision loss. The organization challenges conventional attitudes about vision loss and educates Canadians about preventing eye disease. CNIB is active in every region of Canada, with 1,100 employees and 10,000 volunteers. Gone are the residences and workshops of the past; today's CNIB helps people to stay independent, enjoy a good quality of life, and succeed in just about any career. CNIB is a world leader in accessible technology, including its consumer products and digital library. With the approaching crisis in age-related vision loss, CNIB is working harder than ever to meet Canada's vision health needs.



Research

Highlights

- This year, CNIB invests \$1.25 million in medical and applied research, and supports education by training scientists in the vision health field at the nation's foremost universities and health-care centres.
- CNIB releases a landmark, nationwide report, "An Unequal Playing Field," garnering widespread attention in the media and among policymakers across Canada. The study confirms that many barriers faced by Canadians with vision loss 30 years ago still exist today, including barriers to employment, public transportation and rehabilitation services.
- Among the many projects that CNIB funds are studies that look at treatments for macular degeneration, retinoblastoma (cancer of the eye) and corneal disease. Applied research projects examine home care needs of seniors with vision loss and attempt to forecast the coming vision loss epidemic in Canada.



The preliminary data is quite convincing already. The children we've studied who have had early surgery – well, they've done beautifully.

Dr. Agnes Wong

For decades, eye surgeons have debated the best age to treat strabismus, a condition affecting one per cent of infants and causing one eye to be crossed, decreasing 3-D vision. The discussion had been intense, but no one had done adequate research. Enter CNIB-funded clinician-scientist Dr. Agnes Wong, who leads a team at the Hospital for Sick Children in Toronto. Dr. Wong's research is beginning to prove infants do better if they have surgery at an early age, rather than waiting until they are a year old – the current practice. Many children who grow up with strabismus have difficulty with activities such as sports, and often face limits to career opportunities. But thanks to Dr. Wong and CNIB, infants with strabismus can look forward to a future with the best possible vision.

Programs and Services

Highlights

- This year, 10,210 people come to CNIB for the first time, 500 of them children. The most common diagnosis is age-related macular degeneration (AMD), which takes its greatest toll on seniors. CNIB provides these Canadians with hope and the vital programs and services necessary to reclaim their lives.
- Among the new programs introduced this year is an innovative registration and referral pilot project in Saskatchewan and Manitoba, which connects people newly diagnosed with vision loss to rehabilitation services in half the usual time.
- Through CNIB, Canadians have access to rehabilitation services such as professional low vision assessments, counseling and support, training in safe travel techniques and instruction to manage the essentials of daily living.
- CNIB embarks on a goal to achieve sustainable funding from the private and public sector, to ensure that it can continue to provide vital support for people with vision loss long into the future.



Our house was always extremely lively and well organized when I was growing up. Mom just did things differently.

Russell Fraser

When Russell Fraser's mother Dorothy began losing her vision in the 1940s, she quickly learned to adapt. "Our house was always extremely lively and well organized when I was growing up," says Fraser, a former CNIB board vice chair and Attorney General in British Columbia. "Mom just did things differently." Dorothy Fraser loved to keep up with the latest books and ideas, and thanks to the records (and later on, audio tapes) that CNIB sent through the mail, she continued reading – but like everything else, she did it differently. When she died recently at the age of 101, her son knew the ideal tribute. His family got together to raise money for digital talking books, technology that had just been introduced at CNIB. "Mom would have liked the idea of other people being able to enjoy books the way she did," he says.

Public Education

Highlights

- From events in schools and local communities to large public-speaking engagements and international conferences, CNIB offers opportunities for Canadians to learn about preventing, detecting and treating eye disease and living with vision loss.
- CNIB once again hosts a popular seminar series on age-related macular degeneration (AMD). Every year, 78,000 Canadians are diagnosed with AMD, a number expected to triple within 25 years. At another set of seminars, CNIB trains flight attendants in Atlantic Canada to accommodate patrons with vision loss.
- CNIB's national headquarters, The CNIB Centre, opens in Toronto, setting a new standard for accessible design in Canada. The building is voted "best new building" (*NOW* magazine) and called "a powerful reminder that disability is strictly in the eyes of the beholder" (*Toronto Star*).



