



Mission

To provide high-quality, integrated and accessible rehabilitation and healthcare services that enable Canadians impacted by vision loss to live the lives they choose.

Vision

To maximize health and independence for Canadians impacted by vision loss.



Embracing a future of health and independence

The growing number of Canadians who live with vision loss expect a health system that treats their vision loss as an integrated part of their overall healthcare plan. But despite the shift towards more coordinated health services, vision loss rehabilitation largely remains an isolated consideration within their care.

Vision loss is not a standalone issue. It is linked to a host of other mental and physical health considerations that deeply affect people's overall quality of life. Among other things, it is an intrinsic challenge of aging, a critical factor in chronic disease management, and a significant contributor to social isolation and depression.

Aim Higher articulates Vision Loss Rehabilitation Canada's ambition for a health system that recognizes this fact and gives Canadians with vision loss everything they need when it comes to their health and independence. Through this plan, we are embarking on a journey to deliver innovative rehabilitation and healthcare services that drive positive outcomes from coast to coast.

Powered by an exceptional team of healthcare professionals and a wide range of collaborative partners, we will transform the care our clients receive - and in the process, aim higher as an organization than ever before.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Eric Hanna', with a long horizontal flourish extending to the right.

Eric Hanna
Board Chair

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read 'John M. Rafferty', with a stylized, looped design.

John M. Rafferty
President & CEO

The need for connected care

During the process of developing our plan, Vision Loss Rehabilitation Canada consulted authoritative research and listened to the voices of our community to gain a complete picture of vision loss and its impact in Canadian lives. The evidence points to clear opportunities for our organization to improve the health and independence of the population we serve.

Vision loss by the numbers

Approximately **1.5 million Canadians** aged 15 years or older live with a vision-related disability¹

British Columbia 252,000	Newfoundland & Labrador 21,700	Manitoba 57,000	Ontario 681,000
Alberta 160,000	Northwest Territories 1,220	Yukon 1,400	Nunavut 1,280
New Brunswick 37,750	Prince Edward Island 6,250	Quebec 205,900	Nova Scotia 49,500
Saskatchewan 43,000			

Canadians with a vision-related disability by age²

- 15 to 24: 5.8% (88,010)
- 25 to 64: 58.7% (892,220)
- 65+: 35% (539,610)

An estimated **6.1 million Canadians** have one of the four most common eye conditions that may lead to vision-related disability³

¹Statistics Canada, Canadian Survey on Disability, 2017

Vision loss and overall health

People with vision loss are at a **higher risk** for depression, anxiety, and other psychological problems⁴

Cognitive impairment is **far more widespread and rapidly progressive** in older adults with vision loss than in those without⁵

25 per cent of Canadians experience irreversible vision loss by age 75¹⁰

85 per cent of Canadians with sight loss identify as living with two or more disabilities⁹

More than **60 per cent** of stroke survivors have experienced vision loss⁷

Older adults with vision loss have an **80 per cent** greater likelihood of falls⁸

Elderly individuals with vision loss coupled with severe depression were **23.9 times more likely** to have moderate or severe limitations in their ability to socialize compared to people without⁶



²Statistics Canada, Canadian Survey on Disability, 2017

³Gordon, based on Buhrmann et al, 2017

⁴Kempen et al., 2012

⁵Lin et al., 2004; Ong et al., 2013; Reyes-Ortiz et al., 2005; Rogers and Langa, 2010; Tay et al., 2006; Whitson et al., 2007

⁶Crews et al., 2006

⁷Rowe et al, 2019

⁸Crews et al., 2016

⁹Statistics Canada, Canadian Survey on Disability, 2017

¹⁰National Coalition on Vision Health, 2011

Our Strategic Goals

Aim Higher identifies four ambitious goals that will drive our work providing high-quality care, enabling independence, and supporting all Canadians with vision loss.

GOAL #1

Enhance the client care experience

A diagnosis of uncorrectable vision loss is a turning point. People require the right information and a clear pathway to the services and supports they need to adapt and thrive. Vision Loss Rehabilitation Canada will work with our clients, their families, and allies in the health care and community service sectors to improve the overall care experience, making the process more person-centred, seamless and compassionate.

How we'll do it

- Empower and support our clients and their caregivers to be full partners within their care team
- Provide an interdisciplinary approach to care, and a seamless experience within our organization and along the healthcare continuum

“Vision loss is traumatic, both physically and mentally. Physically, a new life’s path needs coping skills, organization help, and learning assistance to adapt. Mentally, one needs stamina and acceptance of the grief you feel. The Vision Loss Rehabilitation Canada team has not only been professional and supportive, but also understanding, found solutions, and provided hope to find a comfortable and safe daily life. Their assistance is immeasurable.”

- Joanne Megit, Vision Loss Rehabilitation Canada client



GOAL #2

Improve client and population health outcomes

Vision loss is just one part of a person's overall health, wellness and lived experience. Taking a holistic view of the physical and mental health needs of Canadians with vision loss, we'll collaborate to drive better individual outcomes, create healthier communities and provide equitable access to rehabilitation services from coast to coast.

