



**Ava, École des Pionniers**

*Jumps for her mother who has a implantable cardioverter defibrillator (ICD)*

# DEPARTMENTAL REPORTS

## FISCAL 2023

SEPTEMBER 1, 2022 - AUGUST 31, 2023



New Brunswick / Nouveau-Brunswick

## Promote Health

The Heart and Stroke Foundation of New Brunswick is invested in health promotion programming to support cardiovascular disease prevention. By supporting New Brunswickers to adopt Healthy Behaviours such as healthy eating, physical activity and living smoke and vape free, we are investing in an upstream approach to chronic disease prevention and helping to decrease New Brunswicker's risk for cardiovascular disease.

### Heart Healthy Schools

In F23, the Heart Healthy Schools (HHS) Program welcomed **58 schools** into the 2022-2023 year, engaging 14,409 students. This year, an updated program model was launched which prioritized exploration and experiential learning of health topics. The new program focused on the 4 key themes of (1) Fruits and Vegetables (2) Joyful Movement (3) Water and (4) Rest & Recharge. This change was accompanied by new resources, and a new program website. Program changes were welcomed by School Champions, and overall, educators felt that the HHS program continues to be a valuable and important program for their schools. To date, 95 (or 45%) elementary schools have participated in the HHS program since 2015.

*“Students really loved this. The program was very easy to implement and worth it to see the students so engaged.”  
– HHS School Champion*

*“Following the Heart Healthy topics gave the school monthly topics that extended into lessons, activities, assemblies, and extra-curricular learning.” – HHS School Champion*

*“HHS gives you all the resources you need to be able to participate easily and tie it in to your school curriculum seamlessly. There's no reason not to do it!” – HHS School Champion*

### Live Well | Bien Vivre

Our health coaches have guided over **353 clients** on their unique journeys to wellness. Communications was deemed a major priority to increase the number of referrals this program receives and to align our messaging with the right channels and audiences. This year the first ever **communications strategy** was developed to drive traffic and awareness specifically tailored to the Live Well | Bien Vivre program. We are excited to see the impact of this strategy moving into F24. Outside of communications, health coaches continue to support clients, in F23, to meet their health goals – 96% of our clients either **fully realized their health/wellness goals (83%)** or **partially realized their health/wellness goals (13%)**.

*“It's been a pleasure working with my Health Coach. The knowledge and technique used worked well with me. My coach was able to work within my abilities to support me in my journey.” – LWBV Client*

*“I never felt judged and that was very important to me. This support was as little or as great as I needed. I controlled the frequency of our meetings and based it on my needs that were not always of the same urgency throughout the process.” – LWBV Client*



## New Brunswick Anti-Tobacco Coalition (NBATC)

Heart & Stroke NB is a founding member of the New Brunswick Anti-Tobacco Coalition (NBATC), and is proud to continue to provide administrative management of the grant funding through the hired NBATC Manager. For over 20 years, the NBATC has been a collaborative partnership between government and non-government stakeholders, in the pursuit of a smoke and vape-free New Brunswick. Throughout F23, the NBATC continued to provide stakeholder engagement and knowledge exchange for its networks. The NBATC also provides ongoing information to stakeholders, and continues to host meetings, coordinating stakeholder action, through its various working groups, to initiate new projects, advocacy opportunities, and knowledge sharing.

## Save Lives

Ensuring New Brunswickers have access to the best practices in emergency cardiovascular care has been a long-standing priority for the Heart and Stroke Foundation of New Brunswick. In F23, we continued to add new CPR and First Aid instructors to grow our resuscitation program, and we placed more AEDs in priority locations across the province, supporting New Brunswickers with optimal response in the event of a cardiovascular emergency.

### First Aid & CPR

Heart & Stroke NB continues to equip New Brunswickers with the skills they need to recognize & respond to emergency situations. In F23, our First Aid & CPR programs saw a growth of 47%, with 3,417 courses offered, and 15,393 New Brunswickers trained. Additionally, 59 new instructors were welcomed to the program, bringing our total number of instructors in our network to 257. In F23 we continued to work with our partners in the healthcare system to re-stabilize staff training systems, and provide support post pandemic.

