



2025  
Ontario Branch  
Impact Report



# Improving Lives, Advancing Kidney Health

BOARD OF DIRECTORS

|                                        |                    |                |
|----------------------------------------|--------------------|----------------|
| Mary-Pat Shaw, President               | Alisa Cheddi       | Mark Lambert   |
| Alan Hui, Vice President               | Dr. Varun Dev      | Roger Ma       |
| Dr. Norman Muirhead,<br>Past President | Elizabeth Giacinti | Jim O’Brien    |
| Stephen Getzler, Treasurer             | Ethan Holtzer      | Teresa Roberts |
| Richard Bernreiter                     | Craig Kerr         | Terry Young    |

ONTARIO CHAPTERS

|                           |                                    |                                   |
|---------------------------|------------------------------------|-----------------------------------|
| Brampton                  | Hamilton & Niagara                 | Sarnia-Lambton                    |
| Brant County              | Kingston                           | Sault Ste. Marie                  |
| Central Ontario           | London & District                  | Timmins-Porcupine                 |
| Chinese Renal Association | North Bay                          | Waterloo Wellington<br>& District |
| Durham Region             | Northern Superior<br>(Thunder Bay) | Windsor & District                |
| Eastern Ontario           |                                    |                                   |

Our Mission

The Kidney Foundation of Canada is the leading charity committed to eliminating the burden of kidney disease through:

- **Funding and stimulating** innovative research for better prevention, treatments and a cure;
- **Providing education and support** to prevent kidney disease in those at risk and empower those with kidney disease to optimize their health status;
- **Advocating** for improved access to high quality health care;
- **Increasing** public awareness and commitment to advancing kidney health and organ donation.

Our Vision

**Excellent kidney health, optimal quality of life for those affected by kidney disease, and a cure.**



Message From the President & Executive Director

2025 proved to be another successful year for the Ontario Branch with outstanding results in both fundraising and program delivery.

In addition to growing Peer Support and Emergency Short Term Financial Assistance, our Program’s Team, supported by charitable gaming revenues, opened four food cupboards to assist patients and families with the challenges of increasing food costs. It is particularly important that patients adhere to their renal diets, so the food cupboards are stocked with appropriate options.

As part of its Northern Strategy, the Branch hosted a Northern Voices Roundtable in Thunder Bay bringing together Indigenous Navigators, Tribal Councils, the regional renal program, and community-based Indigenous care providers. There was also representation from allied health organizations supporting diabetes care and mental health.

The Kidney Walk, held in 28 communities across Ontario, broke its own fundraising record by raising over \$1.2 million. Kidney Car had net revenues of over \$2.15 million. Despite the challenges facing the retail sector, Kidney Clothes provided the Foundation with \$819,000 in net revenues. Many thanks to the incredible support of donors and participants in our fundraising activities.

Ontario plays a significant role in supporting the Foundation in many ways as its impact is felt across the country. Our Kidney Car Team provides operational and strategic support to the British Columbia and Atlantic Branch’s car programs. The Branch Programs Team delivers the virtual peer support program across Canada.

Financially, in addition to providing programs and meeting the needs of patients in Ontario, the Branch remitted over \$3.3 million to support National initiatives like research and advocacy.

We remain nimble and agile even in an unpredictable economy. The only way we can achieve success is with our talented and enthusiastic team of employees, supported by thousands of volunteer hours. Volunteers step up every day to support all of our activities. It would be impossible to meet and exceed our objectives without them.

We appreciate the continued support of everyone that contributes to the Foundation’s capacity in delivering on its mission while easing the burden of chronic kidney disease.



*Mary-Pat Shaw*

Mary-Pat Shaw,  
President,  
Ontario Branch



*A. Tirone*

Anthony Tirone,  
Executive Director,  
Ontario Branch

# Patient Impact Highlights



\$426,209

Provided in Financial Assistance



4,282

Participants in Patient Education Events



1,489

People Accessed One-To-One Support



63,695

Patient Handbooks & Brochures Distributed



953

Grants Supported People with Kidney Disease



\$77,289

Funding for Camp



1,779

Accessed Group Support



3,335

Information & Referral Calls



142

Peer Support Volunteers

## A Lifeline Through Connection

A diagnosis of kidney failure can turn life upside down in an instant. For Sarah, the news came with little warning. What she initially dismissed as the flu quickly escalated into something far more serious. A visit to her family physician—and an urgent referral to the hospital—likely saved her life.

