



# Independent Living Resource Centre



**annual  
report  
2025-26**



We acknowledge that we are gathered on the traditional territories of the Anishinaabeg, Cree, Anisinew (Ojibwe-Cree), Dakota, and Dene peoples, and on the homeland of the Métis Nation. We further recognize that the clean water we rely on comes from Shoal Lake 40 First Nation, and that the electricity we use is generated on Treaty territory.

The ILRC honours the spirit and intent of the Treaties and Treaty-making, and remains committed to working in partnership with First Nations, Inuit, and Métis peoples in the spirit of truth, reconciliation, and collaboration.

# BOARD OF DIRECTORS

## 2025-2026

### EXECUTIVE OFFICERS

Chairperson: Ken Shachtay  
Vice-Chairperson: Brian Baldwin  
Treasurer: Neil McNiven  
Secretary: vacant

### OFFICERS

Sharon Olson  
Lucie Diane  
John Pinkerton

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**PROJECT DEVELOPMENT AND TRAINING  
COORDINATOR** Doug Lockhart

**OPERATIONS AND ADMINISTRATION  
COORDINATOR** Robert Mitchell

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**RECEPTION** Kyle Jackson

**MEDIA/WEB ADMINISTRATOR** Jason Hirose

**INFORMATION AND NETWORKING**  
*IL Consultant* Natalie Pirson

**COMMUNITY LIVING - QU'APPELLE HOUSING/  
BROKERAGE/SELF AND FAMILY MANAGED CARE**

*IL Consultant* Susianti Fierce  
*IL Consultant* Krystal Polson  
*Tenant Resource Coordinator (Qu'Appelle)* Kelly Thurston

**COMMUNITY LIVING STAFFING**  
*IL Consultant* Romeo Recalde

**DISABILITY AWARENESS RESOURCE TRAINING  
(DART)**

**COMMUNITY OUTREACH**

*IL Consultants* Patrick Stewart, Cherie-Lou Bagro,  
Jason Hirose

**PERSONAL ATTENDANT COMMUNITY EDUCATION  
PROGRAM (PACE)**

*IL Consultant* Natalie Pirson

*And many volunteers and members who support ILRC  
daily. We greatly appreciate these members of the  
community team!*





# INDEPENDENT LIVING RESOURCE CENTRE MANDATE

The ILRC is a consumer controlled organization that promotes and supports citizens with disabilities to make choices and take responsibility for the development and management of personal and community resources.

ILRC is a consumer-controlled, cross-disability, community based, non-profit promoter of integration and full participation.

Essential program components of the ILRC include, but are not limited to, the following:

- Information and Networking
- Peer Support
- Individual Advocacy
- Personal Attendant Community Education
- Increased Service Capacity through Research and Development
- Additional projects designed to enhance inclusion, including:
  - Community training
  - Community living supports and enhanced staffing options
  - Volunteering
  - Leisure Education
  - ILRC Able Sail
  - And others ...



# CHAIRPERSON AND EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR REPORT

Throughout 2025, ILRC remained firmly committed to advancing independence, inclusion, and community participation for Manitobans with disabilities, while responding to changing needs with flexibility, innovation, and determination. Across our programs and services, 2025 was marked by both steady operational delivery and important steps toward long-term growth.

A major focus this year was strengthening the foundation of ILRC's funding and service relationships. We continued working closely with government and community partners to review, renew, and improve service agreements and funding arrangements. These discussions were not only about financial sustainability, but also about ensuring that ILRC's evolving role is recognized and supported. As service demands continue to grow and inflationary pressures affect all areas of operation, these conversations remain critical to the organization's future. We were encouraged by ongoing engagement with key funders and stakeholders and remain committed to advocating for funding models that more accurately reflect current realities and the true scope of disability supports in Manitoba.

This year also demonstrated the strength and breadth of ILRC's programming. Our community living services continued to provide flexible, person-directed supports through MIST, Qu'Appelle, Self and Family Managed Care, Brokerage, ILRC as Agent, Family Caregiver Training, and PACE. These programs reflect the diversity of support needs across the community and the importance of adapting services to meet community requirements. Community living work remains rooted in collaboration, clear communication, and a strong commitment to the Independent Living Philosophy. In 2025, that commitment was evident in our efforts to maintain high-quality individualized support while responding to shifting referral patterns, participant turnover, and increasingly complex care needs across programs.

