



2025–2026
Annual Report

FROM OUR CEO & BOARD CHAIR

Cota is pleased to share its 2025-26 Impact Report. As we reflect on the past year, we at Cota are proud of our continuous efforts to improve as an organization and of our ability to improve our existing services and introduce new ones to better meet the needs of the people we serve. We remain committed to ensuring that people with mental health and cognitive challenges receive the support they need to live well within their communities.

None of our accomplishments would be possible without the hard work and dedication of our amazing staff team and our Board of Directors, the support of our funders, the collaborative relationships we hold with our partners and the generous contributions of our donors.

We look forward to continuing to inspire positive change within our community, and in the lives of the people we support. To this end, we have begun the process of developing our next Strategic Plan, which we hope to release in early 2027. Stay tuned for further news on this front!



Paul Bruce
CEO



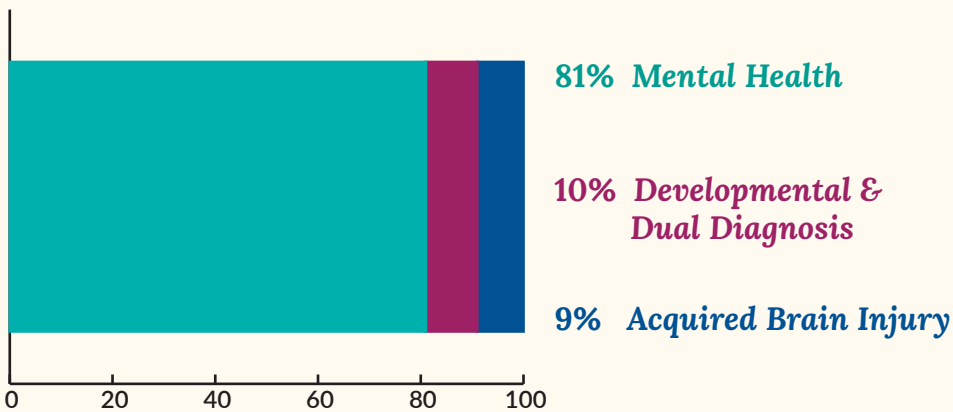
Bill Noble
Board Chair



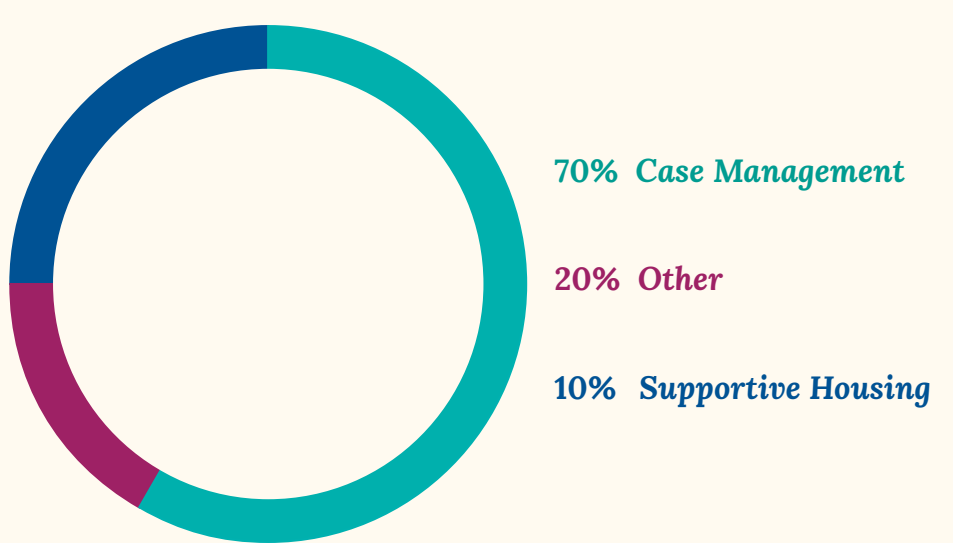
6117
TOTAL NUMBER OF
CLIENTS SERVED



PEOPLE SERVED BY POPULATION

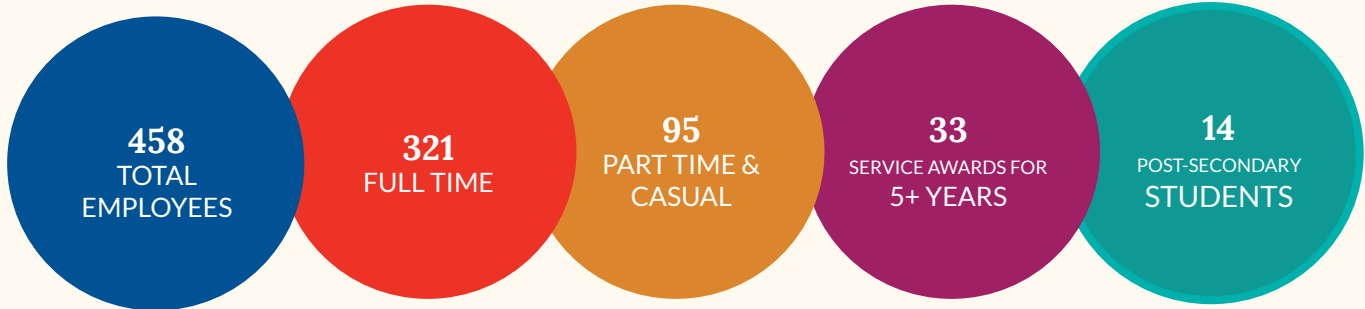


PEOPLE SERVED BY SERVICE TYPE



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COTA BY THE NUMBERS



Over the past year, our People & Culture team strengthened the employee experience, enhanced engagement, and improved organizational stability through targeted initiatives to strengthen organizational culture. Together, these efforts enhanced workforce stability, created a more connected employee experience, and continued progress toward an inclusive and supportive workplace.

We implemented several initiatives to strengthen connection, inclusion, recognition, and belonging across Cota. A redesigned onboarding program launched in April and provided new employees with a more consistent, engaging introduction to the organization, accelerating integration into teams and reinforcing organizational values and culture from day one.

