



ANNUAL REPORT 2014-2015

Our Vision

A supportive and inclusive society in which all people have equal opportunity to live, thrive and enjoy the full benefits of belonging within their communities.

Our Mission

To support individuals with mental health and cognitive challenges to live well within their communities.

Our Values

Hope • Respect • Collaboration • Dedication • Accountability • Innovation





Our Organization

Cota is an **accredited** community-based organization that has been supporting adults with mental health and cognitive challenges for more than 40 years. Our goal is to **inspire meaningful change** in the lives of our clients by helping individuals to recognize and build on their strengths and skills so that they could achieve their goals.

We also work collaboratively with our funding partners and other stakeholders across the provincial health and social service sectors to inspire positive change in the development and delivery of services for those living with mental health and cognitive challenges.

THE THINGS WE DO

Our services include:

- case management
- supportive housing
- short-term residential beds
- day programs
- court and justice related supports
- assertive community treatment (ACT)

THE PEOPLE WE HELP

Cota offers a wide range of services to adults living with:

- serious mental illness
- geriatric mental health conditions
- acquired brain injuries
- developmental disabilities
- dual diagnoses
- the experience of homelessness

Message from the **Board Chair** and **Executive Director**



Charlie Bigenwald, Board Chair



Paul Bruce, Executive Director

Cota is pleased to share our 2014-2015 Annual Report with you. Over the past year our dedicated staff team of over 240 employees worked tirelessly to inspire positive change in the lives of over 3,000 people.

In November 2014 Cota was awarded *Accredited with Commendation* status, by Accreditation Canada. We also successfully negotiated an arrangement between Central LHIN and Toronto Central LHIN resulting in Cota establishing a Multi-Sector Services Accountability Agreement with each LHIN, for the services that we provide within their respective boundaries.

Cota is actively involved with various system level planning tables working on issues ranging from the coordination of service solutions for people living with complex mental health and addiction challenges to ending homelessness in the city of Toronto. We remain committed to working collaboratively with our colleague organizations and other key stakeholders as we inspire positive change through our collective efforts.

Some of our **2014-2015** accomplishments included:

- The launch of our **Health, Home and Community Program** within a Toronto Community Housing building at 220 Oak Street. This service is aimed at supporting tenants to achieve their best possible health, maintain housing stability and build a sense of community.
- The reorganization of case management services into four new **Integrated Service Teams** supporting North York, Scarborough, Toronto East and Toronto West.
- The full implementation of **Flexible Outreach and Urban Support (FOCUS)** Team, a new collaboration between Cota and St. Michael's Hospital developed to meet the needs of individuals with complex mental health and addictions challenges within the Mid-East Toronto Health Link (METHL) catchment area.
- The launch of our formal involvement with the **City of Toronto's Specialized Program for Interdivisional Enhanced Responsiveness (SPIDER)** Initiative aimed at resolving some of the city's most complex health and safety issues involving vulnerable residents.
- The expansion of our developmental services through the **Specialized Care Program** which provides transitional support and administrative oversight to young adults with developmental disabilities.
- The expansion of our **Acquired Brain Injury Case Management services** into south York Region.
- The expansion of our **At Home – Assertive Community Treatment Team (At Home – ACTT)** service resulting from the addition of eight new rent subsidies.
- Our involvement as an early adopter of **Coordinated Care Planning** in each of the South Toronto and Mid-East Toronto Health Links.
- Our involvement in the new **South Etobicoke Reintegration Centre** in partnership with the John Howard Society of Toronto and other colleague organizations.

Fiscal 2015-2016 promises to be another exciting year for Cota, as we orchestrate the move of our Administrative Office to 550 Queen St. East, Suite 201 and also relocate three of our satellite offices by the end October, 2015. We will also be engaging with many of you as we work on developing our next Strategic Plan. Thank you all for your ongoing support and dedication.