Further testing revealed that Sarah had a rare autoimmune disease that was aggressively attacking her kidneys. Her care team began treatment immediately in an effort to preserve her kidney function. When early treatments failed to show results, Sarah prepared herself for the possibility of dialysis. Thankfully, her condition began to improve just in time, allowing her to narrowly avoid it.

While the physical symptoms were one part of the struggle, it was the emotional weight of the diagnosis that proved most overwhelming.



“What truly saved me was finding others who understood and who could provide valuable guidance,” Sarah shared.

Sarah Sipione & Her Family

“The Kidney Foundation’s peer support groups gave me a community when I needed it most. These connections have been transformative. While my family and friends tried their best to understand, there’s something profoundly different about talking with someone who has walked the same path.”

Kidney Connect Peer Support is one of the ways The Kidney Foundation brings Canadians affected by kidney disease together. Through one to one connections, group meetings, and online support, trained peer volunteers help reduce isolation, foster connection, and empower people to manage their kidney health with confidence.

The Kidney Foundation is committed to meeting people where they are on their journey. Group support sessions are enhanced with guest speakers who bring expertise in kidney disease management, offering participants valuable learning opportunities alongside emotional support.

For Sarah, finding a community of support brought renewed hope.

**“The damage to my kidneys won’t heal,” she said, “but The Kidney Foundation helped heal my spirit and inspired me to take an active role in my health.”**

## A Community in Action

Through our network of community chapters, The Kidney Foundation works closely with renal programs, participates in community events, and builds relationships with organizations serving communities at increased risk of developing kidney disease. These partnerships are essential to expanding access to kidney health education and supports where they are needed most.

Collaboration with community health partners created new opportunities to address barriers to care. “For example, access to tools like blood pressure cuffs empowers people to take control of their health and supports earlier intervention,” said Craig Lindsay, Director of Programs & Public Policy for the Ontario Branch. Through our short term financial assistance program, The Foundation provided blood pressure cuffs to community members, supporting early detection, self monitoring, and proactive kidney health management.

In Northern Ontario, we sought feedback from members of the kidney community to better understand the most pressing challenges they face. Food insecurity emerged as a critical concern, leading to the development of a Food Cupboard project across four renal programs. Delivered through the renal programs with direct input and operational support from renal teams, the

project provides patients with access to nutritious food while supporting their overall health and treatment plans. The initiative is funded through our short term financial assistance program and reflects our commitment to community informed solutions.

“We continue to listen and learn from our health care partners about the needs of people affected by kidney disease and work collaboratively to build solutions that respond to those needs,” said Lindsay.

We also expanded our presence at health and wellness events to improve public awareness of kidney disease. Through cooking demonstrations and community-based education, we engaged participants in practical conversations about kidney health, nutrition, and prevention.

**Together, these initiatives demonstrate how strong partnerships—grounded in listening, trust, and shared purpose—enable The Kidney Foundation to deliver meaningful, community driven impact.**

# Investing in Life-Changing Research

Kidney health research has led to improved prevention, early detection, and treatment strategies for kidney disease, ultimately enhancing patient outcomes and quality of life. Donor and grant dollars have significantly contributed to these life-changing improvements.