The annual Staff Summer BBQ brought employees together across teams to recognize their hard work and foster a sense of community and collaboration. We enjoyed a lunch at High Park while participating in games and competitions.

In November, a new employee volunteer program was launched to support volunteers in meaningful roles that strengthen Cota's community impact. We currently have three volunteers, one at a Modular Housing site and two at 2195 Jane Street!

Meanwhile, our student placement program continues to grow. This last fiscal year we had 21 student placements from Humber, York, Guelph-Humber, and Sheridan. This has been a huge success and extremely helpful to our staff, service users, and overall organization.

In December, the annual Staff Recognition Event celebrated employee contributions, organizational achievements, and the many ways staff bring Cota's values to life in their daily work. The event honoured long-service milestones, recognizing thirty two staff with over five years of service!

These engagement efforts were complemented by meaningful progress in workforce stability, including achieving the lowest vacancy rate in several years. This result reflects the impact of focused recruitment strategies, improved onboarding, and retention efforts. Reduced vacancies have increased operational stability, lessened staffing pressures on existing teams, and enhanced our ability to deliver consistent, high-quality service.

Looking ahead, People & Culture will continue to build on these achievements by investing in employee engagement, strengthening recruitment and retention strategies, expanding recognition initiatives, and fostering an inclusive workplace culture that supports both employees' and Cota's success.

—Rachel Stanford, Director, People & Culture

PEOPLE & CULTURE UPDATE

EVOLVING & GROWING SERVICES

November 2025 saw the creation of Cota's brand-new Acquired Brain Injury (ABI) program, ABI Crisis Case Management. Designed to catch people slipping through the cracks of existing ABI healthcare provision, the program has two dedicated staff members whose goal is to stabilize vulnerable service users and link them to longer-term support. This one-of-a-kind program is already making an impact in Toronto's ABI care landscape and in the lives of our service users.

