

Impact Report

2025-2026



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Overview

- Transition from the Independent Living Resource Centre (ILRC) to Empower, the Disability Resource Centre on April 1, 2016
- Transition from Civic #4 to The Independent Living Resource Centre (ILRC) in 1997-1998
- Accredited member of IL Canada
- Not-for-profit cross disability organization
- 16 full-time staff and 35-40 project staff throughout the year

Mission Statement

Empower is a consumer-controlled, non-profit organization that provides leadership in the delivery of cross-disability services and supports while promoting a more inclusive society within Newfoundland and Labrador.

Independent Living

“Independence is not measured by the quality of tasks we can perform without support, but by the quality of life we can have with support.”

Independent Living is:

- Having a choice
- Making decisions
- Taking risks
- Taking responsibility
- Having control of one’s own life

At Empower, the Disability Resource Centre, we break barriers every day. Barriers to access. To knowledge. To choices. Anyone with a disability can use our services. And anyone can help, through volunteering, donations, or even a career with Empower. Empower is a vital part of our community, and the need for our services is growing. With your support, you will be helping even more people find their path to independent living.

CEO's Report

The EmpowerNL team has experienced another active and productive year delivering programs, services, and opportunities for connection. We remain committed to responding to the evolving needs of our members and advancing inclusion, accessibility, and independent living throughout Newfoundland and Labrador.

Over the past year, we continued to strengthen our membership system and how we communicate with the people we serve. EmpowerNL now provides direct services to approximately **180 active members** and shares information and resources with over 479 others across the province. In the coming year, we will continue developing strategies to reach people in rural, remote, and underserved communities and help members remain connected wherever they live.

Member engagement remained central to our work in 2025–2026. We offered a variety of programs, groups, community outings, and special events designed to encourage learning, creativity, wellness, and social connection. These included numerous information and educational sessions on a variety of topics, Dinner & Lunch Clubs, peer support groups and a variety of social activities. Our members also participated in community celebrations and accessible activities hosted throughout the St. John's area and beyond. Further details and highlights can be found in the Member Services Report.

This year, EmpowerNL hosted our annual IL Awards reception, bringing together members, community partners and the Minister of Persons with Disabilities, Government of NL, Minister Joedy Wall. The event focused on our award recipients and the gains they have made in advancing accessibility within the community, and provided participants with practical knowledge,

resources, and opportunities to build stronger connections. We are grateful to all those who contributed to its success.

Our annual Christmas Dinner and Dance was held at The CLB Armoury in December. Once again, the event provided a wonderful opportunity for members, staff, volunteers, and supporters to celebrate together. Thank you to everyone whose time and effort made the evening welcoming, accessible, and memorable.

We were also pleased to recognize the volunteers who contributed to EmpowerNL's programs, activities, committees, and events throughout the year. Their generosity, experience, and commitment strengthen our organization and make much of our work possible. In April, we hosted a Volunteer Appreciation breakfast and recognized all those who contributed to our work in the community and at the Centre.

Through InclusionNL, we continued working with employers, businesses, and community organizations to identify and remove barriers to participation. Highlights included our work with the NL Liquor Corporation, supporting them in creating their Accessibility Plan, and our work with NL Hydro, where two staff members travelled to Churchill Falls to complete accessibility reviews of all the venues in the town. This work supports more accessible and inclusive workplaces and communities across Newfoundland and Labrador.

The year also brought progress in advocacy, partnerships, funding, policy development, accessible transportation, housing, employment, and other strategic priorities. Working alongside our members and partners, we continued to promote the rights, choices, and full participation of persons with disabilities. The lived experiences and perspectives of our members remain essential to shaping our priorities and guiding our decisions.

Our Board of Directors and standing committees have provided strong leadership and thoughtful oversight throughout the year. Their understanding of EmpowerNL's work and the Independent Living philosophy continues to guide the development of our policies, practices, and strategic direction. I extend my sincere thanks to every Board and committee member, and especially to our Board Chairperson, Paul Morgan, for their leadership and support.

I also want to recognize EmpowerNL's staff. Their professionalism, compassion, flexibility, and determination have enabled the organization to respond to increasing needs while continuing to deliver meaningful programs and services. I am deeply grateful for everything they have accomplished.

Finally, thank you to our members, volunteers, funders, donors, government and community partners, and supporters. Your participation and trust make our work possible. As we enter 2026–2027, EmpowerNL will continue to build on this year's progress and work toward a province where persons with disabilities have equitable opportunities, meaningful choices, and full inclusion in community life.



Kathy Hawkins
Chief Executive Officer
EmpowerNL, Disability Resource Centre

Service Delivery

Empower provides a variety of services to both individuals and groups, promoting accessibility and inclusion for persons with disabilities throughout Newfoundland and Labrador.

Empower service delivery falls under one of the following five categories:

Consultation

A Consultation is a service that involves in-depth work with an individual around a particular topic.

For example, the Coordinator of Technology Services provides a consultation service when meeting with a student who requires technology support for educational purposes. The Coordinator will work with the student to identify challenges and try out Adaptive Technology options so the student can decide what works best.

They will discuss options around purchasing the technology followed by offering support to teach the student how best to use the technology once it is acquired.

Information Service

An Information Service is simply providing information on a disability related topic.

Examples would include individuals approaching Empower to obtain information on services available through a government program to assist with renovations to a home or accessing funding to assist with the cost of required medical equipment or services.

Individual Support

Individual Support moves beyond the providing of information and involves staff providing direct assistance to an individual or family in addressing a particular issue.

This service could include something as basic as providing alternate formats for a consumer who requires printed material in Braille. However, most of the individual supports provided by staff involve working with members on difficult issues over extended periods of time.

Skill Development

Skill Development services occur when staff provide training and instruction to an individual.

For example, the Manager of Advocacy Services provides a skill development service when helping a person complete a Canada Pension Plan application form. Or our Coordinator of Member Services provides a skill development service when working with a volunteer interested in learning what is involved with volunteering at Empower.

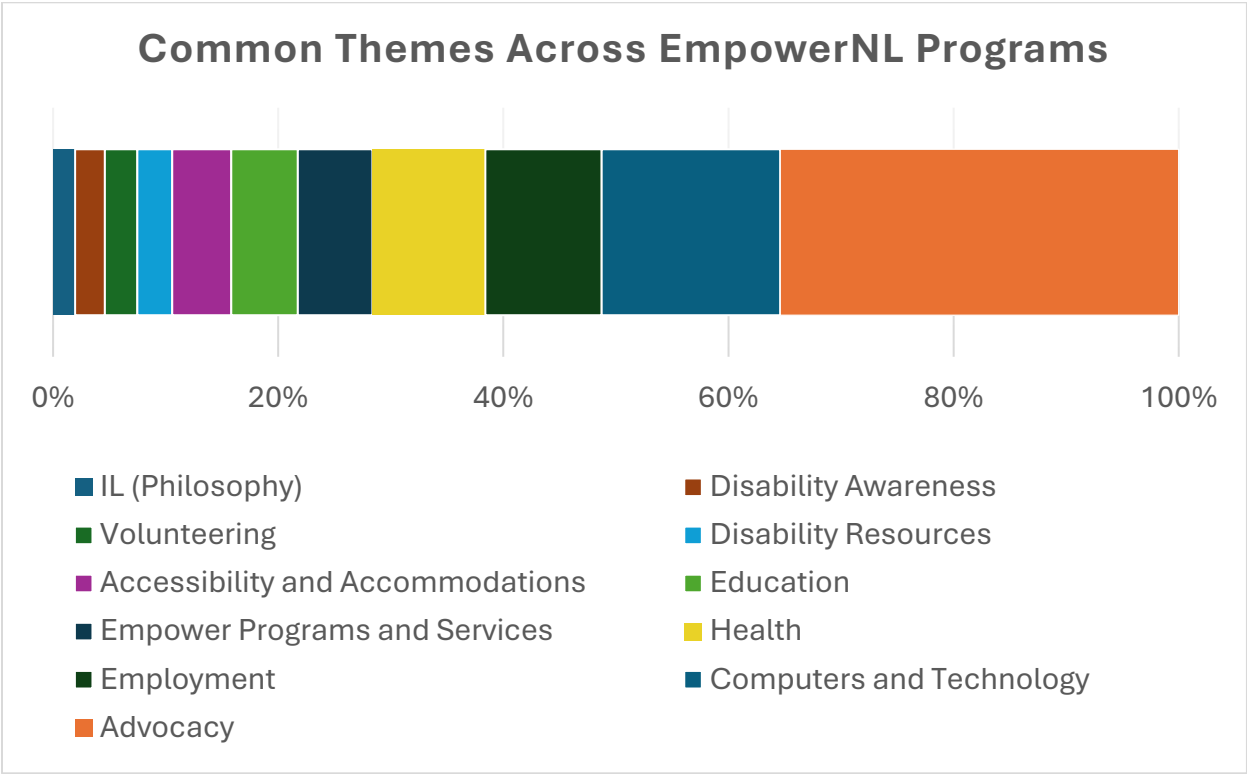
Referral Services

Referral Services occur when an individual is connected to another program, service or organization.

As an example, the Career Services Coordinator provides a referral service when linking a consumer who's interested in participating in a Horizons employment opportunity with Easter Seals. They would also provide a referral service when connecting jobseekers with staff at the Department of Families and Affordability to apply for "job start" funds.

EmpowerNL programs and services primarily cover the St. John’s Metro and Northeast Avalon area. However, with the addition of our two provincial programs Community Inclusion Services (formerly Adaptive Technology Internship and IL Internship) and InclusionNL, many services are provided to other areas of the province.

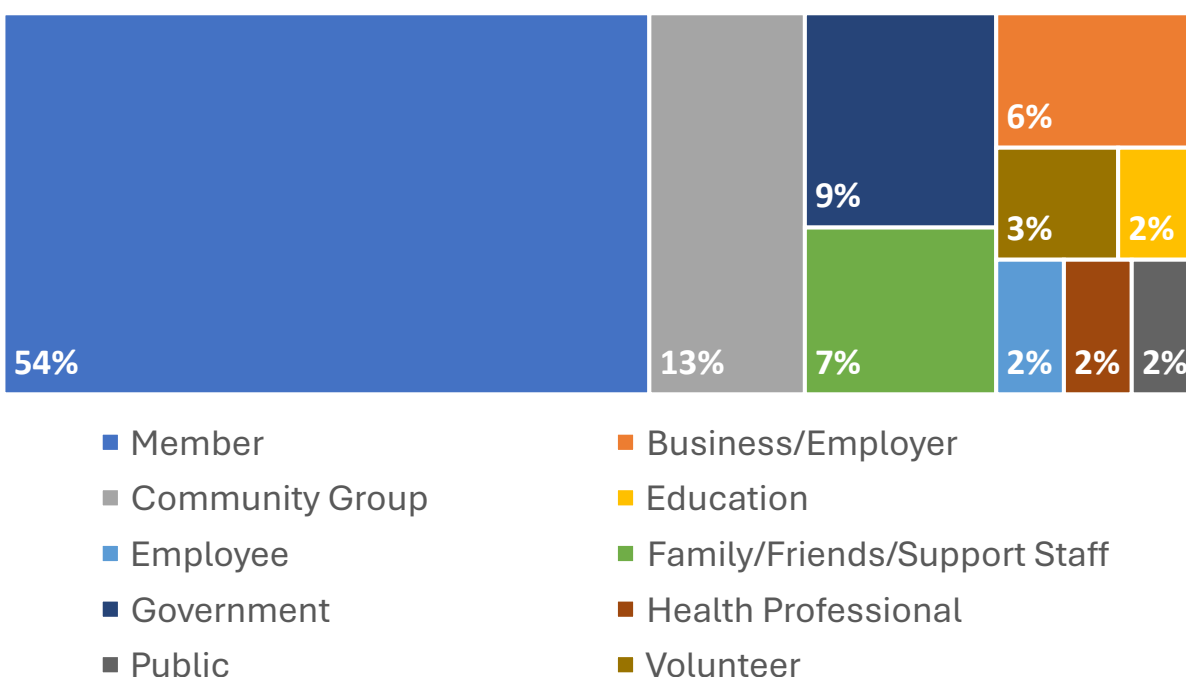
The charts below provide a breakdown of the areas where service is provided and the types of individuals/groups accessing EmpowerNL services.



This bar chart shows the common themes across all Empower programs and services. The themes IL Philosophy (1.96%), Disability Awareness (2,94%), Volunteering (2.88%), Disability Resources (3.20%), Accessibility and Accommodations (5.24%), Education (5.92%), EmpowerNL Programs and Services (6.62%), Health (10.04%), Employment (10.33%), Computers and Technology (15.87%) and Advocacy (35.40%).