Charlie Bigenwald, Board Chair



Paul Bruce, Executive Director

What People Say About Us

“I know that the staff at Cota do a great job everyday but I have to say that I seldom have been aware of a more persistent and exemplary pursuit of the right contacts and assistance on behalf of someone. You really held the situation together for this vulnerable young man across international boundaries and I am grateful for your efforts as I am sure he and his family are as well.”

Excerpted from a thank you letter from the Ministry of Community and Social Services to a Cota Service Provider

“Cota’s staff...helped me to realize that I’m somebody. I felt for the first time in more than 25 years living in Canada that I’m a part of society. My problem was Cota’s problem...”

Anonymous client of the Court Support Service

“Cota has provided an excellent community support to clients with mental health issues who are reporting to the Jane Street Probation and Parole Office...In the first year of the program, over 110 clients have been referred by Probation and Parole officers to Cota Case Managers... Clients have reported positive experiences from their involvement with [their] Cota worker and Probation and Parole’s Officers appreciate the services provided to our clients by Cota Case Managers Alenka Dujmovic and Andrea Davis.”

Excerpted from a thank you letter from the Ministry of Community Safety and Correctional Services

Our Services

Introducing Cota's Integrated Service Teams

In January, 2015 Cota reorganized its various case management services into four Integrated Service Teams in order to improve our ability to respond to the unique needs of communities across Toronto and to enhance our ability to improve coordination of care, particularly for people presenting with complex needs. Each of the four Integrated Service Teams is comprised of:

- Acquired Brain Injury (ABI) Case Managers
- Geriatric Mental Health Case Managers
- Mental Health Case Managers
- Dual Diagnosis Case Managers
- Consulting Psychiatry

Cota's Integrated Services Teams are now operating in each of North York, Scarborough, Toronto Central LHIN-East and Toronto Central LHIN-West catchment areas.

Cota's Other Services Include:

Acquired Brain Injury Services

- Adult Day Service at Providence Healthcare
- ABI Case Management at West Park Healthcare Adult Day Service
- Collegeview Supportive Housing

Developmental & Dual Diagnosis Services

- Community Liaison Worker Program
- Dual Possibilities Supportive Housing
- Specialized Care Program

Geriatric Mental Health Services

- Geriatric Mental Health Case Management at Neighbourhood-Link

Homelessness Related Services

- Assertive Community Treatment (ACT) Team
- Hostel Outreach Program Case Management
- Streets to Homes Intensive Follow-Up Supportive Housing

Mental Health Services

- ACT Team
- Adams House Supportive Housing
- Bailey House Supportive Housing
- Boarding Home Program
- FOCUS (Mid-East Toronto Health Link Integrated Service Coordination Team)
- Health, Home and Community Program
- Short-Term Residential Beds
- Step by Step Supportive Housing

Mental Health & Justice Services

- Court Support
- Mental Health & Justice Prevention Case Management
- Mental Health & Justice Supportive Housing
- Release Planning Case Management
- Short-Term Residential Beds


Inspiring Change Through Collaboration

Cota's Roles in the City of Toronto's Enhanced Service System Response

In November 2014, Cota partnered with the City of Toronto to join a new initiative known as SPIDER (Specialized Program for Interdivisional Enhanced Response). This program was initially developed to coordinate the City's interdivisional responses to complex and unresolved safety risks that involve vulnerable individuals, their homes or property, and their neighbours.

Cota's involvement in this initiative has provided the City with much needed support. Since joining the initiative Cota has assisted with more than 40% of all SPIDER situations.

According to SPIDER co-chair Dan Breault, Cota has acted as a leader in response efforts, serving as "our most active community partner – [Cota is] not afraid to step up, get creative and reduce vulnerability".



Other SPIDER participants include: ten city divisions; four community health care agencies; Toronto Employment and Social Services (TESS); Toronto Central CCAC; Children's Services; Shelter, Support & Housing Administration (SSHA); Woodgreen Community Services, Fire and Paramedic Services; Toronto Community Housing; Toronto Public Health; Revenue Services and Municipal Licensing and Standards; including Toronto Animal Services.



Esmaeel Nazari, Case Manager - Mental Health, (left), Ben Mariani, Case Manager - Mental Health (center), and Jennie Hawking, Manager, Clinical Services (right).

