

**CANADIAN HARD OF HEARING ASSOCIATION
NEWFOUNDLAND AND LABRADOR (CHHA-NL)**



Canadian
Hard of Hearing
Association
NEWFOUNDLAND & LABRADOR

**CHHA-NL
STRATEGIC PLAN
2016-2019**

Approved at:

**CHHA-NL Board Meeting
January 26, 2016**

CHHA-NL STRATEGIC PLAN 2016-2019

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Executive Summary

CHHA-NL is an incorporated, not-for-profit, charitable agency and self-help organization that provides a variety of programs and services for hard of hearing and late-deafened consumers across the province of NL, but whose primary operations and provincial offices are located in St. John's. The association officially joined CHHA in 1994, and has helped to form CHHA Branches in Western (Corner Brook and area), Exploits Valley (Central West), Gander (Central East), Happy Valley-Goose Bay and Labrador City. Where interest exists, CHHA-NL will form Branches in other areas of the province with the help of local volunteers.

The work of the association is guided by strategic plans of which this is the fifth. To facilitate the development of the strategic plan, feedback was solicited from the association's various stakeholders (board, staff, volunteers, clients, funders, government agencies and community organizations), via a survey that was distributed online with Survey Monkey, and by regular e-mail. Total survey responses totaled 190, with the majority coming from Survey Monkey.

The results were discussed by board, staff and volunteers during a **Futures Planning Retreat**, held at The Wilds Golf Resort in November 2015. The retreat had two major objectives which were to discuss and confirm the strategic directions for the next three-year strategic plan and to discuss the future growth of the association for the next ten years. Financial support for the retreat was provided by the **Department of Business, Tourism, Culture and Rural Development**. CHHA-NL thanks for the Department for its outstanding support.

Over the course of two strategic planning days, four strategic directions were confirmed which are outlined below, while the outcomes for expectations for the next ten years can be found in **Appendix C: Planning for the Future of CHHA-NL to 2026** on page16. There are three primary strategic direction areas that correspond to the three key operational areas that guide the work of the association - **Awareness, Accessibility and Advocacy** – which have been carried over from the last strategic plan. It was decided to keep this as participants felt they were still relevant to the goals and work of the association for the next three years.

The fourth strategic direction is considered to be a **Process** or **Structural** area since it is designed to support or facilitate the other three strategic directions.

The ***Strategic Directions (draft)*** that will guide the efforts of CHHA-NL board, staff and volunteers for 2016-2019 are:

- To network with other stakeholders and partners in developing and delivering programs and services that are focused on preserving and protecting hearing in NL (***Awareness***);
- To create better hearing accessibility throughout NL (***Accessibility***);
- To develop a pro-active advocacy role on issues that affect hard of hearing and late-deafened individuals and their families in NL (***Advocacy***);
- To develop organizational infrastructures (***governance, financial, fund development, communications, evaluation, etc.***) to support the Awareness, Accessibility and Advocacy strategic directions identified above (***Process or Structural***).

This strategic plan builds on the achievements and challenges of the first four strategic plans whose outcomes have resulted in a significant reorganization and improvement of the association's governance, administrative, operational and financial systems. All previous plans have also contributed to the development of significant resources, new programs and services, special projects, and membership and client service growth for the association. Sincere thanks are extended to everyone who responded to the survey and the development of the CHHA-NL Strategic Plan 2016-2019.

Introduction

The Canadian Hard of Hearing Association-Newfoundland and Labrador (CHHA-NL), is the NL Provincial Chapter of the Canadian Hard of Hearing Association (CHHA). Originally known as the Newfoundland Hearing Association (NHA), it became the Canadian Hard of Hearing Association-Newfoundland Chapter (CHHA-NC) when it joined CHHA in 1994 and added the NL extension when the province officially changed its name in 2001.

The association has helped to form CHHA Branches in Western (Corner Brook and area), Exploits Valley (Central West), Gander (Central East), Happy Valley-Goose Bay and Labrador City. Where interest exists, CHHA-NL will form Branches in other areas of the province with the help of local volunteers.