Thanks to the Generous Support of Donors:

 **\$4.5 M**  
Investment for Research and Innovation in 2025

 **547**  
Researchers Impacted by Grants

 **105**  
Grants Supported

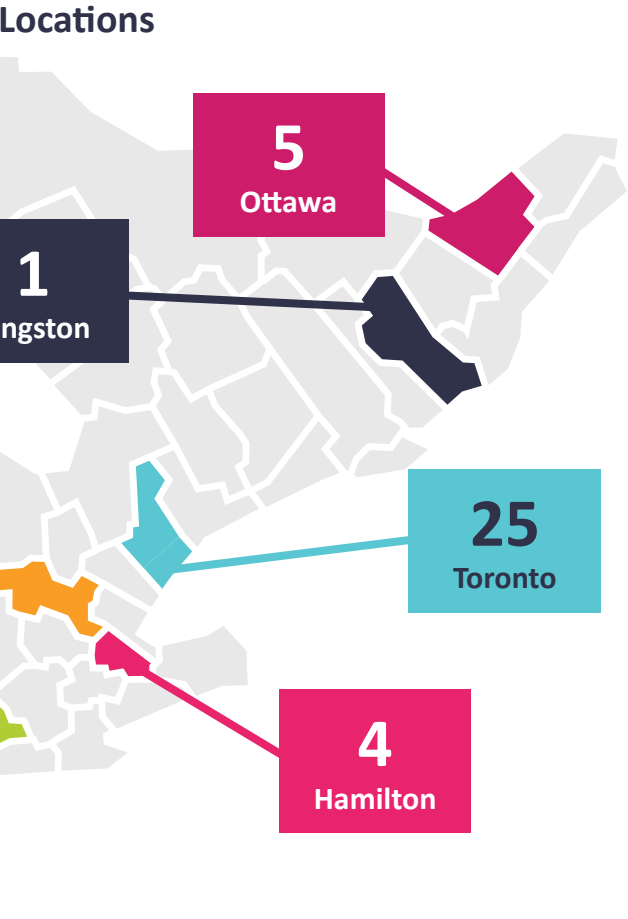
 **33**  
Research Institutions Nation-Wide

 **\$147.7 M**  
Cumulative Investment Since 1964

**2025 Ontario Data:**

 **40**  
Funded Projects in Ontario

 **16**  
Research Institutions - Includes Two Major Partnership Grants with CIHR



# 20 Years of the KRESCENT Program

2025 marked the 20th anniversary of the Kidney Research Scientist Core Education and National Training program (KRESCENT), Canada’s elite kidney health research training program – supporting the next generation of kidney health researchers.

KRESCENT is administered and supported by The Kidney Foundation of Canada, supported by the Canadian Society of Nephrology (CSN), and has most recently been the recipient of support from the Canadian Institutes of Health Research, Institute of Nutrition Metabolism and Diabetes (CIHR-INMD).

The program aims to develop well-rounded, committed, and highly connected kidney health researchers who will help strengthen Canada’s research landscape. KRESCENT has played—and continues to play—a pivotal role in launching trainees’ academic and professional careers by fostering interdisciplinary collaboration, promoting shared learning, and bridging research gaps.

The program offers competitive salary support for post-doctoral fellows, early career researchers, and allied health scholars, alongside robust opportunities for career development, mentorship, and collaborative training.

“Over the past 20 years, the KRESCENT program has fulfilled the vision of its founders by creating not just a unique training program, but also a thriving community of Canadian kidney researchers who are actively advancing the field. As we look ahead, we are committed to ensuring this vital program continues to flourish and evolve.” – Dr. Mathieu Lemaire, current Program Director, KRESCENT

The KRESCENT program continues to create opportunities and transform health research training. Ultimately, leading to more breakthroughs for patients.



The 2025 KRESCENT Cohort



Program Impact Since Inception in 2005

 **87%**  
of Graduates Remain in Kidney Health

 **137**  
Awards Supported

 **103**  
Trainees Supported

 **5800+**  
Research Publications

# Volunteers and Donors Make Our Work Possible

Every year, The Kidney Foundation measures progress not only in programs delivered or people reached, but in the extraordinary generosity that makes that work possible.

Behind every milestone achieved this year stands a community of committed volunteers and donors whose time, talent, and financial support continue to power our mission.

## Volunteers: The Heart of Our Work

Volunteers play an essential role in bringing our programs to life. They show up consistently—often behind the scenes—offering skills, compassion, and lived experience that strengthen every aspect of our work.

Volunteers like Stéphane exemplify the power of giving back. As a living kidney donor to his aunt, Stéphane has a personal understanding of the impact of kidney disease and a strong desire to make a difference. From supporting bingo nights and local events to connecting with organ donors and recipients, his dedication helps advance The Kidney Foundation’s work.