Assisting a Vulnerable Toronto Resident

A socially isolated woman in her 50's was referred to Cota through SPIDER. She lives in a detached home, on a pension, with two pets and excessive amounts of clutter. She is a vulnerable citizen, due to mental illness, and has had a number of challenges keeping her home free of health and safety risks. Recently her home also became uninhabitable due to excessive amounts of black mould resulting from a roof leak.

Cota collaborated with the City to support this vulnerable woman. Through persistent efforts, Cota's case manager eventually gained her trust. Over time, Cota's case manager has been able to support her through the mould remediation process and to make informed choices about safer living options for herself and her pets. Cota will continue to provide support to her until all safety issues have been fully resolved.

Inspiring Change at the Systems Level

Cota provides case management services and administrative oversight for young adults living with a developmental disability in children's group homes

In 2013, Cota was awarded funds from the Ministry of Community & Social Services (MCSS) to create the Specialized Care Program. The Specialized Care Program provides case management services to young adults with developmental disabilities who have completed service delivery through the Special Needs Team at Delisle Youth Services and are currently living in a children's per diem residence. This program supports not only the young adults and their families, but it also supports the children's service providers that offer ongoing care to these young adults until they can secure permanent housing within an appropriate setting for adults.

The case manager provides individualized supports to the clients as needed so that they can achieve their unique goals for themselves as adult members of their communities. For example, the case manager helps individuals to access important health care services or social services. The case manager will also support the individual to develop a plan for adult life. This might include exploring post-secondary education and/or pursuing employment options.

Cota educates, coaches and monitors the children's service providers so that they can be more responsive to the needs of their adult clients while also ensuring that these agencies demonstrate full compliance with the legislative expectations of the Adult Developmental Services Sector.

This new program inspires systems change by ensuring that adults who are living within children's residences are able to access age appropriate care as they continue their transition to adulthood. In 2014, Cota was awarded additional funds from MCSS to enhance existing capacity in the Specialized Care Program.



Inspiring Change Through Outreach

A New Initiative at a Toronto Community Housing Building

There are a significant number of individuals living in Toronto Community Housing (TCH) who struggle with a mental health, addictions and/or cognitive challenges. Many of these tenants are not receiving the support that they need. As a result many struggle with their health, have difficulty maintaining housing and are not fully engaged in their communities. In addition, data indicates disproportionately high incidents of police contacts, EMS calls, eviction rates and hospital emergency department utilization for tenants of some TCH buildings. In the late fall of 2013, Cota initiated conversations with TCH and began to explore the possibility of developing a service to address these issues. TCH identified 220 Oak Street as a priority building that would benefit from Cota's support.

A Barbecue in the Community

A barbecue was organized to engage community members at 220 Oak Street. Some community members shared their favourite dishes and helped make this event a great success.

On December 1, 2014 Cota launched our *Health, Home & Community* program at 220 Oak Street. This program involves Cota placing an interdisciplinary team of services providers on-site, six days per week, to work with the tenants of the building. The goals of the program are to assist tenants to achieve their best possible health, successfully maintain their housing and build a sense of community within the building.

Operating at first with money from our own reserves, the Toronto Central Local Health Integration Network (TC LHIN) has since agreed to fund this program.



Introducing the *Health, Home & Community* Support Team



From top left to right: Susan Blakeley, Pat Melnick, Norine Thompson (Manager), Don Ford, Luba Senkiw, Olga Vaks, and Jennifer Rosser deliver services to residents at 220 Oak Street six days a week.



Inspiring Change

One Person at a Time

A Success Story: Cota helped Adrienne through a difficult time in her life

Toronto Community Housing (TCH) referred Adrienne to Cota while she was involved in an eviction process. Adrienne lived in her apartment with seven cats. Despite her efforts, it was difficult for one person to care for so many cats, and considerable damage had been done to the apartment.

When the team received the referral and learned of the situation, they were primarily concerned about Adrienne's well-being. They were also concerned about the well-being of the neighbours and the cats.