This year, ILRC was also pleased to launch the Salt & Strength Initiative, a new consumer-directed wellness program developed in partnership with the Laing Family Foundation. Designed to address key barriers faced by individuals living with POTS (Postural Orthostatic Tachycardia Syndrome) and other chronic, energy-limiting conditions, the program provides support in areas such as essential supplies, adaptive physical activity, peer connection, and education. Through a combination of direct material support, virtual and in-person programming, and cross-disability learning opportunities, the initiative promotes greater independence, self-management, and community inclusion. Salt & Strength is a great example of ILRC's mission in action, offering responsive, person-centred supports that help individuals access resources, exercise choice, and strengthen their capacity to live independently.

ILRC's role as a training leader also continued to grow in other areas. Demand remained strong for accessibility and community-based training, and the organization expanded its reach across transportation, safety, and disability awareness initiatives. One important development this year was the expansion of DART-ATT training to all Personal Transportation Provider drivers regulated by the City of Winnipeg, including Uber and Lyft. This represents a meaningful step in improving accessibility within the transportation system and demonstrates how ILRC's expertise is increasingly influencing broader community standards and service delivery practices. Our growing partnerships with municipal, corporate, and transportation stakeholders continue to position ILRC as a leading accessibility and inclusion training hub in Manitoba.

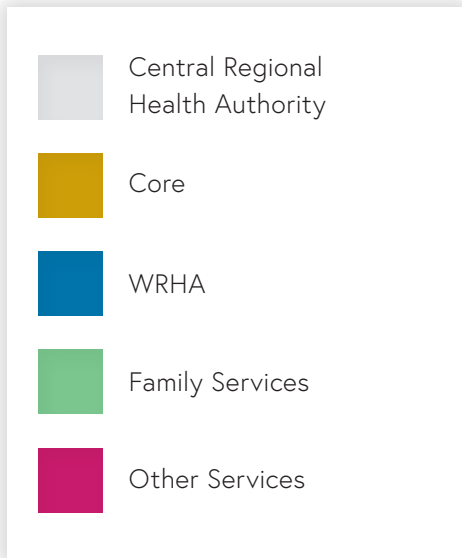
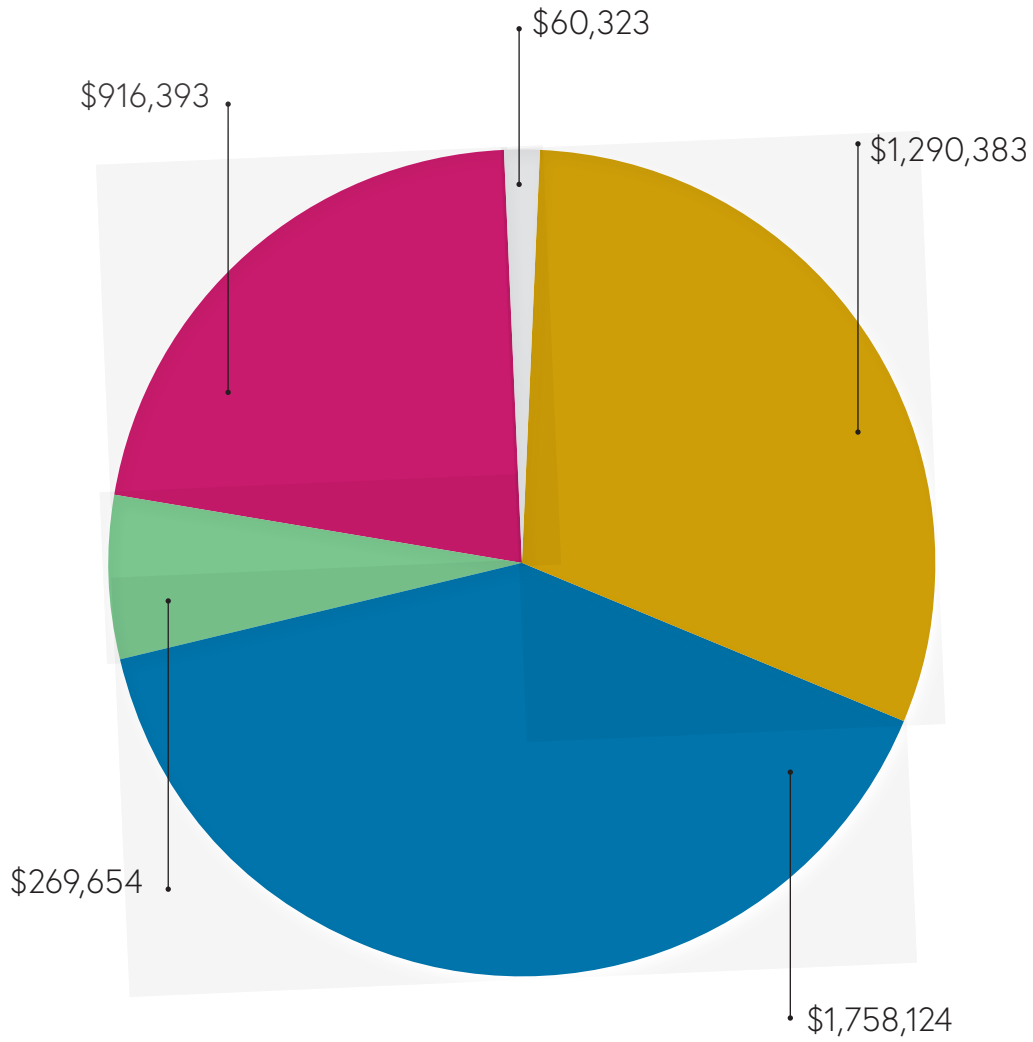