How we'll do it

- Strengthen the connection between individuals with vision loss and the broader healthcare system
- Improve health equity in the delivery of rehabilitation services across Canada
- Improve integration of mental health and wellness supports within our service delivery model

“Our partnership with Vision Loss Rehabilitation Canada helps us provide the best care to clients and their families in communities across the province. For New Brunswickers who are aging at home, comprehensive, coordinated access to essential health care services, like vision rehabilitation, are key to living independently and safely, avoiding or delaying admission to a health care facility, and maintaining a good quality of life.”

- Richard Losier, President, Medavie Health Services New Brunswick


GOAL #3

Improve financial sustainability and value

Canadians with vision loss deserve the highest quality of care, provided by a leading-edge organization. Vision Loss Rehabilitation Canada will continue to develop our resources and offer innovative, efficient healthcare solutions that add value for our clients and partners.

How we'll do it

- Diversify funding sources in order to enhance financial sustainability
- Optimize quality of services while improving cost effectiveness

A woman with dark hair and a white headband is looking down at a young child. The child is wearing a blue and white striped shirt and is playing with colorful blocks on a table. The woman's hands are visible, and she appears to be interacting with the child's play.

“Innovative solutions are the key to solving many healthcare issues and decreasing the burden on our health care system. Vision Loss Rehabilitation Canada is committed to developing innovative and financially sustainable service delivery models that improve the quality of care we provide to our clients in the most cost-efficient way.”

- Josie McGee, Vice President of Healthcare Innovation,
Vision Loss Rehabilitation Canada

GOAL #4

Promote a culture of performance excellence

High-quality care starts with an engaged workforce of highly skilled, passionate healthcare professionals. We'll build a culture in which our team is supported and empowered to excel in service delivery, reinforcing our position as a national and international leader in vision loss rehabilitation.

How we'll do it

- Create an adaptable, diversified, resilient workforce positioned to meet future service delivery needs
- Establish a culture of best-in-class service delivery
- Enhance employee health, wellness and engagement across all organizational levels



“When I think about promoting performance excellence, I’m immediately reminded of the diversity of our National Low Vision Team.

Our training model emphasizes the importance of investing in professional development, peer support, and interdisciplinary teams. It ensures that our service delivery continues to evolve with the needs of our clients, alongside the rapid advancements in technology and medicine - enabling us to continue to position ourselves as global leaders in vision loss rehabilitation.”

- Bianca Giacalone, Certified Low Vision Therapist, Vision Loss Rehabilitation Canada

Strategy enablers

Partnerships

Shifting health outcomes for Canadians with vision loss will require collective commitment and action across the healthcare sector. Vision Loss Rehabilitation Canada will collaborate with a wide range of partners to plan and deliver the comprehensive care our clients need.

Technology

The right technology solutions will accelerate our progress toward coordinated, comprehensive, high-quality care. We will leverage technology across all dimensions of our work to drive greater efficiency, impact and equity in our service delivery.

Research

Evidence, evaluation and business intelligence are key to shaping our priorities and improving our performance. We are committed to evidence-based practice, leveraging the best available data to support our clinical and business decisions.

Communications

We need to build a shared understanding with all our stakeholders when it comes to the work we do and its vital impact. Through proactive communications, we will elevate our profile, share our plans for the future, and change the conversation about vision loss as a health issue.

Learning

Growth and learning go hand in hand. We will proudly promote a culture of learning across all levels of our organization, so that every member of our team can achieve their potential - and in turn, help our clients achieve theirs.



Measuring our impact

Vision Loss Rehabilitation Canada is committed to a culture of continuous improvement. We rely on evidence and data not only to measure the success of our strategic plan, but to better understand our client population, their needs and the impact of our services. Ultimately, evidence will inform our future decisions on how to deliver the best possible services to all Canadians with vision loss.

We assess client outcomes to understand the benefits of our services

We use standardized, internationally validated assessment tools to measure the clinical outcomes of our services. Our processes put clients at the centre of their care decisions. We also conduct satisfaction surveys to hear directly from clients about their service experience.

We evaluate the efficiency of our services

Our teams leverage business intelligence to ensure our people and resources are deployed in such a way as to optimize both the reach and effectiveness of our services.

We understand our clients' journey through the healthcare systems

We evaluate our own data and data from the broader healthcare sector to identify best practices for integrating vision loss rehabilitation services into the continuum of care, as well as locate where disconnects continue to exist.

We share evidence to drive system-wide value

We are committed to sharing information with our partners to support evidence-based decision making across the broader healthcare system. We believe coordinating care and sharing information and resources are effective ways to avoid downstream health costs.

VISION LOSS REHABILITATION

CANADA

Vision Loss Rehabilitation Canada is a provincially funded, accredited healthcare organization that provides professional, high-quality and sustainable rehabilitation to Canadians with vision loss now and into the future.

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