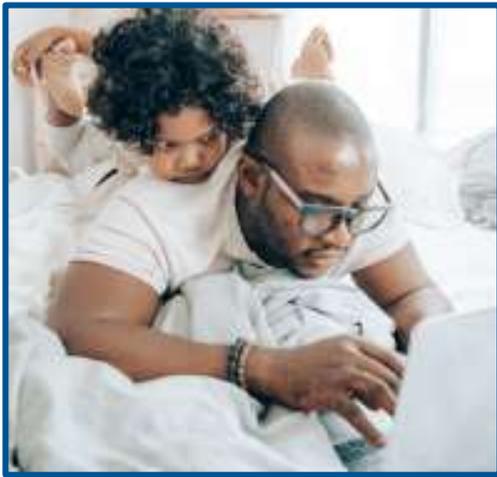




# 2021 - 2022 Annual Report

A Year of Accomplishments



# VISION, MISSION AND VALUES

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## OUR VISION

Stride envisions a world in which barriers to employment have been eliminated for people living with mental health and/or addictions challenges.

## OUR MISSION

Stride is committed to providing person centered support to empower people living with mental health and/or addiction challenges to gain and maintain meaningful employment.

## OUR VALUES

Stride recognizes that employment and self-determination contribute significantly to a person's sense of dignity, independence and quality of life.

Stride believes that people living with mental health and/or addiction challenges make significant contributions to society.

Stride respects the individual needs and strengths of each person. We work collaboratively with partners and individuals we serve to assist them in identifying and achieving their employment goals.

### We believe:

- In treating people with dignity and respect
- In all individuals having the opportunity to achieve their employment goals
- In providing service levels that exceed expectations for those we serve
- In creative, innovative responses to the ever-changing political, economic and work environments



# ABOUT US

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**Supported Training & Rehabilitation in Diverse Environments (Stride)** is a nonprofit, charitable, community based vocational rehabilitation program founded in 1983. Stride's primary purpose is to assist individuals living with mental illness and addiction find and maintain meaningful work.

Our Programs include:

## **Employment Connections Program**

We deliver a wide range of employment connection services including career assessments, skills development, interview practice, job coaching and ongoing job retention support. An employment plan is developed based on skills and experience. Assistance is provided to locate, secure and maintain employment.

## **Youth Employment Program**

Our staff assist youth aged 16-24, living with mental illness and addiction. Youth are assisted in exploring possible employment options and gaining valuable employment skills. We provide individualized services and supports necessary to be successful in the workplace.

## **Pre-Employment Service**

This service is designed to enhance and complement the current service model and focuses on assisting individuals to develop vocational and life skills through a variety of training workshops and additional one-on-one support. Staff provide time-limited assistance and guidance in preparing clients for employment through short-term groups and individualized job-readiness support. Services are geared to those interested in obtaining part-time or full-time competitive employment in the community.

## **Employment Peer Mentor Program**

The Employment Peer Mentor program aims to provide enhanced support to individuals facing mental health and/or addiction challenges. The Employment Peer Mentors are persons with lived experience with mental health and/or addictions and are in recovery. They use their experiential knowledge to inspire hope and empower others in similar situations by providing social and emotional support in order to assist peers on their path towards recovery.

## **Job Development**

Our Job Developers work with employers to seek out opportunities for previously non-existent jobs based on gaps discovered during needs analysis discussions with employers. Individuals who are wanting and are ready for job development services are referred internally to the Job Developer by the candidate's Employment Specialist or Youth Employment Specialist.

## **Justice Employment Program**

The Justice Employment Program supports the unique needs of individuals that live with mental health and/or addictions and are justice-involved. The Justice Employment Specialist develops an individualized employment plan to meet the needs of each client; supporting them in developing the needed skills, supports and resources to attain and retain suitable employment opportunities. The aim is to increase their resiliency, promote positive mental health and assist in developing positive relationships to their community.

