

Annual Report 2008



Community Living Services



President's Message

It has been my pleasure to serve as President of Vita Community Living Services since 2003. During that time we have seen significant growth in the agency. This has been in response to the final closure of the 3 remaining institutions in Ontario for individuals with developmental disabilities. It has been an honour to have been part of a significant change in how we support our members and to have been able to welcome so many of the former institutional residents home into the community. We have also responded to many new ministry initiatives in order to expand our support to families through increased day, respite and crisis options

It has also been my honour to be part of VITA during the time that Mens Sana Families for Mental Health joined our organization. Together we can ensure that supports are provided for all individuals with intellectual disabilities and or mental health needs.

This past year we have seen our members increase their participation in numerous educational opportunities and self advocate conferences. The voice of our members has become stronger and they continue to guide us in ensuring we offer the best possible support.

We have established a new Mission Statement which reflects our commitment to Providing Safety, Practising Respect and Promoting Community.

We successfully introduced the Master's Series, three one day conferences for service providers. These conferences were attended by over 600 individuals and included topics on abuse prevention, dual diagnosis and positive leadership.

As we welcome new board leadership, I am confident that Vita and Mens Sana will continue to grow in response to community needs.

Rick DeVincenzo
President

Board of Governors as of June 2008

President
Paul Mior*

Vice President
Brian Naraine*

Treasurer
Silvano Zamparo

Secretary
Paul Bottos*

Directors
Lou Cairo
Rob Caruso

Wilma Cesario
Rosanne D'Ambrosi

Frank DeCesare
Fausto Gaudio

Mario Giampietri
Nancy Salerno

Past President
Richard DeVincenzo

Three vacancies to be filled

* Villa Charities Board Representatives

Human Resources Report 2008

COMMUNICATION STRATEGY

In order to improve communication throughout the organization, a one day retreat for all full time staff was held in January 2008. The purpose of the retreat was to celebrate our achievements, identify communication needs and ensure a common vision of who we are and where we are going. As a result of the retreat, several actions were undertaken:

1. A new committee named: *Everyone Needs to Know* was formulated. The purpose of the committee is to ensure that communication channels are open between all staff and management. The committee will ensure that everyone is included, updated and informed of all organizational related activities and events.
2. Updates to the Computer Server system were undertaken so that a Vita Portal could be created for the sharing of information, forms and policies; and so that all employees could be issued an email address.
3. A staff retreat will be planned and held annually and where possible expanded to include as many part time employees as possible without compromising member care.

HR POLICIES AND PROCEDURES

Personnel Policies & Procedures were updated to incorporate new organizational practices and capture updated government legislative changes. Several new policies and procedures were recommended and are awaiting final approval before implementation.

RECRUITMENT & RETENTION STRATEGY

During the year, the HR department worked diligently to attract, recruit and successfully filled 59 full-time and 49 part-time positions.

One key area that Vita will be focusing on in 2008 is the development and implementation of a comprehensive retention strategy. Identifying and retaining key employees will enhance and ultimately enable Vita to successfully achieve the organization's goals and objectives, reduce employee turnover, enhance employee morale and productivity, and increase job satisfaction.

Vita's will introduce a two day *New Employee Orientation* process. The process will include:

- A meet and greet session
- Introductions of new employees to their supervisors
- Employee communication materials, i.e.: email, portal.
- Video about services
- Discussion of our Culture, Mission, Vision and Values.
- Tours of various sites and locations
- Review of mandatory training schedule
- Policies and procedures
- Benefits and payroll

In addition a *Buddy* will be assigned to each new employee to help the employee adjust to Vita's work environment and enable them to feel valuable and accepted right from their first working day.

To further expand on the retention strategy, Vita is currently considering implementing a new Employee Educational Reimbursement policy and a new Employee Referral Program. In addition, Vita is also considering enhancing the organization's Training and Development programs and Fitness policy.

PAYROLL TRANSITION TO THE HR DEPARTMENT

Vita has determined that it is essential to consolidate and transition all payroll functions and integrate them with the Human Resources department. The HR and Finance departments have been actively and diligently working together to identify key departmental needs and have research several HR/payroll providers. Once final proposals have been reviewed and approved, the HR department will become responsible for managing the payroll function.

The installation of the new Payroll system is expected to be completed by late fall 2008.

