



Epilepsy  
Support  
Centre

# Annual Report 2014 - 2015



## Letter from the President



The last year has been absolutely incredible!

We were blessed with the return of Michelle Franklin to our organization as Executive Director, we rolled out our Clinic to Community Program and we have expanded our team to allow us to effectively and efficiently provide service and support within our area.

Despite being faced with financial adversity in the past, we have effectively navigated our way through the uncertainty and remain in a position of fiscal strength. But we're not resting on our laurels either - the search for more sustainable funding continues to be a key initiative as we closely monitor the impact we're having in our communities and seek out strategic partnerships.

Our board of directors has grown into a diverse group of motivated professionals and stakeholders; and it is my firm belief that this enthusiastic board will help our organization continue on the trajectory of success as we look towards the future.

I would like to offer my thanks to our many volunteers, staff and board members for your dedication to this organization and its members. I look forward to working closely with each of you as we make further progress into the coming year.

Lastly I would like to thank our members and stakeholders. You're the reason we are so passionate about supporting people living with Epilepsy within our community.

Cheers,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Chris Brittain".

Chris Brittain  
President, Board of Directors

## Executive Director's Message



The last year has been one of tremendous growth, new opportunities and steadfast focus on achieving the benchmarks of our strategic plan.

The biggest strength of our organization continues to be the people involved! We are very fortunate to have such a diligent Board of Directors, passionate staff team, generous donors, committed volunteers and amazing clients. We are all pieces of the puzzle working collaboratively toward increasing epilepsy awareness throughout Southwestern Ontario.

The launch of our Clinic to Community program has allowed us to focus on better connecting with health care professionals. One of the main goals of this project is to create formalized referral pathways to help us meet every newly diagnosed individual and their family at the time of diagnosis and before they are in crisis. This proactive strategy will help shift our support services from reactive to proactive, therefore helping to improve the well-being and quality of life of people living with epilepsy.

March Epilepsy Awareness Month remains a yearly highlight! It is actually overwhelming to have so many people rally together in support of epilepsy. We have seen everything from purple hair to purple ice cream days! Thank you to everyone who participated in this national effort. Together we are making a difference!

The work we do would simply not be possible without the investments of our funders. We are currently funded by Ontario Trillium Foundation and United Ways of Chatham-Kent, Elgin-St Thomas, Oxford and Sarnia-Lambton. A special thanks goes to Domino's Pizza of Canada Ltd., for providing generous support in London/Middlesex and Windsor/Essex (where we are not currently receiving United Way funding). Thank you so very much!

Looking forward to another fantastic year!

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Michelle Franklin".

Michelle Franklin  
Executive Director





## Spotlight: Living well with epilepsy

Phil Abraham is an example of one of our members from Sarnia-Lambton, who is 'Living well with epilepsy'. Phil experienced his first seizure at a high school party when he was 16 years old. Shortly after, he began to have seizures more and more frequently and was eventually diagnosed with epilepsy. Phil's experience with epilepsy has been rocky. After his initial seizure, he was ostracized by his peers. In the workplace, his employers had difficulty understanding his diagnosis, but made appropriate accommodations. In addition, changes in his anti-epileptic drug regime took a toll on Phil, who had to cope with numerous side-effects while adjusting to the medication. He became depressed and angry about the lack of control he had over his body.

As he has grown older, Phil's outlook on his condition has changed and he believes he has matured as a result of the challenges he has faced. He has found strength and support through music, his family and the paintball community. Recently, Phil has organized a paintball team called the Purple Knights. Yearly, Phil, his girlfriend Jamie Wilcox and the Purple Knights organize an epilepsy paintball fundraiser, which continually increases in proceeds. To date, they have raised approximately \$4,000, which has been invested back into the Sarnia-Lambton community for local epilepsy services.

Phil is hoping to continue this event in the future, explaining that he is changing directions and looking to do more positive things to raise awareness for epilepsy. He wants to educate others about what epilepsy truly is and how to respond to seizures, and hopes that doing so will help to eliminate the stigma that he grew up with. It is important to him that he and all others with epilepsy are able to feel safe and welcome in society, and understand that they are not alone.



## Volunteers and Student Placements

Throughout the year, we are fortunate to have various students assist with programming and office duties. Thank you to each one of our hard working student placements!

The Centre provides placement opportunities for practicum students from Kings College School of Social Work, Brock University's Applied Health Science Program and with Althouse College.

We are a member of the Special Education Advisory Committee and the Child and Youth Network. Collaboration allows us to identify newly diagnosed individuals and families in need. It also provides us with low cost and efficient service delivery as all of our education outreach programs are offered at no cost in partnership with local hospitals, churches, libraries, community organizations and schools.

Our college and university partnerships allow us to attract the brightest and most talented students who provide program development, implementation and evaluation.



## H.O.P.E. Award

The HOPE award is given out annually to a group or individual who have demonstrated a commitment to improving the quality of life for people living with epilepsy in our community.



Congratulations to our 2014 H.O.P.E. award recipients: Paediatric Neurology Unit, Children's Hospital, London Health Science Centre.