Crisis Case Management is the result of close collaboration with our community partners. It started when Cota's ABI team decided to shift focus from the ABI Behavioural Therapy program to address more pressing gaps in the system. To identify those gaps, we approached the Toronto ABI Network, which leads ABI referrals in the city. What followed was thorough consultation with community partners and poring over existing referrals and databases. The conclusion: some individuals leaving medical facilities with an ABI lacked support networks and faced lengthy wait times for services. There was a need for immediate, short-term case management that would stabilize those people until they could access longer-term support.

The ABI Crisis Case Management's small but mighty team is made up of Juline, an Individual Support Worker, and Renee, a Case Manager-Social Worker. The pair have already developed a close and flexible working relationship that allows them to cover the different needs of each service user. Those needs can change drastically, ranging from daily living support to finding stable housing, but system navigation is usually a big part of it. Someone might leave the hospital with referrals to other services but no idea how to access them, or they might struggle with remembering medications and meals. Service users are often isolated and dealing with the cognitive side effects of their ABI, making these challenges even more difficult. Both Juline and Renee can see how much their services are needed and that they're making a real difference, reflected in the positive feedback they've received from service users so far.

Service users aren't the only ones praising the program – the Toronto ABI Network invited Juline and Renee to present at an ABI Network Advisory Committee event, where they spoke about the collaborative creation process and presented a service user's success story. Next up is the Toronto ABI Network Conference in October 2026, where Renee and the Network's Julie Osbelt will co-present the program. This goes to show what an impact ABI Crisis Case Management has made in such a short amount of time, and we're excited to see the program grow from here.

ABI Crisis Case Management



1
Nurse
Supervisor

5
Case
Managers

50
Service
Users



An exciting pilot project is underway at Cota in partnership with LOFT and the City of Toronto. Housing First for Encampments and Street Homelessness (H-FRESH) is a three-year initiative led by the City that aims to support people with complex mental health and addiction challenges who are living in encampments or are otherwise unhoused. Cota is incredibly proud to have been approached by the City to join the program.

Out of H-FRESH's 100 service users, Cota and LOFT each support 50 people. There are 36 Cota service users in supportive housing sites across Toronto, with an additional 14 waiting for housing availability.

A research group consisting of CAMH, the University Health Network, and Unity Health is monitoring H-FRESH's 100 service users, who receive Cota and LOFT's enhanced support, against a comparison

group of
100 people
receiving
standard
supportive
housing services.

This will allow the City to measure H-FRESH's impact and effectiveness at the end of its three-year term. Cota's H-FRESH team includes five case managers with different specializations along with one nurse supervisor. Staff are currently focused on creating relationships and trust with service users, assisted by staff from the City's Streets to Homes outreach program.

The end goal at Cota is for H-FRESH to integrate further with our Assertive Housing First (AHFT) program, which offers additional supports like psychiatrists and social workers who could step in once service users are housed and their needs are identified. Integrating the programs would create comprehensive, flexible coverage for service users, allowing them to move between different support systems depending on their needs. With that potential in mind, our team will continue their outreach and relationship-building with an eye to the future.

H-FRESH

EVOLVING & GROWING SERVICES

IDEA COMMITTEE UPDATE



Over the past year, the IDEA Committee continued to build on the work we have started by turning conversations into meaningful action. From monthly awareness articles and educational resource sharing to advancing Cota’s Land Acknowledgement, developing an African Ancestral Acknowledgement and supporting mandatory staff learning, we remained focused on creating a space where people feel respected and represented.