At the beginning, Adrienne was reluctant to talk with the team. Through persistent effort, and with time, the team was able to open discussion about a plan to meet the requirements to maintain housing and avoid eviction.

The team collaborated with Adrienne to reduce the number of cats, and allow TCH to renovate the apartment to bring it up to standard. Some

of the cats were given to the Humane Society. The team provided support to help her through this difficult time. The team coordinated services with the Salvation Army to refurbish the home.

With Cota's assistance, Adrienne successfully met TCH's requirements to maintain housing. Living conditions in the apartment have greatly improved. Adrienne continues to engage with support services from the team.





Judy Gargaro (left) from West Park Healthcare Centre and **Pam Nir** (right), Cota Senior Manager will be sharing important results of a study at the **2015 ABI Provincial Conference**. The study found a high prevalence of acquired brain injury in the homeless population served by Cota's ACT team.

ABI/ACT Study

60% of those with complete screeners have a history of acquired brain injury (ABI), and those with an ABI are over-represented among homeless individuals living with mental health issues, using substances and reporting emotional problems.

Inspiring Change Through Practice

Study finds high prevalence of acquired brain injury in homeless population served by Cota's ACT team

Led by principal investigators Dr. Gary Gerber and Judy Gargaro from West Park Healthcare Centre, this research study evaluated "the relationship between a self-reported history of acquired brain injury (ABI) and treatment outcomes and psychiatric symptoms in a mainstream community mental health treatment program". The goal of the study was to use the findings to determine how ABI screening can be helpful to clients.

Cota's At Home Assertive Community Treatment (ACT) team serves persons who are homeless and have serious mental illness. The ACT team participated in the study using a screening tool to identify any history of acquired brain injury. Many individuals living with ABI have complex needs, so it was not unexpected that persons with an ABI history would be served by the team. The screening findings showed that 55% of the caseload have had a history of ABI with loss of consciousness. In addition, individuals with an ABI are over-represented among those using substances and reporting emotional problems.

If these individuals were diverted to the ABI service sector, they could not be supported with the existing funding so it is necessary to build capacity within the larger and well-resourced Mental Health Sector. The data from the study will be used to begin developing sensitive and specific decision-making guidelines for clinical practice.

The long-term goal is to use study findings to build collaborative models of care that are seamless and allow for individuals with ABI and complex health issues to receive the right service across service sectors.

Judy Gargaro and Cota Senior Manager, Pam Nir, will share these important results at the 2015 ABI Provincial Conference sponsored by Ontario Brain Injury Association (OBIA). They are also co-authoring a paper with Dr. Gerber to be submitted to a peer reviewed journal.

Facts About Cota

In 2014-2015 Cota inspired positive change in the lives of

3,293 PEOPLE

Cota offered housing and housing supports to

OVER 470 CLIENTS

Financial Information

FINANCIAL SUMMARY

FISCAL YEAR ENDED MARCH 31, 2015

Revenue

Transfer Payment funding

Central Local Health Integrated Network (CLHIN)	\$ 13,155,403
Toronto Central Local Health Integrated Network (TCLHIN)	115,844
Ministry of Health and Long-Term Care	3,721,627
Ministry of Community and Social Services	2,627,864
City of Toronto	346,931
Partnerships and other funding	706,426
Other income	95,496
Amortization of deferred capital contributions	144,572
Investment income	101,428

Total revenue	\$ 21,015,591
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Expenditure

Salaries and employee benefits	\$ 15,734,737
Occupancy costs	3,272,254
General overheads and program supplies	1,937,535
Amortization of capital assets	165,940

