



PROUD  
HISTORY

**BRIGHT  
FUTURE**

**2021-2024  
STRATEGIC PLAN**

# MESSAGE

from the **BOARD**  
**PRESIDENT**

For over 40 years, ARBI has taken a holistic approach to rehabilitation for brain injury survivors and their families. The Board of Directors and Leadership Team remained focused on our mission while diligently responding to the need for change, innovation, and opportunity.



Since our last strategic plan (2016–2021), we have restructured our organization, implemented positive changes with programming, fostered new relationships in the community, and developed new partnerships. As we look ahead to ARBI's future, we will continue to pursue opportunities to better serve our clients and strive to be recognized for our work and leadership with brain injury and stroke rehabilitation.

In 2020, the world as we knew it was forever changed due to the global COVID-19 pandemic. The pandemic has made a significant impact on our organization and our clients. ARBI focused on keeping our employees, clients and communities safe while pivoting from our traditional in-person services to virtual services and adapting to help as many clients as possible. We provided virtual services and programs, supplied laptops to our clients, delivered art and craft supplies and made every effort to stay connected with clients, staff, volunteers, donors and funders. We

took this opportunity to challenge ourselves and learn new ways to achieve our goals and objectives, which you will see throughout this updated strategic plan.

It is a privilege to be part of an organization that has such a tremendous impact for brain injury survivors and to witness the successes of our clients. ARBI is a place that families can depend on to find the support they need.

On behalf of the Board of Directors and the Leadership Team, I invite you to read this strategic plan and welcome you to become part of ARBI's journey.

*Doug Webb*

# MESSAGE

from the **EXECUTIVE**  
**DIRECTOR**

As ARBI continues to adjust ever-changing landscapes, I am delighted to take this opportunity to share my thoughts about the exceptional team that drives ARBI to meet the ambitious strategic goals we have set for ourselves. From our trained interdisciplinary team members through to our capable administrative staff, ARBI's success as an organization is due to our team members' passion, commitment and ability to work exceptionally well together to best meet the needs of our clients. Our licensed therapists provide evidence-based treatment that is both holistic and resourceful and of course, our volunteers round out the support provided at all levels.

Collectively, the team sincerely believes in our clients' abilities to recover, learn and accomplish their goals. Clients and their family members are assisted in living their best possible lives. It is remarkable to watch the magic, the symphony created through skill, humor, kindness and caring, in order to gain the trust of our clients and their families in working towards what is most important to them.

As we implement our plan for the next three years, we will continue to work together, both internally and externally with a growing cadre of partners to meet our goals and those of survivors of acquired brain injury. It is my pleasure to be part of this team, contributing my voice and skills to better the lives of those we serve.

*Luanne Whitmarsh*

”  
*ARBI's success as an organization is due to...*  
*Our team members' passion, commitment and ability to work exceptionally well together*  
“



## OUR MISSION

ARBI is a community-based non-profit organization that strives to improve the lives of individuals with a moderate to severe brain injury, including stroke. We unite professionals, volunteers and caregivers throughout Alberta to provide personalized rehabilitation and community integration.

## OUR VISION

Create a community where quality rehabilitation is accessible to all individuals with a moderate or severe brain injury, including stroke, enabling them to live their best life possible.

## OUR VALUES

### QUALITY OF LIFE

All individuals deserve to live their best possible lives and can be active community participants.

### DIGNITY & RESPECT

We treat each client with respect and dignity at all times.

### HOPE

We believe that every client and every family deserves to have hope for the future.

### DIVERSITY

We embrace diversity in our clients, volunteers, board and staff, and capitalize on our differences for the benefit of all those affected by moderate to severe brain injury, including stroke.

### ADVOCACY

We advocate for our clients and their families to help make life better.

### INTEGRITY

Our staff and volunteers are compassionate as they guide clients through their recovery to reach their goals in an atmosphere of openness, caring and trust.

### TEAMWORK

Our positive culture values teamwork, internally amongst clients, staff and volunteers and externally through collaboration with partners and other agencies.

## ARBI: AN OVERVIEW

ARBI serves individuals with moderate to severe acquired brain injuries (ABI). A brain injury affects not only the individual; families too, are forever changed. ARBI supports clients with rehabilitation and services to help them transition back into their communities and surrounds families with practical and emotional support.

**About 160,000 Canadians sustain a brain injury each year.** Approximately 20% of ARBI's clients have acquired brain injuries due to trauma such as a car crash, a fall, or while participating in sports. The remaining 80% of our clients acquired their brain injuries as a result of stroke. Approximately 405,000 Canadians are currently living with long-term disabilities as a result of stroke, and that number is expected to increase by 80% in the next two decades (*Heart & Stroke Foundation of Canada, 2018*).