CHHA-NL is an incorporated, not-for-profit, charitable agency and self-help organization that provides a variety of programs and services for hard of hearing consumers across the province, but whose primary operations and provincial offices are located in St. John's. The association provides an extensive range of programs and services to other organizations, its clients and members and various allied health professionals.

This strategic plan builds on the achievements and challenges of the first three strategic plans whose outcomes have resulted in a significant reorganization and improvement of the association's governance, administrative, operational and financial systems, all of which contributed to the development of significant resources, new programs and services, special projects, and membership and client service growth for the association.

Sincere thanks are extended to everyone who responded to the survey and the development of the CHHA-NL Strategic Plan 2016-2019. This plan seeks to build on these successes by outlining new challenges that have been identified from the association's recent survey results.

Strategic Planning Process

The work of the association is guided by strategic plans of which this is the fifth. To facilitate the development of the strategic plan, feedback was solicited from the association's various stakeholders (board, staff, volunteers, clients, funders, government agencies and community organizations), via a survey that was distributed online with Survey Monkey, and by regular e-mail. Total survey responses totaled 190, with the majority coming from Survey Monkey.

The results were discussed by board, staff and volunteers during a **Futures Planning Retreat**, held at The Wilds Golf Resort in November 2015. The retreat had two major objectives which were to discuss and confirm the strategic directions for the next three-year strategic plan and to discuss the future growth of the association for the next ten years.

Financial support for the retreat was provided by the **Department of Business, Tourism, Culture and Rural Development**. CHHA-NL extends thanks to the Department for its outstanding and ongoing support. The Department has also provided financial support for two CHHA Branch Leadership Development Workshops held in 2011 and 2013.

Over the course of two strategic planning days, four strategic directions were confirmed which are outlined below, while the outcomes for expectations for the next ten years can be found in **Appendix C: Planning for the Future of CHHA-NL to 2026** on page 16.

There are three primary strategic direction areas that correspond to the three key operational areas that guide the work of the association - **Awareness, Accessibility and Advocacy**. The fourth strategic direction is considered to be a **Process** or **Structural** area since it is designed to support or facilitate the other three strategic directions.

As well, there is a recommended change to the association's Mission Statement while retaining the current Vision and Principles Statements.

Mission, Vision & Guiding Principles

The following are the Mission, Vision and Values statements that reflect the aims and work of the association and provide the foundation for the development of its programs and services.

Mission (New)

The Canadian Hard of Hearing Association Newfoundland and Labrador (CHHA-NL) is a charitable organization committed to the prevention of hearing loss and delivery of programs and support services that promote better hearing, communication, and quality of life for people with hearing loss in Newfoundland and Labrador.

Vision

Better Hearing for Everyone

Guiding Principles

We are committed to:

1. Our clients, members and volunteers right to be treated with dignity and respect and to be involved in all decisions that affect them;
2. The empowerment of all hard of hearing and late deafened individuals, in achieving well being and inclusion as equal members of our society;
3. The preservation of hearing;
4. To reduce the barriers to accessibility in our communities, our work places and our homes;
5. The provision of programs and services that are focused on positive outcomes, are client centered, are evidence based, and client information is held as confidential;
6. Working in partnership with our clients, our members, our volunteers and other organizations to promote better hearing for all;
7. Being accountable to our clients, our members, our funders, our donors and the community at large.

Environmental Scan & SWOT Analysis

In structuring this plan, every effort was made to ensure that the issues that were identified in the Environmental Scan & SWOT Analyses were considered to determine the barriers that might help or prevent the **Strategic Directions & Priority Initiatives** from being successfully implemented. A detailed overview of the Environmental Scan & SWOT Analysis can be found in Appendices A & B respectively.