*“For me, volunteering isn’t just about giving back—it’s about making a real difference and building community,”*

Volunteers contributed thousands of hours in service in 2025, enabling us to respond more effectively to community needs.



**Volunteer Impact at a Glance:  
Total Hours Contributed**  
**9900+**



Stéphane Goyer

## Online Engagement Stats



**6500+**  
Newsletter Subscribers



**19,000+**  
Social Media Followers



**\$1.5 M +**  
Legacy & Memorial Donations



**\$22,000 +**  
Secured in  
Community Grants



**\$2.15 M net**  
Kidney Car



**\$18,000 +**  
Raised through Kidney 50/50

## Kidney Clothes



**158**  
Clothing Drives with Schools,  
Sports Teams, Charities  
& Community Partners



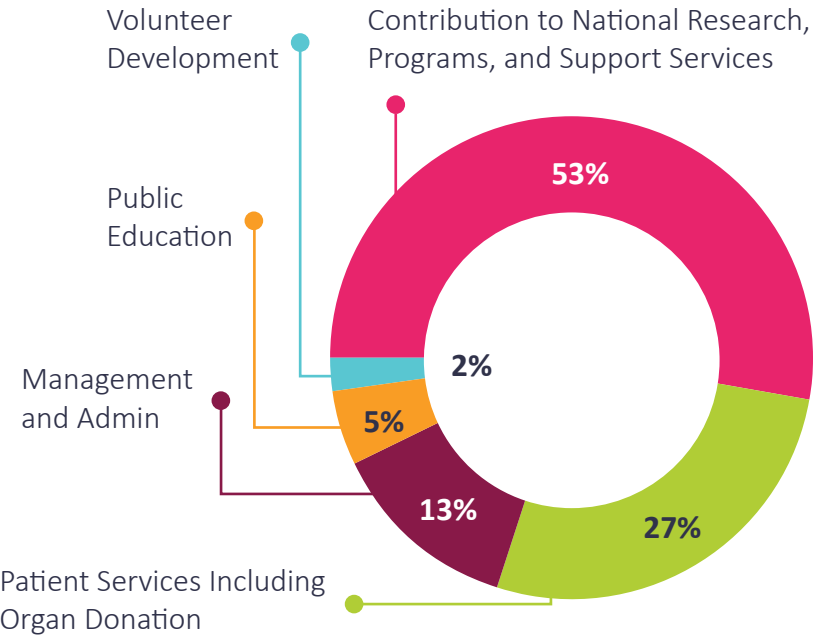
**5.68 M lbs**  
of Soft Goods



**7.2 M lbs**  
of Miscellaneous Goods  
& Books Donated to  
Kidney Clothes

# Donor Impact Highlights

*The Kidney Foundation of Canada’s donors transform compassion into real impact to ensure improved kidney health and greater supports and services for all people impacted by kidney disease.*



## Donors: Investing in Lasting Change

Our donors are more than supporters—they are partners in change. Donor generosity is at the heart of the Foundation’s mission, making it possible to fund critical programs, broaden our impact, and strengthen communities across Ontario. In 2025, donor investments advanced innovative research, expanded programs and

services, and developed essential resources—helping improve the lives of individuals and families affected by kidney disease.

Every contribution—whether a first-time gift or years-long commitment—helped translate vision into action.

# Breaking Down Barriers

The Kidney Foundation of Canada supports people living with kidney failure at all stages of their journey. Our advocacy work is focused on breaking down systemic barriers and improving the quality of life of all Canadians living with and at risk of kidney disease.

We hosted a powerful roundtable discussion in Toronto in the fall of 2025 that brought together government officials, healthcare leaders, and people with lived experience of kidney disease and their care partners. The Ontario-focused dialogue highlighted urgent challenges facing kidney health in the province, while also pointing toward solutions that could transform care and outcomes.