***“I became an instructor because my 8-year old daughter suffered a cardiac arrest and due to high quality CPR, she’s with us today. It has become my passion to teach this lifesaving skill”***

*– Natasha Russell, Instructor*

***“I’ve worked as a part of Heart & Stroke NB’s First Aid & CPR program for more than 25 years. I’ve seen first-hand the difference these life saving skills make, and it’s what led me to become an instructor”***

*– Kelsy Wadman, Instructor*

### Restart A Heart

In F23, a record breaking 58 AEDs, were placed! A partnership with the Government of New Brunswick, allowed us to place AEDs in all remaining Schools that did not currently have a device. A joint press conference on March 1, 2023 announced this placement of AEDs at the 49 remaining schools. Additionally, 9 other AEDs were placed in community locations. In total, 530 AEDs have been placed since 2014 and 27 lives have been saved. Public awareness of the importance of AEDs continues to build, and we anticipate continued program growth in 2024.

***“We have seen time and time again the impact that AEDs can have when utilized in a timely manner. It is a matter of life and death, and today we can celebrate that every school in our province is helping to close a gap in the delivery of emergency medical services.”*** - Dr. Michel D’Astous, Cardiologist, Dr. Georges-L.-Dumont

*University Hospital Centre & Heart & Stroke NB Board member*





## Enhance Recovery

In F23, the Heart and Stroke Foundation focused our efforts in providing support to people with the lived experience of cardiovascular disease. We did this through our work in promoting the use of best practice care within the healthcare systems and providing service delivery of stroke navigation to stroke patients and their caregivers.

### Stroke Conference

In F23, Heart & Stroke NB's Annual Provincial Stroke Conference, once again provided continuing education on stroke to healthcare providers across the province. This year marked the 9th iteration of this event and saw a record breaking attendance of 759 registered delegates! Registration rates have more than tripled over a 5-year period! Participants like the virtual option, value that registration is at no-charge, and feel that the topics meet their learning needs. Heart & Stroke NB was proud to be able to host this bilingual event once again in partnership with Horizon and Vitalité Health Networks.

***I really enjoyed how the conference presenters targeted pieces of stroke care across the continuum.***

*- Delegate*

***I thought all the presentations were excellent and represented current best practices.***

*- Delegate*

### Stroke Navigation

In F23, our stroke navigators supported over **110 stroke patients** navigate the recovery experience and continue to support and empower the patient to adjust to life back in the community. This year encompassed the onboarding of a second full-time stroke navigator to the program. We are excited as we anticipate an increase in their direct client care hours now that training and orientation are complete. We continued to see most clients referred from one of our **16 partnering hospitals** in both Vitalité and Horizon. We continue to work with both regional health authorities and continue the roll-out of our communications strategy to spread awareness and knowledge of the program more widely.

Finally, a key indicator worth celebrating this year is that there were no hospital readmissions for any of our stroke navigation clients at all three checkpoints (30 days, 90 days, or 6 months post stroke). This is encouraging to see as stroke patients are at high risk for complications, including recurrent stroke, leading to readmission. Readmissions are otherwise common in New Brunswick for stroke patients: 6% of patients experience 30-day readmission, 15% of patients experience 90-day readmission, and 23% experience 6-month readmission.

***"I couldn't have made it without the help of the HSFNB and my Stroke Navigator - looked forward to my weekly sessions and was very helpful to me."*** – Stroke Navigation Client

***"It gave me some direction and support; it made me focus on where I am instead of where I was... This program is crucial and so is the help of a Stroke Navigator."*** – Stroke Navigation Client



Christine Roherty  
**Vice President,  
Health Promotion**



# Development

The unwavering support of our donors, and stakeholders across New Brunswick contributed to the continued success of our events and programs. Funds raised throughout our many channels allows us to focus on mission initiatives and directly impacts the health and wellness of New Brunswickers.

## Bequests

Planned Gifts in the form of bequests and gifts of securities totalled \$1,478,810 which was an increase of 2063% over the last year. The generosity of Mrs. Joyce Sherwood's gift of over \$1 Million is the largest one-time gift in our Foundation's history and the impact towards our mission will be felt for many years.

## Major Gifts

Major Gifts totalled \$138,758. This 21% decrease in revenue from the previous year is primarily due to changes in program allocation. We were thrilled to continue the Stroke Signs and Symptoms campaign in partnership with the Government of New Brunswick.

## Special Events and Super Bingo

This year Special Events raised a total of \$152,485. Included in this was our new Super Bingo which happened quarterly with a jackpot of \$20,000. The Super Bingo helped to attract new players to our regular Monday night Bingo as well as raising additional funds. Other programs included were Paper Hearts and Dress Red campaigns and a Curl for Heart in the Bathurst region.

