

Annual Report

Gilbert Centre
2020-2021





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A LETTER FROM The Board of Directors and Management Team

Gilbert Centre for Social and Support Services has always found innovative solutions to our most pressing community needs. This has been particularly evident in our evolving and ongoing response to the COVID-19 pandemic. But innovation does not happen on its own. The Gilbert Centre's core strength is in our Board of Directors, staff team, funders, donors, volunteers and courageous clients and families.

With this last year focused on client, community and staff needs related to the COVID-19 pandemic, we would like to take this opportunity to showcase all that our organization has accomplished. This year has been a true reflection of strength, resiliency and commitment towards the clients we serve and what our values are as an organization.

WHO WE ARE

OUR MISSION

The Gilbert Centre is a community-based, not-for-profit, charitable organization that has been providing programs and services for 25 years. In 2015, in part to recognize the reality of people with HIV not developing AIDS, but living healthy lives with HIV, the organization changed its name from AIDS Committee of Simcoe County to the Gilbert Centre for Social and Support Services. Our name change not only reflects the change in HIV, but also embraces the expansion of programming to service 2-spirits, lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, queer individuals and families, and more recently, the expansion of harm reduction programming. We take a broad, social determinants approach to our work that is based in social justice, health equity and human rights. We seek to engage individuals, families, organizations, institutions and communities as partners and collaborators in the work we undertake.

OUR COMMITMENT

Gilbert Centre commits to providing our service users, volunteers, staff and stakeholders an Annual Report highlighting our programming, successes and challenges faced, as well as the overall impact throughout the reporting year.

OUR VALUES

We operate from a value system grounded in the following key areas and based on continuously working towards improving our capacity and practices.

Queer and trans inclusion - committing to challenge systemic barriers that reduce health outcomes for vulnerable populations, particularly 2SLGBTQ individuals.

Anti-oppression practices - acting consciously and consistently to challenge systemic and historic patterns of marginalization and oppression including racism, sexism, homophobia and discrimination in all its forms.

Sex positivity - celebrating healthy sexual relationships, diversity within those relationships, bodily autonomy and empowering individuals to control their own sex life (or lack thereof).

Harm reduction - committing that people who use substances are treated with respect and without stigma and that substance related problems and issues are viewed systematically.

Decriminalization - efforts to support decriminalization related to social justice, specifically illegal substances and substance use, sex work, and reducing unjust prosecutions against people living with HIV.

STAFF, STUDENTS & VOLUNTEERS

Board of Directors

Himanshu Shah	Board Chair
Heather Croft	Board Vice-Chair, Fundraising Committee
Esen Mau	Treasurer, Finance & Fundraising Committee
Jen Turner	Secretary
Rob Gearing	Finance Committee
Aman Dhillon	Director
Gerry Croteau	Executive Director

Volunteers & Student Placements

We would like to acknowledge all of the volunteers and student placements that were able to continue supporting the Gilbert Centre throughout the pandemic. Your commitment and dedication to the centre during such uncertain times did not go unnoticed.

We look forward to welcoming back volunteers and student placements in person when it is safe to do so.

Staff Positions

The Gilbert Centre currently employs 17 full-time staff and is a proud **Living Wage Employer**. There are a variety of areas of interest employed by the centre.

Executive Director
Program Director
Safer Spaces Program (2)
Harm Reduction Coordinator
Program Assistant
Gay Men's Sexual Health Coordinator
Women's Health Coordinator
HCV Client Support Coordinator
Harm Reduction Worker (4)
Family & Youth Program Coordinator (2)
Trainer & Group Facilitator
Seniors Program Coordinator



The strength of the team is each individual member. The strength of each member is the team.

-Phil Jackson



COMMITMENT TO TRUTH & RECONCILIATION

The Gilbert Centre is a member of the Provincial Committee on Reconciliation in Action. We have set out guidelines on how to begin the process of R.I.A for the HIV sector in Ontario.

We are committed to deepening our organizational understanding, commitment and action around how to best learn, grow and engage with Indigenous community members and partner organizations.

As of March 31, 2021 all staff have taken the San'yas Indigenous Cultural Safety Training. This training has provided staff the ability to foster a climate where the unique history of Indigenous peoples is recognized, honoured and respected as we strive to provide appropriate care and services in a way that is free from discrimination.