Strategic Directions & Priority Initiatives

The **Strategic Directions & Priority Initiatives** define the association's strategic plans for 2016-2019. There are three primary strategic direction areas that correspond to the three key operational area that guide the work of the association - **Awareness, Accessibility and Advocacy**. The fourth strategic direction is considered to be a **Process** or **Structural** one since it is designed to support or facilitate the other three strategic directions.

The **Strategic Directions** that will guide the efforts of CHHA-NL board, staff and volunteers for 2016-2019 are:

- To network with other stakeholders and partners in developing and delivering programs and services that are focused on preserving and protecting hearing in NL (**Awareness**)

- To create better hearing accessibility throughout NL (**Accessibility**)
- To develop a pro-active advocacy role on issues that affect hard of hearing and late-deafened individuals and their families in NL (**Advocacy**)
- To develop organizational infrastructures (**governance, financial, fund development, communications, evaluation, etc.**) to support the Awareness, Accessibility and Advocacy strategic directions identified above (**Process or Structural**)

Each of the four Strategic Directions have a number of Priority Initiatives that will be pursued by board, staff and volunteers to ensure successful outcomes for the CHHA-NL Strategic Plan 2016-2019. Operational plans will be developed by staff and approved by the board of directors before being implemented. This will ensure that the resources of the association (time, human, financial, equipment, etc.) will be utilized in the most efficient and effective means possible. On a quarterly basis, formal progress reports will be developed by staff and finalized by the Executive Director, before being delivered to the board of directors for review and feedback. Revisions to the strategic plan may be required periodically to ensure the desired outcomes are achieved in a timely and cost effective manner.

SP 2016-2019: Strategic Directions and Priority Initiatives - Strategic Direction One

Strategic Direction One:

- To network with other stakeholders and partners in developing and delivering programs and services that are focused on preserving and protecting hearing in NL (**Awareness**)

Priority Initiatives

1. Develop a comprehensive education program on hearing loss prevention for Early Childhood Education (3-5 years) and Elementary Grades (4-6). (New)
2. Develop a strategy to prevent hearing loss for recreational activities. (New)
3. Implement the Better Hearing for Life Public Education Strategy. (New)
4. Increase partnerships to develop, promote and access CHHA-NL programs and services across NL (Retained)

Longer Term Vision for Association

- As a result of various hearing loss prevention programs implemented by the association, the public will more widely use hearing loss prevention strategies to protect their hearing.
- To increase and expand linkages with allied health professionals across the province to promote referrals of their clients to CHHA-NL for help with hearing loss issues.

- CHHA-NL is publicly recognized as a reliable and reputable source of information and education about hearing loss issues and available supports.

Association Performance To Date

- The association's client base has grown significantly (350% in five years) and its programs and services are becoming better known by the public.
- The association works collaboratively with the CHHA Branches in NL and provides funding, training and site visits to rural areas as resources permit.
- The association has established better relationships with audiologists, hearing aid dealers, speech-language pathologists, and other allied health professionals which has led to more client referrals and the development of a resource booklet for consumers.

SP 2016-2019: Strategic Directions and Priority Initiatives - Strategic Direction Two

Strategic Direction Two:

- To create better hearing accessibility throughout NL (**Accessibility**)

Priority Initiatives

1. Create better hearing accessibility in public facilities (offices, places of worship, hotels, theatres, community halls, and educational institutions) *and travel terminals (airports, ferries, trains, buses)*. (Revised)
2. Create better hearing accessibility in health care facilities (hospitals, nursing homes) by performing hearing accessibility audits and fully implement the newly developed **Hear Here Program** in all health care facilities across the province. (Revised)
3. Re-develop the **Hearing Accessibility Registry** to better inform the public of places that are hearing accessible. (Revised)
4. Expand and promote **Public Facility Hearing Accessibility Fund**. (Retained)

Longer Term Vision for Association

- To ensure all public areas across the province become hearing accessible.
- To ensure all health care facilities in NL become hearing accessible with the introduction of staff training and the use of hearing assistive technology).
- To create greater awareness of which facilities in NL are hearing accessible.