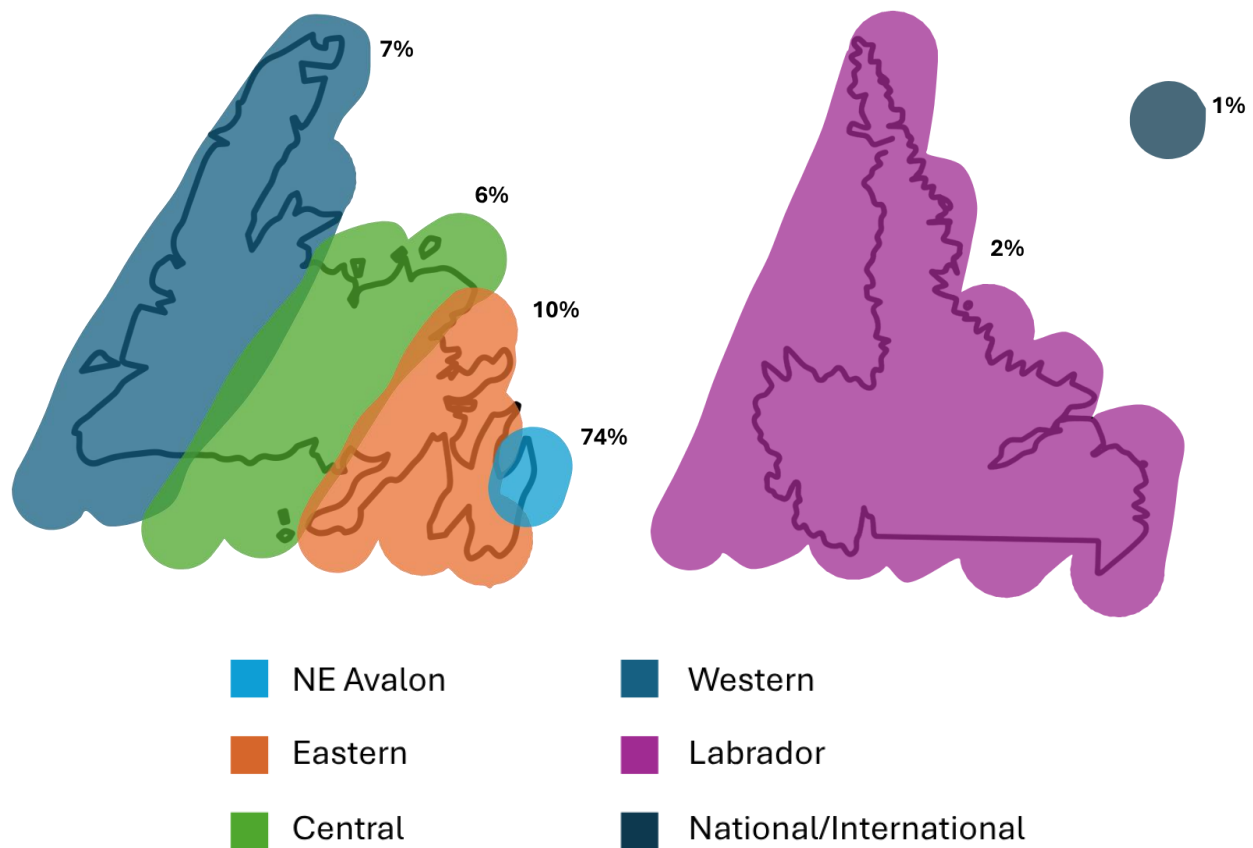


Who Received EmpowerNL Services in 2025 - 2026



This tree map shows who received services from Empower in 2025 – 2026. The categories are member (54%), business/employer (6%), community group (13%), education (2%), employee (2%), family/friends/support staff (7%), government (9%), health professional (2%), public (2%) and volunteers (3%).

Geographical Distribution of EmpowerNL Services 2025-2026



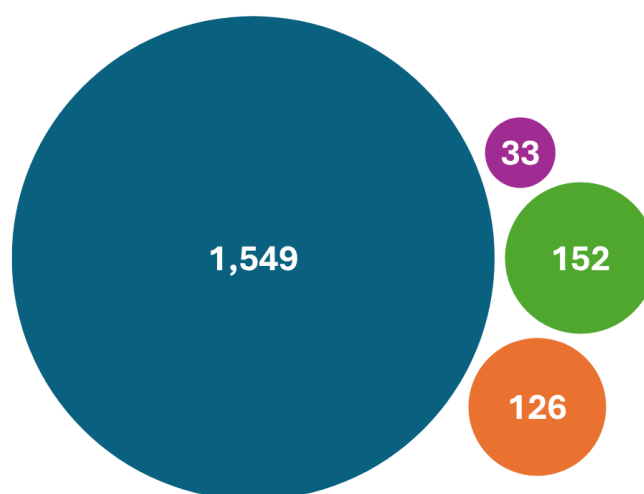
This map chart shows the geographical distribution of Empower services in 2025 - 2026, in the NE Avalon (74%), Eastern (10%), Central (6%), Western (7%), Labrador (2%) and National/International regions (1%).



Impact

Advocacy Services

- Advocacy Service Assistant and Manager engaged with **1549** individuals and saw **152** new referrals.
- Housing Stability Coordinator supported **126** individuals.
- Housing Accommodation Coordinators helped **33** individuals find and maintain housing.



Career Services



26

people found employment



14

people began
training/education

This year, **26** people found employment and **14** began their education journey with support from our Career Services Coordinator.

In partnership with Tourism HR Canada and Hospitality NL, Career Services connected with over **20** tourism-related businesses and supported over **20** job seekers interested in the tourism industry.

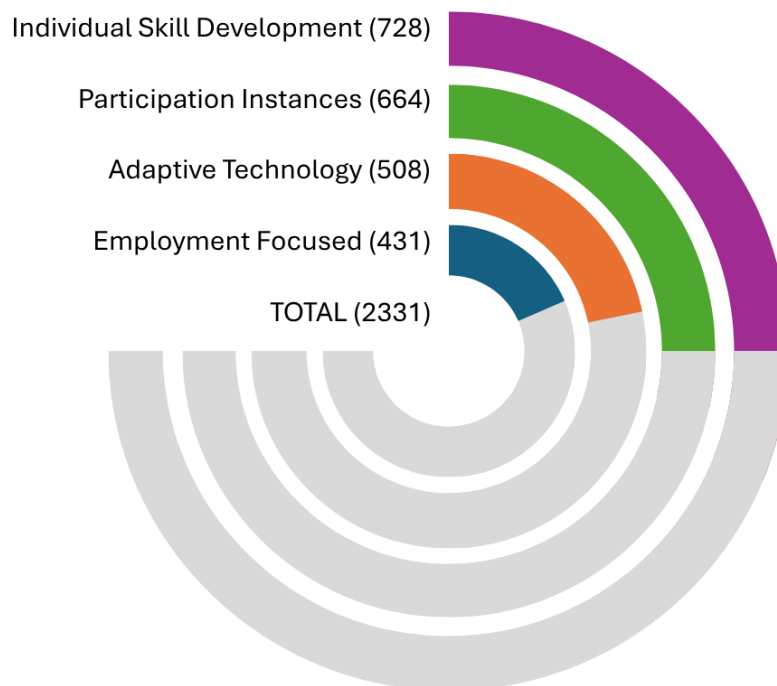
Connected with
20+
business in tourism



Supported
20+
job seekers in tourism



Technology Services



Technology Services held individual skill development, adaptive technology and employment focused consultations and directly supported individuals with disabilities in instances of participation.

This amounts to a total of **2331** individuals assisted this year.

InclusionNL – Corporate Services

InclusionNL staff gave
Accessibility Confidence
Training at over **14**
businesses this year,
reaching a total of over
700 employees



Member Services

Member Services provided a variety of opportunities for Members to take part in activities and events both at EmpowerNL and within the community. Our Members find these opportunities very impactful in their lives.



Board

Chairperson's Report

The EmpowerNL team, under the leadership of our CEO, Kathy Hawkins, continues to develop meaningful ways to support our members and the many individuals who access services through EmpowerNL, the Disability Resource Centre. On behalf of the Board of Directors, I extend my sincere thanks to our CEO and the entire staff team. Your dedication, professionalism, and commitment to the Independent Living philosophy make our work possible.

Throughout 2025–2026, EmpowerNL, The Disability Resource Centre, continued to strengthen and expand its services. Staff maintained regular contact with members to better understand their needs, gather feedback, and ensure that programs remain relevant, accessible, and responsive. This year, 100% of our active members identified as having disabilities, with the majority of our membership aged 40 years and older representing the largest segment of our membership. This information helps EmpowerNL understand the people it serves and plan effectively for the future.

The reports prepared by the EmpowerNL team highlight the important work completed during 2025–2026. Members' Services, Technology Services, Advocacy Services, Career Services, Community Inclusion Services, and the corporate accessibility services offered through InclusionNL reached members, consumers, employers, and community organizations throughout Newfoundland and Labrador.

These programs addressed a wide range of needs, including accessible housing, employment, health care, mental health, technology, social inclusion, skills development, and community participation. As demand for

our services continues to grow, EmpowerNL will seek new opportunities to address emerging needs and expand its reach across the province.

Despite ongoing financial pressures, EmpowerNL remained innovative in securing project-based funding and developing new initiatives. With support from the Judy Heumann & Steve Estey Memorial Fund, we were able to develop curriculum for a new Peer Leadership Program for members to learn facilitation skills and lead groups, and we received funds from DAWN Canada to host two GBV Survivors Peer Support Programs. This program provided opportunities for survivors of Gender Based Violence to expand their networks and develop skills to increase their engagement in the community while coping with the life experiences they've had with violence.

We were also pleased to receive continued financial support from the Government of Newfoundland and Labrador for operational funding and/or funded programs through the Department of Health and Community Services as well as the Department of Jobs, Growth & Rural Development. Funding for Career Services and Community Inclusion Services was confirmed for the year. We were also very fortunate to receive funding from the Supported Living Program at NL Housing Services to continue working with members on their housing stability.

InclusionNL continued to expand its corporate accessibility services and social-enterprise activities. Through this work, EmpowerNL supported employers and organizations seeking to improve accessibility, inclusion, and equitable participation. The Board anticipates that this source of earned revenue will continue to grow and contribute to the organization's long-term sustainability.

We sincerely appreciate the support of our government, funding, and community partners. Their contributions enable EmpowerNL to maintain essential programs and provide services that meaningfully impact the lives of persons with disabilities.

The Board continued to explore funding opportunities for necessary repairs, maintenance, and improvements to the EmpowerNL building. Next year, we will be focusing on repairs to the exterior of our building. Maintaining a safe, accessible, and welcoming space for our members, staff, volunteers, and visitors remains an important priority.

Special thanks are extended to Melanie Grandy and the Board's Financial Manager, Renee March for providing the Board with dependable financial information and guidance throughout the year.

The Board also continued its work on EmpowerNL's Strategic Plan 2024–2027, monitoring the organization's progress toward its established goals and priorities. During 2025–2026, the Board completed a performance evaluation of our Executive Director, upgraded her position to CEO, updated our HR policies, reviewed our Board's skills, and identified areas we'd like to improve in the coming year. This can certainly be seen with the calibre of new Board Members joining our team for this upcoming year. This work helped strengthen Board effectiveness, clarify organizational priorities, and support informed decision making.

The Governance and Nomination Committee advanced its work on the Independent Living Awards by introducing new Award categories and established a new process for Board recruitment.

The Occupational Health and Safety Committee met regularly and continued implementing procedures to support the health and safety of employees, members, volunteers, and visitors. The Human Resources Committee also worked on employee policies, succession planning, and the CEO's performance review.

The Board of Directors remains committed to strong governance, financial accountability, and the values and principles of the Independent Living movement. I am grateful to every Board and committee member for contributing their time, knowledge, and experience to EmpowerNL.

In closing, I extend my sincerest thanks to the EmpowerNL team, our dedicated Board and committee members, our volunteers, and our many partners and supporters. I would also like to recognize the dedication of our Board Secretary, Amanda Howlett, for her six years of valued service and contributions to the organization.

It is a privilege to serve as Chairperson of EmpowerNL. I am incredibly grateful for the commitment and dedication demonstrated throughout the organization, and I look forward to continuing our work together in 2026–2027.



Paul Morgan

Chairperson, Board of Directors

EmpowerNL, The Disability Resource Centre

IL Canada NL Provincial Representative's Report

Founded in 1986 by members of the Independent Living Movement, Independent Living Canada - formerly the Canadian Association of Independent Living Centres - represents Canada's network of Independent Living Member Centres at the national level.

IL Canada provides a collective voice on national issues affecting persons with disabilities, fosters partnerships, strengthens the capacity of Independent Living Centres, and promotes the integrity and importance of the Independent Living philosophy across Canada.

The organization is governed by a volunteer Board of Directors that includes provincial representatives from across the country. Working with IL Canada's Member Centres, the Board remains committed to advancing accessibility, inclusion, choice, and the full participation of persons with disabilities in their communities.

It has been an honour to serve my first year as EmpowerNL's Newfoundland and Labrador Provincial Representative to Independent Living Canada. This role has provided me with an opportunity to learn more about the national Independent Living network, build relationships with representatives from across Canada, and bring the perspectives and priorities of EmpowerNL and its members to national discussions.

During 2025–2026, I participated in monthly Board Meetings and have been participating on IL Canada's Youth Advisory Committee (YAC). These meetings provided opportunities to discuss the challenges and opportunities facing Independent Living Centres and the people they serve. Key areas of discussion included national funding, a number of national projects such as a

partnership with Food Banks Canada for a Menstrual Products Initiative, the completion of three years of research on the Festivals and Events project, and the new collaboration with DAWN Canada regarding GBV Survivor Peer Support Groups with four of our IL Centres Canada-wide.