# Support

Support is always at the forefront of our services. We provide one-on-one meetings, develop peer-to-peer support networks, host educational sessions and support groups. We provide school and workplace advocacy to our members, and run summer camp programs for children living with epilepsy and their siblings. The Centre organizes a variety of family-fun events and activities, providing people living with epilepsy an environment in which they are not isolated and where they connect with others who have been through similar experiences.

we have served **1,229** clients



and



**167** volunteers donated  
**3081** hours

## Board of Directors

Chris Brittain	President Oxford	Ken Taylor	Director Chatham-Kent
Murray Jones	Treasurer	Joe Longmoore	Director Windsor-Essex
Dr. Dave Diosy	Medical Advisor	Jon Lavkulich	Director
Dr. Narayan Prasad	Medical Advisor	Pete Hannaberg	Director
Bob Harvey	Director	Sara Martin	Director
C��zanne Charlebois	Director	Sharon Berry Ross	Director Sarnia-Lambton
Christine Ford	Director	Steve Gillis	Director
		Tom Stadnisky	Director

# Educate

Training people in seizure first aid and providing information about epilepsy is at the core of our public education programs; and our audience continues to grow each year. The Centre's school and workplace awareness programs, as well as information booths, have helped us to reach our community across all regions. Our Grade 5 program, *Thinking About Epilepsy*, reaches more and more schools every year.

In addition, our staff continue to educate people living with epilepsy and their families. We are now meeting new clients earlier than ever with our Clinic to Community program.

In the past year,  
we have provided

**183** school presentations

**109**

presentations to community  
organizations



## Raise Awareness

In 2014-2015, Epilepsy Support Centre raised awareness about epilepsy through our Spikes and Waves newsletter, seizure first aid and agency posters, informative displays, social media and a variety of March Epilepsy Awareness initiatives. Providing information and awareness to the general public is one of the ways we help break down barriers that prevent those with epilepsy from fully and actively participating in their communities.



In the past year,

**2231**

individuals attended a  
support group or social  
function



# Our Year in Review

# April 2014 - March 2015



Annual Spring Gala -  
Smoke & Mirrors (April 6, 2014)



Game On - physical literacy program  
(May 2014)



Fourth Annual Rick Berg Invitational  
Golf Tournament (May 22, 2014)



Annual General Meeting  
(June 18, 2014)



Special screening of On the Edge,  
Living with Epilepsy (June 23, 2014)



Fitness Program Launch (July 2014)



Wacky Wednesday Summer Camp - London (Summer, 2014)



Chatham BBQ and Beach Day  
(July 27, 2014)



Annual Member BBQ  
(August 27, 2014)



First Annual Seize the Day Run  
(September 28, 2014)



Year of the Brain- Memory  
Strategies Webinar (March 19, 2015)



Clinic to Community Launch  
(November 7, 2014)



Holiday Dinner  
(December 11, 2014)



London Bus Campaign Launch  
(January 16, 2015)



London Support Group Launch  
(February, 2015)



Senior's Challenge (March 2015)



Mini Parapan Am Games  
(March 19, 2015)



Chatham Kent - Epilepsy Awareness  
Month (March 26, 2015)



Elgin County- Epilepsy Awareness  
Month (March 26, 2015)



London - Epilepsy Awareness Month  
(March 26, 2015)



Oxford County - Epilepsy Awareness  
Month (March 26, 2015)



Sarnia- Epilepsy Awareness Month  
(March 26, 2015)



Windsor- Epilepsy Awareness Month  
(March 26, 2015)



# Financials

Statement of Activities and Changes in Fund Balances  
Year ended March 31, 2015

Revenue	2015	2014
United Way		
London & Middlesex	38,934	63,714
Sarnia-Lambton	22,500	22,500
Oxford	31,000	31,000
Chatham-Kent	14,700	12,333
Ontario Trillium Foundation	86,033	20,800
Grants	27,632	38,661
Donations	136,084	22,885
Net fundraising	90,834	77,727
Summer Camp	3,953	3,685
Rental Income	24,996	26,025
Other Income	16,218	2,058
<b>Total Revenue</b>	<b>\$496,634</b>	<b>\$323,138</b>

Expenditures	2015	2014
Program expenses	220,208	209,070
Administration expenses	168,499	137,986
<b>Total Expenditures</b>	<b>\$388,707</b>	<b>\$347,056</b>
Excess of revenue over expenses	107,927	(23,918)

# Clinic to Community



Clinic to Community is a new coordinated care program, designed to educate people who have been newly diagnosed with epilepsy, and their families.

- The goals of the C2C program:
- Provide individuals and their family with information about seizures, seizure first aid and epilepsy
  - Provide individuals and their family with a network of support services to help everyone in the family to live well with a diagnosis of epilepsy
  - Reduce the burden of epilepsy on the family, the health care system and the Ontario economy



Special thanks to all of our supporters and donors in 2014-2015.  
With your help we were able to provide services to 3,072 people throughout Southwestern Ontario.



## Our Mission

Epilepsy Support Centre enhances the lives of people who are affected by epilepsy and seizure disorders by providing a network of services that educate, support and build community awareness.

## Our Vision

Our vision is a community free of barriers where persons affected by epilepsy and seizure disorders are empowered and supported to live a life of dignity, self-worth and hope.

## Our Values

We are dedicated to providing innovative services that are responsive to individual needs.  
We are both inclusive and collaborative in our approach to ensure that all individuals with epilepsy have the opportunity to fully participate in their community.



**1-866-EPILEPSY**

[www.epilepsysupport.ca](http://www.epilepsysupport.ca)

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Windsor/Essex, Elgin & Oxford Counties.

Charitable Reg No.: 11890-0802-RR0001