Red Scarf Gala Event Update

Since 2018, the Gilbert Centre began hosting the Red Scarf Gala, a night of dinner, dancing and a silent auction. The gala was created to bring awareness and support to those living with and/or affected by HIV. The funds raised from this amazing event support various programming offered at the Gilbert Centre.

Due to COVID-19, we have had to postpone both the 2020 and 2021 events, but we are thrilled to announce our next Red Scarf Gala set for November 25, 2022. We look forward to coming together once again to recognize and celebrate the lives of those living with and/or affected by HIV.



World AIDS Day 2020

The Gilbert Centre for Social and Support Services marked National HIV/AIDS Awareness Week, November 23 to December 1 (World AIDS Day) with our Sixth Annual Red Scarf Campaign in Simcoe County and Muskoka regions. Donated red scarves, knitted by volunteers and friends of the Gilbert Centre were handed out to organizations throughout Simcoe Muskoka. Our biggest donation of 100 scarves went to Gravenhurst Against Poverty. A special thank you to all the volunteers for helping bring awareness to World AIDS Day while providing warmth for those in need.

inclusHIV Care Clinic Grand Opening!

The inclusHIV Care Clinic provides Point of Care HIV testing - the first of its kind in Central Ontario. The goal of the clinic is to offer broader regional health and community services to Simcoe Muskoka.

The clinic was in its final preparation stage in 2020, however due to the COVID-19 pandemic the launch was pushed back until April 21, 2021.

iNCLUS^{HIV}
CARE CLINIC

A range of health care services, led by two doctors and their supporting teams are available every **Wednesday from 5:00-8:00pm** by appointment only.

For appointments, please call 705-790-6748
clinic@gilbertcentre.ca

HARM REDUCTION

Saves Lives

With the support of the United Way Centraide Grant the Gilbert Centre was able to enhance our harm reduction outreach services in Barrie, Midland, Bracebridge and Orillia. This included having additional access to food, medical supplies, hygiene supplies, snacks, water, clothing, housing resources, temporary shelter, and referrals to much needed resources. Several people were supported into shelter, and because of the relationships built through the growth of the program, we were able to establish a few people were able to find more stable housing, either on their own or through the reunification with their families and support systems. By supporting people with hygiene and medical needs we were able to help alleviate some of the burden on our taxed hospital system by referring people to medical care before their needs became urgent. In addition, we were able to supply undervalued medical aids (such as band-aids, saline solution, antibiotic cream, etc.) so that conditions could be aided in their healing so as to not require formal medical attention at all.

**HARM REDUCTION
MEANS RESPECT,
DIGNITY AND
COMPASSION**

968

Clients Served

443

Naloxone
Distributed

2486

Practical Support
Engagement

3060

Brief Counselling
Engagement

59,515 Harm Reduction Supplies Distributed

YOUTH PROGRAM

“ This is honestly one of my favourite places in the world right now. You are always here and super respectful and I'm not misgendered or deadnamed and it's amazing to have all of this. ”

- Youth Program Participant

COVID-19 presented new opportunities for our youth programming and one in which Gilbert Centre embraced. Our program went from weekly drop-ins (pre covid) that averaged 8-10 participants, to an online platform with access to a staff member via phone, text, in-person or email Monday to Friday from 9-6pm. Connections with the youth engaged in programming have grown stronger as more conversations are being had and there is no waiting until the next group to talk about challenges or crisis. We now receive updates daily from the youth and how they are doing. This new platform has also allowed for connection with youth from all across the country. More friends are being made, larger support networks being developed, and participants are getting information when they need it.

Gilbert Centre and Catholic Family Services have been partnering together to provide both formal and informal counselling services to youth ages 12-20 since September 2019. We would like to thank Kim for her continued dedication to our youth and program.

108

Youth engaged
on the Discord
Server

Gilbert Centre's LGBTQ
Youth & Family Programming
is made possible through
funding from



SENIORS PROGRAM



New Horizons for 2S-LGBTQ+ Older Adults is a partnership between multiple agencies across central and northern Ontario, created to reduce the social isolation experienced by older (55+) 2S-LGBTQ+ people, and is especially important for these communities as they are often geographically isolated as well. Participating agencies include Gilbert Centre, Mamaway Wiidokdaadwin, AIDS Committee of North Bay and Area, North Bay Indigenous Hub, Réseau Access Network, and Ontario Aboriginal HIV/AIDS Strategy (Sudbury). This partnership has allowed for a collaborative approach to elder care, engagement, social opportunities, and accessibility. The emergence of the COVID-19 virus presented the program with a challenge that was met with a rich array of virtual programming, allowing for networking across regions, but also an increase in participant isolation and mental health challenges. The New Horizons staff, leadership and community partners have rallied to provide ongoing support to this underserved and often invisible population, resulting in a growing and successful program that is unparalleled across the country.