Association Performance To Date

- The association has worked with the Disability Policy Office (DPO), Service Canada, Workplace NL (formerly WHSCC), and other to train front-line staff and to introduce hearing assistive technology to make workplaces more hearing accessible.
- The association had started a **Hearing Loss Registry** but lost the database due to a virus.
- The association developed and launched the **Hear Here Program** in 2015.

SP 2016-2019: Strategic Directions and Priority Initiatives - Strategic Direction Three

Strategic Direction Three:

- To develop a pro-active advocacy role on issues that affect hard of hearing and late-deafened individuals and their families in NL (**Advocacy**)

Priority Initiatives

1. Advocate for an increase to the income ceiling for qualification of a subsidy for purchase of hearing aids under the Provincial Hearing Aid Program (PHAP). (Retained)
2. Advocate for access to bilateral implants, mandatory upgrades and repairs to Cochlear Implants for adults. (Retained)
3. Advocate for an increase to subsidy for hearing assistive technology and to make it available for other areas beyond the workplace. (Revised)
4. Advocate to ensure that with Inclusive Education no gaps in services and resources exists for hard of hearing students. (Retained)
5. Advocate for better access to audiology services across the province. (Retained)
6. Advocate for formal policy to implement a province-wide Universal Newborn Infant Screening Program (UNISP). (Retained)
7. Advocate for better hearing accessibility in the courtrooms and the justice system. (New)
8. Advocate for full hearing accessibility at all post-secondary institutions in NL. (New)

Longer Term Vision for Association

- To be recognized as the formal voice for advocacy issues for the hard of hearing in NL.
- To create more access to cochlear implants services (bilateral implants, upgrades, repairs)
- To qualify for a subsidy all purchases of hearing assistive technology for any purpose.
- To ensure that all post-secondary education, courtrooms, and other public institutions in the province become fully hearing accessible.
- To have the provincial government introduce a formal policy for UNISP so that all newborns have their hearing screened at birth.

Association Performance To Date

- Member of Mayor's Advisory Committee for Persons with Disabilities.
- Member of the Marine Atlantic Accessibility Committee.
- Established the **Public Facility Hearing Accessibility Fund** to provide financial subsidy for organizations to install hearing assistive technology.
- The association has established an Advocacy Working Group.
- The association has developed formal position papers on seven advocacy issues with more being drafted.

SP 2016-2019: Strategic Directions and Priority Initiatives - Strategic Direction Four

Strategic Direction Four:

- To develop organizational infrastructures (**governance, financial, fund development, communications, evaluation, etc.**) to support the Awareness, Accessibility and Advocacy strategic directions identified above (**Process or Structural**).

Priority Initiatives

1. Develop a formal Funding/Financing Plan for the association to create long-term sustainability. (New)
2. Conduct a review of the association's financial reporting mechanisms.
3. Conduct a review of Programs and Services structure to ensure adequate delivery.
4. Conduct a review of the association's building and space needs to permit future growth.
5. Conduct a review of human resource requirements.
6. Develop and implement a new Staff Scale for staff compensation.
7. Have annual Town Hall Meetings to obtain input from various stakeholders on issues the association is dealing with as a means to engage, inform and receive ideas and feedback.

Longer Term Vision for Association

- The association will achieve long-term financial and program sustainability.
- The association will have adequate space needs for its staff and volunteers.
- Staff will be compensated with the establishment of new salary scales.
- The association will become more engaged with stakeholders with the implementation of annual town hall meetings.

Association Performance To Date

- The association has had some excellent success with its fund raising efforts to date, however, it is too reliant on one primary source of income and needs to diversify its revenue streams.
- The association has revised and added new staff as need and resources permit.
- The association has successfully conducted a compensation review and established the use of salary scales but these expired two years ago.
- The association own its own facility but has now outgrown it and needs more space.
- The association has conducted several stakeholder surveys to obtain feedback.