## Bingo

Bingo continued to be a success for our Foundation with more than \$356,000 raised. Bingo provides the opportunity to connect with individuals across the entire province with retailers selling our Bingo cards in over 50 communities. We continued to share health messaging and information about our events and programs through advertisements during our weekly Bingo games.

## Hockey Heroes Weekend

In its 11th year, our Hockey Heroes Weekend event continues to be an incredible success raising over \$919,000 for our Foundation. As the most successful fundraising event in Atlantic Canada, and our Foundation's signature event, we are grateful to our participants who go above and beyond to fundraise for our Foundation year after year.

## Jump Rope for Heart

Jump Rope for Heart has been a major fund raiser within New Brunswick schools for over 40 years. English and French videos were created and played to each individual class during physical education. This provided the students the opportunity to learn more about our Foundation and the program in a smaller group. This, combined with the school ambassador watching the video many times and our team frequently connecting with the schools, proved to be a successful model. Seventy-five schools participated in Jump Rope for Heart raising over \$344,000, a 24% increase over the previous year.



## Direct Mail

Donors responded well to Direct Mail options throughout the year and \$300,496 was raised. Given mail-in gifts are trending down across the country, we were pleased to see Direct Mail gifts increase by 4% over last year. In addition to one-time gifts, our Direct Mail program is also home to our monthly donors.

## Employee Giving

Employee Giving's totalled \$17,828 which has remained consistent over the past 3 years. Currently, our employee giving portfolio consists of our HealthPartners relationship with the employees of the Federal Government.



*Paula McKinley*

Paula McKinley,

**Vice President,  
Development & Strategic Partnerships**



The Marketing & Communications department has continued its momentum in F23, leveraging innovative strategies to strengthen our digital presence and extend our impact across New Brunswick. From website launches, to impactful campaigns, this year has been marked by transformative initiatives aimed at enhancing accessibility and showcasing our commitment to supporting heart health in our community.

## Website Launch

We launched [heartandstrokenb.ca](http://heartandstrokenb.ca), our comprehensive digital platform, showcasing health services like Live Well-Bien | Vivre and Stroke Navigation, along with fundraising events like NAPA Hockey Heroes Weekend. The site's user-friendly design offers resources for donors, volunteers, and those impacted by heart disease and stroke. With features like digital donations, program registrations, and volunteer opportunities, we're enhancing accessibility and reinforcing our local presence throughout New Brunswick. Ongoing updates, and innovative digital strategies, are planned to sustain our impact.

## FAST Campaign

Our **F**ace, **A**rms, **S**peech, **T**ime (FAST) campaign, focused on stroke awareness, made significant strides. Through targeted online efforts, it reached 1.9 million people on social media and 695k through digital ads, leading to a 1,200% increase in website visits. Surveys showed a 13% rise in New Brunswickers recognizing stroke signs, with 52% identifying two or more FAST signs, and 79% knowing to call 9-1-1 during a stroke. Extended funding ensures the campaign's continuation until 2024, reinforcing our commitment to stroke awareness.

## Rebranding Initiative

In our quest for a stronger brand identity, our Communications & Marketing Department led a focused effort to build consistency across all brand touchpoints, enhancing recognition among donors, volunteers, and stroke survivors in New Brunswick. Polished email signatures, letterhead templates, and PowerPoint slides showcase our unified brand image, reflecting our enduring impact and commitment to visual coherence.

As we reflect on the achievements of F23, our dedication remains steadfast in telling impactful stories, fostering awareness, and engaging with our community. Looking ahead, we are poised to build upon these successes, furthering our mission to create a lasting impact on heart health in New Brunswick through continued innovation and outreach.



A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Geoff Walsh".

Geoff Walsh  
**Director,**  
**Marketing & Communications**



In F23, the Operations & Finance team continued improving programs and processes to support moving the Foundation forward.

## **Operations & IT**

The Foundation opened one new office in Bathurst under our Live Well|Bien Vivre program. This new space was required to accommodate a health coach in that area. This brings our provincial office total to six including Saint John, Moncton, Edmundston, Fredericton and Woodstock.

