ALS Society of New Brunswick & Nova Scotia

Annual Report

A Brave and Bold Future

For the Year Ending
December 31st, 2024

Message from Chair and CEO/President

A Bold and Brave Future — that's the title of the ALS Society's Strategic Plan from November 2022 to November 2025. We believe this plan reflects our unwavering commitment to improving the lives of people affected by ALS through innovation, collaboration, and compassionate support. It sets a clear path forward, grounded in the voices of our community and driven by the urgent need for change.

Because… everyone deserves the chance to live beyond their limits—courageously and boldly. To find joy, to overcome, to celebrate, to **ALWAYS LIVE STRONG.**

A bold and brave future cannot be achieved by a small board and staff alone. It will become a reality when people and families who have lived—and are living—with ALS, along with those who support them, join forces with government, the corporate sector, and dedicated volunteers. Together, through active collaboration and unwavering commitment, we will continue to improve lives and build a better future for all members of the ALS community.

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Message from Chair and CEO/President

In 2024, the ALS Society of New Brunswick and Nova Scotia—together with our community—set out to raise awareness and vital funds, ensure long-term sustainability, and position the organization for meaningful growth and expansion.

It was an inspiring year. From the 10th Anniversary of the Ice Bucket Challenge to the tremendous success of the Circle of Care Conference, we came together as a community. We shared our stories, raised awareness, and secured vital funds. ALS families and friends stood with us, joined by the governments of Nova Scotia and New Brunswick, and supported by a dedicated network of volunteers. Together, we made a powerful impact.

This remarkable year—2024—has helped spread the ALS story far and wide. It is a story of struggle, yes—but also of grace. A story of friends and family standing strong together. A story of perseverance, courage, and community. And it is a story that continues.

Thanks to your continued support, we have big plans for 2025. Together, we are building a bold and brave future.

Thank you.

Kimberly Carter
President - CEO

Tom Margeson
Board Chair

Client Services

A Fond Farewell and a Year of Impact

After 13 years of dedicated service, our beloved Medical Equipment Technician, **Cecil Dixon**, has retired. Cecil was more than a technician—he was a lifeline. Always going above and beyond, he supported not only people living with ALS and their families but also his colleagues and anyone in his community who needed help. Though we miss his daily presence, we're always happy to see him when he drops by for a visit and a chat.

In **2024**, we proudly served **106 clients** across New Brunswick and Nova Scotia. There were **56 new registrations**, and we honoured the memory of **28 individuals** who passed away.

Thanks to the support of our donors and funding partners, we were able to loan out **630 pieces of equipment**, helping clients maintain safety, independence, and comfort at home. This included:

- **27 walkers**
- **57 wheelchairs** (tilt, power, manual, and travel buggies)
- **54 breathing machines**
- **23 hospital bed packages**
- **20 patient lifts**
- **51 bath assist items**
- **4 specialty mattresses**
- **13 ROHO mattresses**
- **18 suction units**
- **15 communication devices,** including **5 eye-gaze systems**

The remaining items included **air mattresses**, **bathroom aids**, and a wide range of other assistive devices—all part of our mission to ensure that no one faces ALS alone.

Client Services

Staying Connected Through Support and Learning

Our ALS family continues to find strength and comfort in our regular **support groups**, held over Zoom. These gatherings offer more than just conversation—they're a vital space for **checking in on one another**, sharing experiences, and learning from experts in the field of ALS.

Over the past year, we were grateful to welcome several guest speakers, including:
- **Dr. Sean Taylor**, Neurologist
- **Marla Calder** from the Stan Cassidy Centre
- **Michelle Lane** from the IWK, who spoke on **genetic testing**
- Staff from **Family First**, who offered guidance on **breathing support**

We also explored practical topics such as **travelling with ALS**, the role of **occupational therapists**, and strategies for improving **mobility**. These sessions continue to foster connection, knowledge, and reassurance for everyone in our ALS community.