The IL Canada Board of Directors for 2025–2026 included Diane Kreuger (AB) as Chairperson, Robyn East (SK) as 1st Vice Chair, Kathy Hawkins (NL) as 2nd Vice Chair, Sue Larocque (ON) as Treasurer and Beth Casey (BC) as Secretary, along with provincial, territorial, youth, and at-large representatives. I appreciate the knowledge and experience shared by my fellow Board members, as well as their commitment to strengthening the Independent Living Movement.

IL Canada continued to work with its Member Centres and national partners on initiatives designed to advance disability rights and remove barriers to participation. During the year, this work included research projects, consultations, advocacy initiatives, capacity-building activities, or national partnerships.

IL Canada also continued its work under funding provided through the Government of Canada. This support assisted IL Canada and participating Member Centres in various programs identified above. EmpowerNL's involvement in the Festivals Research initiative provided an important opportunity to contribute Newfoundland and Labrador perspectives to work being conducted at the national level.

Throughout my first year, I gained a greater understanding of IL Canada's mission, governance, and national role. I also saw the value of Member Centres working together to exchange knowledge, identify shared concerns,



and advocate for policies and practices that recognize the rights, experiences, and contributions of persons with disabilities.

I am grateful to EmpowerNL's members and Board of Directors for the opportunity to serve as the Newfoundland and Labrador Provincial Representative. I also thank Susan Barrett for their support, guidance, and service to IL Canada and EmpowerNL during this transition.

As I look toward the coming year, I am committed to continuing to learn, build meaningful national partnerships, and ensure that the voices of EmpowerNL's members are represented in IL Canada's work. I look forward to supporting IL Canada and its Member Centres as we work together to advance Independent Living across the country.



Mandy Penney

Newfoundland and Labrador Provincial Representative -
Independent Living Canada
EmpowerNL, The Disability Resource Centre

Financial Advisor's Report

I am pleased to present the Financial Advisor's Report to the membership of EmpowerNL, the Disability Resource Centre.

Beacon Accounting Professional Corporation audited EmpowerNL's financial statements for the fiscal year ending March 31, 2026, and completed the audit without issue.

According to the audited financial statements, EmpowerNL recorded total revenue of \$1,118,637.00 and total expenditures of \$1,160,961.00. This resulted in a deficit of \$42,324.00 for the 2025–2026 fiscal year.

The Board of Directors and management remain committed to responsible financial stewardship and the effective use of the resources entrusted to EmpowerNL. Although the organization continues to face financial pressures, rising operating costs, reduced funding, or other relevant circumstances, it remains focused on maintaining essential programs and services while pursuing sustainable funding opportunities.

I extend our sincere gratitude to the provincial government departments that provide ongoing financial support to EmpowerNL. I would also like to thank our project funders, donors, sponsors, community partners, and other financial supporters. Your contributions enable EmpowerNL to assist persons with disabilities in achieving greater independence and to advance the principles of Independent Living throughout Newfoundland and Labrador.

Finally, I extend my appreciation to EmpowerNL's staff and volunteers. Your commitment and dedication allow the organization to continue providing

essential services and working toward more accessible, equitable, and inclusive communities.



Renee March

Financial Advisor

EmpowerNL, The Disability Resource Centre



HR Committee Report

The HR Committee had an active year supporting EmpowerNL's staff and governance needs. Over the past year, the Committee has focused on strengthening our internal policies and practices and welcomed a new member to help carry this work forward.

HR Committee Members: Mandy Penney, Amanda Brace, Paul Morgan, Susan Barrett

Key activities this year included:

- Reviewed Operations Policies – The Committee undertook a review of our operations policies to ensure they remain current, relevant, and aligned with best practices for the organization.
- Welcomed a New Committee Member – We were pleased to add a new member to the HR Committee this year, bringing fresh perspective and additional capacity to our work.
- Executive Director Performance Review – The Committee conducted the annual performance review of our Executive Director, Kathy Hawkins, reflecting on the past year's achievements and areas of continued growth.
- Looking ahead to 2025-2026, the HR Committee has identified the following priorities:
- Building a Solid HR Management System – We will work to establish a more comprehensive HR management system to better support staff and streamline processes across the organization.
- Reviewing Hiring and Intake Forms – In collaboration with the Executive Director, the Committee will review hiring and intake documentation for all employee positions to ensure consistency and compliance.

- Establishing a Salary Baseline – We will work with the Executive Director to develop a salary baseline for positions across the Centre, supporting fair and transparent compensation practices.

I thank my fellow HR Committee members for their dedication this past year and look forward to advancing this important work in the year ahead.



Mandy Penney
HR Committee



The Governance and Nominations Committee Report

This is the first year that I, as chairperson of the Governance and Nominations Committee, have been asked to submit a report on the work done during the previous fiscal year. I am delighted to bring you our 2025-2026 highlights.

The 2025-2026 Fiscal Year for the Governance and Nominations Committee was busy and successful. We worked to revamp the Independent Living awards, shelving two categories and adding three new categories.

The new categories:

- Members' Award for Independent Living: this award will go to a member who does the most engaging with Empower and the community.
- Seniors' Award for Independent Living: This award would be for a member age 55+ with a disability who is actively engaged in Empower activities and community events and who is a mentor to others in community engagement.
- Community and Social Inclusion Award for Independent Living: For a person, team, community organization, or group of people who have created opportunities for disabled people to participate in the wider community.

We did keep two of the original awards categories:

- Young Leader Award for Independent Living
- The Business Award for Independent Living

We shelved two of the original awards categories:

- The Cecilia Carroll Award for Independent Living: we've exhausted every individual in the disability community who meets the criteria of a minimum of 20 years of service.

- The Social Inclusion Award for Independent Living.

In December of 2025 EmpowerNL hosted an International Day of Persons with Disabilities Luncheon to celebrate International Day of Persons with Disabilities and the 2025 IL Award recipients. The Minister of Social Supports and Well-Being and Minister Responsible for the Status of Persons with Disabilities brought greetings from the province. The NDP MHA for St. John's East-Quidi Vidi and the City of St. John's Councillor at Large who is council champion for the Inclusion Advisory Council were in attendance as well as representatives from various organizations within the disability network and our community partners! It was a lovely event and well attended.

In the fourth quarter of the 2025-2026 fiscal year, we hosted a Board Information Session for those interested in joining the board of directors.

As I conclude these highlights from the Governance and Nominations Committee, I'd like to extend my thanks to my fellow board members who serve on the Governance and Nominations Committee. I'd also like to extend my thanks to our board chair, our CEO and the entire team at Empower NL for all your hard work and commitment over the 2025-2026 fiscal year!



Thank You,
Amanda Howlett
Chair of the Governance and Nominations Committee

Independent Living Awards 2025

In December, EmpowerNL hosted its annual Independent Living Awards reception, bringing together members, community partners, and the Minister of Persons with Disabilities for the Government of Newfoundland and Labrador, Minister Joedy Wall.

The event recognized award recipients and their contributions to improving accessibility in the community. It also gave participants the opportunity to share knowledge, learn about resources, and build stronger connections. The Governance and Nomination Committee worked comprehensively on the Independent Living Awards and introduced new and revised award categories.

Members Award for Independent Living

For a member of EmpowerNL who is active in Centre activities and community events and leads by example for other Members of EmpowerNL



Amanda Howlett

Amanda's inspiring journey with EmpowerNL began in 2006 when she joined as a quiet, shy youth group member. Over the years, she blossomed into a strong advocate for people with disabilities, starting to volunteer in 2008 with peer support activities and eventually becoming a Peer Leader for the Dinner Club. Her commitment culminated in her service as a Board Member, where she educates and provides valuable insight.

Furthermore, Amanda demonstrated remarkable professional growth since graduating high school, transitioning from relying on a job coach to working independently in a job she loves, perfectly illustrating the empowering impact of her involvement and dedication to the IL Philosophy. Amanda is a valuable member of EmpowerNL who demonstrates Independent Living and encourages other members to engage in their community.

Young Leader Award for Independent Living

For a young person with a disability, under 30 years of age, who has raised awareness and shown outstanding leadership in promoting full inclusion of people with disabilities in NL.



Annalea Pudan-Sproule

Annalea is a 19-year-old woman residing in Adam's Cove, having moved to NL in 2019 as a tween to Carbonear. She was diagnosed with autism and ADHD just before she turned 18, having traumatic brain injury and TMJ issues since the age of 9, suffering from migraines for the majority of her life. Without support for her IEP or impactful academic accommodation until after high school graduation, she has made her way to post-secondary, attending Tyndale University in her second year of the Biblical Studies and Theology program.

Her leadership started with her participation with Girl Guides as the former co-chair and chair of the local Girl Guides of Canada Provincial youth forum Newfoundland and Labrador. She won their National Change Maker Award in 2023 and moved up to the National Girl Guide Committee to engage with topics raised by youth forums from all provinces and territories.

Annalea is involved with the Newfoundland and Labrador Youth Parliament. She has participated in numerous pageants in the province, using her public speaking opportunity to talk about intersectionality, placemaking and harm reduction, advocating for persons with disabilities and those impacted by racism by sharing her lived experience of discrimination to give visibility and testimony to the invisible barriers she faced during marginalization in this province.

She aspires to be a part of rural communities exploring religious studies with a desire to serve the residents and wanting to involve herself in politics for this province and achieve equitable representation as a person of colour with disability. That is why she continues to advocate the need to identify and challenge systemic gaps as they happen to read the pulse and manifest change, evolving in real time with the needs of the people, especially youth with disabilities living in rural communities.

Business Award for Independent Living



For a business that has displayed an innovative approach and achieved substantial outcomes, in supporting the full inclusion of people with disabilities in areas such as employment, transportation, social development, housing, communication and technology.

Sheldon Crocker - Crocker's Transformative Thinking

Sheldon Crocker has dedicated more than a decade of his life to making Newfoundland and Labrador a more inclusive, compassionate place for people with disabilities. His commitment has been

constant and heartfelt — expressed through his work in the arts, education, recreation, business, and community building.

As an author, Sheldon's Keep on Walking trilogy — Keep on Walking, The Road to Resilience, and Resilience Redefined — has touched countless lives since the first book was published in 2016. He uses his own story to break down stigma and open honest conversations about disability, resilience, and self-worth. His author readings and talks across the province have given people hope and a sense that their own stories matter too.

Through Crocker's Transformative Thinking and his online community - Community of Unstuck Minds (founded in 2019), Sheldon has created safe, supportive spaces for hundreds of people to connect and share. These communities are built on empathy, authenticity, and hope — values Sheldon lives every day.

Seniors Award for Independent Living

For a member of EmpowerNL who is at the age of 55+ and is actively engaged



in Centre activities and community events. This recipient leads by example and mentors other members in community engagement.

Kimberley Ann Underhay

Kim's commitment to inclusion is both personal and practical. She has a positive attitude that inspires those around her. Even though she lives alone, she surrounds herself with good friends, many of whom also have disabilities, so she never feels isolated. Her confidence, independence, and joyful outlook make her a role model for others who

may be adjusting to life with disabilities or seeking to build more independence. She is a strong advocate for using community services and resources that empower people with disabilities.

Kim encourages others to connect with EmpowerNL and to take part in community programs such as painting classes, arts and crafts, and swimming at local centers including the Pottle Centre, The Hub, The Mews Center, Paul Reynolds Center, and the Froude Avenue Community Centre. Her enthusiasm motivates others to get involved, helping them build social connections and confidence through shared experiences.

Kim's work and example have had a lasting impact on her community. She has helped empower others to embrace their independence, stay active, and feel included. Her positivity, advocacy, and unwavering commitment to inclusion truly embody the spirit and mission of EmpowerNL.

Community and Social Inclusion Award for Independent Living

For a person, team, community organization, or group of individuals who have



worked towards a more inclusive environment by creating opportunities for people with disabilities to participate in areas such as sports, the arts, education, recreation, and the wider community involvement.

Canadian Hard of Hearing Association-NL

CHHA-NL has a number of subsidized programs that contribute towards inclusion in the community, namely the Public Accessibility Fund (PAF) and the Alert and Aware Fund (AAF). The PAF pays for half the cost to qualifying organizations that install

Assistive Listening Systems (ALS) in public meeting spaces. The AAF pays for the full cost of the First Alert System to individuals that qualify based on their income.

CHHA-NL has been providing the Public Accessibility Fund (PAF) since 2013 and budgets between \$8,000 to \$10,000 per year. These Assistive Listening Systems (ALS) have been installed in many public facilities with meeting rooms, churches, halls, etc. The Alert and Aware Fund (AAF) was originally started in 2018 with a \$20,00 grant from the Government of NL; however, the program was continued after that by CHHA-NL with a yearly contribution of about \$5,000.



Photo of the 2025 IL Awards winners with Minister Joedy Wall (Minister Responsible for the Status of Persons with Disabilities)

Services

Advocacy Services

Another successful year has come to a close for EmpowerNL's Advocacy Services Program. Throughout the year, we continued to support a large number of individuals who identify as having a disability, providing essential advocacy and support to help ensure their voices are heard. EmpowerNL's Advocacy Services Program remains the only program in Newfoundland and Labrador providing individualized advocacy services to people with cross-disabilities. We are proud of the continued impact of this work and remain committed to advancing inclusion, accessibility, and self-advocacy across the province.