JOB DESCRIPTIONS AND PERFORMANCE EVALUATIONS

Vita has reviewed all current job descriptions and our process for evaluating work performance. As a result we will be introducing a new annual *Performance Management Program* for all staff. The proposed program will consist of mutually agreed upon goals and competencies between employee & supervisor, a mid-term and

an annual performance review process. The program will include one consistent performance appraisal date for all staff (date to be determined). At present, annual reviews are conducted on the anniversary date of hire. This has resulted in significant management issues in: ensuring all reviews are completed, accurate budgeting of individual increases and determining anniversary dates when an employee has changed positions or locations within the organization. A consistent annual review date for all employees will eliminate these concerns.

PAY EQUITY AND WAGES

In 2007/08 the Ministry of Community and Social Services (MCSS) announced wage enhancements of \$2.40 per hour for all front line positions. MCSS committed to paying these funds over a 3 year period beginning April 1, 2007. Though the increase was much appreciated, the lack of funding for positions above supervisor resulted in management positions with compensation levels lower than entry level employees. MCSS advised the community that it was the responsibility of each individual agency to address pay equity and compression issues within their own resources. All positions with the exception of DC I and DC II have achieved pay equity.

The following increases were paid:

For DC I Positions (this includes all Part Time Staff,

Full time Overnight Awake and Counselor's Aid Positions)

- 1 % pay equity increase effective January 1, 2007
- 1% pay equity increase effective January 1, 2008
- \$1.40 per hr effective April 1, 2007

For DC II Positions (this includes all full time Front line Positions)

- 1 % pay equity increase effective January 1, 2007
- 1% pay equity increase effective January 1, 2008
- \$1.40 per hr effective April 1, 2007

Supervisors and front line administrative and clinical staff

- \$1.40 per hr effective April 1, 2007

All other positions

- Received a pay increase to maintain a 5% difference between levels

DESCRIPTION	2007	2008
Approved FTE'S	256.93	313.50
Employees on Leave	14	20
FTE Vacancies	18.9%	29.3%
Turn over Rate	17%	17%
Average Sick days used per employee	5.4	7

A significant increase in the vacancy rate between 2007 and 2008 was due to expansion in the last quarter. As of May 31, 2008, the rate has been reduced to 25% and continues to decline.



Property Report at March 31, 2008

The property department is directly responsible for the maintenance and repair of over 70 distinct addresses. These properties are a combination of residential homes, a variety of 1–3 bedroom apartments, day program locations and offices. In addition, the property department continues to be responsible for internal client moves, cataloguing, pickup and delivery of donated items to programs, ensuring water is in compliance with the Ministry of Environment and Health's Waterworks regulations O Reg. 170 and coordination of all required municipal, fire and ministry building inspections.

The responsibilities of the Property Department expanded this past year with the acquisition of three new homes. In order to retrofit and prepare new properties for occupancy the Property Department extensively used external contractors to allow full time maintenance department employees to focus on existing properties. The maintenance department was successful in obtaining the services of a retired individual who has volunteered his time twice weekly for the past eight months. This proved, and continues to be a great asset to the organization.

In July of 2007 we had a small fire at a home triggering the fire protection system within the residence. Though damage from the actual fire was contained to only some bedding, extensive water damage from the release of the sprinklers resulted in residents needing to be relocated to temporary settings for two months. No one was injured in the event and the fire was ruled accidental by both the fire department and police. Restoration and relocation cost approximately \$200,000 and was covered by our insurance company.

Other significant work completed this past year included: a new concrete patio and accessible walkway, installation of three new kitchens, rewiring and electrical upgrades for two homes, water seepage and mould remediation in two property basements.

Over the past few years great strides have been made to standardize items in the homes, such as appliances, kitchen cabinets, hardware, fixtures, paint colours, etc., in efforts to maximize parts/product availability and therefore better utilization of time.

For the year ending March 31, 2008, Vita's maintenance budget was \$220,000. In addition, we were successful in obtaining Transformation and Facility Renewal Funding of \$240,200 (Toronto–201,400 and Central East 38,800) for repairs, replacements and maintenance of existing residential properties. The maintenance budget for 2008/09 is \$229,900. This budget includes only supplies and in house repairs. All repairs of a capital nature will be completed if/when further Facility Renewal funding becomes available.



