

# Annual Report

# Foundations for Future Growth



Asthma.ca™

Asthma Society of Canada



## Why we do what we do Meet our Community

My son Matthew was 18 months old when he had his first life-threatening asthma attack. It was terrifying to see him struggling for breath.



He recovered. But it wasn't our last challenge.

When Matthew started school, a new nightmare began. He loves to learn, but his classroom included many triggers. The school principal and teacher were not open to my requests for reasonable accommodations. Matthew was treated in the hospital 13 times in his first year.

But when I went to the Asthma Society of Canada for help, things started to get better. A representative worked with us as an advocate for our family and mediator with the school. He reassured me that I wasn't crazy and I wasn't alone. He gave me the confidence to speak up and fight for my son.

This fall our family moved, and Matthew, now in grade four, started attending a new school. The Asthma Society of Canada supported us once again, as the teachers received training, including a presentation by Matthew. I was so proud and thankful.

We've come so far since Matthew's first year of school. But other children still face ignorance and hostility in their schools. That's why I stand with the Asthma Society of Canada as they support families like ours through education, advocacy and support initiatives that save lives, and through funding research into preventing, treating and curing this disease.



Tracey Beaudry  
The Beaudry Family

Joint message from CEO & Chair  
**Foundations for Future Growth**

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One of the more rewarding things we do together as Chair and CEO is thank everyone who contributes towards our vision. Thank you to our volunteer Board members, dedicated staff and volunteers and generous donors who are responsible for our success in 2016.

Our community is at the heart of all we do. As the only organization solely dedicated to helping all people affected by asthma in Canada, we are committed to bringing your voice to the forefront of the healthcare dialogue and improving health outcomes.

We are proud of the role we play in ensuring the availability of biologics in the Canadian market. With the development of this new type of medicine, we have made great strides in making personalized treatments accessible for those with uncontrolled or Severe Asthma. Advocating for choice

and access to treatments, along with our efforts to ensure the Canada-wide phase-out of coal and a move towards clean air energy, is changing lives.

Our educational programs and support services are built for you. 2016 saw us extend our outreach into First Nations communities and improve support for kids with asthma in schools. Our Certified Asthma Educators continued to provide essential assistance through our free HelpLine, to bridge gaps in our healthcare system.

We also expanded our research funds with plans to establish a new National Research Program. This initiative will provide grants to young researchers, investing in both future talent and asthma research. We look forward to working with the next generation of brilliant Canadian minds in the quest for a cure for asthma.

Together we continue to improve the lives of the 3 million Canadians living with asthma.



Vanessa Foran  
President & CEO



John C. Healy  
Chair



# Speaking up on behalf of our community

## Our Advocacy Efforts

As the *only national organization solely committed to enhancing the quality of life of the 3 million Canadians living with asthma, we advocate on issues that are important to our community. In 2016, together with our coalition partners we supported clean air initiatives to reduce greenhouse gas emissions, access to a wide range of treatments options, and childrens' ability to carry their asthma medications in schools.*

### Sustainable Clean Air Clean Energy



We played a key role in the phase-out of coal campaign, including collaborating with the Pembina Institute on *Out with the Coal, in with the New*, a report which fully aligned with the federal government's plan to accelerate the phase-out of coal by 2030. To date, all but two provinces have agreed to shut down coal plants.

We participated in a campaign calling on Canada's First Ministers to put Canada on a path towards a *Clean Growth Century* promoting green electricity, clean transportation options, energy efficiency, pricing pollution, and seeking economic opportunities in this transformation.

### Choice & Access to Treatments



We worked to ensure a wide range of treatment options are available based on best health outcomes.

Through our input to the drug review process at both the provincial and federal levels, we helped make life changing medications available for people with Severe Asthma.

### Access to Medicines in School



Ryan Gibbons, aged 12, died of an asthma attack at school in 2012. The Asthma Society of Canada advocated in support of Ryan's Law, which came into effect in 2015, giving all children in Ontario the right to carry their asthma medication in schools.

In 2016, we continued our work to implement Ryan's law in Ontario. With our National Asthma Patient Alliance (NAPA) we developed *Best Practices for Asthma Management in School*, a national education and advocacy tool for parents and educators to ensure the safety of all children with asthma.

## Lending a hand through Education and Support

The Asthma Society of Canada encourages self-management and prevention by helping our community take control of their symptoms through evidence-based resources and support. In 2016, we developed resources on several topics. Some of the highlights include:

- Webinars on Severe Asthma and biologics and avoiding the September Peak and other back-to school precautions
- Targeted resources on lung health for First Nations Communities
  - Bilingual resources on influenza that we shared with individuals and clinics throughout the country



### National Asthma Patient Alliance

Our growing grassroots

community of 2,500 patients and caregivers form the very core of who we are. Through NAPA we are able to incorporate the patient voice into the healthcare conversation. In 2016, NAPA members offered educational webinars, participated in Team Asthma runs, provided peer-to-peer support and participated in media and community events nationwide.