Throughout the year, individuals have accessed Advocacy Services to build confidence, strengthen their self-advocacy skills, and better navigate complex systems and make informed decisions. Through knowledge sharing and education, the program supports people who identify as having a disability in developing the tools and knowledge needed to advocate effectively for themselves.

Advocacy Services works collaboratively with individuals to identify their goals, strengths, and abilities, while providing accessible information on legislation, policies, regulations, and available resources in plain language. By increasing awareness and understanding, the program helps individuals make informed choices, exercise their rights, and participate more fully in decisions that affect their lives.

At the heart of Advocacy Services is the principle of "Nothing About Us Without Us." This guiding philosophy remains at the forefront of our work and

reflects our commitment to ensuring that individuals are heard, respected, and actively involved in decisions that affect their lives.

Through a coordinated access approach, Advocacy Services continues to work collaboratively with community organizations, government partners, and other key stakeholders to help individuals meet their basic needs, navigate systems, and achieve their personal goals. Our strong and growing network of partners is an essential part of the program's success and strengthens EmpowerNL's ability to advocate effectively within the community.

We are grateful to our dedicated community and government partners for their continued collaboration and support. Their contributions play an important role in advancing meaningful advocacy and creating more inclusive and accessible communities for people with disabilities across Newfoundland and Labrador.

Advocacy Services Team:

Joby Fleming - Advocacy Services Manager

Olivia McFarlane - Housing Stability Coordinator

Sharon Hogan - Advocacy Services Support

Theo Walsh- Housing Accommodation Coordinator

Laura Robinson - Housing Accommodation Coordinator

Patrick O'Brien - Housing Accommodation Coordinator (until October 2025)



Joby Fleming



Olivia McFarlane



Sharon Hogan



Theo Walsh



Laura Robinson

Advocacy Services Manager

The Advocacy Services Manager provides leadership and oversight of the advocacy team's daily operations, supporting staff, addressing challenges, and ensuring effective service delivery. The role also builds and maintains strong relationships with community organizations, government partners, and service providers to promote collaboration and ensure the voices and rights of individuals with disabilities are heard and respected.

Housing Stability Coordinator and Advocacy Services Assistant

In partnership with the Newfoundland and Labrador Housing Corporation (NLHC) Supportive Living Program (SLP), the Housing Stability Coordinator role was established to address the unique needs of individuals with disabilities. The program provides individualized support to promote independent living, strengthen housing stability, and help individuals maintain safe, secure housing in their communities.

The four main service areas that the Housing Stability Coordinator has provided are NL Health Services Navigation, Financial Navigation, Accessible Transportation, and Eviction Prevention.

As part of the Housing Stability project, our Advocacy Services assistant conducted intakes, made phone calls, and sent emails to provide information and schedule appointments.

Housing Accommodations Coordinators

In partnership with End Homelessness St. John's, EmpowerNL's Housing Accommodations Coordinator, as part of Advocacy Services, provides

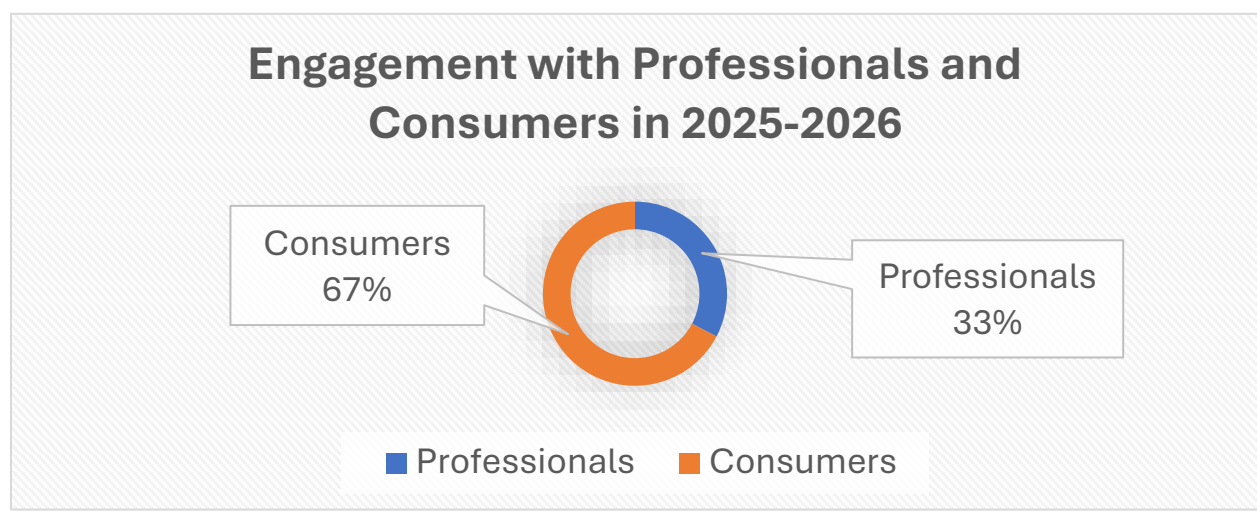
support to individuals experiencing homelessness as they work to secure and maintain safe, affordable, and accessible housing.

The Housing Accommodations Coordinator works closely with community organizations, government agencies, and landlords to provide individualized support throughout the housing process. This includes assistance with housing searches, apartment viewings, initial housing setup, case management, and crisis intervention.

By building collaborative relationships with landlords and service providers, the Housing Accommodations Coordinator also helps individuals maintain stable housing and supports positive, sustainable housing outcomes. This collaborative approach plays an important role in reducing barriers to housing and promoting greater stability, independence, and inclusion for people with disabilities.

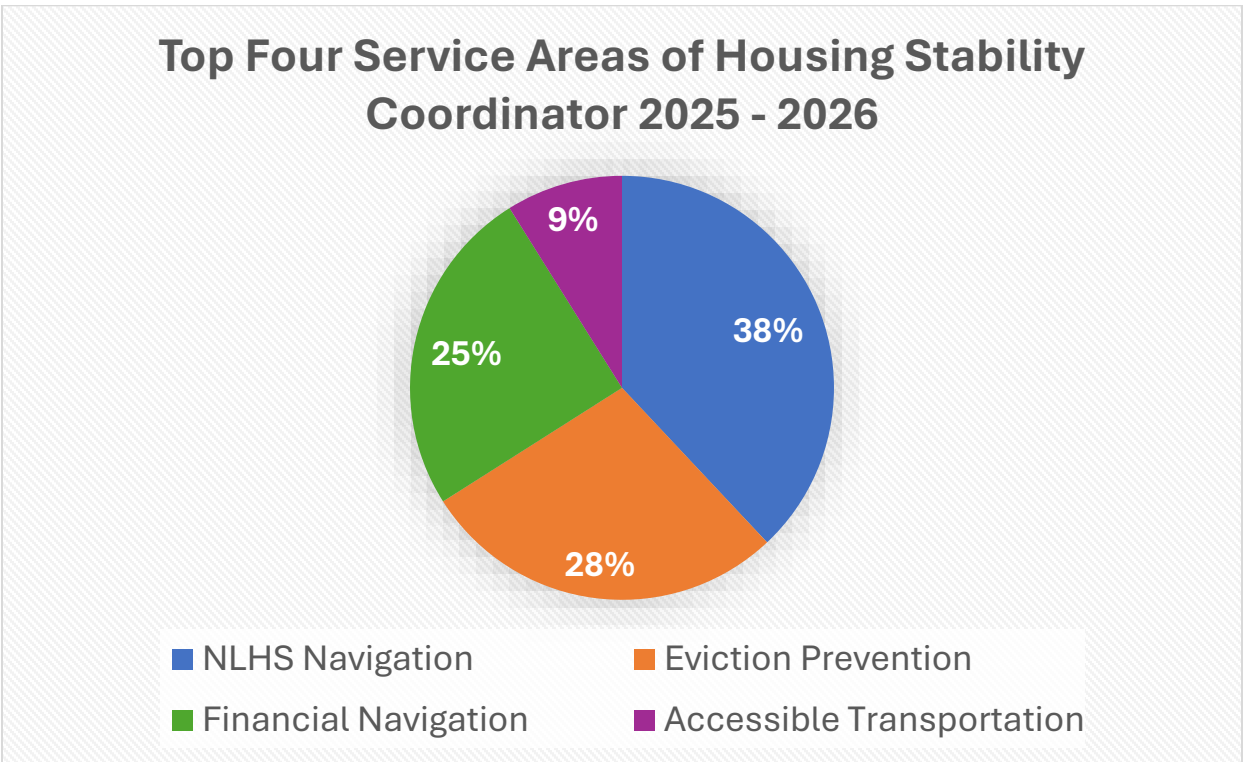
Advocacy Services Team Statistics

During the reporting period, the Advocacy Services Assistant and Manager recorded a total of **1,549** engagements and **152** new referrals. The following section provides a breakdown of these engagements, including the number of individuals and professionals contacted and supported.



The donut chart above displays the total number of consumers (1,043) and professionals (506) who engaged with the Advocacy Services Assistant and Manager.

The Housing Stability Coordinator supported **126** individuals this year. The figures below will depict and break down the top four service areas of support (NL Health Services Navigation, Eviction Prevention, Financial Navigation, and Accessible Transportation Navigation) for 2025-2026.



The pie chart above depicts the top four service areas for the Housing Stability Coordinator's position. Newfoundland and Labrador Health Services Navigation (38.0%), Eviction Prevention (28.0%), Financial Navigation (25.1%), and Accessible Transportation (9%).

Our Housing Accommodation Coordinators supported **33** individuals this year in finding, maintaining, and addressing housing needs.

Key Accomplishments:

- Advocacy Services hosted another successful Community Tax Volunteer clinic, offering virtual and in-person appointments to our members.
- Advocacy Services renewed the End Homelessness St. John's Housing Accommodations Coordinator contract again this year, and we also gained an additional Housing Accommodations Coordinator position.
- The Advocacy Services program continues the valued partnership with Memorial University of Newfoundland and Labrador (MUN) and the School of Social Work. EmpowerNL's Advocacy Services has provided field instruction to Bachelor of Social Work Students (first- and second-degree) in the fall of 2024 and the winter of 2025. We look forward to continuing to provide field instruction through another placement this upcoming fall of 2026. All students who complete placements with Advocacy Services at EmpowerNL receive an enriched learning experience from a cross-disability lens.
- Advocacy Services has partnered with IL Nova Scotia to support individuals in completing the Disability Tax Credit application.
- Advocacy Services, in partnership with End Homelessness St. John's, ran a project specifically aimed at reducing homelessness for people with disabilities. This project was funded by the Canadian Alliance to End Homelessness, Homeless Reduction Innovation Fund (HRIF).

Participation in External Events:

- Sat at the Coordinated Access to Homes table every week for End Homelessness (EHSJ).

- Joby Fleming attends Disability Network Meetings representing EmpowerNL
- Joby Fleming has sat on the Community Advisory Board (CAB) with End Homelessness St. John's since October 2021.
- Joby Fleming is the Co-Chair of the Coordinated Access to Home Working Group under CAB.
- Joby Fleming is a member of the Securing Citizenship for All steering committee.
- Joby Fleming is a member of the Equity and Resilience Advisory Council, Department of Health and Community Services, Government of NL
- Olivia McFarlane is a registered Social Worker under the Newfoundland and Labrador College of Social Workers.

Testimonials:

“I have seen firsthand the invaluable work that the Advocacy Services team consistently does to make a meaningful difference in the lives of individuals and families living with disabilities in the province. As its name suggests, the organization is committed to empowering people to live fully connected and productive lives, while helping to build a more inclusive and accessible community for all.”

- Community Partner, 2026

“Empower, as an organization, has done a variety of things to support me and provide opportunities. I have also built relationships and gained skills since I became a member. Advocacy Services has taught me how to advocate and work within complex systems that create barriers for people with disabilities. It has also provided me with information on programs and services that I can trust to be accurate. Both Joby and Olivia have worked extremely hard to support me with tasks that I find too overwhelming to complete on my own, which has empowered me and my independence. Advocacy Services has given me hope for the future and the knowledge that I have support and them in my corner when facing future challenges.”

- Member of Empower, 2026



Joby Fleming
Advocacy Services Manager



Olivia McFarlane
Housing Stability Coordinator

Member Services

Overview

Over the past year, Member Services has worked to create, coordinate, and deliver a wide variety of programs, events, and supports that enhance our members' lives, foster inclusion, and strengthen our community. This year's initiatives focused on accessibility, connection, peer support and celebration, ensuring that every member could participate fully and meaningfully.

Annual Events & Special Initiatives

Our year was filled with engaging activities and themed celebrations that brought members, volunteers, and the broader community together:

- **Volunteer Appreciation Brunch - “Shining a Light on Our Volunteer Contributions”**
Honoured the dedication of our volunteers with a nautical-themed brunch, recognizing their invaluable contributions to our programs.
- **Independent Living Canada Day staff and Board Mingle event**
A celebration of Independent Living Canada. Board Members and staff were invited to have some snacks and celebrate the work of our national organization.
- **National Accessibility Awareness Week (NAAW): Empowered Learning Session - Understanding Your Rights.**
Members were invited to an educational session on their rights.
- **Annual Garden Cleanup**
Prepared our accessible community garden for the growing season, with members and volunteers working side by side.

