



ANNUAL REPORT 2017/2018

Who We Are

OUR MOTTO Connecting People to Possibilities

OUR MISSION To build community capacity in west Toronto by helping individuals and families achieve their full potential.

OUR VISION To ensure our collaborative efforts result in socially integrated and empowered individuals, families and communities.



Goals for Fiscal 2018/19

- Lead by example as a strong and active United Way anchor agency that is committed to helping women and children with domestic abuse issues and reduce poverty in our community
- Continue to address other social issues such educating youth on healthy relationships, helping newcomers and removing seniors out the destructive cycle of loneliness and isolation
- Continue to evolve as an organization to match the needs of our clients and provide the appropriate services where the requirements are the greatest. We will grow and prosper by telling compelling stories and sharing the positive impact our work makes in the community

What We Do

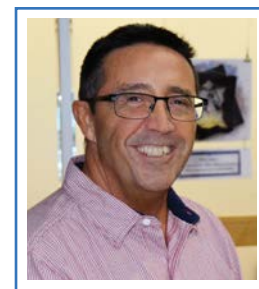
Abrigo By The Numbers (Fiscal 2017/18)

6,680	Total number of clients served (includes school outreach)
3,642	Number of clients served by the Community Development and Integration Program (CDIP)
3,717	Number of new, first-time clients to Abrigo
1,571	Number of clients served by the Youth Outreach program
785	Number of clients served by the Violence Against Women program
620	Number of clients served by the Partner Assault Response (PAR) program
185	Number of clients served by the Life and Hope Seniors group
110	Number of volunteers donating their time to Abrigo
15,630	Number of hours donated by Abrigo's volunteers



HUMBERTO CAROLO
Board Chair

A Message from the Board Chair and Executive Director



ED GRAÇA
Executive Director

For the last 28 years, Abrigo has been a safe place and reliable resource for women experiencing domestic abuse in the Davenport community and west Toronto. Every day we build on the legacy of our founders with improved programming and expanding services. Fiscal year 2017/18 saw significant growth in our ability to provide services to all our clients with the construction and installation of a new elevator in our building.

The addition of an elevator is important because of our growing Life and Hope seniors group whose ranks have now increased past 185 clients. With their programming occurring on the second floor, it was essential to make our building fully accessible so that all clients, regardless of any mobility issue, could attend and enjoy each day. Construction took place over the summer and early fall of 2017 and the grand opening held on November 30, 2017.

Abrigo's new elevator would not have been a possibility without the generous financial support of LiUNA Local 183, the Ontario Trillium Foundation and GJF Realty Management Inc., our building's property owner. We were delighted to dedicate the elevator in honour of the membership of LiUNA Local 183.

There were a number of other successes throughout the year including record setting revenue and attendees at our signature fundraising event the Imagine the Possibilities Gala. The creation of three impactful public service announcement videos on elder abuse brought an overlooked issue to the forefront. Generous third party gifts from groups like the Portuguese Canadian Walk of Fame Committee, Lusogolf Fundraising Inc., CHUM Charitable Foundation, York Lions Club and others demonstrated that Abrigo's work in our community is meaningful, respected and far-reaching.

It is our pleasure to present to you on behalf of the Abrigo Centre's Board of Directors and staff, our agency's 2017/18 Annual Report. In this issue, you'll read about our clients, our counsellors and our donors. They are stories of courage, compassion and generosity.

Abrigo connects people to possibilities and each day we are building an engaged community one step at a time. Thank you again for your ongoing support.



Building Individual Growth

Abrigo Centre's Programs and Services make a positive impact on thousands of clients each year.

YOUTH OUTREACH AND COUNSELLING

Abrigo's Youth Services program provides individual, supportive counselling for youth between the ages of 12 and 29. Trained staff members offer crisis intervention and one-on-one counselling. Counsellors work with clients to improve awareness regarding issues related to mental health, substance abuse, inter-personal violence, and healthy relationships. They will also develop safety plans for clients if needed. Referrals are made to other agencies as required for specialized issues.

Our Youth Outreach team works in various high schools, facilitating workshops on healthy relationships. They travel directly into the classroom to speak about topics that are relevant to today's student. The Outreach team discusses topics such as cyber bullying, self-esteem, conflict resolution, stress and body image with students. Each workshop is customized to be age and delivery setting appropriate (i.e., classroom vs. auditorium).

