Celebrating **100% Coverage**

Ontario 211 Services Corporation
ANNUAL REPORT 2011-2012

Collaborating across Ontario
What is 211?

211 is an award winning service providing the most complete directory of 56,000 community and social services in Ontario to help residents find the support they need.

Dial 2-1-1 to reach our helpline
www.211ontario.ca
TTY: 1-888-340-1001

Highly trained specialists answer the 211 helpline who can help in over 150+ languages.

Free | Confidential | Live answer 24/7
From the President

Mission Accomplished!

In February 2012 Ontario 211 celebrated the milestone achievement of bringing its award winning phone helpline to the entire province by December 15, 2011. Thanks go to the hard work of the 211 Operators, the collaboration with United Ways, municipalities and 211 data contributors and the support of our provincial partner, the Ministry of Community and Social Services. In these times of public austerity, we are grateful that our funders and partners recognize the value 211 brings to communities.

People trust the information we provide and callers feel empowered to connect with the services they need. Our Information and Referral Specialists answered just under 575,000 calls, while our website saw a 91% increase in traffic in 2011. Last year our helpline was awarded SQM’s Highest Customer Satisfaction among public sector call centres where 92% of callers were very satisfied with 211 and 94% followed up on the referral 211 had provided. Even more interestingly, 84% of these callers got the help they needed when they followed up.

Digital technology is rapidly increasing the options people and organizations have for finding human service information. The recently released National Report, ‘A Strategic Vision for 211 Canada’, highlights these trends and the opportunities they create to make 211 services and data more dynamic and powerful. We will always have the phone helpline to provide a human voice for people in need. In fact, for complicated calls the helpline is crucial. However, research shows that the top 3 sources people turn to for help are their family/friends, health care providers and the web. Ontario 211’s digital applications enable us to expand the reach and impact of 211 in a very cost effective way.

Technology is changing our expectations. Consumers are increasingly expecting customized and intuitive experiences from their devices. The Canada 3.0 Digital Media Forum has set a “moonshot goal” that anyone in Canada can do anything online by the year 2017. 211 is doing its part to make information and referral and human service data accessible on multiple channels. By envisioning 211’s potential in the digital landscape, we align these powerful forces to enable innovation and collaboration.

This year, in partnership with 211 BC, we set sail on 211’s new Information Management System (IMS) by selecting the vendor, CharityLogic Inc. The new IMS will improve our ability to capture and manage 211 data, create efficiencies and share data with our funders and partners for innovative applications all the while reducing duplication. As part of a broad initiative designed to improve 211 data quality and collection, and create a new relationship with data contributors, we hosted 211 Data Day. The 211 Data Charter, released shortly afterwards, builds on the Data Day theme of “collect once, manage professionally, share openly”, to contribute to Canada’s social infrastructure.

We continue to make progress and investments to ensure 211 is a positive force in a sector impacted by growing fiscal restraint and pressures to demonstrate a return on investment. By connecting people with services and providing data to create new insights regarding those services, we will fulfill 211’s public purpose.

R. Kent Gillespie
President
Board of Directors
From The Executive Director

Ontario is the first province to bring 211 service to every resident. This milestone represents 10 years of collaboration among a diverse array of non-profit organizations, charities, governments, private sector companies, and individuals. Last year alone, 19 community launch events were held to introduce 211 service and to recognize the many contributions that helped make 211 a reality.

The teamwork across Ontario has been exemplary. The 211 Operators group, chaired by Marie-Andrée Carrière, and facilitated by Janine Elias Joukema continued to support the community launches, the data work and keep us accountable to the daily realities of front-line service. At the Provincial Office we worked closely with United Way-Centraide Canada and the 211 Canada Steering Committee to help create a foundation for the new vision for 211. We saw 211 step-up to the plate, following the Goderich Tornado last August to help Huron County through the disaster. For all of us, it was a key learning experience.

To celebrate the completion of our expansion, O211SC ran our first integrated marketing campaign. Destiny Bedwell, Communications and Marketing Coordinator, worked with Pattison Outdoors to develop bus ads, created online ads with Flyerland and Zoomer for the respective websites and a TV commercial which ran on CTV Stations in the province. Each of these companies donated advertising to enhance the promotion of 211. Their generosity and support is greatly appreciated.

Thanks to Kelly Bergeron, Online Initiatives Manager, web traffic nearly doubled. By directing queries and searches to the website, we are better able to control costs and reach people where they are already looking. 211’s social media presence has grown substantially and continues to create opportunities and new relationships with groups like Imagine Canada, CanadaHelps, Platformation and TechSoup Canada.