# FINANCIAL HIGHLIGHTS

FUNDER	BREAKDOWN	AMOUNT
<b>CORE</b>		\$ 1,290,383
	United Way of Winnipeg	\$ 170,713
	Training Centre	\$ 158,681
	Project Administration Fees	\$ 478,846
	Interest Income	\$ 2,139
	Miscellaneous Income	\$ 27,385
	Youth Employment Grants	\$ 24,952
	Province of Manitoba	\$ 427,667
<b>WRHA</b>		\$ 1,758,124
	Leisure Education	\$ 105,561
	Qu'Appelle project	\$ 676,876
	Self-managed care project	\$ 33,357
	Individual support skills	\$ 942,330
<b>FAMILY SERVICES</b>		\$ 269,654
<b>OTHER SERVICES</b>		\$ 916,393
<b>CENTRAL REGIONAL HEALTH AUTHORITY</b>		\$ 60,323
<b>Total revenue for the year</b>		<b>\$ 4,294,877</b>

All figures are pre-audit. Please consult the audited financial statements for final figures.

# REVENUE TOTALS 2025-26





# INFORMATION AND NETWORKING REPORT

The Information & Networking program remains the central access point for the Independent Living Resource Centre (ILRC), connecting individuals, families, and community partners to critical resources and supports across Winnipeg.

Grounded in the belief that access to information enables choice, independence, and informed decision-making, the program delivers accurate, timely, and individualized information through multiple channels, including telephone, email, website, social media, and in-person engagement. Despite rapid technological advancement and the emergence of AI-driven tools, the program continues to respond to over 3,800 direct inquiries annually, underscoring its essential role—particularly for individuals who face barriers to digital access or prefer human interaction.

Information & Networking continues to function as a "311 for the disability community," offering a trusted and responsive entry point for individuals navigating complex systems related to housing, transportation, employment, education, and community living. Seven years beyond the height of COVID-19, demand for these supports remains high, reflecting ongoing systemic challenges and the need for accessible, community-based guidance.

The program maintains strong integration across all ILRC services, supporting coordination, outreach, and program delivery. In the past year, this included the re-establishment of the Disability Emergency Management (DEM) training program, focused on equipping individuals and communities with the knowledge and skills to prepare for, respond to, and recover from emergencies. A DEM NET Steering Committee, comprised of community members and government partners, has been established to guide this work, with training currently delivered to PACE participants and planned for broader community rollout.

Information & Networking also plays a key role in community capacity building. Volunteers are actively engaged in program delivery, developing skills in administration, training, and peer support. This has been particularly impactful in programs such as PACE and DART, where volunteers contribute as co-trainers and subject matter experts, strengthening program reach and sustainability.

The program continues to expand and maintain a network of over 1,600 community organizations, promoting collaboration and information sharing across sectors. In addition, a growing partnership with the Winnipeg Public Library has enhanced community outreach, with regular information sessions delivered to the public throughout the year.

Ongoing responsibilities of the program include the production of the Options newsletter, continuous website updates, stakeholder engagement, and representation at community events, workshops, and forums. Through these efforts, Information & Networking ensures that the principles of the Independent Living philosophy remain visible, accessible, and actionable across the community. In summary, Information & Networking continues to serve as a vital, responsive, and evolving hub—bridging information gaps, strengthening community connections, and supporting individuals to live independently with dignity and choice.



# HIGHLIGHTS

## 2025

✓ Our outstanding Independent Living Attendants continue their work in supporting the needs of various consumer and family models in community living. Great work, everyone!

✓ Launched full Family Caregiver (FCG) Training Models, with strong uptake across Manitoba and endorsement from WRHA, SFMC, and partners.

✓ The Brokerage program supported 12 individuals in the community and the ILRC as Agent Option supported another 17 individuals.