### AQHI & Asthma Today App

We all know how difficult it is to safely plan outdoor activities while worrying about air quality. In collaboration with Environment Canada, we designed an iOS app to help our community stay informed about important issues related to asthma and healthy living including information on the Air Quality Health Index and weather information affecting our community.



### Fighting for Breath: Severe Asthma Conference

Our third annual national conference focused on the definition and diagnosis of Severe Asthma and new innovative treatment options, with an eye to improving patient-physician dialogue. The gathering also brought patients, caregivers, healthcare providers and policy makers to the table for a conversation on national pharmacare, with the patient voice at the forefront.



### Asthma & Allergy HelpLine

We receive daily emails and phone calls from concerned parents, newly diagnosed individuals, people from remote communities that lack services, and others. Our free, bilingual, national service connects them with Certified Asthma Educators who are there to answer their questions in an interactive and approachable manner, filling a much needed gap in the health care system.

# Working together to save and improve lives

## Research

*Today, asthma has no cure. By supporting research, we can ensure that while we work towards finding a cure, we can find the best means of controlling asthma so that we can live symptom-free lives. Our past research has had an important effect on our understanding of the disease. Our study, "Severe Asthma: The Canadian Patient Journey," revealed the social, financial and health impacts of Severe Asthma (SA) on the lives of Canadians. We use this landmark study to educate, raise awareness and advocate for the estimated 150,000 - 250,000 Canadians living with SA.*

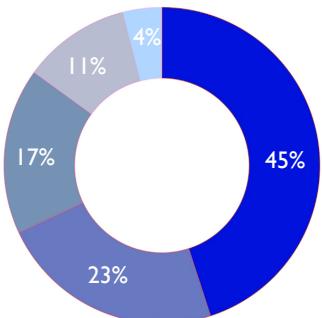


Through our National Bastable-Potts Research Award we continue to support leading investigators finding new treatment options for people living with asthma. The 2016 recipient of the award was Dr. Nair, a McMaster University Professor of Medicine, investigating non-invasive measurements of airway inflammation in the treatment of Severe Asthma. This award is an exciting opportunity for us to encourage real strides towards better treatments and, ultimately, a cure for asthma.

Looking to the future, we believe that building capacity amongst the next generation of asthma researchers is crucial to ensuring continued developments in asthma treatment. To that end, we are expanding our Bastable-Potts and Enhoring Research Funds to start an exciting new initiative which will provide grants to qualified young researchers doing clinical and basic research on asthma. We are very excited about this initiative, which will not only support promising research, but will grow the next generation of Canadian asthma researchers.

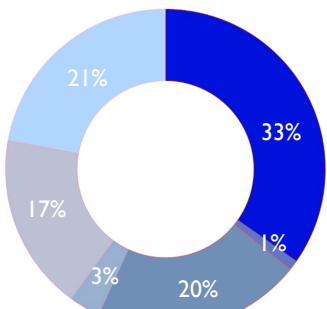
We believe in collaborating with community and corporate partners to work towards better treatment options. In 2016, we worked with Teva Canada in a study of the patterns, causes and effects of eosinophilic asthma to better understand the size and scale of the SA community. We are proud to have been a part of this study, which leads to a better understanding of eosinophils, a biomarker found in the blood and its relation to asthma, which may lead to the development of more personalized treatments.

Your support makes a difference  
**The Numbers**



### Sources of Revenue

- Corporate \$476,102
  - Bequests and Individual \$250,152
  - Foundation \$185,966
  - Asthma & Allergy Friendly Certification Program \$113,502
  - Investment Income \$42,597
- Total: \$1,068,319



### How the Money was Used

- Education, Support, Advocacy & Research \$353,425
  - Asthma & Allergy Friendly Certification Program \$18,238
  - Increase to Enhorning Fund \$212,000
  - Increase to Bastable Potts Fund \$27,000
  - Operations \$188,958
  - Fundraising \$227,602
- Total: \$1,027,223

## **Our Vision**

Our vision is to empower every child and adult with asthma in Canada to live an active and symptom-free life.

We help patients to take control of their symptoms by providing credible and leading edge information and the guidance and education they need to live their lives symptom free.

## **Our Mission**

We are the balanced voice for asthma in Canada, advancing optimal self-management, prevention, research and health care.

We lead and advocate for the best interests of Canadians with asthma through effective collaboration with policy-makers, researchers and health care providers.



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