Youth counsellors also present in the community at wellness symposiums, mental health and addiction awareness events, school parent nights and violence against women prevention programs. In fiscal 2017/18, our dedicated Youth Outreach workers made an impact on the lives of approximately 1,571 young people.



VIOLENCE AGAINST WOMEN (VAW)

Were you aware that each woman who comes to the Abrigo Centre for the first time is screened for signs of domestic violence by one of our specially trained counsellors? If you said no, you are not alone. Most women experiencing it themselves do not realize it is part of a process.

Most women visiting Abrigo for the first time are not there to talk about abuse. Very often, it is something else such as their child doing poorly in school, there's a question about a government form or financial concerns. When our counsellors slowly begin a dialogue, sometimes information is revealed that may indicate physical, emotional or financial abuse.

Abrigo serves approximately 775 VAW clients each year. This figure has remained relatively the same over the last few years. This issue is not immediately going away in our community and society in general. The #MeToo movement exposed the problem more widely than ever before and women are speaking up. Despite all the good work done around this issue, abuse does happen. It is important for women to know that Abrigo is always available with open arms to welcome and support victims and survivors in need.

Brick by Brick: Rebuilding a Family

As a social worker in Brazil, Mirelly G. knew all the signs of emotional, financial or physical abuse. Like other countries around the world, a woman living with domestic violence was not unheard of in her homeland.

Yet, for whatever reason, Mirelly failed to see the signs in her own marriage. She saw herself as a strong woman, not a victim. Thinking back, the controlling behaviour, verbal attacks and promises to be better started on the honeymoon.

"I never pictured myself in the cycle of abuse. The manipulation was there, but I did not realize it. I always thought things would be alright," she says.

After coming to Canada, the first three months with her husband and two pre-teen children were positive. The promise of a better life seemed to be taking hold. Soon after, her husband wanted to return to Brazil. He was the only one.

He started drinking heavily and talking negatively to the children about their mother. "He promised that he would change once we got back to Brazil. He said that if we all went back, we could be happy again,"

One verbal confrontation at 3:00 a.m. resulted in a concerned neighbour calling the police. Mirelly was thankful because people generally do not call the police in Brazil. The thought is no one wants to "stick a spoon" in a relationship. The result of that inactivity is often deadly.

The attending officers found the home in shambles, beer bottles everywhere. The verbal abuse continued and the police were concerned for Mirelly and the children's safety. Before they left, an officer gave Mirelly Abrigo's telephone number. "I would have never reached out for help if it wasn't for him," she said.

A call to the agency brought Mirelly face-to-face with Abrigo counsellor Maggie Batista. "I am forever grateful for the time Maggie spent with me. First, she



was always straight with me. Whatever I was thinking, she was encouraging. My experience was stressful but Maggie got me to relax, she did everything for me."

After a difficult period of transition in their relationship, Mirelly's husband eventually moved back to Brazil. Even though he would be thousands of miles away, he departed with threats and a promise to make her life difficult financially and emotionally through social media.

After this dark, two-year period, hope is now on the horizon. Abrigo referred Mirelly to the FCJ Refugee Centre where they helped her with an application for citizenship. She was delighted to learn that it was just accepted

With a strong support group around her – friends, neighbours and clergy – the future is bright for Mirelly. "What I want is to pay my taxes, pay my bills, feed my kids and enjoy life with my children who have a great future now. And I want to see my kids be proud of their mom."

We think they already are.

Drafting a Plan For a Brighter Future

Watching almost everything in your life that you deeply care about crumble away is difficult for anyone. Having to do it through a lens 8,000 kilometres away was almost too much to bear for Francisco Goldstein.

In a short period back home in Brazil, his father was involved in a car accident leaving him hospitalized in serious condition. Francisco's beloved grandmother who helped raise him passed away and the young, vibrant mother of his teenage son died unexpectedly of a heart attack in the boy's arms. The pain he felt was overwhelming. His inability to return home to hold and comfort his son only multiplied his sorrow.

In addition, a Canadian immigration lawyer who he paid more than \$27,000 to help him gain Canadian citizenship disappeared without providing the services promised. Later, an application for citizenship he submitted was denied.

"Depression set in at that point, a very, very deep depression," says Francisco. Despite having a supportive wife here in Canada, he turned to alcohol. Drinking a bottle of Jack Daniels daily for a year and a half became the answer to numb his feelings. "It became the escape from my problems."