✓ ILRC joined the Community Living Manitoba Human Rights Committee. Its primary 2025–26 goal is to encourage the Manitoba College of Physicians and Surgeons to adopt a standard of care for patients with developmental disabilities and/or autism who face significant barriers to equitable healthcare.

✓ ILRC is positioning itself to meet growing demand from municipal, corporate, and transportation partners, including WAV, DART, and PTP/Uber-related training.

✓ ILRC trained 471 New Drivers. 631 drivers recertified.

✓ ILRC delivered WAV training for 27 drivers.

✓ Strengthened board engagement and governance through targeted board training, and strategic planning as immediate priorities.

✓ Joined the City of Winnipeg's Emergency Management Office (EMO) committee, offering input on inclusive disaster planning.

✓ Strengthened relationships with major funders, including WRHA and United Way, to align goals and improve service outcomes.

✓ ILRC is emerging as a leading accessibility and inclusion training hub. The scale of DART, PACE, caregiver, WAV, and related programming positions ILRC as the go-to provider for inclusive training across sectors.

✓ ILRC is assuming a broader leadership role in accessible transportation, emergency planning, and disability-related public policy, not just direct service delivery.

✓ Re-established DEM-NET (Steering Committee) as a coalition of disability organizations, government partners, and community agencies working together to reduce the risks Manitobans with disabilities face during emergencies and natural disasters.

✓ DART-ATT training expanded to all Personal Transportation Provider (PTP) drivers regulated by the City of Winnipeg, e.g. Uber and Lyft.



# PERSONAL ATTENDANT COMMUNITY EDUCATION REPORT

The Personal Attendant Community Education (PACE) program remains one of ILRC's most distinctive and impactful training initiatives. Developed by and for the disability community, PACE prepares skilled Independent Living Attendants through a rigorous five-week program that blends classroom learning with meaningful, hands-on practical experience.

What continues to set PACE apart is its deep grounding in the principles of Independent Living and consumer control. Practical training takes place in the homes of consumers and in real community living environments, giving participants the opportunity to learn directly within the settings where attendant support matters most. This approach ensures that training is not only theoretical, but responsive, relevant, and rooted in the lived realities of the people the program is designed to serve.

PACE is guided by several core objectives. First, it advances the philosophy of Independent Living by reinforcing the right of persons with disabilities to direct their own lives, make their own choices, and control the supports they receive. Second, it places consumer involvement at the centre of the training

process, recognizing that the insight, experience, and leadership of consumers are essential to preparing effective attendants. Third, it delivers a holistic model of education that reflects the diverse and evolving needs of the community, while promoting dignity, autonomy, inclusion, and meaningful participation.

2025 was a productive for the program. PACE received nearly 600 program contacts, reflecting significant growth in awareness and community interest. Over the course of the year, ILRC hosted six PACE classes and celebrated the graduation of 60 Independent Living Attendants. This level of engagement speaks not only to the strength of the program, but also to the growing demand for high-quality, community-based attendant training grounded in the Independent Living model. We are incorporating a module to address the growing needs of the POTS community through our Salt and Strength Initiative. As always, we continue to add new content to the PACE program, including new modules and teaching experiences to enhance the skillset of graduates.

Each graduating PACE class continues to demonstrate dedication, compassion, and a strong understanding of Independent Living Philosophy. PACE graduates are helping expand community living options for persons with disabilities and strengthening the capacity of the sector to respond with skill, respect, and consumer-directed support.

ILRC extends sincere congratulations to all 2025 graduates and heartfelt thanks for the commitment they have shown throughout their training. Their work helps ensure that more people can live in community with greater choice, greater independence, and greater opportunity for full inclusion.



# DISABILITY AWARENESS RESOURCE TRAINING REPORT

The Disability Awareness Resource Training (DART) program represents an umbrella of training and education components delivered to private and public sectors across Manitoba. Using a variety of methods and materials, DART distributes awareness and information to the community on the socio-economic potential of the disability community.

ILRC's influence as an educator and capacity-builder continued to deepen over the past year. Interest in accessibility-focused, community-grounded training remained high, and our work broadened across key areas such as transportation, safety, and public disability awareness. DART intersects closely with our many programs at ILRC, including Community Outreach. As we expand our presence in policy and training mediums, we supported the major development of extending DART-ATT training to all Personal Transportation Provider drivers licensed through the City of Winnipeg, including those working with Uber and Lyft. This marks important progress toward a more accessible transportation network and reflects the growing recognition of ILRC's knowledge in shaping service expectations beyond the disability sector itself.