I'm lucky I've had CNIB's help – it's made a real difference so far.

Howard Berntsen

Eight years ago, Howard Berntsen was losing his vision to glaucoma and cataracts. It seemed to run in his family – his brother had already lost most of his sight to both conditions, and Berntsen decided he'd better take some proactive measures. At his local CNIB office in Saskatoon, he was connected with Rob Wilton, a CNIB career counselor. Not only did Wilton help him explore his future career options, he also provided Berntsen with information about his eye condition, and gave him health tips and strategies to prevent his vision loss from getting worse. Since then, his vision has remained clear and stable, allowing him to read and get around without assistance. "I'm very happy I met Rob," says Berntsen. "He's been a tremendous help and a tremendous support."

Advocacy

Highlights

- This year, the Canadian library community comes together in a breakthrough report to design a national, equitable library network for Canadians who cannot read print due to a disability.
- Showing great leadership on the same issue, the federal government provides CNIB with a one-time \$6 million grant to become one of the network's largest producers of accessible books and information, and allocates another \$3 million to Library and Archives Canada to coordinate the network.
- As a result of extensive consultation with CNIB, the Bank of Canada releases its new five dollar bill, the last in its series of accessible currency. The new bank notes are designed based on feedback from CNIB-coordinated focus groups across the country and have significantly larger print and better colour contrast for low vision readers.



This is landmark legislation for Canada. I think once it's in place, we'll wonder as a society why we didn't do it sooner.

Lesley MacDonald

After years of lobbying by individuals and groups such as CNIB, the Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act (AODA) came into effect, the first comprehensive disability rights legislation in Canada. The AODA mandates that the entire province be made accessible before 2025, which means that people with vision loss will be able to participate fully in every aspect of public life, from employment, health care and education, to the physical environment, transportation, communications and customer service. "It wasn't an easy battle," says Lesley MacDonald, CNIB's National Coordinator of Accessible Design Services, who has represented CNIB in AODA advocacy work for the last 12 years. "When it finally came through, it was so exhilarating I was pinching myself. There are going to be tremendous benefits in all of society from implementing this."

CNIB in Your Community

The Power of Peers

This year, CNIB introduces new telephone peer support programs in Alberta and Quebec. As a result of the programs, many participants report feeling less isolated and more connected, and say they are coping better with vision loss. “I don’t feel so alone; I’m not the only one with eye problems,” says one senior involved in the Alberta program. “It really feels like a family,” says another.

Leadership and Learning

If you love what you do, you’ll never work a day in your life, goes the saying. How true of many of CNIB’s unique learning programs, which provide opportunities to develop skills in supportive and exciting ways.

- CNIB in Quebec hosts Techno-Culture, a program for adults, and Cafnet, a summer camp for teens, both combining technology training with recreational and cultural activities. Adults and children in Quebec also learn about The CNIB Digital Library through community partnerships in rehabilitation centres and schools.
- Youth in Alberta enjoy an expanded Ambassador’s Club program, with monthly meetings to practice public speaking skills, and a three-day retreat with risk-taking, leadership, and team-building exercises.

- CNIB in St. John’s, Newfoundland, hosts a skills development program for youth between the ages of 13 and 18, where participants learn about CNIB and engage in career exploration.

Quality Programs and Services

This year in Ontario, CNIB realigns its structure and service delivery approach to ensure quality, relevant and sustainable programs and services that meet the needs of people with vision loss well into the future. This includes reorganizing operations into six regions from 22 stand-alone districts to realize efficiencies, and introducing a continuous quality improvement program to assess, build and enhance programs and services.

Restoring Lake Joseph

For the past 45 years, thousands of adults and children with vision loss have enjoyed the CNIB Lake Joseph Centre, a fully-accessible facility providing an innovative mix of recreation and rehabilitation in Ontario’s Muskoka Lakes region. CNIB’s Restoring the Spirit capital campaign to rebuild the Centre is well on its way to reaching its \$6 million goal.