- **Annual Harvest & Soup-Making Day**
Members harvested produce from our garden, prepared soup together, and took home food hampers and homemade soup.
- **Annual Summer BBQ – Carnival Theme**
Included games, prizes, and a relaxed, outdoors-inspired atmosphere.
- **Halloween: Carving Halloween Pumpkins**
Provided a fun and inclusive session, where members carved pumpkins and offered peer support to other members, had snacks and enjoyed each other's company.
- **Christmas Dinner & Dance**
Brought members together for a festive evening with a traditional Christmas Dinner, prizes, and dancing at the CLB Armoury.
- **Christmas Karaoke**
We invited members to come in and sing a few songs and have some Christmas snacks.
- **International Women's Day Spa Day**
Celebrated women in our community with relaxation, self-care, and connection.

Monthly Activities

In addition to annual events, the coordinator organized and facilitated ongoing monthly programs, including:

- **Peer Support Groups** – Safe spaces for shared experiences and mutual encouragement.
- **Virtual Travel Club** – Exploring the world together from the comfort of our centre or members' homes.
- **Creative Skills Sessions** – Artistic and hands-on projects to foster self-expression.

- Independent Living Skills Workshops – Practical learning for greater autonomy.
- Dinner Club – Dining at local restaurants with accessibility supports like braille/large-print menus and ASL interpretation.

Community Engagement

We actively participated in diverse community events, including:

- National Indigenous Day Celebrations
- Visiting The Rooms Museum
- Frosty Festival
- Local holiday events

These outings and others strengthened relationships and broadened members' access to cultural and recreational opportunities.

Presentations & Outreach

Our services have been available at many information sessions and booths, including the Fierce conference, the day treatment program at St. Clare's Hospital, and the Memorial University (MUN) Recreation class, helping build awareness of our mission and services.

Accessible Community Garden

The coordinator oversaw all activities in our accessible community garden, ensuring members could fully participate in planting, maintenance, and harvesting. This year, we worked on building an accessible shed for the Garden Committee to provide secure and convenient storage. We have the

shed built and the garage door installed. All that remains are some finishing touches.

Individual Supports

The Member Services Coordinator also provided one-on-one peer support, assisting members in navigating both internal and external resources. This individualized approach ensured that members received guidance tailored to their needs.



Conclusion

This year's programs and activities reflect our ongoing commitment to accessibility, inclusion, and empowerment. By offering a rich calendar of events, maintaining strong community partnerships, and providing both group and individualized supports, the Member Services Coordinator helped create meaningful connections and opportunities for all members.



Amanda Lush
Coordinator, Member Services



Career Services

This will be my 18th Annual General Meeting with Empower as the Career Services Coordinator, and a lot has happened in the job market over the years. We have seen economic booms and busts. We have seen initiatives from government to increase the number of employees with disabilities. And we have seen initiatives in the public sector to increase the representation of people with disabilities in their workforce.

And despite these advances, people with disabilities still face barriers when looking for employment. We still deal with inaccessibility, discrimination, misconceptions and the stigma that surrounds disability. It can be hard looking for work with a disability.

But what I have seen as a constant is the heart and determination that each of you bring to your career journey. You are talented, resilient, hopeful and driven. And with support, you are, step by step, little by little, surely moving towards achieving your goals.

In 2025-2026, 26 people found employment and 14 people started training. And as Career Services looks back on a successful year, we also set our sites on helping more people in the year to come. We will be reaching out to participants to see if, in addition to finding work and returning to school, Career Services has helped increase your confidence, improve your employability skills, and give you more career clarity.

This year also saw us participating with Tourism HR Canada and Hospitality NL in the Belong Talent Referral Program. The Belong Program is designed to train Tourism businesses with best practices for hiring people with disabilities, with the goal of filling labour shortages with people with



disabilities. To that end, I reach out on behalf of consumers to connect them with Tourism businesses that are hiring. We have connected with over 20 businesses and supported over 20 job seekers. We look forward to the growth of this project over the next year.

This upcoming year I'm dedicating to all of the job seekers who haven't found work, **yet**. Because you haven't given up, because you are talented, because you are only looking for that one opportunity where the employer gets it and gets you! Perhaps you can't see it right now, but it's there, just around the corner, you just need to keep trying. And I'm here to help.



Stephen Quinn
Coordinator, Career Services

Community Inclusion Services

The Community Inclusion Program provides disability education and support to individuals and organizations at the community level. Working with all community members (including individuals, organizations and local government) to identify and overcome barriers to accessibility in all forms, Community Inclusion Services can help create solutions for barrier-free community environments and events. We can also provide professional development training, support and community development around building accessibility confidence.

This year we continue to partner in community and provide valuable information and services. We continue to build community partnerships and provide valuable service while providing meaningful work experiences to persons with disabilities.

Our team has been involved in the following activities:

- Advancing disability awareness, accessibility, and inclusion
- Promoting EmpowerNL, Disability Awareness, Inclusion, and Services through our social media platforms Facebook, Twitter and Instagram
- Partnering with groups to build awareness of how to reduce barriers in community.
- Assisting local organizations to reduce barriers in their service delivery and events
- Researching gaps in service and resources and developing recommendations and tools where possible
- Delivering support to access services online
- Providing information and training on adaptive technology
- Creating accessible materials for internal and external use

- Engagement with the public through social media, attendance at community events, and information sessions
- Skill building and training opportunities where possible

Our team has done great work throughout the province. We have provided several information sessions, created new community partnerships, expanded on existing ones, and increased our social media profile.

The program provides opportunities for Facilitators to gain skills and acquire training in areas that will enhance their future employment opportunities. Facilitators gain these skills through professional training, online webinars, mentoring from other staff, and self instruction. Some of the training and skill development included:

- Assistive Technology Virtual Expo - hosted by AT of Alaska - new and upcoming AT specific to employment, community living and education.
- W3Schools - HTML and CSS coding for website
- Fast Track to Accessibility for QA Testers 2.0
- Accessibility Fundamentals - Disabilities, Guidelines, and Laws
- Basic Web and Document Accessibility for Content Contributors
- Webinar: Multiple Chemical Sensitivities
- Triware's Rock Solid Technology Show
- W3Schools - HTML and CSS coding for website
- Google Drive Training - Technology Services, EmpowerNL
- Deque University Accessibility Courses
- Axe-Con Conference

The program has rolled out nicely and we look forward to another year of working in community, building partnerships and making our province more

inclusive for persons with disabilities. Thank you to all our partners and government funders. We look forward to working with you again in the coming year!

I would also like to thank our dedicated team for all the hard work they have put in this year. A special congratulations to Thoren Tilley on his employment with Medavie Blue Cross. We wish him all the best in his new role and thank him for his service over the years.



Penny Abbott
Manager, Provincial Services

Jim Escott
Coordinator, Technology Services

Thoren Tilley
IT Facilitator

Jen Mackey
Digital Media Coordinator

Technology Services

This annual report brings together the four quarterly reports submitted by Technology Services across the fiscal year, covering the periods April 2025 - March 2026. Over the course of the year, the program advanced digital accessibility, strengthened partnerships across government, education, and community sectors, and delivered direct support to individuals with disabilities through adaptive technology, employment services, and skill development.

Highlights of the year included the Global Accessibility Awareness Day (GAAD) Open House, the launch of a new Staff Resource Website, accessibility training delivered to numerous provincial partners including NL Health Services, ACOA, and Municipalities Newfoundland and Labrador, direct technology support for youth, and a series of well-attended group training sessions on MyGovNL, Gmail, and using AI for pre-employment skills. Technology Services also represented the organization at national forums such as the Cybersecurity Co-Design Focus Group.

Yearly Statistics Summary

The table below compiles the quarterly indicators reported by Technology Services throughout the year, with year-end totals shown in the final column.

Indicator	Q1	Q2	Q3	Q4	Year Total
# of individual consultations – employment	65	93	137	136	431

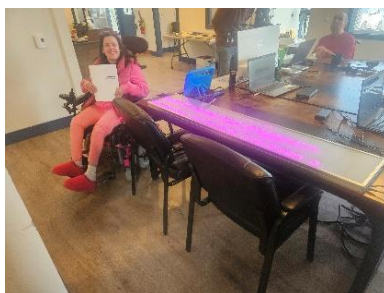
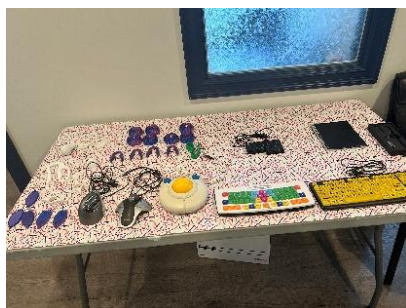
Indicator	Q1	Q2	Q3	Q4	Year Total
# of individual consultations – education	7	32	29	49	117
# of individual consultations – adaptive technology	120	72	139	177	508
# of individual consultations – skill development	155	163	215	195	728
# of individuals linked with education services	9	44	18	97	168
# of individuals linked with employment services & IPGS	28	55	51	24	158
# of individuals linked with other organizations/agencies	35	21	108	140	304
# of community organization consultations	14	2	8	64	88
# of participants in group sessions	18	2	74	199	293
# of participants – unemployed and non-EI eligible	41	47	33	22	143
# of participants with disabilities	204	168	168	124	664
# of participants with Income Support	35	33	36	25	129

Across the year, Technology Services logged **728** individual skill-development consultations, **508** adaptive technology consultations, and **431** employment-focused consultations, while directly supporting **664** participation instances involving individuals with disabilities.

Global Accessibility Awareness Day (GAAD) Open House

On May 15th, Technology Services successfully hosted the Global Accessibility Awareness Day (GAAD) Open House, which was a fantastic success. The event served as a platform to highlight the importance of digital accessibility through interactive demonstrations, informative presentations, and an adaptive technology showcase.

- **Interactive Demos:** Attendees experienced accessible video gaming, navigated websites with screen readers, saw comparisons between accessible and non-accessible web design, and learned how the Empowered 3D Printer creates custom adaptive tools.
- **Informative Presentations:** An overview of the “Empower” initiative was provided, along with explanations of the Web Content Accessibility Guidelines (WCAG) and the POUR principles (Perceivable, Operable, Understandable, Robust), plus common barriers like low contrast text and missing alt-text.
- **Adaptive/Assistive Technology Display:** A dedicated showcase featured assistive technologies from Compusult, including hands-free mouse alternatives (Jouse+ & JouseLite), wheelchair tray systems, mobile communication devices, protective cases, caption display systems, and adaptive switch controllers.
- **Toolkit of Resources:** Participants received practical guides on creating accessible e-newsletters, social media content, and webpages.



Building Business Partner Awareness in Digital Accessibility

Technology Services actively engaged with key organizations this quarter to promote digital accessibility within their operations:

- Provided accessibility information to NL Hydro regarding their workforce management tools.
- Offered recommendations for NL Health Services' recruitment portal.
- Assisted in delivering accessibility training and creating accessibility reports for ACOA, NL Health Services, NL Liquor Corporation, Public Service Commission, C-NLOPB, and Churchill Falls NL Hydro, building internal capacity for creating inclusive digital environments.

“Free AT Software Solutions” Guide Update

This quarter, Technology Services updated the comprehensive “Free AT Software Solutions” guide, a resource designed to empower individuals by centralizing information on accessible and cost-effective assistive technology (AT) software. The guide covers Core Accessibility Tools (Screen Readers, Text-to-Speech, Screen Magnifiers), Input and Control (Mouse and Pointer Software, Typing Software), Learning and Organization (Learning Software, Mind Mapping, Time Management), Engagement and Communication (Screen Overlays, Communication, Note-Taking Applications), Operating System Built-in Features (Windows, macOS, Chrome OS, iOS, Android), and Literacy Support (Literacy Bundles). This guide remains a vital tool for clients and contributes significantly to promoting accessibility and reducing technological barriers.

Networking

Technology Services attended “The State of Tech in Newfoundland and Labrador: Report Release & Sector Insights,” an event about the province’s growing technology industry. The tech sector added \$1.8 billion to the economy in 2023 and employs nearly 10,000 people. The event explored job trends, remote work, diversity, and new technology such as Artificial Intelligence (AI).

Anticipated community benefits include more accessible job options for people with disabilities, increased remote work opportunities, skill development through Empower’s tech training (computer basics, accessibility design, coding), greater use of adaptive tools like screen readers and speech-to-text, and better inclusion and diversity in tech workplaces.

Accessible Document and Digital Accessibility Training

Accessible document and digital accessibility training was delivered to new staff and community partners, including NL Health Services, MUN's Social Work Online Training Program, and NL Liquor Corporation. The training focused on creating documents that are easier for everyone to read and use through clear headings, readable fonts, simple layouts, accessible PDFs, and plain language. Participants gained practical skills they can immediately use when creating Word documents, PDFs, and online content.