We helped launch training on Gender Diversity and represented Cota at community events, including the Toronto Pride Parade. The organization participated in the event for the first time last June 2025; we came together and proudly marched to celebrate diversity, demonstrating our commitment to inclusion beyond the workplace. This past February 2026, the committee marked Black History Month by sharing educational resources, local events and learning opportunities that celebrated Black excellence - encouraging ongoing conversations about anti-Black racism and equity.

Every project reflected our shared belief that inclusion isn’t simply one initiative, it’s something we build together every day.

—Mikayla Segriff & Melissa Mattiacci, Committee Co-Chairs



Being part of the IDEA Committee, this year has been one of the most rewarding experiences I’ve had. I’ve loved collaborating with colleagues from across the organization and seeing the passion, thoughtfulness, and commitment everyone brings to this work. From the articles we shared and the meaningful discussions we have, to achieving our goals and updating policies to make our workplace more inclusive, it’s been inspiring to see the impact we’ve made together. I’m incredibly grateful to have been part of this journey and look forward to seeing the committee continue to create positive change.

—Maria Malfara, IDEA Committee Secretary

STRENGTHENING COTA'S CLIENT ASSISTANCE FUND

In late fall 2025 and in line with Giving Tuesday, we launched our first fundraising campaign in over a decade, Reducing Barriers and Overcoming Obstacles. This campaign reflects Cota's renewed focus on strengthening the Client Assistance Fund and expanding awareness of the practical supports it can provide. The fund offers timely, one-time assistance when service users face urgent barriers to safety, stability, recovery, or dignity.

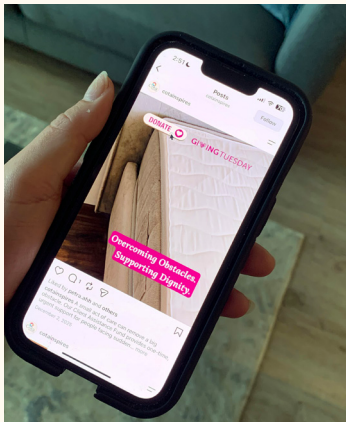
The Client Assistance Fund provides one-time, urgent financial assistance when all other options have been exhausted. These supports are often modest in cost, but they can make a significant difference at a pivotal moment in someone's life.

Through the fund, Cota may be able to help service users access emergency housing stabilization, costs associated with an extreme clean, therapeutic equipment not covered by other supports, a bed or mattress, or registration for programs that foster connection, wellbeing, and recovery.

Guided by a New Committee

This renewed focus was supported by the creation of Cota's Donor Relations and Fundraising Committee, established to guide and strengthen the organization's approach to donor engagement, fundraising, and community partnership development.

The committee has been mapping current donation processes, reviewing existing partnerships, exploring opportunities to deepen community relationships, and identifying new potential supporters and fundraising avenues.



Help us say "yes" when it matters most.

Why the fund matters

Recent examples show how practical, responsive support can help reduce barriers in real time. The fund has helped prevent a service user's hydro from being disconnected by covering an outstanding balance and supported a service user whose medical bed needed to be moved while their unit was being renovated for accessibility, after other funding options were unavailable. Each example reflects the campaign's core message: a timely "yes" can help someone overcome an obstacle and move forward with greater stability and dignity.

In May 2025, Cota also launched a grocery gift card initiative to help address food insecurity among service users. The initiative provides grocery store gift cards to people receiving services who do not have access to meal programs at their housing sites or who live independently in the community, offering flexible support for basic needs and helping reduce financial pressure related to food costs.

How to support the campaign

Support for Reducing Barriers and Overcoming Obstacles can be made through Cota's CanadaHelps campaign page. Every contribution helps Cota respond quickly and compassionately when a small amount of financial assistance can make an immediate and meaningful difference.

The journey of Renata, a North York Case Manager, and her client, Johann, is one of the year's most touching success stories built on compassion, person-centred support, and partnership.