Apted Home – Toronto



Wantanopa Home – Scarborough



Queen Home – Schomberg

Financial Report at March 31, 2008

The audited financial statements for Vita and Mens Sana showed a small total loss of \$9,999.

Review of financial staffing resources to meet the continued growth of the agency commenced last year. At that time, it was recommended that the agency acquire a qualified and skilled controller to oversee the department. This new position was implemented February 2008. As a result, the department has undergone a reorganization of staffing duties. Most significantly, the payroll responsibilities will be transferred to the Human Resources Department. The controller is supported by two full time accountants.

Below is a summary of revenue sources representing the actual and budget for 2007–2008 and approved 2008–2009 budget. 07/08 actual compared to 07/08 budget reflect a 20% growth in revenue sources and is mainly due to the acquisition of two new homes for \$1,125,000; pay-down of a mortgage of \$239,737; repair and maintenance grant of \$240,200; 2% base increase of \$256,816; \$1.40 wage gap per FTE of \$974,566; and program expansion.

Although the budget year 2008–2009 does not include major capital or repair and maintenance grants, it includes annualized operational revenue and costs associated with expansion in the final quarter of the previous year (\$952,000), 2% base increase (\$307,247) and \$0.5 wag gap (\$294,971). Therefore the operational budget for 2008–2009 has increased by 19% over the 2007–2008 budget.

FUNDING SOURCES	2007—2008 BUDGET	2007—2008 ACTUALS	2008—2009 BUDGET
MCSS Toronto Region Operational	\$ 9,261,967	\$ 10,574,132	\$ 11,729,270
MCSS Central Region Operational	\$ 3,912,457	\$ 4,071,925	\$ 4,235,313
ODSP, User Fees	\$ 1,754,289	\$ 1,818,292	\$ 1,911,425
Homebase MOH	\$ 108,000	\$ 117,391	\$ 108,000
Minor Capital – Toronto		\$ 201,400	
Minor Capital – Central East		\$ 38,800	
Major Capital – Toronto		\$ 1,125,000	
Major Capital – Central East			
Lloydtown Mortgage – Central East		\$ 239,737	
Mens Sana	\$ 404,320	\$ 408,810	\$ 414,723
Other	\$ 70,000	\$ 123,573	\$ 50,000
TOTAL FUNDING	\$ 15,511,033	\$ 18,719,060	\$ 18,448,731

Operational Services Report at March 31, 2008

As part of Developmental Transformation, the Ministry of Community and Social Services (MCSS), continues to introduce new community services which allow families to have more control over the type of service they will receive as well as choosing the service organization that will provide the support. They also continue to work on centralizing wait lists and creating a common application tool. *Application Centres* will be created in each region. This will result in one point of access for families and eliminate individual agency wait lists.

The Ministry of Health has transferred all funding and planning of Mental Health Services to the Local Integrated Health Networks (LIHN). The LIHN's are responsible for planning and funding of hospitals, community health care, long term care and mental health. This has created concerns in that the agenda is dominated by issues of physical health as opposed to mental health. The focus for mental health remains on funding case managers to assist individuals to live independently in the community. Unfortunately, for those with chronic mental health needs there remains a significant gap in services.

The following chart will serve to indicate the total number of admissions and the corresponding MCSS initiative or other means for admission:

REGION / SERVICES	MOVEMENT INTO LONG TERM CARE	FACILITIES INITIATIVE	SPECIALIZED TREATMENT/ TRANSITIONAL HOMES	PASSPORTS	HOMES OF YOUR OWN	T.A.Y	I.R.M.I. (INNOVATIVE RESIDENTIAL MODLE)	REGULAR VACANCY
Toronto Day Supports			1					1
Toronto Residential		6	5		4	3	1	2
Central East Day Supports				3				1
Central East Residential		1	1				1	2