Working With Youth on Adaptive Technology

Direct support was provided to youth to help them use adaptive and assistive technology, including speech-to-text, text-to-speech, built-in accessibility settings, and software that supports learning, communication, and independence. This work helped youth build confidence, improve access to learning, and prepare for future employment.

Online Safety and Scam Prevention Training

An online safety session titled "Learn How to Stop Scams (Phishing)" was delivered. Participants were directed to an accessible website and a downloadable PDF that explains how to recognize scams, protect personal information, and stay safe online. All materials were written in plain language and designed to be easy to read and navigate.

What to Do When Windows 10 Stops Getting Updates

An online information session was hosted to explain what the end of Windows 10 support means for users, covering upgrade options, how Linux can extend

the life of older computers, how to stay safe online if still using Windows 10, and how to decide when a new device is needed. The session focused on clear explanations and practical next steps.

How to Buy a New Device

As part of the Windows 10 session, additional guidance was provided on how to buy a new computer or device, including simple explanations about memory (RAM), storage, processor types, screen size, and budget considerations, so participants could choose a device that fits their daily needs.

Online Session: Magnifiers for Your Devices

An online session was offered for people who have trouble seeing text or images on their computer, phone, or tablet. The session showed how to use built-in magnifier tools on Windows, Apple, Android, and Linux devices, including how to turn magnifiers on, adjust size, colour, and contrast, and use accessibility settings to make screens easier to read.

Group Sessions

MyGovNL

Technology Services delivered a group training session focused on helping the public effectively use MyGovNL. The session provided a clear overview of what MyGovNL is and how it serves as a centralized portal for accessing provincial government services. Participants were guided through creating an account, navigating the portal, and customizing their experience by adding relevant service sections, as well as searching for and accessing specific

services and managing account settings, including how to securely delete an account if required. This session supported increased digital confidence and improved access to essential government resources.

Gmail

Technology Services facilitated a group session on improving email management using Gmail, focused on practical tips and strategies to help participants better organize and navigate their inboxes. Participants learned to personalize their email experience with themes, use labels to categorize and organize emails, set up filters to automatically sort incoming messages, and manage their inbox by prioritizing important messages and maintaining a clean, organized workspace.

Using AI for Pre-Employment Skills

Technology Services delivered a group session in partnership with Independent Living Canada, focused on using artificial intelligence tools to support pre-employment skill development. The session explored how AI can assist participants in refining job searches, building and improving resumes, and creating tailored cover letters, along with strategies for interview preparation and AI-generated feedback. The session also addressed ethical considerations, including responsible use of AI, maintaining authenticity, and protecting personal information. This session helped participants build confidence and practical skills for entering the workforce and is being shared across Canada for other employment centres.

Partnerships

Technology Services collaborated with several community partners to deliver and participate in training sessions focused on accessibility, inclusion, and disability confidence. A session was conducted with Inclusion NL, supporting increased awareness and understanding of inclusive practices. In partnership with End Homelessness St. John's through the Horizon @ 106 program, training was provided on Disability Confidence, helping staff better understand how to effectively support individuals with disabilities, along with accessible formats and related topics.

Additional sessions included work with College of the North Atlantic on "Understanding the Duty to Accommodate," exploring legal and practical responsibilities in creating inclusive environments, and with Municipalities Newfoundland and Labrador on "Accessibility Confidence – Putting it into Action" and "The Power of Language," emphasizing respectful communication and actionable strategies to improve accessibility in municipal services. These collaborative efforts strengthened partnerships across sectors and contributed to building more inclusive, accessible communities through education, awareness, and practical skill development.

In the Community

Technology Services provided support, including live captioning and assistive technology setup, for a government announcement delivered in partnership with the Canadian Alliance to End Homelessness, End Homelessness St. John's, and EmpowerNL. The announcement introduced the Accessible Pathways to Housing initiative, which aims to reduce chronic homelessness in St. John's for individuals living with disabilities.

Technology Services ensured the event was fully accessible by implementing captioning solutions and supporting the use of assistive technologies, enabling inclusive participation for attendees. The event was hosted by EmpowerNL and highlighted the organization's ongoing commitment to accessibility, including the role of a Housing Accommodations Coordinator within its Advocacy Services team. The announcement featured remarks from Tom Osborne, Chantal Perry (Canadian Alliance to End Homelessness), Doug Pawson (Executive Director, End Homelessness St. John's), and Kathy Hawkins (Executive Director, EmpowerNL).

Focus Group: Cybersecurity Co-Design

Technology Services participated in a national cybersecurity co-design focus group with individuals from across Canada, centered on the unique challenges faced by people with disabilities in staying safe online. The session included breakout group discussions, collaborative idea sharing, and the development of practical recommendations for both users and technology creators. Key topics explored included safe online interactions, protecting personal data, avoiding scams when using assistive technologies like screen readers and Braille, accessible authentication methods, and the growing role of AI in cybersecurity.

A strong theme throughout the session was the critical need for accessible and inclusive cybersecurity education, including clear, simple, and engaging learning materials in multiple formats such as short videos, interactive simulations, newsletters, and gamified learning tools. The group also highlighted the shared responsibility between users, developers, and policymakers in ensuring safe digital environments, with recommendations for improved accessibility standards, better compatibility with assistive

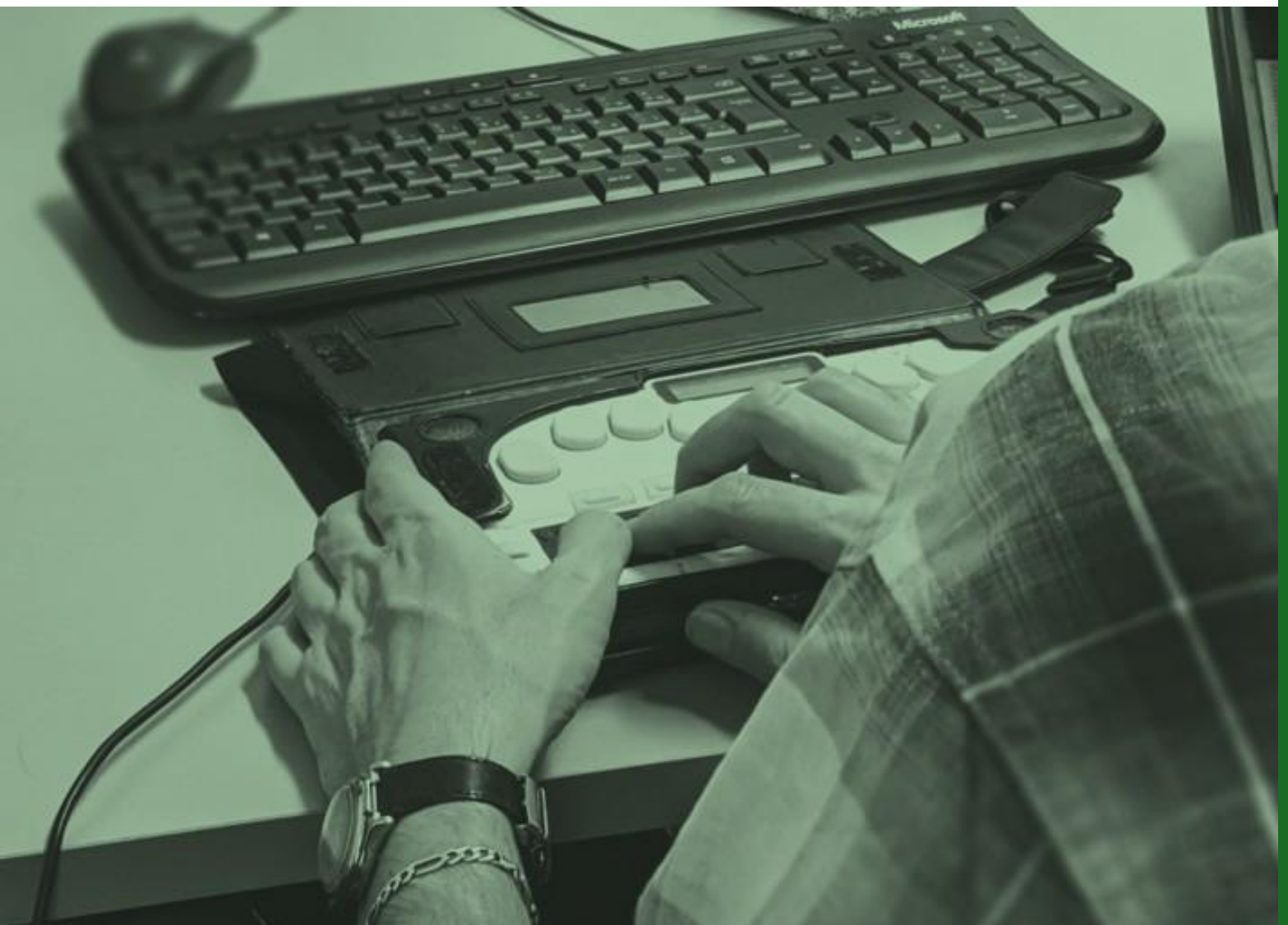
technologies, and stronger enforcement of regulations such as the Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act.



Jim Escott
Coordinator, Technology Services



Thoren Tilley
IT Facilitator



Social Media

Social media continued to be an important way for EmpowerNL to connect with the community this year. Feedback from followers has been very positive, and our social media analytics show continued growth in both followers and engagement.

Staff have also been supportive in creating posts about programs and services. These posts have been well received and have helped highlight the work happening across EmpowerNL. Sharing staff activities and involvement in the community has also helped strengthen EmpowerNL's connections with community members and partners.

Facebook

Facebook continues to be EmpowerNL's largest social media platform. This is largely because it is our longest-running social media account and its audience closely matches our largest demographic.

From April 2025 to March 2026:

- Our followers rose to 2812, up 9.4%
- Our profile visits were 33,636 for the year, up 137%
- We had 13,187 individual engagements with our content (likes, comments, shares and clicks), up 174.4%
- Our content was viewed 231,515 times

X (Twitter)

In the 2025-2026 fiscal year, X (formerly Twitter) continued to face the challenges of declining brand engagement and some of the lowest organic engagement rates of any social media platform. Newer issues of concern,

such as widespread polarization and radicalization from highly divisive, opinion-driven posts have led to algorithm-dictated echo chambers and a lack of trust and perceived safety by users.

While we maintain monitoring of the suitability of X as a platform to meet EmpowerNL's social media needs, especially considering the opposing demographics served by the platform and the increase in contentious content, we continue to post on X due to the importance of a text-based platform for people with certain disabilities

From April 2025 to March 2026:

- We have 903 followers, down 3 from the previous year
- Our average engagement rate stands at 4.94%, up 16.6%
- Our page and profile reach for the year was 126,938, up 387%

Instagram

Instagram is the newest social media platform in use by EmpowerNL. However, while our followers are slowly growing, the continued improvement of our overall reach has been by far the best on this platform.

From April 2025 to March 2026:

- Our followers grew by approximately 10% to 915
- Our post reach stood at 12,455, up 22.8%
- Views of our profile were 20, 940, up 115%

It has been rewarding to see the slow and steady increase in fans/followers across all platforms. But perhaps of more import is the consistent and increasing engagement of the community with all EmpowerNL's social media.

The key points to take away from this year's social media performance that will guide our strategy for the next year and help tailor posts for maximum impact are:

- Facebook continues to have EmpowerNL's largest audience, as well as the most geographically diverse. It remains the best platform with which to engage people with disabilities and other organizations across the province.
- While our X account had a spike in reach and continues to have increasing engagement, we will continue to monitor policies/politics around this platform to ensure that it remains a fit for EmpowerNL's messaging.
- Instagram remains the fastest growing of our social media accounts, with the highest levels of engagement. Going forward Instagram remains a great tool to engage with our younger followers and bring more focus to current community issues and events.

In summary, it has been a positive year for EmpowerNL's social media, which helps keep members up to date with events and activities, helps educate the public about disability and accessibility and connects EmpowerNL with other community organizations and the wider provincial disability community.



Jen Mackey
Digital Media Coordinator

InclusionNL: Corporate Services

InclusionNL: Corporate Services celebrated its 12th anniversary in June 2026. Since we began, we have provided numerous partnerships to employers across Newfoundland and Labrador. We enjoy building new partnerships as well as maintaining and supporting current partners.

This year was busy, with training sessions and working with business partners focused on building inclusive work environments. During these partnerships, we reviewed various buildings and offered professional training to their leaders and staff. When working with the Newfoundland and Labrador Liquor Corporation, we supported their accessibility plan, served on their accessibility advisory committee, and created opportunities for building reviews and training for their staff. When working with NL Health Services, we have offered numerous education and training sessions for their staff across many departments, represented people with disabilities on their Pillar Advisory Committees and are spearheading an initiative to gather testimonials from patients with disabilities about their experiences accessing provincial health services.

Over the past year, we have continued to offer most of our services through a hybrid model, providing both in-person and virtual work options to meet the needs of our business partners, who are doing the same. This requires more support to ensure their hybrid work models are barrier-free.

Complete inclusion of people with disabilities is not possible without valuable partnerships with businesses, organizations, and employers. Over the past year, we have developed and participated in unique online and in-person projects and business partnerships across the province. With our support,

businesses build disability confidence and enhance accessibility and inclusion in their work environments.