This fiscal we secured a grant through the Community Services Recovery Fund, a program administered jointly by the Canadian Red Cross, Community Foundations of Canada, and the United Way. The grant will be used to modernize the digital infrastructure of the foundation by upgrading current hardware, software, data, and communication systems. There were approximately 10,000 applicants and only 1800 recipients chosen. This IT revitalization is long overdue and will improve the way the foundation communicates internally and externally.

## **People & Culture**

This year our focus was to engage our team. We implemented an annual anonymous Pulse Survey that will allow the Foundation to “check the pulse” of every employee to see how they are really feeling about their roles and the Foundation as a whole. It provides our team the opportunity to have our voice heard as well as impact policies and procedures moving forward.

We also hosted our 2nd Annual All-Staff Retreat that brought all team members from across the province together to participate in various team building activities. It was held in Moncton this year and our theme was “Connection”.

The aforementioned initiatives supported our success in being named one of Atlantic Canada’s 2023 Best Places to Work by Atlantic Business Magazine. This program was established to recognize organizations that are 100% committed to HR excellence –workplaces that are going above and beyond the norm. The Foundation was proud to be featured in the January/February issue of the magazine.

## **Finance**

This fiscal the Foundation once again continued to focus on accurate budgeting and continuous forecasting to ensure our financial sustainability. With an ever-growing organization, new and improved financial processes have been implemented to ensure efficiency and transparency of financial records and reporting.

The annual audit performed by Teed Saunders Doyle was completed in October, in the Saint John office. The audit process went smoothly and did not identify any considerable deficiencies.





### Annual Campaign

In F23, the annual door-to-door fundraising campaign, in conjunction with a donation pledge campaign, raised \$191,912 for the Foundation. It is important to note that while our traditional campaign may be winding down, we will continue to engage our donors and volunteers with current and new initiatives.

### Memorial /In Honour Program

The memorial/ In honour program surpassed its annual goal by raising \$178,303 this fiscal, a 14% increase over last year.

### Year in Review

Overall, it has been another year of growth and innovation for the Foundation. I remain excited about the future of HSFNB.



A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Lynn Flewwelling".

Lynn Flewwelling  
**Vice President,  
Operations & Finance**



## Advocacy

### New Brunswick School Food Program

In New Brunswick, 20% of children live in households without adequate access to food. Although school food programs cannot fix all systemic problems that lead to food insecurity, reliably providing healthy foods while at school can support all children with improved health, wellness and educational outcomes. This year we continued to advocate for a province wide comprehensive school food program that addressed food insecurity, provided healthy foods, included guidance from dietitians, built nutrition knowledge and helped create partnerships. While we were pleased government invested an additional 2 million in school food programming in their last budget, we know that there is still more work to do to accomplish the goal of providing universal and nutritious school food programming.

We also worked in partnership with the NB Medical Society and Canadian Cancer Society to form a new coalition that will not only advocate for comprehensive nutritional school food programs, but also advocate to reduce consumption of sugar sweetened beverages and enhanced opportunities to meet the recommended Canadian 24-Hour Movement Guidelines. This new partnership will strengthen our voices for change to support New Brunswick children and youth to lead healthier lives and prevent chronic disease that will yield a positive impact on their overall health and well-being.

### Presumed Consent for Organ Donation

A single organ donor can save or improve the lives of up to 80 people. According to the World Health Organization, countries with presumed consent legislation have donation rates 25 to 30 per cent higher than those that require explicit consent. Working alongside the New Brunswick Medical Society, we were pleased to support the work of MLA Jean-Claude D'amour and the opposition party who put forward a private member bill for the Human Organ and Tissue Donation Act that passed royal assent on June 16, 2023. This makes New Brunswick the second province in Canada to adopt a "deemed consent" model for organ and tissue donation. All adults who are not exempt will be presumed to agree to donate their organs when they die — unless they opt out. While this Bill will take a few years to implement it is a huge step in the right direction.

### Vaping Legislation

New Brunswick has the highest vaping prevalence in Canada among youth ages 15-19, with more than 1 in 5 high school aged teens (22.8%) indicating that they vape daily or occasionally. We continue to work closely with the NB Medical Society, Canadian Cancer Society, and the NB Lung Association to identify our collective concerns around the rising rates of vaping in NB among youth and to advocate for solutions to tackle this issue. This past year we have been primarily advocating for Age 21 legislation, which would increase the age of purchase of tobacco and vaping products from 19 to 21 years of age. The majority of smokers begin as teenagers. Raising the Age to 21 is an evidence-informed measure that would significantly reduce smoking and vaping rates among kids.