Operational Plans 2016 - 2019

The four ***Strategic Directions and Priority Initiatives*** identified in this document will be implemented as an ***Operational Plan*** once the ***Priority Initiatives*** have been approved by the CHHA-NL Board of Directors. These plans will outline the objectives to be implemented to achieve the desired strategic directions and priority initiatives, identify the performance measures to validate success, assign accountabilities and time lines for action as well as anticipated resource needs and communication strategies.

Once the strategic plan has been approved by the board of directors, staff will, in conjunction with the Executive Director develop annual and quarterly business plans for each of the priority initiatives and related objectives. It should be noted that, while the strategic directions will be in place for the full three years of the current strategic planning cycle, the activities outlined will need to be reviewed annually and the appropriate adjustments, if any, will need to be made to reflect changing demands, decided priorities and available resources.

In addition, the following principles will guide the implementation of each initiative:

1. Planning will use evidence-based practice and will involve relevant stakeholders.
2. A work plan will be developed by the person/committee responsible for each priority initiative/objective together with defined time lines for completion.
3. All initiatives will have an evaluation component to measure progress and success.
4. Established performance measures will be the determinants of success.
5. Quarterly progress reports will be an agenda item at meetings of the CHHA-NL Board of Directors.
6. Quarterly Reports will be written and presented by the Executive Director to the CHHA-NL Board of Directors.

List of Appendices

Appendix A: Environmental Scan

This section has several components whose purpose is to ensure everyone has the information it needs to make informed decisions on the strategic initiatives being planned for the next three years. These include a listing of the various environmental factors (external and internal), that could influence (positively or negatively), any efforts to implement the four strategic directions. Understanding the issues that could affect those plans will help to guide the decisions being made.

Environment Factors (External and Internal)

Strategic Direction One

- ❖ Demographic trends show the province has the largest percentage of seniors per capita in the country and seniors make up the majority of people with hearing loss.
- ❖ Hearing loss, among young adults, is growing significantly and these are the fastest growing demographic with hearing loss.
- ❖ The public has more awareness of the association's programs and services which is resulting in an increased demand for programs and services.
- ❖ Membership growth hasn't changed significantly; the association gains and loses an equal number each year, however, the number of clients served (350% increase in past five years), and the number of programs and services available have grown significantly.
- ❖ Hard of hearing persons are becoming more open about their hearing loss and are more willing to seek help.
- ❖ Hearing assistive technology (hearing aids and ALDs) are getting better in quality, thus more people are using the technology.
- ❖ Rural areas of the province require extensive travel and funds to deliver service.

Strategic Direction Two

- ❖ The population of the province is aging rapidly which will increase requests for service, especially in rural areas.
- ❖ Young adults comprise the fastest growing segment of the hard of hearing population.
- ❖ The association is becoming involved in more hearing accessibility issues that demand greater availability of financial and human resources.

Strategic Direction Three

- ❖ More people are choosing cochlear implants and often want a second one; they are also in need of upgrades that are costly and can't afford.
- ❖ The association is receiving more requests for help with advocacy issues.
- ❖ There has been an increased focus by government on prevention initiatives in general as they relate to health and the provision of better supports for persons with disabilities, including children with hearing loss.
- ❖ The government has finally released the long-awaited Inclusion Strategy for Persons with Disabilities which should help to create a more inclusive society.
- ❖ The Disability Policy Office (DPO), under the leadership of Mary Reid is doing much to advance disability issues within government, through the establishment of inter-departmental working groups, developing a disability lens for policies to be screened against, helping to introduce new programs and services, assisted with the development of the Inclusion Strategy for Persons with Disabilities, and has helped to create a better understanding among politicians and bureaucrats of the important work being carried out by disability groups.
- ❖ No legislation exists to regulate recreational noise, but the use of ATV's, Personal Water and Snow Vehicles, etc are causing a huge increase in recreational noise in many areas of the province.
- ❖ Legislation exists to control noise levels in the workplace, but measures to ensure compliance are weak to non-existent.