Three Streams of Service Delivery

1. Direct Employer Supports

- a) Staff provide direct support to businesses based on individual needs/requests. Through these partnerships, we:
 - Provide hiring support by distributing job vacancies throughout our networks, which include partnering with disability organizations.
 - Provide businesses with inclusion-related support for interviews (e.g., ASL Interpreters, Closed Captioning, etc.).
 - Provide accessibility reviews of businesses so that individuals interviewing can be confident their access needs will be met.
- b) Through various opportunities and professional development training sessions offered in person and online, we have successfully developed forty-five current partnerships with employers province-wide and have increased knowledge of accessibility and inclusion in various ways. These unique partnerships provide businesses with services and resources to enhance accessibility and inclusion for those interested in increasing their confidence in accessibility. One example is our partnership with the provincial government, where we delivered 6 sessions to employees of NL Health Services and saw over 400 employees sign up for the training.
- c) We also provide human resources support to NL Health Services.

2. Conferences | Events | Festivals

This year, staff from the program supported several businesses, community organizations, and associations that organized virtual and in-person festivals, events, and conferences throughout the Avalon region.

Staff worked with organizers before their events to ensure patron accessibility. This included helping recruit volunteers, training them in accessibility practices, and providing support during consultations. This year, we have provided support to Mount Pearl Frosty Festival, Mount Pearl Days, NL Folk Festival, Churchill Park Music Festival, and the Royal St. John's Regatta.

3. Research

Our research, conducted in partnership with Memorial University, continues to examine employment equity for persons with disabilities in the oil and gas, mining, and renewable energy sectors. An extension in funding allowed us to widen our literature review and seek evidence of employment equity practices internationally.

Program Success and Milestones

- Celebrating our 12th year of operation and success. We have developed a collection of business partners with over 100 unique partnerships.
- Worked with federally regulated employers such as NL Health Services and NL Liquor Corporation to develop an accessibility plan as obligated by provincial and federal legislation.
- Accessibility Confidence training has been provided for over 14 businesses, reaching over 700 employees.
- Completed Accessibility Reviews for Canada-Newfoundland and Labrador Offshore Petroleum Board (C-NLOPB), Connection for Seniors, NTV, and McInnes and Cooper.

- Have promoted milestone occasions to build recognition and awareness during National Accessibility Awareness Week, GAAD, International Day of Persons with Disabilities, and the month of October as Disability Employment Awareness Month.



Amanda Lush

Coordinator, InclusionNL: Corporate Services.



Appendix

Annual General Meeting 2025 Minutes

Empower, The Disability Resource Center Annual General Meeting
September 24th, 2025, 7pm via zoom

Motion to approve the agenda:

Moved by: Amanda Howlett

Seconded by: Katie Cashin, **Motion Carried**

1. Welcome and Introduction of Board members 2024-2025:

Paul called the meeting to order at 7:06pm. Board members present introduced themselves.

In attendance: Paul Morgan

Mandy Penney

Renee March

Amanda Howlett

Susan Barrett

Kathryn (Katie) Cashin

Terrie Hefford

Hailey Pudan

2. Minutes of 2024 Annual General Meeting:

Amanda Howlett read the minutes from the 2024 Annual General Meeting

Motion to approve the minutes of the 2024 AGM

Moved by: Stephen Westcott

Seconded by: Katie Cashin, **Motion Carried**

3. Chairperson's Report:

Mandy/Kathy, on behalf of Paul, brought the 2024-2025 Chairperson's Report.

Motion to approve the Chairperson's Report for 2024-2025

Moved by: Kimberly Yetman-Dawson

Seconded by: Amanda Howlett, **Motion Carried**

4. Executive Director's Report:

Kathy brought the Executive Director's Report for 2024-2025.

Motion to approve the Executive Director's Report

Moved by: Paul Morgan

Seconded by: Mandy Penney, **Motion Carried**

5. Treasurer's Report and Audited Financial Statements

Renee brought the 2024-2025 Treasurer's Report and Audited Financial Statements.

5.1 Approval of Audited Financial Statements:

Motion to approve the Treasurer's Report and Audited Financial Statements

Moved by: Mandy Penney

Seconded by: Paul Morgan, **Motion Carried**

5.2 Appointment of Auditors for Fiscal Year 2025-2026

Motion to approve the appointment of Beacon Accounting as Empower Auditors for 2025-2026

Moved by: Paul Morgan

Seconded by: Hailey Pudan, **Motion Carried**

6. Empower Board 2025-2026:

Amanda Howlett introduced the board for 2025-2026:

Paul Morgan

Mandy Penney
Renee March
Amanda Howlett
Susan Barrett
Kathryn (Katie) Cashin
Hailey Pudan
Terrie Hefford

** Dr. Amy Warren (currently on a leave of Absence)

Motion to Approve the Empower Board for 2025-2026

Moved by: Susan Barrett

Seconded by: Kim Underhay, **Motion Carried**

6.1 Vacant Seat - Person with a background in Legal expertise:

Kathy informed those in attendance for the Annual General that there is a vacant seat for someone with a legal background as per the board skillsets (Strategic Plan). She asked all those in attendance if they knew of someone with a legal background to let herself or a board member know. The person would be appointed by the membership and at the 2026 Annual General meeting the person would be confirmed as a board member for the term of 6 years (two 3-year terms) or however long the person can commit.

7. Certificate of Appreciation:

One board member retired this year - Andrea Smith. Kathy will be sending a certificate of appreciation to her.

8. Gift card draw & adjournment:

Motion to Adjourn the 2025 Annual General Meeting (at 7:55pm)

Moved by: Kimberly Yetman-Dawson

Seconded by: Hailey Pudan, **Motion Carried**

EMPOWER, THE DISABILITY RESOURCE CENTRE INC.

Financial Statements

Year Ended March 31, 2026

EMPOWER, THE DISABILITY RESOURCE CENTRE INC.

Index to Financial Statements

Year Ended March 31, 2026

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INDEPENDENT AUDITOR'S REPORT

To the Members of Empower, The Disability Resource Centre Inc.

Opinion

We have audited the financial statements of Empower, The Disability Resource Centre Inc. (the organization), which comprise the statement of financial position as at March 31, 2026, and the statements of revenues and expenditures, changes in net assets and cash flows for the year then ended, and notes to the financial statements, including a summary of significant accounting policies.

In our opinion, the accompanying financial statements present fairly, in all material respects, the financial position of the organization as at March 31, 2026, and the results of its operations and cash flows for the year then ended in accordance with Canadian accounting standards for not-for-profit organizations (ASNPO).

Basis for Opinion

We conducted our audit in accordance with Canadian generally accepted auditing standards. Our responsibilities under those standards are further described in the *Auditor's Responsibilities for the Audit of the Financial Statements* section of our report. We are independent of the organization in accordance with ethical requirements that are relevant to our audit of the financial statements in Canada, and we have fulfilled our other ethical responsibilities in accordance with these requirements. We believe that the audit evidence we have obtained is sufficient and appropriate to provide a basis for our opinion.

Responsibilities of Management and Those Charged with Governance for the Financial Statements

Management is responsible for the preparation and fair presentation of the financial statements in accordance with ASNPO, and for such internal control as management determines is necessary to enable the preparation of financial statements that are free from material misstatement, whether due to fraud or error.

In preparing the financial statements, management is responsible for assessing the organization's ability to continue as a going concern, disclosing, as applicable, matters related to going concern and using the going concern basis of accounting unless management either intends to liquidate the organization or to cease operations, or has no realistic alternative but to do so.

Those charged with governance are responsible for overseeing the organization's financial reporting process.

Auditor's Responsibilities for the Audit of the Financial Statements

Our objectives are to obtain reasonable assurance about whether the financial statements as a whole are free from material misstatement, whether due to fraud or error, and to issue an auditor's report that includes our opinion. Reasonable assurance is a high level of assurance, but is not a guarantee that an audit conducted in accordance with Canadian generally accepted auditing standards will always detect a material misstatement when it exists. Misstatements can arise from fraud or error and are considered material if, individually or in the aggregate, they could reasonably be expected to influence the economic decisions of users taken on the basis of these financial statements.

As part of an audit in accordance with Canadian generally accepted auditing standards, we exercise professional judgment and maintain professional skepticism throughout the audit. We also:

(continues)

Independent Auditor's Report to the Members of Empower, The Disability Resource Centre Inc. *(continued)*

- Identify and assess the risks of material misstatement of the financial statements, whether due to fraud or error, design and perform audit procedures responsive to those risks, and obtain audit evidence that is sufficient and appropriate to provide a basis for our opinion. The risk of not detecting a material misstatement resulting from fraud is higher than for one resulting from error, as fraud may involve collusion, forgery, intentional omissions, misrepresentations, or the override of internal control.
- Obtain an understanding of internal control relevant to the audit in order to design audit procedures that are appropriate in the circumstances, but not for the purpose of expressing an opinion on the effectiveness of the organization's internal control.
- Evaluate the appropriateness of accounting policies used and the reasonableness of accounting estimates and related disclosures made by management.
- Conclude on the appropriateness of management's use of the going concern basis of accounting and, based on the audit evidence obtained, whether a material uncertainty exists related to events or conditions that may cast significant doubt on the organization's ability to continue as a going concern. If we conclude that a material uncertainty exists, we are required to draw attention in our auditor's report to the related disclosures in the financial statements or, if such disclosures are inadequate, to modify our opinion. Our conclusions are based on the audit evidence obtained up to the date of our auditor's report. However, future events or conditions may cause the organization to cease to continue as a going concern.
- Evaluate the overall presentation, structure and content of the financial statements, including the disclosures, and whether the financial statements represent the underlying transactions and events in a manner that achieves fair presentation.

We communicate with those charged with governance regarding, among other matters, the planned scope and timing of the audit and significant audit findings, including any significant deficiencies in internal control that we identify during our audit.

St. John's, Newfoundland and Labrador
September 22, 2026

Beacon Accounting Professional Corporation
CHARTERED PROFESSIONAL ACCOUNTANTS

EMPOWER, THE DISABILITY RESOURCE CENTRE INC.**Statement of Financial Position****March 31, 2026**

	2026	2025 <i>Restated</i>
ASSETS		
CURRENT		
Cash	\$ 304,736	\$ 392,348
Accounts receivable	253,521	186,239
Harmonized sales tax recoverable	14,496	5,072
Prepaid expenses	223	218
	<u>572,976</u>	<u>583,877</u>
PROPERTY, PLANT AND EQUIPMENT <i>(Note 2)</i>	<u>239,414</u>	<u>248,119</u>
	<u>\$ 812,390</u>	<u>\$ 831,996</u>
LIABILITIES AND NET ASSETS		
CURRENT		
Accounts payable	\$ 54,962	\$ 82,804
Current portion of long term debt <i>(Note 3)</i>	3,324	3,324
Deferred revenue <i>(Note 4)</i>	61,668	15,957
	<u>119,954</u>	<u>102,085</u>
LONG TERM DEBT <i>(Note 3)</i>	<u>11,323</u>	<u>14,647</u>
	<u>131,277</u>	<u>116,732</u>
NET ASSETS		
Operating fund	475,813	509,964
Reserve fund	205,300	205,300
	<u>681,113</u>	<u>715,264</u>
	<u>\$ 812,390</u>	<u>\$ 831,996</u>

ON BEHALF OF THE BOARD

_____ *Director*

_____ *Director*

See notes to financial statements

EMPOWER, THE DISABILITY RESOURCE CENTRE INC.**Statement of Revenues and Expenditures****Year Ended March 31, 2026**

	2026	2025 <i>Restated</i>
REVENUES		
Other revenue (<i>Note 5</i>)	\$ 913,337	\$ 1,000,070
Province of Newfoundland and Labrador operating grant	205,300	205,300
	<u>1,118,637</u>	<u>1,205,370</u>
EXPENSES		
Amortization	8,705	9,651
Bank charges	805	932
Business taxes, licenses and memberships	1,735	2,754
Insurance	7,809	6,752
Office	17,972	17,514
Purchased services	30,676	25,347
Programs and accommodations	90,458	191,461
Professional fees	5,348	5,080
Repairs and maintenance	3,838	9,852
Salaries and wages	955,614	932,064
Telephone and communication	21,200	19,955
Staff training	2,351	3,807
Staff transportation	5,758	8,886
Utilities	8,692	7,769
	<u>1,160,961</u>	<u>1,241,824</u>
DEFICIENCY OF REVENUES OVER EXPENSES FROM OPERATIONS	<u>(42,324)</u>	<u>(36,454)</u>
OTHER INCOME		
Interest income	4,849	10,797
Debt forgiveness	3,324	3,324
	<u>8,173</u>	<u>14,121</u>
DEFICIENCY OF REVENUES OVER EXPENSES	<u>\$ (34,151)</u>	<u>\$ (22,333)</u>

See notes to financial statements

EMPOWER, THE DISABILITY RESOURCE CENTRE INC.**Statement of Changes in Net Assets****Year Ended March 31, 2026**

	Operating Fund	Reserve Fund	2026	2025 <i>Restated</i>
NET ASSETS - BEGINNING OF YEAR	\$ 509,964	\$ 205,300	\$ 715,264	\$ 737,597
DEFICIENCY OF REVENUES OVER EXPENSES	(34,151)	-	(34,151)	(22,333)
INTERNALLY RESERVED	-	-	-	-
NET ASSETS - END OF YEAR	\$ 475,813	\$ 205,300	\$ 681,113	\$ 715,264

See notes to financial statements

EMPOWER, THE DISABILITY RESOURCE CENTRE INC.**Statement of Cash Flows
Year Ended March 31, 2026**

	2026	2025
OPERATING ACTIVITIES		
Deficiency of revenues over expenses	\$ (34,151)	\$ (22,333)
Items not affecting cash:		
Amortization of property, plant and equipment	8,705	9,651
Debt forgiveness	(3,324)	(3,324)
	<u>(28,770)</u>	<u>(16,006)</u>
Changes in non-cash working capital:		
Accounts receivable	(67,282)	13,687
Accounts payable	(27,842)	(94,910)
Deferred revenue	45,711	(131,145)
Prepaid expenses	(5)	10
Harmonized sales tax payable	(9,424)	7,477
	<u>(58,842)</u>	<u>(204,881)</u>
DECREASE IN CASH FLOW	(87,612)	(220,887)
Cash - beginning of year	<u>392,348</u>	<u>613,235</u>
CASH - END OF YEAR	\$ 304,736	\$ 392,348
CASH CONSISTS OF:		
Cash - Operating account	\$ 94,104	\$ 108,751
Cash - Savings accounts	<u>210,632</u>	<u>283,597</u>
	\$ 304,736	\$ 392,348

EMPOWER, THE DISABILITY RESOURCE CENTRE INC.