A central theme was the importance of strengthening prevention, early diagnosis, and timely intervention in chronic kidney disease (CKD). With over 1.6 million Ontarians living with kidney disease, earlier intervention is critical to slowing progression and reducing the burden on patients, families, and the healthcare system.

Participants also emphasized the need to address inequities in kidney care, particularly for Indigenous peoples, Black Canadians, and those in rural and remote communities who often face barriers to timely diagnosis and access to specialized and culturally appropriate care.



55+

Touchpoints with Policy Leaders & System Planners



Ensuring culturally safe, accessible, and community informed and driven approaches will be vital in closing these gaps. The roundtable also explored opportunities for integrating CKD diagnosis and management into primary care.

Embedding kidney health within everyday healthcare encounters would ensure that more people are reached earlier and supported more effectively throughout their kidney care journey.

The knowledge and perspectives shared at this roundtable helped inform and support The Kidney Foundation’s National Framework on Chronic Kidney Disease (released on World Kidney Day 2026).

At provincial and local levels, volunteers and employees continue to collaborate and consult with system partners to ensure the voices of those affected by kidney disease are heard. Every one of the thousands of conversations we have every year, in diverse communities, and with those at different stages of kidney disease, informs our outreach to the many levels of care providers, planners, and funders across Ontario.

*Together, we are advancing kidney health in Ontario and across Canada.*

L-R, Dr. Christoph Licht, Dr. Jacqueline Getfield, Dr. Istvan Mucsi, Craig Lindsay and Anthony Tirone.



# Building Connection at the Kidney Walk

The kidney community gathers at the Kidney Walk. The walks are the largest community fundraising event in Canada, with over 28 walk events in Ontario.

Eli Dornor has been participating in the walk and volunteering with The Kidney Foundation for over a decade. He’s continually inspired by the stories and dedication of the many participants he meets each year. “The Kidney Walk fosters an incredible community united in fighting kidney disease. Patients, loved ones, healthcare professionals, researchers—all working toward one goal: raising awareness and resources for kidney health,” said Eli.

The Walk is a fun, family-friendly event – it’s a time when the kidney community gathers. For veteran walkers, it’s a time to re-connect with friends and acquaintances and for new participants, it’s a time to feel welcomed into a community of support and understand they’re not alone.

*Eli draws inspiration from the African proverb: “If you want to go fast, go alone. If you want to go far, go together.”*

*He adds “This perfectly captures the Kidney Walk spirit. While the journey with kidney disease is challenging, there is hope.”*

Matilda and Eli Dornor



## Kidney Walk by the Number



\$1,208,798

Raised



2,156

Participants



12,000 +

Donors



28

Walks in Ontario



247

Walk Champions  
(Participants Raising \$1000 +)



28

Members of  
the Pinnacle Club  
(Those who Raised \$5000 +)

**Congratulations to our Pinnacle Club Members**  
Brenda Maillet, Angeline Jadoonanan, Tanja Viveiros, Todd Brophy, Dianne Yeboah, Ranjeev Sethi, Cathy Pennington, Jason McAdoo, Michelle Morant, Norman Muirhead, Kuldip Singh, Sadia Baig, Uzma Quadri, Anthony Chadala, Mark Lambert, Krista Matthews, Sarah Hobbins, Rhonda Noll, Tracy Patrick, Marlene Smith, Carmen Morris, Goldie Schlanger, Taylor Vanderwey, Melissa MaGee, Amol Kapoor, Meaghan Deslieres, Debbie Timpson





**The Kidney Foundation of Canada,  
Ontario Branch**

201-1599 Hurontario Street  
Mississauga, Ontario L5G 4S1

**kidney.ca**

**ontario@kidney.ca | 1.800.387.4474**

Charitable Registration No. 107567398 RR0001  
The Kidney Foundation of Canada's audited  
financial statements are available online at  
[www.kidney.ca/about-us](http://www.kidney.ca/about-us)

 [facebook.com/kidneyontario](https://facebook.com/kidneyontario)

 [x.com/kidneyontario](https://x.com/kidneyontario)

 [instagram.com/kidneyontario](https://instagram.com/kidneyontario)

 [youtube.com/kidneycanada](https://youtube.com/kidneycanada)