Laura Leather, Data Quality and Innovations Manager, the newest member of the O211 staff team, hit the ground running with a full plate of projects. Much of Laura’s work has involved refinements to the 211 data standards and processes and implementation of the new 211 Information Management System. Laura works closely with the very dedicated Data Experts Group.

Marta Hajek, Operations Manager, monitors our work plan to keeps everything moving steadily forward. Marta worked closely with United Ways to create a new sectoral funding agreement and with 211 service providers to implement a new cost centre accounting regime. During a time of budgetary restraint, managing our costs is a critical priority.

As he has since our inception Finance and Office Manager, Philip Ferrao, kept our accounting on track and paid the bills. Philip also faced some significant health challenges this past year, and I would be remiss if I didn't acknowledge and thank Barry MacMaster who, without hesitation, stepped in to keep our financial house in order.

We also extend our thanks to the core consultants (Janine, Barry, David Priebe and Roger Maloney) who shared with us their professional expertise and enhanced our outreach to community stakeholders.

This past year we built on the foundations and positioned 211 to evolve into a national system. I would like to thank the Board of Directors, under the leadership of Kent Gillespie, President, for their guidance. Setting the strategic direction, especially as 211 rapidly evolves to a Canada 211, has never been more critical.

Bill Morris
Executive Director
The American poet and activist Robin Morgan building on Sir Francis Bacon’s famous quote “Knowledge is Power” added, “Information is Power” before proceeding to rebuke those who might otherwise hoard it.

Input and discussion for participants at 2011 Data Day lead to the development of the 211 Data Charter for Ontario. It sets out the vision, benefits and guiding principles to create conditions whereby the broader public purpose can realize the advantages of the rich sources of data generated by 211’s business processes in Ontario.

By maximizing access to comprehensive, up-to-date information and data about human services, decision-makers - whether households, communities or governments - can make better decisions about the choices they face. Providing relevant information at the right time allows decision-makers to make informed choices, before problems spiral into crisis.

211’s service records, when combined with demographic information collected from callers, web-users and external sources, such as Statistics Canada, form a unique picture of the supply and demand for human services. By providing open access to this data, Ontario 211 collaborates with the broader public and professional communities to identify successes in the social infrastructure as well as areas needing improvement. By shining a light on the responsiveness, efficiency and effectiveness of provincial human services, accountability for our public resources is dramatically heightened.

Ontario 211 is a public purpose body, which uses public funds to collect, organize and disseminate valuable information about human services.

211’s information is the ultimate public resource. Ontario 211 is a public purpose body, which uses public funds to collect, organize and disseminate valuable information about human services. Governments around the world are embracing open data as a means of increasing transparency and accountability. The Information and Privacy Commissioner of Ontario challenges provincial institutions to follow access by design principles, to reach out proactively and offer information to the public.

Meeting that challenge brings 211 that much closer to realizing its overall mission - to effectively connect people with the appropriate information and services, enhance Canada’s social infrastructure and enable people to fully engage in their communities.

211 data will help form a unique picture of the supply and demand for human services

Social services
211 service records
211 caller needs
Statistics Canada
United Way
Municipal social services
At least one in five Ontario residents - more than 2 million people - experienced a need for human service help in the last 2 years.

Females were 50% more likely than males to seek help.

The type of help Ontario residents looked for:
- Health Services
- Government Services
- Financial and income assistance
- Employment Services
- Mental health and addiction programs

Where do Ontario residents turn for help?
- Family and friends: 27%
- Health care providers: 17%
- Web search engines: 13%

A quarter of people surveyed in Ontario did not know where to look for home care for an elderly parent.

Why people called 211 in 2011
- 574,987 calls (includes emails and TTY)
- 119,554 calls for Health Services
- 75,107 calls for Income and Financial Assistance
- 52,611 calls for Housing Help
- 44,445 calls for Food & Meals
- 39,488 calls for Legal and Public Safety Information

Calls increased by 49,942, a 3% increase since 2010/2011

Transportation calls increased 2%
Celebrating 100% Coverage

Social Media
- Twitter: 128,967 followers
- Facebook: 6,687,663 pageviews
- YouTube: 1928 followers, 1308 likes, 4638 views

Caller Satisfaction
- Results from SQM caller satisfaction survey
  - 94% of callers followed up with the referral 211 provided
  - 84% of these callers got the help they needed
  - 30% of calls were complicated calls
  - 17% would tell 10 or more people
  - 80% of callers were female

Who calls 211?