Circle of Care Conference

In October, with the generous support of our sponsors— **M.T. Pharma** (Presenting Sponsor), **Sunrise Medical**, and **National Seating and Mobility** — we welcomed 98 clients, caregivers, and clinicians to a day of learning, sharing, and connection.

We were inspired by **Dr. Amanda Fiander**, who shared encouraging updates on ALS research and the growing sense of hope it brings to those living with the disease. Teams from the **Stan Cassidy Rehabilitation Centre** and **Quality Respiratory Care** offered practical advice for daily living with ALS, including insights into equipment options that support independence and quality of life.

We also heard from special guests who guided us through important conversations about **Palliative**, **Hospice**, and **End-of-Life Care**—helping to bring clarity, comfort, and compassion to these deeply personal topics.

A highlight of the day was our **caregiver panel**, where individuals with lived experience bravely shared their journeys, offering honesty, strength, and wisdom to others walking a similar path.

Most importantly, we **connected**. We listened, laughed, learned—and we left with a shared promise:

We’ll be back together in 2025.

Anyone’s Life Story

ALS stands for Amyotrophic Lateral Sclerosis—but in our community, it also means Anyone’s Life Story. Because every person facing ALS has a story that deserves to be told, honoured, and remembered. ALS can touch any life, any family, at any time.

The sharing of a family’s ALS story carries powerful impact. These personal stories help those newly diagnosed understand that their life is not defined by ALS—and that they are not alone. Stories are also among our most effective tools for advocacy and fundraising, helping us ask for the support needed to continue our work.

Thank you to the families that have shared their stories.

If you are interested in sharing your story, please contact Kimberly at kcarter@alsnbns.ca

Anyone’s Life Story

Peggy’s Story - as told by Peggy Weatherson

ALS is like an unwelcome houseguest. It just shows up. You didn’t invite it, and you wonder when it will leave.

Sure, there are stirrings of hope—moments when I feel a little stronger, a little less tired. But it’s still there, waiting for me to open my eyes. It’s sneaky that way, letting me dream of walking, dancing, driving, travelling—of living the life I had.

Poof. Gone with the sunrise.

My husband arrives to put me in a sling and hoist me from my warm bed with a gantry lift. We joke that we need a crane. Our dog gives me a puzzled look—he doesn’t know what to make of me swinging through the air, but he’s got my wheelchair routine down pat. He lies beside it, touching it, making sure I’m not going anywhere without his knowledge.

And so, our day begins, as it has for the past few months since my legs gave way and walking stopped.

I’m in my fifth year with ALS. It seemed to sneak up on me—suddenly, violently—knocking the legs out from under me. And then, the deeper blow: to find it wasn’t just an uninvited guest. It was family. In my genes. My legacy.

I often hear people say a disease can be a gift. That’s hard to accept—especially on the tough days. The days of blame: What did I do to deserve this? Or regret: All the things I could’ve, would’ve, should’ve done if I’d known ALS was in my future.

There are days of tears and self-pity. But there are also days of laughter. Of love from family. Of support from friends. Days when I meet my fate with a smile on my face. **Chocolate helps**.

ALS has given me one true gift:
The gift of living in the moment.
It’s all I have—and it is enough.

Anyone’s Life Story

George Batherson’s Story – as told by his daughter, Kim Batherson

The day Kim Batherson’s Dad, George, was diagnosed with ALS was a day of heartbreak, confusion, and lots of questions! However, before they left the neurologist’s office, Marguerite and George were advised to contact “Terri” at the ALS Society. Terri was the Client Services Manager.

The family reached out to Terri and described that phone call as a "lifeline.” Terri came for a home visit, kicked off her shoes, had a cup of tea, and the Batherson clan took her in as a family member.

Kim says that more than the equipment loaned, and the very informative binder Terri left behind, that cup of tea and the promise always to be there for the family was worth more than anything. It was peace of mind.