# OUR PEOPLE

## Board of Directors



Top (L-R): Georges Abdulahad, Anita Lloyd – Executive Director, Stephanie McCann – Quality and Operations Analyst, Catherine McKeown, Clark Olson, Ann Marie Sullivan, Frank De Vuono, Nancy Lord, Zoe Vulic, Sarah Lawson, Fatima Ul-Haq, Zoe Mitchell, Todd Valentine, Robert Henderson

## Management Team



Top (L-R): Bonnie Trimble - Manager, Specialized Employment Services, Julie Henshaw - Manager, Specialized Employment Services, Julie Lange – Manager, Finance and Administration , Anita Lloyd – Executive Director, Terri Skov - Manager, Specialized Employment Services

## Administration Team



Top (L-R): Julie Lange – Manager, Finance and Administration, Stacia McCann – Human Resource & Administration Assistant, Stephanie McCann - Quality and Operations Analyst



# QUOTES FROM STAKEHOLDERS

*Stride is an extremely supportive and knowledgeable organization with demonstrated expertise in employment for persons who experience mental health and/or addictions. Many of our staff make referrals to Stride when our clients indicate goals around employment as we confidently know that our client will receive exemplary care and understanding. It is without hesitation that we refer clients for employment supports at Stride. - Partner*

*I genuinely don't think I could have made this much progress without him [stride worker] there to support me, I am so grateful for him and stride as a whole. – Client*

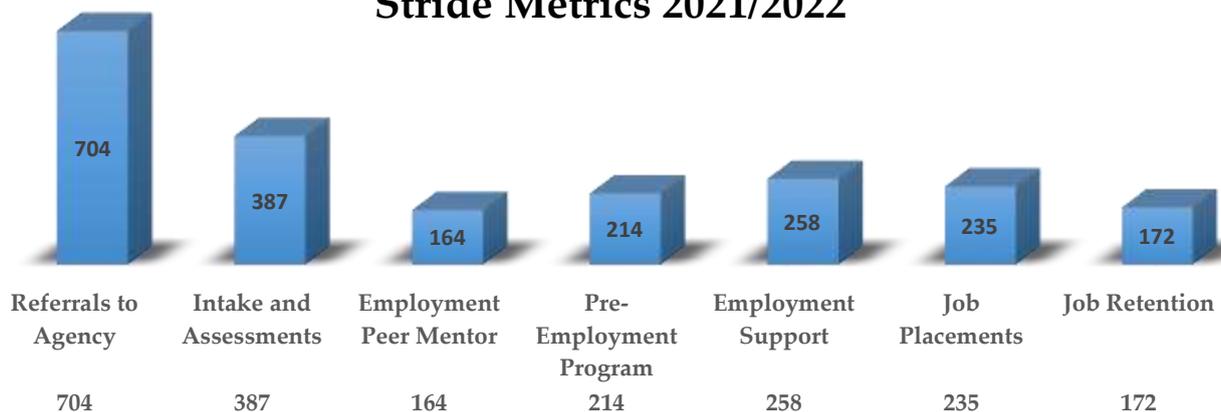
*I am happy that a program like Stride exists, and I hope that Stride can grow and spread its name to more people so that more people who are struggling can get the help they need and find success. - Client*

*I feel well supported by my manager, and I'm able to flex my hours in order to maintain my own wellness. – Staff*

*Stride is a gem of an organization. So many programs are about helping in crisis and just out of crisis, which is needed and great. Stride helped me build a real life beyond my diagnosis and struggles. Being financially independent and getting back to work - meaningful, engaging, suitable work - is a huge part of my recovery and really means I can live day to day in a fulfilling way. Stride bridges the gap between surviving and thriving. - Client*

*Hearing from a person with lived experience, "helped me realize that not all is doom and gloom" - Client*

## Stride Metrics 2021/2022



# OUR PEOPLE

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## Employment Connections Program



Top (L-R): Avalon Purdie – Employment Specialist, Julie Henshaw – Manager, Specialized Employment Services, Adrian Byrne – Employment Specialist, Klara Kabelik – Employment Specialist, Terri Skov - Manager, Specialized Employment Services, Tanya Sanabria - Employment Specialist, Crystal Dainard – Employment Specialist