This trend is substantiated by ARBI's own experience: **Referrals resulting from stroke have increased by 20% over the past three years.**

The gaps in services and supports offered to survivors of acquired brain injury in the Calgary region are well documented (*Acquired Brain Injury Sector Project: Final Report, prepared for Province of Alberta, Community and Social Services, Nov. 2019*). In particular, those gaps fall into three categories: housing, concussion, and psychosocial. ARBI is committed to doing its part to help close those gaps in service for survivors of ABI in the Calgary region.

Just as our clients adapt to new realities, so must we—never more so than through a pandemic. Our traditional on-site program continues to serve many clients well, but we recognize that new treatment and delivery models must be developed to better serve our clients in ways that best suit their needs. The introduction of virtual therapy in the summer of 2020 is but one way ARBI has shown its agility in adapting to large-scale change and its willingness to test innovation in service delivery.

ARBI has a unique operating model, our licensed professionals train and deploy talented volunteers and practicum students to work directly with our

clients. Our therapists take a holistic approach, teaching technical skills with a compassionate approach, helping to shape future health care professionals and leaders. ARBI also plays an increasingly important role in the health care community, participating in applied research that advances the practice of brain injury rehabilitation.

ARBI currently serves approximately 100 clients per year through three core programs: On-Site, Outreach, and Community Integration. A key element of our new strategic plan will see each of these programs evolve so we can serve more clients more effectively.

**ON-SITE:** On-site is an intensive neuro-rehab program offering one-to-one assessment and treatment for clients delivered in-person and/or virtually. Our multidisciplinary team, consisting of physical therapists (PT), occupational therapists (OT), speech language pathologists (SLP), recreational therapists (RT), social workers (SW), rehabilitation assistants (RA), community rehab workers (CRW), along with trained volunteers, work with clients to implement programs designed to work towards clients' self-identified goals.

**OUTREACH:** Outreach is a one-to-one assessment and treatment program aimed at clients requiring intervention from one discipline (OT, PT, or SLP) only. This is a fee-for-service program in which frequency of intervention is determined by the therapist in conjunction with the client. As with on-site, this program is delivered in-person, virtually, or a combination of the two. Clients involved in our outreach program may include those who have already completed the on-site program, or clients new to ARBI. Again, the client's self-identified goals are used to shape the treatment provided.

**COMMUNITY INTEGRATION:** Facilitated by our recreation therapist, the Community Integration Program (CIP) offers recreational and social opportunities for clients in one-to-one and/or group settings. Virtual and face-to-face sessions are scheduled and take place at ARBI or in the community. This program is one of ARBI's largest programs, serving both current and former clients of our on-site program.

## OUR STRATEGIC PRIORITIES

Establishing stability (through and/or after the pandemic) will be a priority in the first year of the plan. Ensuring ARBI's health on all fronts: financial, delivering high-quality rehabilitation, in its treasured relationship with volunteers and a skilled and engaged Board is the foundation from which other growth will occur.

We will retain the best practices used to serve clients both before and during the pandemic, and we will continue to monitor and assess the services and the delivery models offered to ensure quality outcomes for our clients.

Over the next three years, ARBI will stabilize, ensuring program sustainability and preserving its reputation for quality service. From this solid base, ARBI will collaborate with others and find innovative ways to reach more people who need our services. In order to meet these overarching goals, ARBI has established the following five strategic priorities.



### Enhance Quality Programs

ARBI has been providing quality programming to our clients for over 40 years. The pandemic has provided an opportunity to take a deep look at how we provide service and how we can continue to serve our clients in the best possible way using different delivery models. Our staff of licensed professionals have embraced the challenges and implemented virtual therapy, wellness calls, and drop-in visits (socially distanced) to support our clients through this time.

ARBI will, over the next three years, i) invest in its human capital, ii) enhance programming, and iii) participate in research and development to strengthen not only our own programming, but cross-sector collaboration.

#### TO ACHIEVE THIS, WE WILL:

- Stabilize operations by ensuring relevant and sustainable services are provided in the most effective manner
- Support our professional staff to ensure best practice in the delivery of ARBI-quality care to our clients
- Continue to evaluate organizational structure to determine and resolve gaps (staffing, resources, etc.) within ARBI
- Increase talent acquisition and staff retention incentives, ensuring staff numbers are at an appropriate level in order to allow time for research and development of innovative programming
- Engage funders to support ongoing programming and innovation

Our volunteers are integral to who we are and key to how we deliver on our mission and vision. Our client-facing volunteers are community supporters, students in various health care disciplines, and practicum students who are trained by our licensed professionals to ensure we can achieve the best possible outcomes for our clients. We also have volunteers who provide leadership (through the Board of Directors and Advisory Council) and administrative support (through engagement with other organizations in the disability service industry, e.g., Quest School).

ARBI will remain deeply committed to training and supporting our volunteers and providing meaningful opportunities for them. In return, these key team members bring energy, commitment and credibility to ARBI and take away valuable experience that provides a solid foundation for their future studies. Such is the experience of our volunteers that ARBI is much sought after when students and others are looking for meaningful volunteer opportunities.