Age of person needing assistance:
- 6 years or under: 13%
- 7 to 12 years: 22%
- 13 to 21 years: 33%
- 22 to 35 years: 0%
- 36 to 54 years: 4%
- 55 years or older: 2%
- Refused/Don't know: 3%

Income of person needing assistance:
- Welfare/Social assistance: 13%
- Pension: 19%
- Don't know: 3%
- Refused: 3%
- Other: 14%
- Self-employed: 3%
- Old Age Security: 2%
- Employment Insurance: 7%
- Part Time: 4%
- Ontario Disability Support Program: 17%
- Full Time: 13%

2011 calls by 211 Operator Regions:
- Northern Ontario: 9%
- Central East Ontario: 11%
- Halton Region: 1%
- Central South Ontario: 12%
- South West Ontario: 5%
- Central Region: 9%
- Dufferin Peel: 50%

Who calls 211?
- Income of person needing assistance:
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Ontario 211 is First to Achieve Province-wide Reach

On “211 Day”, February 15, 2011, Ontario 211 celebrated the extension of its telephone helpline to the four corners of the Province. From Windsor to Winisk and Cornwall to Kenora, Ontarians can phone 211, night and day, and get the help they need in more than 150 languages.

From left to right: Bill Morris, Executive Director, Ontario 211 Services Corporation, Bas Balkissoon, Parliamentary Assistance, Minister of Community and Social Services; Kent Gillespie, President, Board of Directors, Ontario 211 Services Corporation; Tammy Holland, Chair, 211 Canada Steering Committee; John Kwekkeboom, Director, Board of Directors, Ontario 211 Services Corporation and Master of Ceremonies.
In 2010, the Urban Commissioners Advisory Committee was formed to advise Ontario 211 on how Service Managers and District Social Service Administration Boards (DSSAB) can best support 211.

Human Services Commissioners Janet Menard (Peel), Michael Schuster (Waterloo) and Chris Brillinger (Toronto) were joined by David Landers, CAO of the Cochrane DSSAB and Vice Chair of Ontario Municipal Social Service Association (OMSSA), as well as four 211 call centre providers from Peel, Halton, Niagara and Windsor to meet and discuss the role of municipalities.

The Advisory Committee 2011 Report identified the key benefits of 211 for local communities:

- Helping people navigate the services they need allows for problems to be addressed earlier and more simply,
- Providing a picture of the supply and demand for human services can lead to increased effectiveness and efficiency in delivery,
- 211’s role in emergencies and disasters allows emergency responders to focus on core public health and safety.

The Advisory Committee concluded that the funding model and process must be simple, stable, efficient, transparent and equitable. They confirmed that the municipal contribution towards funding - 20% of the total cost of 211 - should be proportional to the population served by each municipality, and that an initial funding agreement would be in effect for 5 years. The Committee concluded that the most efficient means for realizing this funding was for the provincial government to increase its share through an allocation on behalf of municipalities, as part of overall cost of human service program uploads.

The report from the Advisory Committee was an important step towards establishing a sustainable funding framework for Ontario 211, as it reinforces similar recommendations made by Ontario United Ways earlier in 2010.
On August 21, 2011, a tornado ripped through Goderich uprooting trees and damaging much of its historic downtown. One person was killed and 125 people were injured. Huron County officials declared a State of Emergency, calling on 211’s Central East Region for assistance. 211 handled the calls for information from residents and organized the growing number of offers from volunteers and donors.

While first responders focused on immediate risks to public health and safety, 211 helped in the broader community, by coordinating over 1,200 offers from potential volunteers and donors.

The important function of “generosity management” is not well understood. Simply stated, when disaster strikes, well-meaning citizens often show up at the scene, offering their services or bringing with them collections of food, clothing, toys, etc. The need to manage the volunteers and offers of assistance can become a distraction for first responders. Sometimes what’s offered doesn’t match actual need, or donations overwhelm the capacity to distribute. After the Slave Lake fires, many donated items, such as bedding, clothing, etc. ended up being disposed in landfills. By directing offers of goods, services and money to 211, a systematized list of contributions was compared to fill the needs as they developed. In the case of Goderich, the need was less immediate for clothing, food and shelter, than it was for help to clear the debris.