Notes to Financial Statements

Year Ended March 31, 2026

1. SUMMARY OF SIGNIFICANT ACCOUNTING POLICIES

Basis of presentation

The financial statements were prepared in accordance with Canadian accounting standards for not-for-profit organizations (ASNFPO).

Cash and short term investments

The organization's policy is to present bank balances under cash and cash equivalents, including bank overdrafts with balances that fluctuate frequently from being positive to overdrawn. Also included in cash and cash equivalents are term deposits with a maturity period of three months or less from the date of acquisition.

Property, plant and equipment

Property, plant and equipment is stated at cost or deemed cost less accumulated amortization and is amortized over its estimated useful life on a declining balance basis at the following rates and methods:

Buildings	4%	declining balance method
Computer equipment	30%	declining balance method
Computer software	30%	declining balance method
Furniture and fixtures	20%	declining balance method

Revenue recognition

Empower, The Disability Resource Centre Inc. follows the deferral method of accounting for contributions.

Restricted contributions are recognized as revenue in the year in which the related expenses are incurred. Unrestricted contributions are recognized as revenue when received or receivable if the amount to be received can be reasonably estimated and collection is reasonably assured.

The operating fund accounts for the organization's program delivery and administrative activities. This fund reports unrestricted resources and restricted operating grants. This fund also represents resources that have been invested in capital assets.

The reserve fund represents balances reserved for significant building repairs and eventual building expansion.

Contributed services

The operations of the organization depend on both the contribution of time by volunteers and donated materials from various sources. The fair value of donated materials and services cannot be reasonably determined and are therefore not reflected in these financial statements.

(continues)

EMPOWER, THE DISABILITY RESOURCE CENTRE INC.

Notes to Financial Statements

Year Ended March 31, 2026

1. SUMMARY OF SIGNIFICANT ACCOUNTING POLICIES *(continued)*

Financial instruments policy

The organization considers any contract creating a financial asset, liability or equity instrument as a financial instrument, except in certain limited circumstances. The organization accounts for the following as financial instruments:

1. cash and cash equivalents
2. accounts receivable
3. accounts payable and accrued liabilities

Financial instruments are recorded at fair value when acquired or issued. In subsequent periods, financial assets with actively traded markets are reported at fair value, with any unrealized gains and losses reported in income. All other financial instruments are reported at amortized cost, and tested for impairment when there are indicators of impairment. Transaction costs on the acquisition, sale, or issue of financial instruments are expensed when incurred.

Financial assets measured at amortized cost include cash and cash equivalents and accounts receivable.

Financial liabilities measured at amortized cost include accounts payable.

Measurement uncertainty

The preparation of financial statements in conformity with Canadian accounting standards for not-for-profit organizations requires management to make estimates and assumptions that affect the reported amount of assets and liabilities, disclosure of contingent assets and liabilities at the date of the financial statements and the reported amounts of revenues and expenses during the period. Such estimates are periodically reviewed and any adjustments necessary are reported in earnings in the period in which they become known. Actual results could differ from these estimates.

2. PROPERTY, PLANT AND EQUIPMENT

	Cost	Accumulated amortization	2026 Net book value	2025 Net book value
Land	\$ 39,402	\$ -	\$ 39,402	\$ 39,402
Buildings	296,159	107,302	188,857	194,769
Computer equipment	43,454	34,054	9,400	11,750
Computer software	2,460	2,440	20	29
Furniture and fixtures	38,312	36,577	1,735	2,169
	\$ 419,787	\$ 180,373	\$ 239,414	\$ 248,119

EMPOWER, THE DISABILITY RESOURCE CENTRE INC.**Notes to Financial Statements****Year Ended March 31, 2026****3. LONG TERM DEBT**

	2026	2025
Newfoundland and Labrador Housing Corporation forgivable loan.	\$ 14,647	\$ 17,971
Amounts payable within one year	(3,324)	(3,324)
	\$ 11,323	\$ 14,647

Principal repayment terms are approximately:

2027	\$ 3,324
2028	3,324
2029	3,324
2030	3,324
2031	1,351
	\$ 14,647

Building Upgrades and Forgivable Debt

During the 2013 fiscal year end, the Centre received funding of \$49,822 from Newfoundland and Labrador Housing Corporation for design work completed for a new facility to be constructed on the current site. The Centre intends on accessing outside funding to complete the project. The funds are non-interest bearing and forgivable on a monthly basis of \$277 over a period of 15 years. Forgiveness commenced on September 1, 2015 and is due to mature on August 1, 2030.

The total balance recorded as building upgrades at March 31, 2026 is \$46,958 (2025 - \$46,958). No amortization has been taken on this balance as construction has not commenced.

4. DEFERRED REVENUE

	2026	2025
DAWN	\$ 37,052	\$ -
HRIF	20,543	-
THRC	4,073	-
WAGE	-	15,957
	\$ 61,668	\$ 15,957

EMPOWER, THE DISABILITY RESOURCE CENTRE INC.**Notes to Financial Statements****Year Ended March 31, 2026****5. OTHER REVENUE**

	2026	2025
Community Inclusion	\$ 422,744	\$ 422,744
NLHC	120,274	-
Other Contracts	102,705	87,389
End Homelessness St. John's	84,973	85,741
HRIF	66,457	-
Ready, Willing and Able	60,921	87,515
IL Canada	36,972	36,972
Youth Venture	17,000	17,603
Donations	1,291	1,924
Inclusion NL	-	51,516
Women's Economic Council	-	66,575
NorthPine	-	88,863
Career Services	-	53,228
	\$ 913,337	\$ 1,000,070

The organization is funded by an annual operating grant (2026 - \$205,300; 2025 - \$205,300) from the Province of Newfoundland and Labrador. The organization also receives grants and donations on an annual basis from various levels of government for specific programs and projects (2026 - \$913,337; 2025 - \$1,000,070). The organization is dependent upon these annual operating grants in order to be able to carry out its mandate.

6. COMPARATIVE FIGURES

During the current fiscal year, management discovered that the deferred revenues were understated. The result was an overstatement of revenue of \$15,957 at March 31, 2025.

The error has been corrected by retrospective restatement of the comparative figures for 2025. The effect of the restatement on the comparative 2025 financial statements is as follows:

Statement of Operation (for the year ended March 31, 2025)

- a) Decrease in Other revenue of \$15,957
- b) Increase in Deficiency of Revenues over Expenses from Operations of \$15,957

Statement of Financial Position (at March 31, 2025)

- a) Increase in Deferred Revenue of \$15,957
- b) Decrease in Net Assets of \$15,957

7. FINANCIAL INSTRUMENTS

The organization is exposed to various risks through its financial instruments. The following analysis provides information about the organization's risk exposure and concentration as of March 31, 2026.

(a) Credit risk

Credit risk arises from the potential that a counter party will fail to perform its obligations. The organization is exposed to credit risk from customers. The organization provides credit to its clients in the normal course of its operations.

(b) Liquidity risk*(continues)*

EMPOWER, THE DISABILITY RESOURCE CENTRE INC.

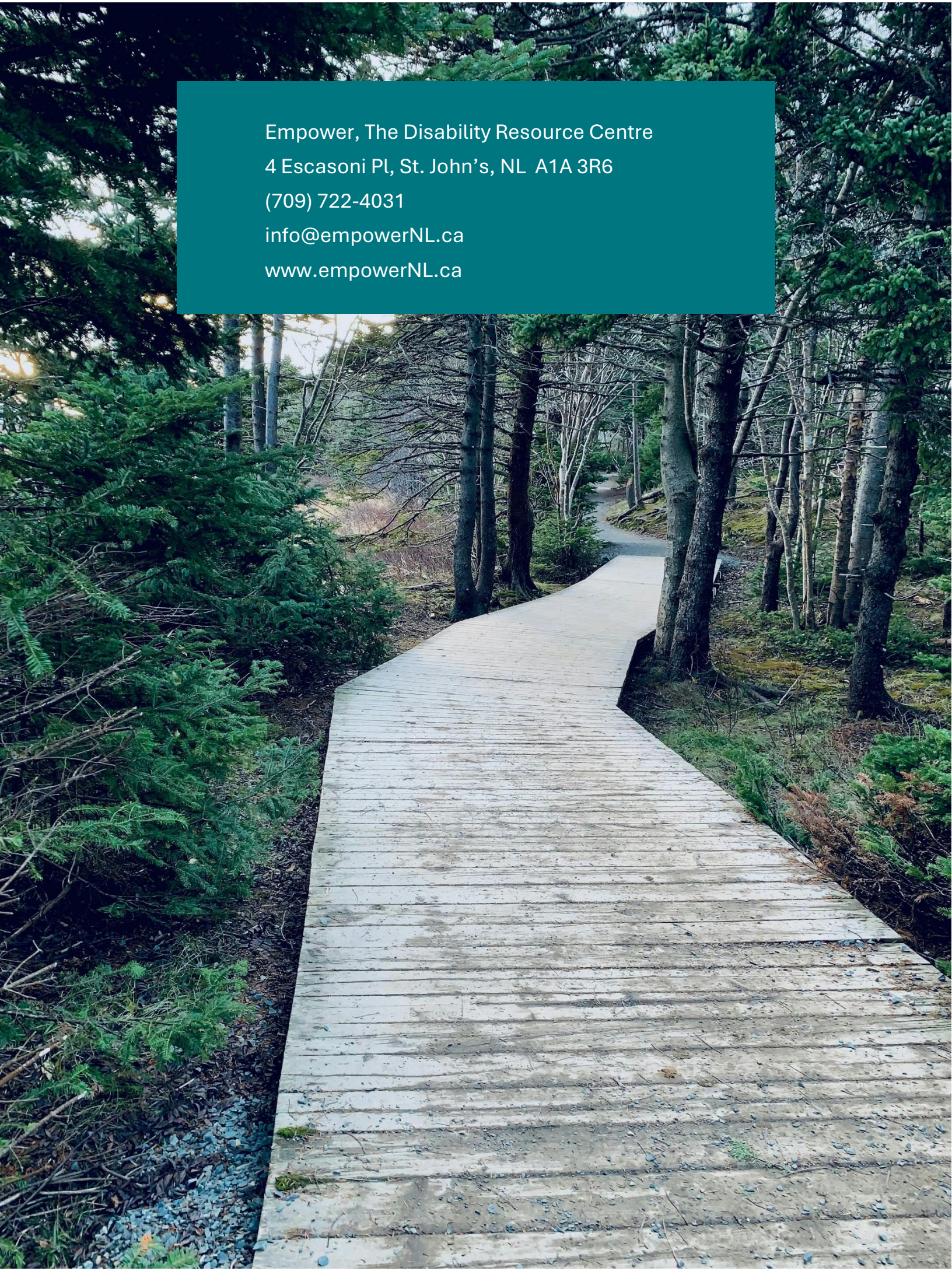
Notes to Financial Statements

Year Ended March 31, 2026

7. FINANCIAL INSTRUMENTS *(continued)*

Liquidity risk is the risk that an entity will encounter difficulty in meeting obligations associated with financial liabilities. The organization is exposed to this risk mainly in respect of its receipt of funds from its customers and accounts payable and accrued liabilities. The organization considers that it has access to sufficient funds to meet its current and long-term financial requirements.

Unless otherwise noted, it is management's opinion that the organization is not exposed to significant other price risks arising from these financial instruments.

A photograph of a wooden boardwalk made of light-colored planks, winding through a forest. The path is flanked by dense evergreen trees on the left and a mix of evergreen and bare deciduous trees on the right. The ground is covered in moss and fallen leaves. The background shows a misty or overcast sky.

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