#### TO ACHIEVE THIS, WE WILL:

- Train our volunteers in innovative ways to support our clients
- Evaluate the volunteer role to determine how to capitalize on our volunteers' talents to provide the best possible treatment for clients
- Expand the way we engage with volunteers especially beyond service delivery, including in fund development and event planning
- Continue to engage the Advisory Council to effectively support our efforts in a way most suited to their experience, skills, abilities and interests



### Invest in Volunteers





## Mind the Gap(s)

ARBI recognizes that serving more people, more effectively, in order to close the gaps in ABI service requires bold thinking about how we leverage scarce resources. Innovation and collaboration will drive ARBI's efforts to ensure more survivors and their families get the high-quality care they deserve.

ARBI will do its part to close the gaps identified in the Brain Injury Study. We believe the biggest opportunities exist in collaborating with other ABI service providers and partners, while innovating to find new ways of delivering rehabilitation services to a broader audience. Already, ARBI is offering excellent and innovative service to clients in need of psychosocial support and our learnings can be shared with others.

### TO ACHIEVE THIS, WE WILL:

- Take a leadership role in the ABI sector, in order to increase collaboration between ARBI and other service providers in the Calgary region. To that end:
  - ARBI's Board and Leadership will strike a committee to develop a plan (resource requirements, timing, approach, etc.) for facilitating conversations in the community about partnering to improve service for ABI clients
  - ARBI will work collaboratively with the Ministry of Community & Social Services to bring sector partners together to look at efficiencies
  - Collaboration will be considered broadly: governance, fiduciary, service delivery, etc.
- Leverage the strength of ARBI's programming and service models, in combination with our learnings from the pandemic period, to pilot and test innovation in rehabilitation and deliver those services to a broader audience
- Actively seek learnings from others in the ABI sector to increase overall effectiveness in client care
- Explore and effectively utilize sector resources to better serve the community
- Participate in research that will serve to enhance innovation at all levels of service delivery

Closing the gaps in service for those with acquired brain injury hinges on bringing supporters to the table. Potential donors, funders, supporters and partners need to know not only who we are and what we do; they also need to know more about brain injury and stroke and the many gaps in the continuum of care.

ARBI will build on its position as a respected and informed voice in the larger conversation about brain injury and rehabilitation. We will play a leading role in advocating for our clients, their families and the brain injury community of practice. In raising ARBI's profile we will, in tandem, help to raise the profile of the ABI sector.

### TO ACHIEVE THIS, WE WILL:

- Continue to collaborate with partners, institutions and associations involved with clinical rehabilitation research
- Build and execute a plan to maintain and strengthen our profile and reputation within the medical rehab community, including maintaining our current partnerships and collaborating with others to raise awareness of brain injury and stroke
- Develop a comprehensive communications and marketing plan with consistent branding and messaging to increase our profile and reputation within the medical rehab community
- Engage our volunteers and volunteer alumni (Board, Advisory Council, students) in telling our story, raising our profile and engaging the community



## Raise Our Profile



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## Leverage Our Resources

Our programs demonstrate excellence in execution, deeply impact individuals, fill an important need, and help create a strong and healthy community. Our funders, our donors, our clients and our partners know that every dollar we raise and invest supports the achievement of our mission and vision. Our activities and programs align with our mission and make a significant difference in the community.

ARBI will increase financial stability in order to sustain our quality programs and support our collaboration with our partners. This will include building an operating reserve to carry the organization through periods of instability and investing in human capital.

### TO ACHIEVE THIS, WE WILL:

- Continue to grow our fee-for-service programming (both Outreach and CIP)
- Continue to focus on multi-year commitments and strategic partnerships with both contract funders and donors
- Increase fundraising through a continued focus on major gifts from individuals, foundations and corporations
- Recruit board members who are community champions and/or health care influencers who will help us build relationships that will lead to financial sustainability

## MEASURING OUR SUCCESS

The successful implementation of our strategic plan will demonstrate our deep commitment to our vision, mission and values. High quality outcomes for our clients, and the engagement of our staff and volunteers, are key to ARBI's long term success and relevance. These outcomes will be measured through:



Ongoing evaluation of decisions and actions that support the furtherance of the strategic priorities



Key performance indicators that will help measure how we are faring against what we've set out to do



Surveys of key stakeholders (clients, volunteers, staff) will provide continual feedback on and guideposts for improvement

## ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

Our gratitude goes to Terry Gilbert for her skilled and insightful guidance through the reboot of this strategic plan.

Thank you to our Board of Directors who, through their leadership, engagement, and deep commitment to our work have provided our direction for a sustainable future and best outcomes for our clients.

The leadership team works tirelessly day after day on the front lines to ensure ARBI's success in meeting its goals and aspirations.







Association for the Rehabilitation of the Brain Injured

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