“211’s help was essential in the tornado’s aftermath,” said Michelle Gaynor, a manager at Huron County.

“We believe it prevented many people with good intentions from coming to Goderich where they would have been more of a hindrance to emergency responders in the early stages.” In the weeks that followed, 211 called upon almost 250 persons, who had volunteered their help to assist.

Author, Margaret Atwood tweeted to her audience of 250,000 that they should be contacting 211.

Ontario 211 staff supplemented the phone communication on social media to pass on authoritative information received from local officials. Over the six weeks following the disaster, over 150,000 persons visited the Goderich Tornado Facebook page. Author, Margaret Atwood tweeted to her audience of 250,000 that they should be contacting 211.

211’s disaster recovery role is like insurance: you hope you never need it but are glad you have it when the unexpected strikes.
Improving Provincial Services for Vulnerable Ontarians

Low-income families and individuals have always been an important focus for 211’s information service. Now, 211 is moving forward with new initiatives for service delivery.

Last year, families in the Grey-Bruce area, who faced threats of having their utilities disconnected had to face those difficulties alone. This year, they were able to turn to 211 and learn about the Winter Warmth Program, which provides one-time assistance for low-income families and individuals living below the poverty line.

211 advises families on their eligibility, assist in completing a preliminary application for financial assistance, and facilitates any necessary documentation required by the utility company.

“A utility-related crisis demands a speedy response. Turning off a utility could mean health problems or even homelessness. By speeding up emergency assistance, we can nip more serious problems in the bud. It just made so much sense,” said Francesca Dobbyn, Executive Director (United Way of Bruce Grey). “Utility companies are ill-prepared to take on this role. The multiple utility companies that service the area add even more to the confusion. By handling all these situations through 211, we reduce delays and get help directly to the client.”

211 can also increase the efficiency of non-emergency services.

- In the Collingwood area, the Community Christmas Cheer Organization decided to make it easier for families in need to register for a holiday hamper. 211 also registered volunteers and donors wanting to make contributions.

- In Ottawa, The Christmas Exchange asks applicants to call 211 to register. Last year, more than 10,000 households received assistance from the program, among them nearly 3,000 senior citizens. As well, more than 12,000 children were referred to The Christmas Exchange’s Toy Centre.

“Building partnerships with community organizations is part of what we do. What we bring to the table are the efficiencies from information and communications technology that are unaffordable by individual service agencies,” Pamela Hillier said.

“This is a very interesting time for 211 and the human services sector. Now that 211 is available across Ontario, we can kick-start innovations in the human services sector,” said Bill Morris, Executive Director of Ontario 211 Services Corporation. “211 offers a textbook example of how leveraging modern technology and the community’s capacity to improve service delivery and build a more caring and resilient Ontario.”
The most frequently asked 211 question in Ontario deals with health information. 211 works with local communities to ensure the right information is available when residents need it.

In South West Ontario, for example, 211 is an integral part of a Heat Alert Program developed by the City of Windsor and neighbouring County of Essex.

Windsor, Canada’s southernmost city boasts mild winters as well as the longest growing season in the nation. The downside? It also has the highest number of days per year in Canada when the temperature crosses the 30°C threshold. High heat, combined with humidity and cross-border pollution, creates a potent mix than can result in major respiratory distress.

Those at greatest risk include children, the elderly and persons with impaired lung functionality. Even healthy workers and athletes engaging in energetic outdoor activities need to heed the warnings.

The response? The City and County joined forces to create “Stay Cool”, a heat alert service as part of their Community Emergency Response Plan. When the humidex readings exceed 40°C, the Medical Officer of Health issues a Heat Alert, advising residents to take precautions and to call 211 for more information.

In the summer of 2011, the Windsor area experienced 10 Heat Alerts. Four of these were more serious Level 2 Alerts, spanning 13 days of prolonged heat waves or humidex readings above 45°C.

211’s telephone channel provided tips about the importance of hydration and directed residents to cooling centres, open swimming pools and other means of escaping the heat. In addition, 211 South West Region provided information about community resources and directed residents to the Stay Cool website (www.staycoolwindsor-essex.com) which received just under 7,000 pageviews from 3,248 visitors.

The “Stay Cool” program reached residents through a targeted communications effort, using bus ads, pool banners, restaurant placemats, fridge magnets and water bottles, asking people to call 211 for help in beating the heat.