When Johann first connected with Cota, he was navigating significant challenges related to mental health and substance use. Having experienced an eating disorder, depression, and addiction, he described feeling lost and struggling to envision a path forward. Like many individuals facing concurrent mental health and substance use challenges, the impacts extended across multiple areas of his life, affecting his well-being, relationships, and sense of stability.

Through consistent support and a strong working relationship built on trust, Renata helped Johann focus on achievable goals. Together, they worked to establish routines, develop accountability, and identify practical steps that would support his well-being. Weekly and monthly goal-setting, encouragement around healthy habits, and ongoing conversations about recovery helped Johann build confidence and regain a sense of direction. With Renata's support, Johann reconnected with healthcare services, attended medical appointments, remained consistent with his healthcare, and accessed financial supports when he needed them most. These foundational steps helped create stability while he worked toward longer-term goals.

Recovery meant rediscovering interests and building a meaningful life despite Johann's challenges. He turned to art as an outlet for creativity and healing, using painting and drawing to channel his energy and manage cravings. What began as a hobby evolved into a source of pride, accomplishment, and personal growth. Today, Johann is working and continuing to build toward his future goals. Inspired by his own experiences and the support he received along the way, he plans to pursue studies in social work so he can help others facing mental health and recovery challenges.

Johann's story demonstrates how recovery is often shaped by many small but meaningful steps, supported by trusting relationships and consistent encouragement. While this is one individual's story, it reflects the work taking place across Cota every day. Service providers like Renata support people through some of the most challenging periods of their lives, helping them build stability, reconnect with their communities, and pursue recovery on their own terms. Much of this work happens quietly and behind the scenes, but its impact is lasting, creating opportunities for hope, wellness, and meaningful change.



SPOTLIGHT ON JOHANN & RENATA

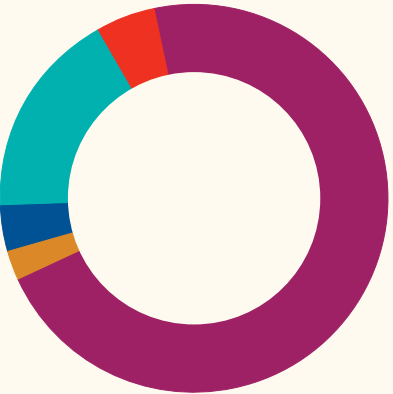
BRAIN INJURY AWARENESS MONTH



We celebrated Brain Injury Awareness Month in July at our Scarborough satellite office! Our ABI staff, service users and their families, and program alums gathered to appreciate the artwork created in our ABI Adult Day Service (ADS) program. Everyone caught up over cupcakes and sandwiches made with love by the ADS team, then it was over into the auditorium for live music!

REVENUE

<u>Transfer Payments and Grants</u>		
Ontario Health Toronto Central	21,148,614	17.3%
Ministry of Health	6,321,326	5.2%
Ministry of Children, Community and Social Services	87,297,486	71.3%
City of Toronto	3,088,075	2.5%
<u>Other Revenue</u>		
Partnership and other funding	1,930,382	3.8%
Other revenue	2,150,984	
Amortization of deferred capital contribution	65,347	
Investment income	509,387	
Total Revenue	122,511,601	



EXPENDITURES

Program Expenditures	121,636,943	99.63%
Central Administration	322,044	0.26%
Amortization of Capital Assets	127,709	0.10%
		=100%
Total Expenditures	122,086,696	
Excess of Revenue over Expenditure before Investment gain/loss	424,906	
Change in net realized gain / (loss) on investments	105,021	
NET	529,927	

EXECUTIVE LEADERSHIP



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Christine Conrad

Treasurer

Wayne Seifried

Directors

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Wes Iqbal
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COTA EXECUTIVE LEADERSHIP

Chief Executive Officer

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Senior Director, Finance & Administration

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Senior Director, People & Culture

Rachel Stanford



FUNDERS & FORMAL PARTNERSHIPS