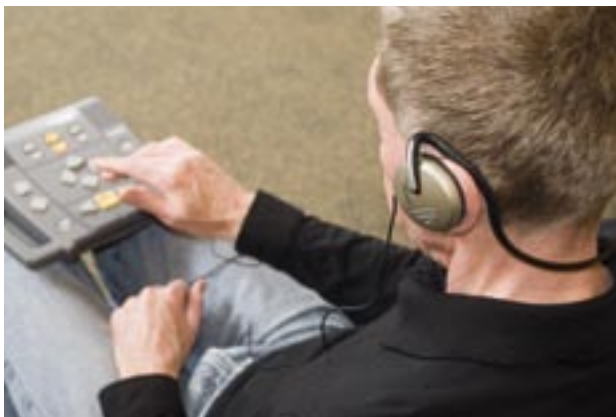
Your Support Makes All the Difference

That all may read... CNIB's campaign for a digital library

Today, Canadians living with vision loss have access to more information, more quickly, in more ways than ever before – because of you! CNIB is delighted to announce that we have exceeded our \$33-million, five-year goal in support of the digital transformation of the CNIB Library.

Thank you to all of our donors for your essential role in this campaign. As a result of your generosity:

- More than 80,000 titles (400,000 copies) of braille books, talking books, descriptive videos and accessible electronic format materials are now available.
- Digital talking book players have been provided at no cost to 3,000 people with vision loss.



- Thousands of people have received training on navigating DAISY digital audio books, as well as the Library's online resources (the CNIB Digital Library and Children's Discovery Portal).

Thanks also to our technology partners, who donated hardware and expertise to help with the conversion of our three recording studios and the creation of a cross-Canada network infrastructure, and who provided computers for a comprehensive training program.

Together, we are making great strides toward equal access to information for all Canadians who cannot read print.

CNIB sincerely thanks all of its donors. Your support makes our vital programs and services possible.

Please visit www.cnib.ca/donors to see a list of our major donors' names.

Financial Statements

Summarized Statement of Financial Position

<i>As at March 31 (in thousands of dollars)</i>	2006	2005
Assets		
Current:		
Cash	\$ 7,284	\$ 13,891
Accounts receivable and pre-payments	4,608	4,873
Inventories and supplies	802	950
	12,694	19,714
Investments	52,565	45,809
Capital assets	57,003	56,810
Total Assets	\$ 122,262	\$ 122,333
Liabilities, Deferred Contributions and Net Assets		
Current:		
Bank indebtedness	\$ 869	\$ 4,413
Construction loan	–	9,210
Mortgage – current portion	667	–
Accounts payable and accrued liabilities	13,802	18,197
	15,338	31,820
Mortgage	9,333	–
Accrued pension liability	5,282	5,353
Deferred contributions	23,545	22,073
Net assets:		
Invested in capital assets	33,827	30,459
Endowments	6,322	6,051
Internally restricted	16,567	16,693
Unrestricted	12,048	9,884
	68,764	63,087
Total Liabilities and Net Assets	\$ 122,262	\$ 122,333

Summarized Statement of Operations

<i>Year ended March 31 (in thousands of dollars)</i>	2006	2005
Revenue		
Support from the public (net)	\$ 29,320	\$ 28,896
Government support	22,376	17,284
Investment	8,987	3,117
Fees for service and miscellaneous	3,578	4,367
Consumer products and assistive technology sales	2,733	3,323
Amortization of deferred capital contributions	1,566	2,782
Total Revenue	68,560	59,769
Expenditures		
Client services:		
Rehabilitation	35,588	36,960
Consumer products and assistive technology	6,145	6,318
Library services	9,843	9,276
Public education	2,152	2,690
Research	1,250	902
Total Client Services Expenditures	54,978	56,146
Support services:		
Administration	5,589	5,555
Fund development	2,281	2,246
Total Support Services Expenditures	7,870	7,801
Other items:		
Loss (gain) on disposal of capital assets	16	(19,430)
Restructuring	290	2,651
Total Expenditures	63,154	47,168
Excess of revenue over expenditures	\$ 5,406	\$ 12,601

Note: The financial information in this summary is drawn from CNIB's audited financial statements. If you would like a copy of the complete audited financial statements, please contact us, or view a PDF version on our website at www.cnib.ca.

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Our Mission

To be the leader in
promoting vision health and
enhancing independence
for people with vision loss.



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