Marguerite remembers the day George was discharged from the hospital after receiving a feeding tube. She was advised that she needed an IV pole and didn’t know where to get one; a quick phone call to Terri reassured her that the ALS Society would deliver one. What Marguerite didn’t realize was how fast the pole would be delivered. In less than an hour, before they left the hospital, Terri wheeled in the IV pole and offered a hug.

Financial Report

Thank You for Your Role in Our Strength and Growth

The ALS Society is in a strong financial position— thanks to you.

Annual support from both provincial governments has been critical in helping us fulfill our mandate and prepare for future growth as we develop our next strategic plan. But just as important is the role played by ALS families, volunteers, donors, board members, and staff. Your contributions cannot be overstated.

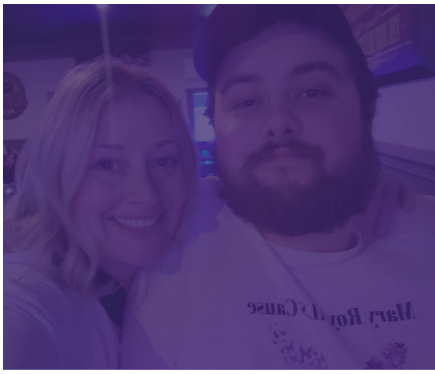
You remembered your loved one with a financial gift.
You walked, fundraised, and reached out to your circles of influence.
You sold chocolate, hosted bake sales, and participated in Ice Bucket Challenge events.
You made and sold amazing things, organized draws and mini lotteries.

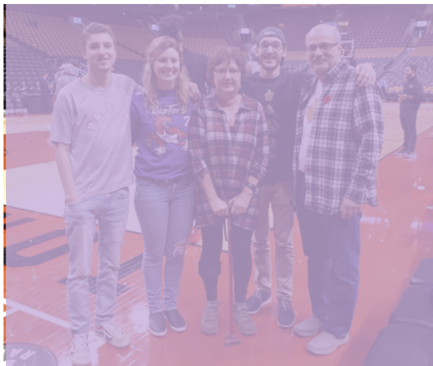
So many people. So much effort. And every action made a difference.

We are currently developing a new strategic plan that will outline how your support is going to help us expand our services— not only for people living with ALS, but also for those with Primary Lateral Sclerosis (PLS).

With your continued support, we will be reaching even more families and meeting the growing needs of our community with compassion, innovation, and strength.

In 2024, the ALS Society reported total revenue of **$792,812**. This included **$252,000 in government grants**, which continue to be a critical source of support. Community fundraising efforts remained strong, with **$177,000 raised through ALS Walk Strong events** and an additional **$57,000 generated by third-party fundraising initiatives**. The Society also received **estate gifts totaling $35,000**, reflecting the lasting legacy of individuals who chose to make a meaningful impact on the ALS community.





Financial Report

How is the money spent?

In 2024, the ALS Society maintained a robust equipment loan program valued at **$500,000**. To continue meeting the needs of individuals living with ALS, we invested **$57,000** in new equipment and completed over **630 equipment loans** throughout the year. We also incurred **$14,000 in repair costs** to keep our equipment in safe, working condition.

The Society owns and maintains a dedicated **equipment delivery vehicle**, and the program is supported by a team of **four full-time and one part-time staff**, along with secure storage and insurance for all equipment.

Beyond equipment services, we proudly hosted the **Circle of Care Conference**, bringing together clients, caregivers, and clinicians for education, connection, and support.

We are pleased to report that we ended the year **in a strong financial position**, with a **$151,000 surplus** carried forward to support our work in 2025.

Thank You

As we look to the future, we are committed to expanding our reach, strengthening our programs, and ensuring every person affected by ALS in New Brunswick and Nova Scotia receives the care and support they deserve. Guided by our “Building Out Loud” strategic plan, we will continue to work with transparency, accountability, and compassion. We thank our donors, volunteers, and partners for making this work possible and invite all who share our vision to join us in building a stronger ALS community.

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