As with all programming, our Seniors program had to adapt through a very challenging year as COVID-19 changed the structure and layout of how our groups were run. We quickly jumped into action to continue providing social and support groups twice a week for the Simcoe/Muskoka, North Bay and Sudbury regions, virtually. We currently have 25 unique participants who take advantage of this space and the virtual platform has allowed our programming to reach and engage people across the country. Participants receive weekly updates and program reminders as well. We are eager to get back to in person events as soon as we can safely do so. Until then, we continue to find creative ways to engage a population that tends to remain hidden and can be averse to learning new technology. Connection to community is key and we want to ensure that anyone needing that sense of community can access it as often as needed. Thank you to Seniors Pride Network of Toronto and Ontario Digital Literacy Access Network for providing regular educational webinars and events for our clients. These events have been incredibly successful and we look forward to seeing where these partnerships take us in the future.



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Educational
Webinars &
Workshops

45

Social & Support
Groups

SAFER SPACES

“Safer Spaces Training provides a common language to help initiate discussions about inclusivity and (hopefully!) start leaders and organizations on the road to creating a culture where everyone feels like they belong. It's a spark.”

[20]

Presentations

[\$28,746.13]

Revenue

[655]

Attendees

Self-Guided Program Launch September 2020

Our new self-guided learning modules provide people with the opportunity to engage in the Safer Spaces training on their own time, while still maintaining a high level of interactive learning. Through videos, self-reflective questions, knowledge checks, and community discussion forms, these e-learning modules provide a great new way to engage with the Safer Spaces professional development services.

NEW Website Launch April 2020

The new Safer Spaces webpage provides a dedicated location for our newly expanded team to promote their professional development and consultation services. The website also features a new section to highlight the different organizations we have worked with, enabling the community to see which organizations are making a commitment to valuing queer and trans inclusion within their workplaces and services.

Network Highlights



Website

The Gilbert Centre website attracted 14,519 unique visitors over the year. Our website allows people to find the services best suited to their needs through easy navigation and relatable content to those needing it. Visit us at www.gilbertcentre.ca

14,519 website views



Facebook

Our Facebook presence increased as people looked for support and spaces to connect with likeminded individuals during a very isolating time in the world. Follow us at Facebook.com/GilbertCentre

1,487 followers



Instagram

We increased our presence on Instagram in 2020-2021 recognizing that this social media platform seems to be most relevant to our clients and those interested in our services. Follow us at [@GilbertCentre](https://www.instagram.com/GilbertCentre)

651 followers



Twitter

Check us out on Twitter for all the latest news, centre updates and job postings. This platform allows us to keep our largest following engaged, informed, and connected. Follow us [@gilbertcentre](https://twitter.com/gilbertcentre)

1,637 followers

“ Social networks aren't about Web sites. They're about experiences.

– Mike DiLorenzo

Financials

Gilbert Centre Statement of Financial Position March 31, 2021

	2020	2021
ASSETS		
CURRENT		
Cash	\$60,532	\$45,748
Marketable Securities	\$45,077	\$15,000
Accounts Receivable	\$26,120	\$23,883
Prepaid Expenses	\$39,158	\$31,455
Equipment	\$39,158	\$31,455
	\$188,055	\$127,737
LIABILITIES		
CURRENT		
Accounts payable and accrued liabilities	\$46,348	\$69,434
Deferred contributions	\$58,710	\$37,306
Deferred contributions - equipment	\$8,333	\$1,667
	\$113,391	\$108,407
CANADA EMERGENCY BUSINESS ACCOUNT LOAN	\$40,000	
	\$153,391	\$108,407
NET ASSETS	\$34,664	\$19,330
REVENUES	\$1,444,467	\$1,189,313
EXPENSES	\$1,429,133	\$1,114,632
EXCESS OF REVENUES OVER EXPENSES	\$15,334	\$74,681

Gilbert Centre is supported by the following funders

Ontario 