In 2025, ILRC's hands-on training sessions reached deep into communities, workplaces, and service sectors. Key numbers for the year include:

- **DART (Disability Awareness Resource Training):**  
172 individuals trained
- **Disability Emergency Management:**  
14 individuals trained
- **First Aid/CPR:**  
37 participants certified
- **Mental Health First Aid:**  
32 participants
- **Taxi Driver Disability Awareness Training:**  
471 new drivers trained, 631 recertified
- **WAV Training (Wheelchair Accessible Vehicle):**  
27 drivers trained

We continued delivering Family Caregiver training throughout the year in support of consumers' desire to remain in their homes and communities for as long as possible. Four successful training sessions were held, providing practical instruction and resources to family members, friends, and other community supports who assist persons with disabilities in the home. Through this work, we also recognized the value of making the training available to a broader audience. As a result, we expanded into agency-based staff training to help ensure that high-quality care instruction is accessible to a wider range of caregivers who can benefit from these skills and supports.

Each training session, partnership, and conversation moves us closer to a more accessible Manitoba. ILRC will continue working to ensure that persons with disabilities are supported not only to participate in their communities, but to shape them.



# COMMUNITY LIVING REPORT

ILRC's community living services include MIST, Qu'Appelle, Self and Family Managed Care, Brokerage, ILRC as Agent, Family Caregiver Training, and PACE. Each program is designed to respond to the unique needs of consumers, and together they reflect our commitment to flexible, person-directed service delivery grounded in the Independent Living Philosophy.

Community living continues to require strong collaboration, clear communication, and ongoing adaptation to the changing needs of the community we support. In 2025, our work focused on strengthening partnerships across community, service providers, education, transportation, and recreation sectors to enhance individualized supports and community participation. One example of this approach was our response to a training request from Touchwood Park in Neepawa. Drawing on the expertise of our PACE training program and our partnership with the University of Manitoba nursing program, ILRC delivered training designed to strengthen staff capacity in supporting individuals with physical and developmental disabilities. More than 50 staff participated over two days, and the response was highly positive.

In 2025, MIST was shaped by changes in referral patterns and turnover among WRHA case coordinators. We continued to support 12 individuals, the program's full capacity, through a complex three-agency collaborative model. This required adjustments in practice while maintaining a strong commitment to Independent Living principles. Although not without challenges, this process supported a stronger shared understanding of staff roles and interagency collaboration in meeting tenants' needs.

Qu'Appelle also experienced changes in occupancy during the year. However, personal care, community navigation, problem-solving, and exploring options with consumers remained central to the program. Consumer control in daily supports continued to guide decision-making, with the Independent Living Philosophy serving as the foundation for service delivery in this shared staffing environment.

The ILRC as Agent program experienced ongoing participant turnover, with entries and exits occurring at a comparable rate. As an extension of Self and Family Managed Care, the program continues to attract interest, although participant tenure remains variable. Despite this fluctuation, consumers in the Agent program continue to benefit from increased control over their lives while receiving support with staffing and payroll administration.

ILRC's Brokerage program continued to provide comprehensive case coordination for individuals with complex support needs. In 2025, the program supported 14 individuals across a wide range of areas, including recreation, communication, transportation, housing, personal care, and employment. The scope of support remained broad and dynamic, reflecting the diverse and evolving needs of participants.

Throughout the year, ILRC also promoted Family Caregiver Training to support consumers in remaining in their homes and communities for as long as possible. Four training sessions were delivered successfully, providing practical knowledge and resources to family and community members supporting persons with disabilities. This work also highlighted opportunities to expand the training to agency staff and other caregivers, broadening its impact across the community.

We extend our sincere appreciation to our Independent Living Attendants (ILAs), whose dedication and commitment were essential to the success of our community living programs in 2025. Their work continues to play a vital role in supporting the independence and community participation of persons with disabilities.

# COMMUNITY VOICES

**“ ILRC courses are amazing, I learned a lot.**

— DART Trainee

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**“ Now I enjoy being at work and being able to use the skills I've learned.**

— PACE graduate and ILA

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**“ Excellent teacher! Personal lived experience and modelling brought training to life.**

— DART Trainee

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**“ Amazing workshop! Thank you so much! Very insightful!!**

— Workshop Participant

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**“ The training was impactful and will be put to use at my place of work. I am looking forward to more impactful trainings with ILRC.**

— DART Trainee

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**“ I have been accepted for my abilities, not my disabilities.**

— ILRC volunteer

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**“ All the trainers are so wonderful... making us feel so welcomed regardless of backgrounds and homelands and cultures.**

— PACE participant

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**“ ILRC gave me knowledge, confidence, and a place to belong.**

— ILRC Member

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**ILRC**  
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LIVING  
RESOURCE  
CENTRE**

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