A friend of his wife suggested that Francisco visit the Abrigo Centre. "From the first day I walked through Abrigo's doors, I found the support I needed," says Francisco. "My counsellor, Marta Santos, has been very helpful. I was lost. She provided the tools I needed to help with my addiction."

"She gave me choices and we used diagrams to map out a plan. Marta did a good job. But it's on me to get better. I didn't want to hurt the people in my life anymore. You have to want to help yourself."

BMX bike racing was a big part of Francisco's life back home in Brazil. He was a champion rider and realized that this important part of his life was missing in Canada. He asked a family member for money to purchase a new bike. They sent \$2,000 to him.

"Suddenly I was facing a dilemma. Should I use the money to purchase the bike or should I use it on alcohol? I bought the bike and have been sober for a long time – many months now."



The Abrigo Centre has an excellent partnership with the Portuguese Mental Health Clinic at Toronto Western Hospital. Francisco was referred to that specialized group for additional counselling for his depression. "Just talking to someone on a regular basis can be a big help," he says.

Another referral to the FCJ Refugee Centre gave Francisco a second opportunity to apply for Canadian citizenship on humanitarian grounds. He was kidnapped in Brazil three times for ransom money prior to coming to Canada. Although the process was long and stressful, he was eventually successful.

Francisco grew up and was an aerospace engineer in Sao Paulo before coming to Canada in 2010. It's still his vision to work for a company like Bombardier. "Don't give up on your dreams. At my immigration hearing, I was ready to get on that plane and head home. Now, I have the rest of my life ahead of me here in Canada."

Sewing a Tapestry of Life

Each workday morning for 38 years, Irene Graça headed off to a job she loved. Canada Goose Inc., the maker today of high-end winter coats, hired her just four days after arriving in Canada from Portugal in 1974.

For many years, her hands skillfully guided small needles and fine thread to create superbly crafted buttonholes and attach stylish straps to coats. Like many others who arrived new to Canada in the '70s, her hands were her livelihood.

Irene's public transit ride home one evening in late 2011 was like most others before it. The bus was crowded, all the seats occupied and the only remaining option was to stand. She held on to a vertical pole that graciously offered some stability. A sudden and unexpected hard stop shattered each rider's mundane commute. A bolt of energy whipped Irene and others forward. She lost her grip and her right arm and shoulder violently hit the bus floor. She woke up the next morning sore, but had the sense that things would eventually be fine. Things soon however got worse. That bus ride changed her life and started her journey to the Abrigo Centre.

After months of pain, discomfort and numbing in her hand, and multiple trips to medical professionals, an ultrasound finally revealed that Irene had torn muscles in her shoulder and arm. The dexterity and flexibility in her fingers was gone. A return to her job was painful and eventually impossible. "My hand was never the same," she said. Surgery and months of physiotherapy soon followed.

During a discussion with Service Canada about a Canada Pension Plan disability claim, an employee recommended that Irene speak to someone from the Abrigo Centre for further assistance.

She made a trip to Abrigo and counsellor Valeria Sales helped Irene fill out the required forms. After failing to gain approval the first time, Valeria tried again with a revised request and a few months later, in early 2013, Service Canada approved her application and granted Irene retroactive payment as well.



Irene has nothing but high praise for the Abrigo staff. "Valeria is a very smart lady. She works with so many people yet she remembers your issues and concerns. She has helped me so much. I know she tries her best for everyone. All the employees are special in my eyes."

Since that time, Irene and her husband have used the services of Abrigo's Community Development and Integration program regularly. Each year they are participants in the agency's free Income Tax clinic. This fiscal year Abrigo filed more than 1,100 tax returns at no charge on behalf of its clients.

The grandmother of two pre-teens also turned 65 since first visiting Abrigo and the agency has assisted with her Old Age Pension forms and her application for Permanent Residence.

"Abrigo is a great place that helps people in the community and not just the Portuguese community. Abrigo is there to help everyone," says Irene. "I've made the recommendation to so many people to go to Abrigo for help. If you are unsure about things like government forms, they will give you the correct information and today, that is so important."