Youth often obtain tobacco products through social sources – namely, a brother, sister or friend. Raising the minimum age for tobacco sales to 21 essentially removes the legal purchaser from the social circle, or high school setting. Additionally, our other advocacy topics included: 1. ensure significant public health measures to reduce tobacco use are included in any lawsuit settlement with tobacco companies; 2. increase the tobacco tax to match inflation; 3. Increase the retail license fee for tobacco and e-cigarette retailers; 4. participate in the federal e-cigarette tax framework; and 5. provide universal access for evidence-informed smoking cessation medications to New Brunswickers.

### **Automated External Defibrillator (AED) legislation and Public Awareness**

The vast majority of cardiac arrests occur outside of the hospital walls, which means bystander intervention is the best chance of survival. Anyone can perform CPR and use an AED; therefore, quick access to an AED in the event of a cardiac arrest is critical for saving lives. The New Brunswick Public Access to AEDs Committee (including representatives from The Heart and Stroke Foundation of New Brunswick, Horizon Health Network, Vitalité Health Network, The New Brunswick Heart Centre, Medavie Health Services, and WorkSafeNB) submitted the New Brunswick Defibrillator Registration and Public Access Act Recommendations to the Department of Health in Q3. We continue to work with government to advocate for: 1. the creation of a Public Access to Defibrillation act for New Brunswick which mandates AEDs in specific public places, mandatory AED registration with 9-1-1, and maintenance; 2. the creation of an AED subsidy fund to offset the cost of AEDs and maintenance for priority locations and those expressing financial need, and 3. investment in a provincial public awareness campaign to improve awareness of AEDs and how to use them.

### **New Brunswick Heart Failure Strategy**

The burden of heart failure is high in Canada with over 100,000 admissions to hospital annually, and more than 750,000 people living with this complex condition. In New Brunswick, heart failure ranks 4th as one of the top reasons for hospital admissions. Despite the significant burden, there is insufficient awareness of the magnitude of the problem of heart failure, care continues to be fragmented and there are gaps/inequities in access to care. This past year, we started to build the groundwork for a New Brunswick Heart Failure Network (NBHFN), which will include passionate champions such as clinical experts, people living with heart failure and system leaders to better understand local resources, capacity, and gaps within care to prioritize initiatives to help advance the pillars of the Heart Failure Action Plan for Canada. We currently have a cardiologist from each health authority co-chairing this network, with HSFNB serving as the secretariat. The goal of the network is to develop and advocate for a coordinated provincial heart failure strategy in New Brunswick to provide equitable care to all New Brunswickers at risk or living with heart failure.

## **Research**

To facilitate the establishment of a robust health research program in New Brunswick, we continue to build an endowment fund that is focused on providing stable funding, in perpetuity, to facilitate capacity building for researchers within New Brunswick conducting cardiovascular research. Our goal for this fund is to raise 2 million dollars. At year end, our endowment was at **\$1,682,702**. We continue to approach potential funders to meet our goal.

This past year, our call for research proposals was open to all cardiovascular research topics (no identified priority areas). We did this to cast our net wide to encourage any New Brunswick cardiovascular researcher to apply. The research proposals submitted were outstanding. The review committee recommended three \$20,000 research grants be awarded, matched by the New Brunswick Health Research Foundation (\$40,000 total for each grant).



The successful recipients included: Dr. Anna Ignaszak from the University of New Brunswick, Department of Chemistry for her research entitled “An electrochemical multiplex sensor platform for early-detection stroke biomarkers: a prototype of portable point-of-care (POC) device”; Dr. Said Mekary from Centre de formation médicale du Nouveau-Brunswick, for his research entitled: “Linking the Heart with the Brain Through Physical Activity”; and Dr. Martin Sénéchal from the University of New Brunswick, Faculty of Kinesiology, Cardiometabolic Exercise & Lifestyle Laboratory (CELLAB) for his research entitled “The impact of exercise intensity on gut microbiome in individuals at risk of cardiovascular disease”.

Lastly on the research side, we continue to meet our contractual obligations in funding national research. This year we contributed **\$560,832** to the national research program organized by the Heart and Stroke Foundation.



A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Kerrie Luck".

Dr. Kerrie Luck, MSc OT, PhD  
**Vice President,  
Policy & Research**