Strategic Direction Four

- ❖ Finding sufficient numbers of volunteers across the province continues to be an issue for many not-for-profit and voluntary organizations.
- ❖ The current downturn in the economy combined with increased competition for available dollars may make it difficult to develop and sustain new revenue streams.
- ❖ The association's current building space is at capacity and more space will be needed to meet future growth needs.
- ❖ The association has earned accreditation from Imagine Canada, the only one in the province to do so, which should be an asset when seeking funds from various sources.
- ❖ The association has grown considerably, especially over the past five years and has expanded its programs and services, hired additional staff and increased its overall outreach and recognition levels in the community.
- ❖ The association has introduced a Risk Management Program to reduce the levels of risk and liability.
- ❖ The association has seen significant growth over the past five years in both its strategic initiatives and its communications tools and practices and has significantly broadened its social media presence as well as its use of traditional media.

Appendix B: SWOT Analysis

The second part of the analysis of the association's ability to carry out its next strategic plan is the use of a detailed ***SWOT Analysis (Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities & Threats)***.

Strengths

1. The association's public image has grown considerably over the past ten years.
2. Despite some challenges, the funding base for the association has remained stable.
3. It has a very dedicated board and staff that have grown professionally and operationally; the association has staff that have employed five plus years, with about half ten plus years.
4. Strong organizational and governance structures which have resulted in Accreditation being granted by Imagine Canada in 2014.

Weaknesses

1. The association's presence in rural areas of the province is still limited.
2. The association has significant financial capacity, yet income is tied to one revenue stream.
3. Operational costs for the association continue to rise, but revenues haven't kept pace.
4. The association cannot pursue the development of some programs due to a lack of resources (financial and human).

Opportunities

1. The hard of hearing population is growing which is an opportunity to broaden programs and services, expand members/clients, and improve the association's funding base.
2. Since more young people are developing hearing loss, an opportunity exists to develop a new demographic base for the association, and possible future revenue sources.
3. With the election of a new provincial government, there is an opportunity to network and obtain enhanced government financial support for programs and services.
4. More people in NL are now online than ever before which is an opportunity to develop new ways of educating the public and delivering the association's programs and services.

Threats

1. The association's funding sources are tied to one major event, which is a high risk situation to the financial security of the association and its long-term sustainability.
2. The association has an inadequate volunteer base which is difficult to increase.
3. With more associations coming into existence that rely on fundraising programs, it is becoming more challenging for the association to develop new revenue streams.
4. Without additional revenues, it is extremely difficult and challenging for the association to hire additional staff and to expand into rural areas in any significant way.

Appendix C: Planning for the Future of CHHA-NL to 2026

The primary objective of the CHHA-NL Futures Planning Retreat was to develop the association's next Strategic Plan for 2016-2019. The second major objective was to discuss the association's growth and anticipated outcomes for the next ten years to 2026. The following list outlines the key outcomes that participants felt were realistic expectations for the next 10 years:

1. Own a larger facility to meet expected growth, either by expanding current location or another facility elsewhere.
2. Establish four staffed regional outreach offices across the province to deliver more programs and services to rural areas.
3. Developed a more diversified fund development program to grow new revenue streams.
4. More Programs & Services staff will be needed to meet growing demands of client services and other programs.
5. Develop a larger focus on hearing accessibility for tourists.
6. Educate the provincial government in an effort to get them to recognize the important work of the association and to convince them that it should be funded in a more equitable manner similar to that of CNIB and others.
7. Use a mobile van/bus to travel the province (Rolling Road Show), to do educational presentations and other services.
8. Encourage young adults to be more dynamically involved with the association by taking on leadership roles.
9. Create a full-time staff position to deal with advocacy issues.
10. We want to hear that more people know who we are and what we do instead of – I didn't know you existed.
11. Need to have a lot more volunteers; this is a priority.
12. Develop and info-graphic on all the association's programs and services.
13. Need to attract more people to the association that have social capital which will help with better networking, fundraising, etc.
14. Hold a series of open forums/public chats to key issues for the association, as a means to both educate and inform, to obtain feedback, and to get more people involved with the association.

Notes Page