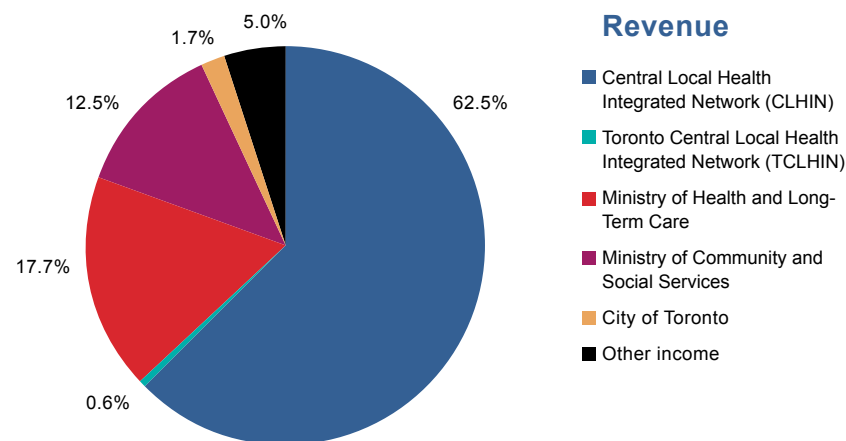
Total expenditure	\$ 21,110,466
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Deficiency of revenue over expenditure before the undernoted	(94,875)
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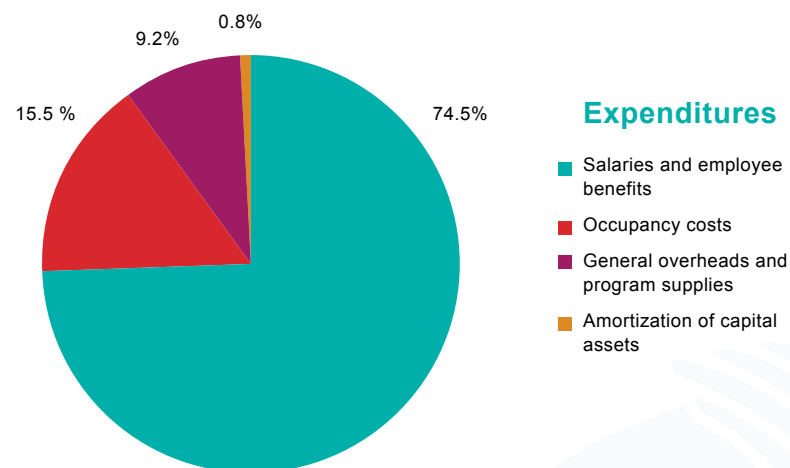
Realized and unrealized Investment gain	207,358
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Excess of revenue over expenditure	\$ 112,483
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Revenue



Expenditures



Our Partners

Cota's accomplishments are often the result of formal partnerships and successful collaborations that we have with other organizations.

In fiscal 2014-2015 some of Cota's key collaborations involved the following partner organizations:

- Across Boundaries
- Black Creek Community Health Centre
- Canadian Mental Health Association-Toronto Branch
- Centre for Addiction and Mental Health
- City of Toronto
- Community Resource Connections of Toronto
- Delta Family Resource Centre
- Evangel Hall Mission
- Fife House
- Fred Victor Centre
- Habitat Services
- Jane Finch Family and Community Centre
- Jane Street Probation and Parole Office
- John Howard Society of Toronto
- Mainstay Housing
- Neighbourhood Link Support Services
- Ontario Shores Centre for Mental Health Sciences
- Parkdale Community Health Centre
- Reconnect Mental Health Services
- St. Michael's Hospital
- Surrey Place Centre
- The Scarborough Hospital
- Toronto Community Housing Corporation
- Toronto North Support Services
- Toronto Public Health
- Vita Community Living Services
- West Park Healthcare Centre



Our Funders

Funding supports provided by:



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One-Time and Monthly Donations

Help us inspire change in the lives of the people we support.

Your generous support...

- pilots innovative services
- purchases needed equipment
- provides one-time assistance to clients in financial need (e.g., to help them buy a bed, purchase an assistive device, pay a registration fee for a course), and
- assists us to undertake other important work as we pursue our mission.

To make a one-time or monthly donation by cheque, please send it to:

Cota

550 Queen St. E., Suite 201
Toronto, Ontario
M5A 1V2
Attention: Donations

Thank you for your support!

Charitable Tax Number: 12196-9661-RR0001