Our Board and Staff

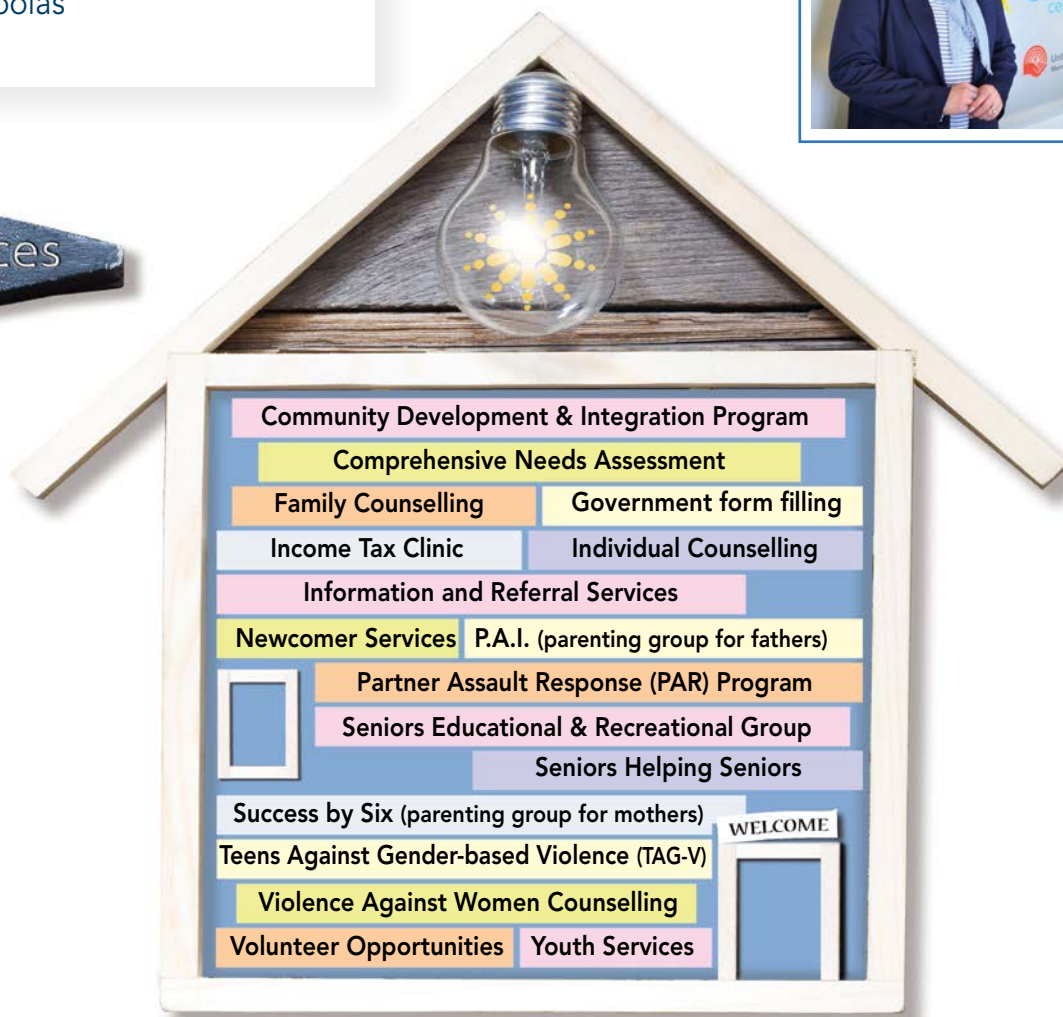
MEMBERSHIP OF ABRIGO'S BOARD OF DIRECTORS

April 1, 2017 to March 31, 2018

Claire de Oliveira
Diana Da Silva
Humberto Carolo, Chair
Ilda Januario
Lisa Melo, Vice Chair
Matthew Correia
Patricia Harper
Paula Medeiros
Paula Oliveira
Ruth Fernandes
Sandra Gamboias

Abrigo Staff Members

Ana Machado
Ana Marques
Anderson Salvador
Ashley de Souza Bannon
Cidalia Pereira
Diana da Costa Correia
Ed Graça, Executive Director
Gerry Luciano
Hugo Mestre
Liliana da Cunha
Luciana Pache de Faria
Maggie Batista
Marilia Dos Santos
Marisa Gomes Marques
Marta Santos
Rosane Fernandes
Teresa Emmanuel
Valeria Sales



Abrigo Volunteers:

Engaged, Caring and Committed

Whether it is the annual gala, tax clinic, the Seniors Helping Seniors program or cooking and organizing activities three days a week with our Life and Hope seniors group, volunteers play an incredibly important role in the life and work of the Abrigo Centre. Each year these dedicated women, men and youth provide valuable hours of service assisting with the delivery of important programming to a growing client base.