## Pre-Employment Program, Intake Specialists & Virtual Services Specialist



Top (L-R): Robinetta Siracusa - Pre-Employment Specialist, Terri Skov – Manager, Specialized Employment Services, Kristen Whattam - Pre-Employment Specialist, Julie Henshaw – Manager, Specialized Employment Services, Stephanie Patterson - Intake Specialist, Delia Bataran – Virtual Services Specialist, Monique Clarke – Pre-Employment Specialist, Brandi Saunders – Intake Specialist  
Missing: Stefania Bonaccorso – Pre-Employment Specialist

# A MESSAGE FROM OUR EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

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Since 2020, our lives have been consumed by COVID-19. Over the past year, Stride has shown great resolve as we overcame immense challenges and embraced opportunities that allowed us to serve more individuals, offer increased workshops, and secure additional job opportunities for people living with mental illness and addiction. The pandemic has tested us and stretched our limits, but thanks to the outstanding efforts of our staff and Board, we were able to pivot to meet many emerging needs across the region.

New data released in February 2022 indicates that more Ontarians are accessing mental health supports than at any other time during the pandemic (CMHA). This survey indicates that one in four people (24 per cent) have sought help for their mental health challenges, a significant increase from 17 per cent last winter and nine per cent almost two years ago. Respondents' outlook about the future of mental health is grim: 77 per cent, up from 69 per cent when the pandemic began, feel that Ontario is on track for a "serious mental health crisis when this is over." We are fortunate that mental health and addiction supports have remained available through the pandemic; Stride's programs, including Pre-Employment, Employment Connections, Youth Employment, Employment Peer Mentor, and Job Development, all nimbly pivoted to keep operations on track at a time when people needed help the most. We even launched four new programs during the pandemic: our Justice, EO Peel, Intake, and Virtual Services. This experience has taught us there's immense strength throughout our organization; we are inspired by the commitment all of our staff have shown in being flexible and responsive to the needs of the population we serve. We will take time to appreciate everything we have learned this past year and apply that knowledge to make us stronger.

For Stride, our focus continues to be 'You Can Work-We Can Help' as we strive towards attaining our vision of building a renewed system to help more people move towards employment and independence during this period of recovery. As we embark on developing a new strategic plan we look forward to the opportunity to serve community members in the years ahead with a renewed focus on an approach that reflects a shared board and staff vision of the organization's role, values, and priorities.

Stride recognized early that the pandemic was bringing uncharted pressures to our community that required our collaboration and commitment. As such, Stride has been fortunate to have a voice at two regional Ontario Health Teams, and is part of the Mental Health Alliance, which is comprised of local mental health and addiction service providers. Future planning will include enhanced access to mental health and addiction services with guidance and support of the Mental Health and Addictions Centre of Excellence. Together we are advocating that the COVID-19 recovery plan requires concrete and strategic investments to address the mental health and addiction crisis. Collaboration between government, system partners, experts and persons with lived experiences will ensure the coordinated delivery of the equitable, accessible, and high-quality mental health and addiction services.

We have demonstrated our commitment to the Integrated Employment Services Program this past year with our new service delivery model in Peel. Throughout the process, our organization was able to meet the performance, quality, and capacity expectations within the new Employment Support Delivery Model, prioritizing the outcomes of employment, financial resilience, independence and well-being. As we move into 2022-23, we look forward to enhanced delivery of employment services system within Halton Region.

According to the Peel Halton Workforce Development Group, at the start of the pandemic, there was a sharp rise in unemployment, and subsequent lockdowns resulted in renewed increases in unemployment. The pandemic has exacerbated the barriers faced by clients who lack digital literacy and access to digital resources, including the internet or a computer. Yet for others, their ability to access services is enhanced when they can learn remotely and on their own schedule. When the pandemic hit, Stride quickly adapted our services to meet existing and new mental health and addictions needs of our clients, which quite often extended beyond supporting the employment needs of the mental health and addictions sector. As we embraced virtual solutions, we attended to clients for whom technology remained a barrier by providing free laptops and cell phones. Using virtual meetings has assisted in overcoming the formidable barriers of COVID, as well as the

need to travel, however access to equipment and internet is essential. We remain optimistic as Canada's unemployment rate dropped to a record low in March 2022 as more people entered into the labour market - and economists say the jobless rate could yet fall even lower.