"By providing residents with the right information on how to keep cool,” says Jennifer Tanner, Manager, 211 South West Region, “we cut down on expensive and time-consuming hospital visits by our children, the elderly and those with chronic illnesses. With one summer season behind us, we know that 211 helps to keep people healthy.”
# 2011-2012 Financial Statement

Ontario 211 Services Corporation

### Revenues

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<tr>
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<th>2012</th>
<th>2011</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Province of Ontario (MCSS)</td>
<td>5,092,915</td>
<td>3,992,547</td>
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<tr>
<td>Interest</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>105</td>
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<tr>
<td>Amortization of deferred contributions</td>
<td>29,084</td>
<td>30,958</td>
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<td><strong>Total Revenues</strong></td>
<td><strong>5,122,003</strong></td>
<td><strong>4,023,610</strong></td>
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### Expenses

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>2012</th>
<th>2011</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Administrative &amp; Office Expenses</td>
<td>188,179</td>
<td>154,178</td>
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<tr>
<td>Service Delivery</td>
<td>2,759,895</td>
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<td>Governance</td>
<td>141,042</td>
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<td>Marketing</td>
<td>429,225</td>
<td>183,164</td>
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<td>Expansion Planning</td>
<td>250,000</td>
<td>602,650</td>
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<td>Stabilization</td>
<td>158,987</td>
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<td>Mobilization</td>
<td>244,400</td>
<td>202,500</td>
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<td>System Development</td>
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<td>Service Expansion</td>
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<td>19,921</td>
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<td>Salaries &amp; Benefits</td>
<td>535,716</td>
<td>465,080</td>
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<td>GST</td>
<td>59,381</td>
<td>38,557</td>
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<td>Municipal Taxes</td>
<td>7,049</td>
<td>6,874</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Amortization</td>
<td>29,084</td>
<td>30,958</td>
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<td><strong>Total Expenses</strong></td>
<td><strong>5,010,400</strong></td>
<td><strong>3,962,235</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### Surplus Before Surplus Repayment

- 111,603
- 61,375

Provision for surplus repayment to MCSS

- 111,603
- 61,375

Prior year’s subsidy adjustment

- 6,848
- 0

**Net Income and Accumulated Surplus**

- 6,848
- 0

*Note:

Extracted from Audited Statements.
Copies of Audited Statements are available from the Executive Director upon request.
2011-2012 Board of Directors

President
R. Kent Gillespie, Mississauga

Vice-President
Jim Alexander, Kanata

Vice-President
Mary Wilson Trider, Almonte

Directors
Michael Belliveau, Thunder Bay
Evelyn Brown, Bracebridge

Winnie Chant, Leamington
David Honderich, Toronto
Jocelyne St Jean, Orleans
John Kwekkeboom, Welland

Governance & Nominations
Committee
Evelyn Brown (Chair)
David Honderich
Winnie Chant
Jocelyne St Jean
Jim Alexander

Audit Committee
Mary Wilson Trider (Chair)
Jocelyne St Jean
John Kwekkeboom
Mike Belliveau

Ontario 211 Operators

Central Region
Val McGee (Executive Director, Acting)
Findhelp Information Services

Central South Region
Rosanna Thoms
Information Niagara

Central East Region
Pam Hillier
Community Connection

Dufferin-Peel Region
Carroll Francis
Regional Municipality of Peel

Halton Region
Kate Johnston
Regional Municipality of Halton

Eastern Region
Marie-Andrée Carrière/Karen Milligan
Community Information Centre of Ottawa

Northern Region
Marie Klassen
Lakehead Social Planning Council

South West Region
Jennifer Tanner
City of Windsor

Ontario 211 Services Corporation Staff

Bill Morris
Executive Director

Philip Ferrao
Finance and Office Manager

Marta C. Hajek
Operations Manager

Laura Leather
Data Quality & Innovations Manager

Kelly Bergeron
Online Initiatives Manager

Destiny Bedwell
Communications and Marketing Coordinator

Lily Hoang
Data Initiatives Assistant

Date Expert Leads 2011-2012
John Allec, 211 Central
Helen Andrews, 211 Halton
Lilian Boote, 211 Central East
Julia Brackenbury, 211 Central
Rebecca Cowell, 211 Dufferin-Peel

Michel Fournier, 211 Eastern
Corinne Gallois, 211 Central
Michael Hodgins, 211 Halton
Sarah Owens, 211 Central East
Laura Smith, 211 Central South
Kristen Tomcko, 211 Northern
Leslie Russell, 211 Central South