Abrigo volunteers are enthusiastic, tireless and committed to the agency. In fiscal 2017/18, a total of 110 devoted volunteers cumulatively provided 15,630 hours of service to our clients and the community. Thank you to all the volunteers listed below for providing your time, energy and passion to improve the lives of individuals who turned to Abrigo for assistance.

Alezandra Alexandria
Alice Ferreira
Allyson Andrade
Almerinda Amaral
Amanda Rozati
Amelia Claro
Amelia Moreira
Ana Rodrigues
Angela Kanayana Hira
Angelina Lisboa
Anna Gomes
Anthony Harker
Aparicio Rodrigues
Brianna Franco
Candida Rodrigues
Carolina Cruz de Silva
Chantelle Henriques
Charlie Botterell
Clementina Santos
Cristiane Cunha
Daniella Mello
Delminda Pereira
Dimas Aloisio
Dina Guarda
Donzilia Veiga
Eduardo Sola
Elisabete Dias
Emilia Camara
Emma DeBono
Enir Bassani
Fatima Louro
Fernanda Couto
Filomena Parreirinha
Francisco Leite

Gabriela De Sousa
Georvina Gomes
Isabel Mateus
Isabel Pereira
Jacob Buchan
Joana Nunes
Joao Almeida
Joaquina Soares
Joey Lisser
Jorge Palhão
Julieta da Cunha
Karina Jacinto
Karina Santos
Kelsey Brasil
Kieran Tisdall
Larissa Rangel
Laura Galeazza
Leonilde Marques
Ligia Sardo
Lisete Ribeiro

Lisiana Vilhalba Prestes
Lucas Livingston
Lucy Carvalho
Magda Nunes
Margaret Murphy
Margarida Pedro
Maria Alice Brites
Maria Almeida
Maria de Fatima Silva
Maria de Jesus Machado
Maria de Lourdes Jesus
Maria do Carmo Carvalho
Maria do Carmo Freitas
Maria Luisa Campos
Maria Machado
Maria Medeiros
Maria Teresa Moura
Maria Silva
Marlucy Silva
Mason DiPierdomenico

Max Jacobs
Michael Keene
M. Zelia Tavares
Nayara Ferrari
Norma Machado
Otilia Leite
Paula Carvalho
Paulo Luis
Priscilla Campos
Priscilla Correa
Roberta Taingo
Rosalia Silva
Seb Atkinson
Sergio Sarmiento Dias
Sharon Weisbaum
Tatiana Goncalves Santos
Urania Silveira
Veronica Einsfeld
Vilmara Lucas



Thank You to our Donors!

Abrigo Centre acknowledges the generous financial support received from our funding partners, corporate donors, community groups, and individuals. Their commitment allows our agency to deliver outstanding programs and services to thousands of individuals and families each year.

FUNDING PARTNERS

Ontario Ministry of Community and Social Services
United Way Greater Toronto
Ontario Ministry of Attorney General
City of Toronto
Ontario Ministry of Children and Youth Services

Catholic Children's Aid Society of Toronto
University Health Network
Ontario Seniors Secretariat
Ontario Ministry of Citizenship and Immigration
Região Autonoma Dos Açores
Service Canada

CORPORATE AND COMMUNITY PARTNERS

17 Designs
Alliance of Portuguese Clubs and Associations of Ontario
Azores Airlines
BMO - Bank of Montreal
BPA Financial Group
Canadian Council of Construction Unions
CHUM Charitable Foundation
Dixon, Gordon & Co. LLP
Dr. Bazydlo Dentistry Professional Corporation
Enterprise Holdings Foundation
Ferreira and Koach
Fidelity Investments Canada ULC
Fix It Windows and Doors
Flor de Sal Restaurant
G.J.F. Realty Management Inc.
IC Savings