Going forward, all of these factors will be considered in our service planning and delivery. Stride has embraced a range of tools and systems to be able to meet with clients and employers both online and in-person. We have adopted technology into all aspects of our organization, not only in service delivery but also in program administration and organization-wide operations. Our ability to change and respond to the technological requirements of online service delivery enabled Stride to continue supporting our staff and clients with little to no interruption.

As we enter 2022-23, we are eager to begin envisioning the post-pandemic landscape of employment services and as such, in order to balance the needs and preferences of all stakeholders, Stride is creating a hybrid model of service delivery, where there will be a combination of virtual and in-person delivery. This will include video conferencing zoom rooms, where individuals will be in-person and others will participate online. Our post-pandemic hybrid model will provide greater options for clients, to ensure that all elements of our services can be accessed either in-person or online. This will comprise individual intake and assessment, job search support, mentoring, peer networking, workshops and follow-up support. Our hybrid service delivery model will be consistent with trends and expectations in the post-pandemic workplace.

Stride is committed to keeping top of mind the importance of health equity and the active commitment to enhanced supports for the most vulnerable populations. The pandemic has highlighted the inequalities in the labor market that disproportionately affected individuals from marginalized backgrounds. We continue to grow and build partnerships to ensure equitable access to high-quality services for the increasingly diverse Halton and Peel communities and yet our sector must do much better in working with people who are Black, Caribbean, Indigenous, of colour, and 2SLGBTQ+ and people of other racial, ethnic, and cultural backgrounds as well as socio-economic statuses. Stride's shared overarching goal will be to ensure confidence in the safety and accessibility of employment services for the communities we serve.

As we end the year I would like to take this opportunity to thank all staff for your continued work and ongoing efforts to meet the needs of our clients throughout the COVID pandemic. It has been a challenging time for our organization and for the communities we serve. The resilience and flexibility shown by each of you has been truly inspiring and reinforces our shared commitment to delivering quality mental health services. We look forward to your continued support and ongoing efforts during the upcoming year as we undergo further transformation within the employment services sector. We remain committed to optimizing our services to meet the rapidly changing needs of our clients and the community.

Thank you to our Board of Directors for your continued dedication and commitment to supporting Stride's work. You have shown wonderful resiliency and flexibility that has allowed Stride to not only survive but thrive during the most difficult societal period this generation may ever know. I would like to offer my sincere thanks to Robert Henderson, Board Treasurer since 2018, who will be leaving us this year; thank you for your passion, dedication, and insight; we appreciate that with your experience, skills, and leadership, you helped move our organization forward and impact change within our sector.

This past year has provided us an opportunity to deeply reflect on how we should be delivering services to meet the needs of our various stakeholders. As we move forward, we are dedicated to working closely with our clients, employees, the Board of Directors, primary funders, and the community health service providers to ensure service continuity and to plan for ongoing modifications, while ensuring the integrity and principles of our community-based supports are maintained.