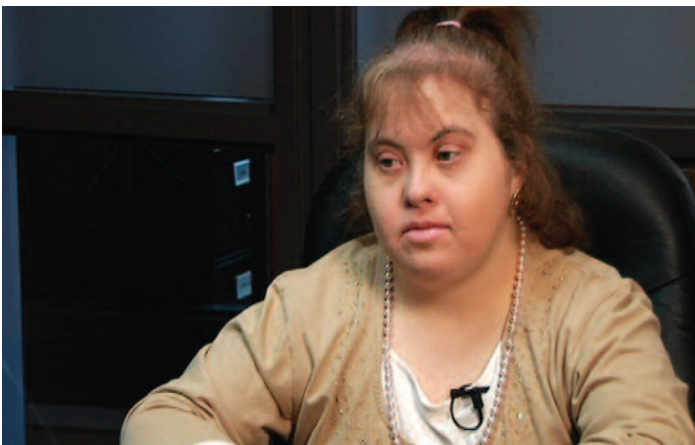
As of March 31, 2008

REGION /SERVICE	IN SERVICE 2007	IN SERVICE 2008
Toronto Residential	136	155
York Residential	35	38
Toronto Day	151	152
York Region Day	62	65
Mens Sana	10	10
Mens Sana Day	12	14
Total Residential	151	203
Total Day Services	198	250

RESPITE & CRISIS SERVICES

In total over 1,600 days of Respite and Crisis support were provided.

SERVICE TYPE	INDIVIDUALS SERVED 2007	INDIVIDUALS SERVED 2008
Respite Services	n/a	55
Crisis Services	n/a	5
Mens Sana Family Support Groups	n/a	170



CLINICAL AND EDUCATIONAL SERVICES

Over the last year Vita has been able to offer an increasing variety of services to our members. We have expanded our capacity to offer training from Relationship Training and Abuse Prevention to include Anger Management and Self Esteem. This has been possible because of our philosophy of providing a breadth of care through investment in our staff. We have managed to train staff from all levels within the organization to provide education that would otherwise fall to the clinicians. Given the need to be financially responsible, it made sense to separate out that work which is clinical and that work which has a clinical benefit but is educational in nature. In doing this, we have been able to offer incentives and opportunities for our staff while creating unique and practical supports for our members. The numbers served this year in this manner are impressive. More than 200 Vita members participated in one of our training programmes!

Within the next couple of months we will begin offering training in 2 new areas, Anger Management and Self Esteem. Right now our new trainers, along with our clinical manager, are working at developing pre and post tests to measure the success of these programmes. We have been collecting this data in the area of Relationship Training and have found the data to be encouraging and

instructive. For example, our first relationship training course had all members increasing their post test scores by an average of 20%. While others may have been satisfied, we used the data to determine which sections that members showed the lowest acquisition rate and then altered the curriculum. Our next class showed an increase of 25% – a more acceptable with number based on our strategy. This data will be part of our process in advertising our service to other agencies – we can say definitively that the classes do what we say they do.

The emphasis in this write up on educational supports, rather than clinical supports, is not at all to suggest that there is a diminishing demand for clinical services. We now have a new Behaviour Therapist who is a Vita employee rather than a contract therapist through an external agency and we continue to provide psychiatric and other therapeutic services as necessary. We believe by increasing the options for service we can serve a broader range of individuals with a broader range of options – from Behaviour / Art / Sexual Therapy to Educational Intervention to Psychiatric Evaluation and Support. In many ways these services compliment each other and we are now receiving educational referrals from clinical providers!

CLINICAL SERVICE	INDIVIDUAL SERVED
Psychiatry	88
Physio assessments	7
Art Therapy	11
Socio-sexual Therapy	15
Behaviour Therapy	31
Relationship Training	67
Abuse Prevention	145



Self Advocacy

Along with offering training in various life skills, Vita has supported a Rights Group within the organization for two years now. During this time the members have participated in a variety of external trainings, traveling to various cities to learn new skills and to represent Vita. The Rights group has also consulted to other self advocate groups and self advocate facilitators regarding their work here at Vita. We will spend much of next year crafting a Bill of Rights for self advocates within service and have already scheduled a consultation with a large number of self advocates in the organization in September.

Master Series

In 2007 we held our first Master Series, three one day conferences featuring a renowned speaker. We first welcomed Dr. Ruth Ryan-Myers a specialist in working with individuals with a dual diagnosis and severe behavioural challenges. Secondly, we welcomed Dr. Dick Sobsey, the leading expert on Abuse and Disability, and finally, we welcomed Lynne Segal a leading American Executive Director who spoke on innovative leadership. In total well over 600 hundred individuals from Ontario and the northern states attended the conferences. We plan for this to become an annual event and are using the proceeds to further the education of our own staff and members.