Joe's No Frills Dufferin Mall
Lancaster Homes
LiUNA Local 183
LiUNA Ontario Provincial District Council
Lusogolf Fundraising Inc.
Mackenzie Financial Corporation
Maple Leaf Sports & Entertainment
MarinaSol Travel & Consultants
Maypex Investments Limited
Portuguese Canadian Walk of Fame
Royal LePage Supreme Realty
Sentry Investments Corp.
St. Clair Simply Pharmacy / Shoppers
Drug Mart Life Foundation
Teixeira Accounting Firm
Viana Roofing & Sheet Metal
Woodbine Entertainment Group
York Lions Club



INDIVIDUALS

Ana Machado
Ana Marcos
Ana Marques
Ana Paula Lopes
Antonio Azevedo
Antonio Carneiro Cunha
Aristides Miguel
Arnold Santos
Carla Sousa Hodgett
Cidalia Pereira
Claire de Oliveira
Diana da Costa Correia
Domingos Antunes
Donzilia Veiga
Ed Graça
Emanuel De Melo
Etelvina Francisco
Fabien Panzarella
Fr. Fernando Couto
Fernando Nunes
Filomena Silveira

Francisco Leite
Francisco Varela
Gerald Luciano
Gisel Bettencourt
Humberto Carolo
Ilda Junuario
Irene Regalado Graça
Iria Barcelos
Janis Alton
Jay Matthew Correia
Jose DeMelo
Jose Louis Pacheco
Jose Manuel Simões
Jose Silva
Jose Tavares
Jose V. Silveira
Judith Da Silva
Dr. Kate Bazydlo
Lee-Anne Stevenson
Lisa Melo
Luciana Pache de Faria

Luis A. Pontes
M. Conceição Silva
M. Jose Tavares
Manuela Marujo
Margarida Pedro
Maria Camacho
Maria Candida Rodrigues
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Maria Conceição Fernandes
Maria Cristina Alves
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Maria Madalena Pontes
Maria Odete Cerqueira
Maria Teresa Gouveia
Marisa Gomes Marques
Mary-Lou Dejesus
Matthew Graça
Melissa Diogo
Michael Borrelli
Miguel Mendes

Mike Di Bari
Ofelia Isabel
Patricia Harper
Paul Azevedo
Paula De Jesus
Paula Maria Nunes de Medeiros
Paula Oliveira
Paulo Luis
Philip Alves
Ricarda Ventura
Richard Melo
Rosane Fernandes
Samantha Graça
Sandra Gamboias
Sophia Hudson - de Carvalho
Stella Jurgen
Dr. Susan da Cruz
Tajul Islam
Valeria Sales
Dr. William Etzkorn

Statement of Revenues and Expenses for the year ended March 31, 2018

	2018	2017
Revenue		
Funding from government	\$ 753,167	\$ 774,528
Contributions from the United Way Greater Toronto	281,226	281,226
Fundraising and donations	227,768	232,636
Fees and other	106,801	91,575
	1,368,962	1,379,965
Expenses		
Salaries	848,871	874,119
Employee benefits	128,156	131,604
Rent	149,189	149,189
Amortization	50,124	38,820
Miscellaneous program costs	44,196	31,928
Interpretation costs	43,699	39,264
Fundraising	26,408	18,902
Insurance	13,908	13,602
Utilities	12,404	13,897
Professional fees	11,433	11,433
Telecommunications	10,292	8,233
Repairs and maintenance	10,111	9,610
Information technology	8,419	8,419
Promotion	7,632	8,017
Direct supplies	7,724	7,284
Bookkeeping	6,268	5,966
Purchased services	5,524	5,395
Office and general	5,027	3,357
Staff training and travel	4,731	3,660
	1,394,116	1,382,699
Excess of expenses over revenue	\$ (25,154)	\$ (2,734)

(Excerpted from Abrigo Centre's audited financial statements that were prepared by Dixon, Gordon & Co. LLP, Chartered Accountants with an Auditor's Report dated August 14, 2018. Full audited financial statements available upon request)



Your generosity builds a strong foundation for others. Please donate today.



Abrigo Centre
 1645 Dufferin Street, Toronto, ON M6H 3L9
 Telephone: (416) 534-3434
 New Client Drop-in Hours: Weekdays 1:00 p.m. to 3:00 p.m.
 On the Web: www.abrigo.ca Twitter: @abrigocentre
 Facebook & Instagram: /abrigocentre
 Charitable Number 129515284 RR0001



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