Respectfully Submitted,

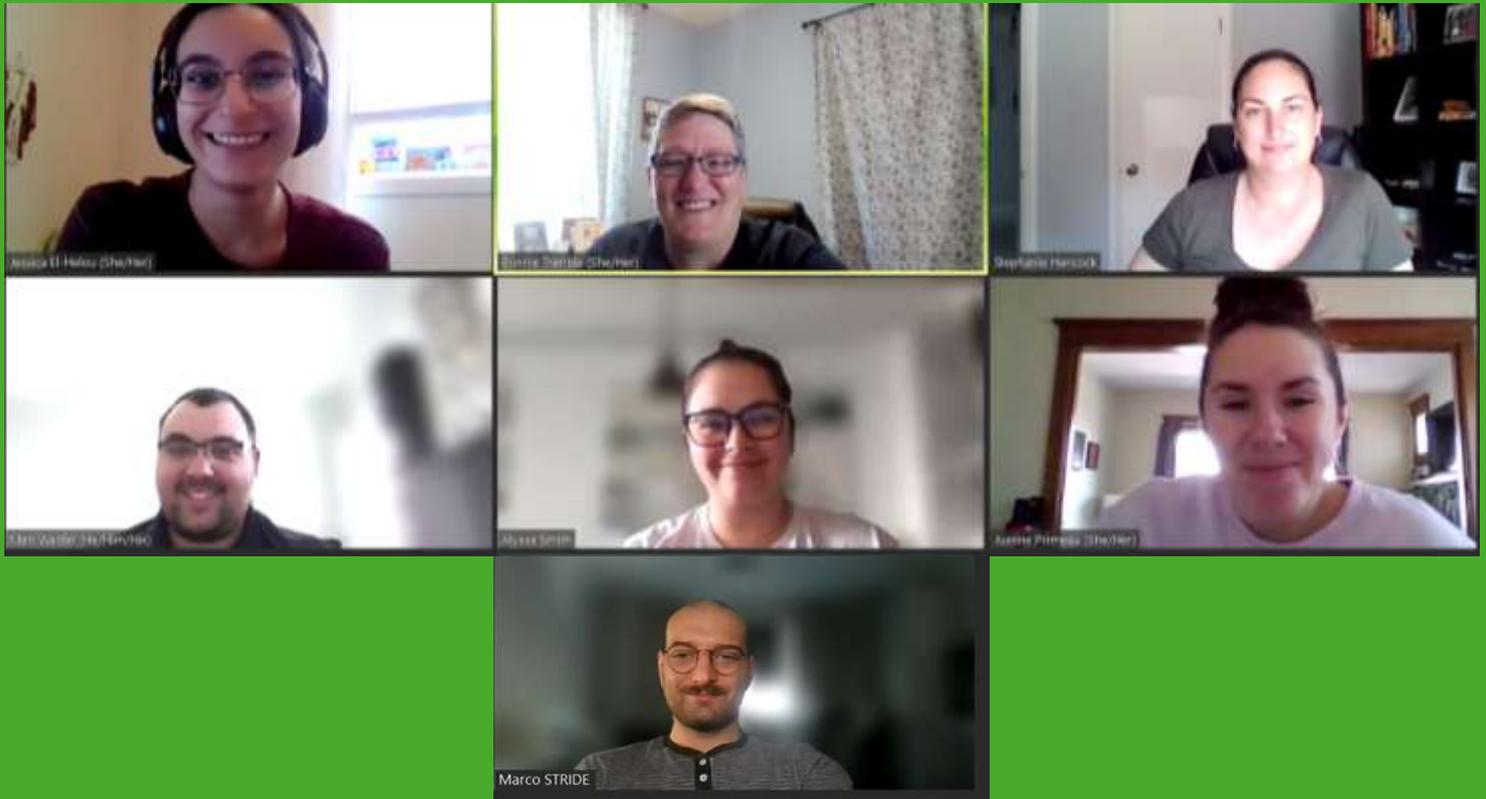
*Anita Lloyd*

Anita Lloyd  
Executive Director

# OUR PEOPLE

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## Youth Employment Team



Top (L-R): Jessica El-Helou – Virtual Services Specialist, Bonnie Trimble – Manager, Specialized Employment Services, Stephanie Hancock – Youth Employment Specialist, Matthew Wadlin – Youth Employment Specialist, Alyssa Smith – Youth Employment Specialist, Justine Primeau – Youth Employment Specialist, Marco D’Auria – Justice and Youth Employment Specialist

## Employment Peer Mentor Team



Top (L-R): Genevieve Blazik – Employment Peer Mentor, Bonnie Trimble – Manager, Specialized Employment Services, Barry Hadlow – Employment Peer Mentor, Nicole Frost – Employment Peer Mentor, Karen Jacela – Employment Peer Mentor



# TREASURER'S REPORT

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In thanks to the strong support of our various partners and the outstanding efforts of Stride management and staff, Stride revenues exceeded expenditures for the fiscal year ending March 31, 2022 by \$53,501 (2021 - \$196,260). Management has succeeded in maintaining the financial strength of the organization throughout a year with considerable uncertainty due to the continued effects of the COVID-19 global pandemic. Management was able to continue to evolve its service offering, ensure the safety of employees and deliver strong financial results.