Information about Abuse Prevention Training and Relationship Training

Abuse Prevention Training Workshop

This workshop is put in place to educate members on their rights, identify different forms of abuse, the difference between abuse and unacceptable behavior, and how to report abuse.

The goal of this workshop is to teach individuals to have a voice and to be heard, and that saying NO is okay. One tool used in the workshop is the 'NO RAP' even the shy ones come out of their shells and scream, 'NO!' There are numerous questions asked during the 'NO RAP' for example the instructor will ask: if someone tells you to get in their car? Or if someone tells you to give them all your money? The individuals in the group respond to each of these questions by yelling 'NO!' This fun learning tool shows the individuals in the workshop that there are many situations in which saying or yelling 'NO' is appropriate.

The workshops are taught in a fun and interactive way keeping the energy and enthusiasm up.

Relationship Training

Our program is based on the Life Facts and the Flash Curriculum, which creates a diverse and comprehensive program to best suit the needs of our members. The Vita specific Curriculum consists of a number of different social skills and Sexual Health Topics including: Self Esteem, Decision Making, Truth and Honesty, Types of Touch and Exploitation, How to say No, Different types of Relationships, Dating, Sexual Thoughts and Feelings, Responsible Relationships, Public, Private, and "Be-Careful" Places, Clothing, Behaviors and Body Parts, Masturbation, Sexual Orientation, Sexual Intercourse, Illegal / Dangerous Sexual Behaviors, Birth Control and Pregnancy, and Sexually Transmitted Diseases.

These topics are taught using a variety of methods, role plays, group activities, activity sheets and lectures. We use different methods of teaching to fit everyone's learning style. The Relationship Training team also offers one on one lessons where deemed necessary.

Message from the Executive Director

This past year was filled with much growth, changes and excitement. We were delighted to open three new homes in order to welcome several residents from the closing facilities. Toronto and York Region have now completed the planning for all facility moves designated for these two areas. The coming year will mark a new era for developmental services in the province of Ontario. All institutions will be closed, all services will be community based and new legislation governing service for persons with developmental disabilities will be introduced. As a result of these changes our focus, now more than ever before, will be on developing community resources for those that have never lived in institutions. The new legislation will also change the definition of who is eligible for developmental services. This may assist us in enhancing supports provided to members of Mens Sana.

In addition to welcoming many new members to Vita, we were also pleased to welcome visitors from England and Manitoba. In September over ten individuals representing agencies throughout England spent two days learning about our services. The visit was such a success they are sending a second group in 2008. In fall and then again in early 2008, several senior representatives of the Manitoba Ministry responsible for persons with disabilities visited Ontario to review how the province was accomplishing our closure of institutions. At the suggestion of the Ontario Ministry of Community and Social Services they toured several homes operated by Vita. The Manitoba government has requested we attend a conference of all their service providers and ministry employees to describe our model of providing community services to individuals with challenging needs.

Another major achievement this past year was the increase in educational and clinical services to our members. Our success with these services and our data showing substantial individual improvements has resulted in interest from both the Toronto Children's Aid and Penetang Mental Health Centre in adopting our abuse prevention and relationship training programs.

REPORT ON 2007 OPERATIONAL GOALS AND STRATEGIC PLAN UPDATE

This report is a synopsis of the operational goals identified at the 2007 AGM and recommendations for the coming year. The operational goals are drawn from the 2006 Strategic Plan and as such reported under each strategic direction.

1 Advocacy:

Operational Goal: Develop a new web site and marketing materials for Vita and Mens Sana

The advocacy committee's primary goal was to establish objectives for increasing general awareness about the organization. To this end marketing and promotional materials were developed including a new web site, brochures for both Vita and Mens Sana and a joint brochure which can be used for seeking donors and volunteers.

The committee is now developing key messages for board members which could be used along with promotional material for advocacy with government and the general public.

2 Governance & Accountability:

Operational Goal: Develop Governance Orientation and Implementation Plan.

Vita has had representation on the Villa Charities Governance committee. The committee hired the firm of Price Waterhouse Coopers to review the organizational structure of Villa Charities and its relationship with its affiliates. A final report and recommendations from this committee is still pending. It remains unclear the impact this will have on the governance of Vita.