The Ontario Health Central continues to provide the majority of revenue for Stride (67% of overall), at \$1,627,400 (2021 - \$1,648,223).

The organization saw an increase in revenue from the Ontario Disability Support Program (ODSP) and Employment Ontario (EO) Peel due to a 46% increase from WCG Services at \$177,946 (2021 - \$122,157) and the on-going revenue from MCCSS-ODSP (\$415,000) generated \$592,946 (2021 - \$550,434). Combined, these programs generated 22% of overall revenue.

Total revenue for fiscal 2022 increased \$32,206 or 1% to \$2,422,923 (2021 - \$2,390,717), driven primarily by increased funding through WCG Services for the Peel EO agreement. The WCG Services generated \$177,946 in revenue in fiscal 2022 compared to \$122,157 in in the previous fiscal year.

Revenues from other sources of \$108,016 in 2022 (2021 - \$148,515) was down due to funding not received in 2022 for Intake Specialist & Virtual Specialist roles that was received in 2021. Charitable donations increased significantly in 2022 to \$51,636 (2021 - \$2,933) due to very generous donations received, most notably from the June and Ian Cockwell Private Foundation.

Total operating expenditures increased \$190,176 or 9% to \$2,369,422 (2021 - \$2,179,246), due to increased head count from added Intake Specialist & Virtual Specialist roles. Salaries and benefits increased 14% to \$1,856,107 (2021 - \$1,624,975) and represents 77% of overall revenues.

The contingency fund created in the prior year remains available for emergencies or unforeseen situations that may develop in the organization. This fund is targeted to equal three months of budgeted operating expenditures.

On behalf of Stride I would like to thank our partners and the Stride management and staff for their continued support. The financial results for the year ending March 31, 2022 were audited by Glenn Graydon Wright LLP. Copies of the Audited financial statements are available from Stride.

Respectfully submitted,

*Robert Henderson, CPA, CA*

Treasurer, Board of Directors

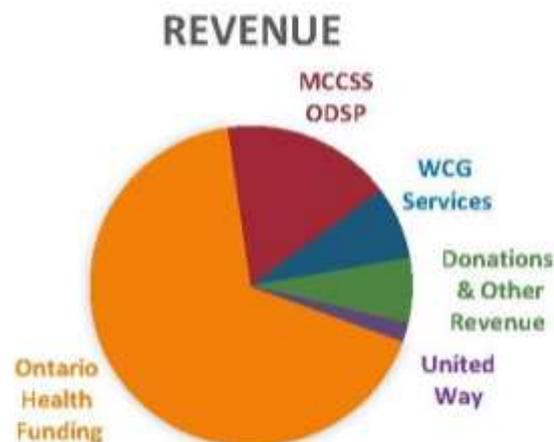
# SUMMARY OF REVENUE AND EXPENDITURES

FOR THE YEAR ENDED MARCH 31, 2022

## REVENUE

Ontario Health Funding	\$1,627,400
MCCSS-ODSP-ES Revenue	\$415,000
WCG Services	\$177,946
Donations and Other Revenue	\$159,652
United Way	\$42,925

**Total Revenue** **\$2,422,923**



## EXPENDITURES

Salaries and Benefits	\$1,856,107
Rent and Utilities	\$205,375
Other Operating Costs	\$261,029

**Total Expenditures** **\$2,322,511**



Excess of Revenue over expenditures for year	\$100,412
Amortization of capital assets	(\$46,911)

**Excess Of Revenue Over Expenditures** **\$53,501**

# OUR PEOPLE

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## Job Development Team



Top (L-R): Terri Skov – Manager, Specialized Employment Services, Julie Henshaw - Manager, Specialized Employment Services, Melissa Hasen – Job Developer, Anne Lech – Job Developer

## Years of Service Recognition



Barry Hadlow was honoured for 5 years of service.



Bonnie Trimble was honoured for 10 years of service.



Stephanie Hancock was honoured for 10 years of service.



Marco D'Auria was honoured for 5 years of service.

# ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

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Stride gratefully acknowledges the funding and support received from various individuals and the following:



JUNE AND IAN  
COCKWELL PRIVATE  
FOUNDATION





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