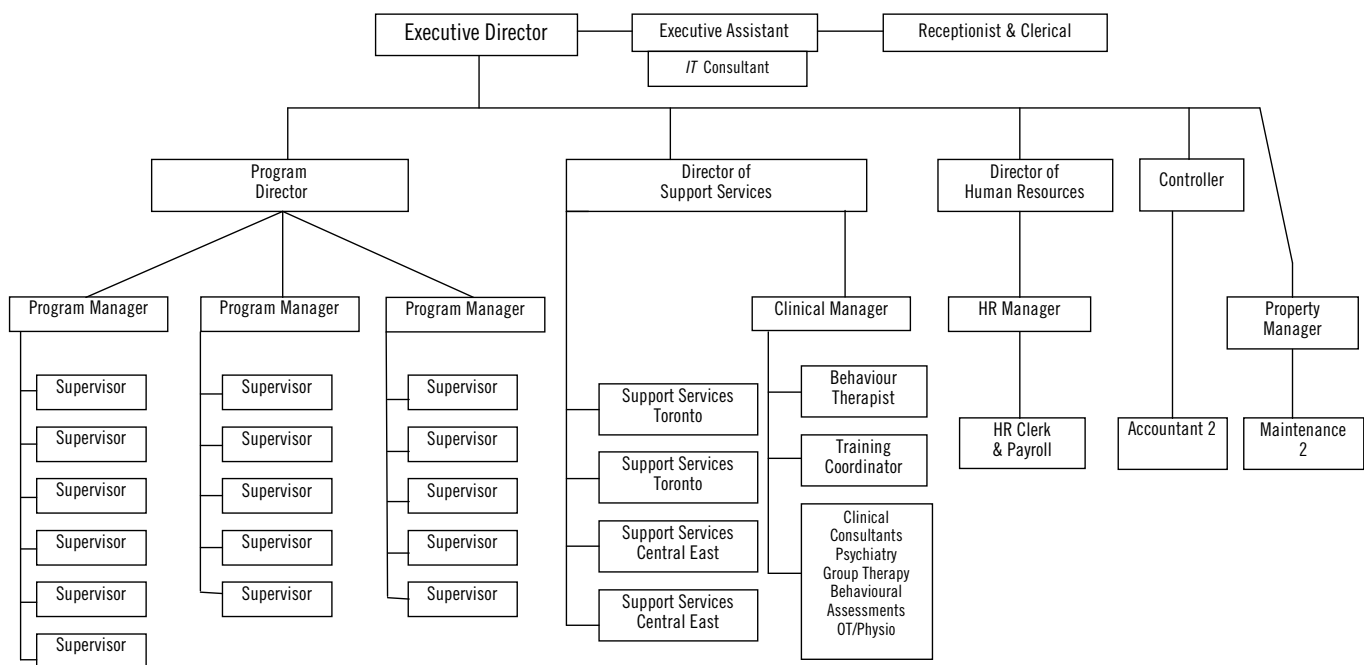
It was determined that the governance structure of Vita and Mens Sana as two separate legal entities with one common board and common management structure would remain in place until more secure, long term funding for Mens Sana could be established in order to not jeopardize current fund raising revenue streams. Prior to further amalgamation occurring, updates to the by-laws and minute books for both Vita and Mens Sana, which are currently being undertaken, must be completed.

A process for orientation of new governors was discussed and approved. During this time a review of employee orientation was also undertaken. It was determined that several documents are required, including: a condensed and simplified version of all our policies, a video of locations and program types, and a manual on common terms, roles and responsibilities specific to Board Members. These items are under development and expected to be finalized by completion of the strategic plan (2009)

Operational Goal: Ensure the Financial, Human Resources and Administration Resources meet the needs of the Agency.

The past year brought significant changes to the management and organizational structure of the agency. Following a voluntary review by an independent organizational specialist and chartered accountant, it was determined that as a result of significant growth both a full time Human Resources Director and a Controller with educational designations were required. The organizational structure was modified to reflect this new positions.

Vita community living services and mens sana families for mental health organization



3 Priorities for Vita

Operational Goal: Ensure successful completion and implementation of new residential and specialized programs in response to MCSS enhancements.

Vita continued to expand throughout the year in response to new MCSS initiatives and the final closure of the remaining three Ontario institutions for individuals with developmental disabilities.

Vita opened three new homes with capital grants from MCSS in order to support individuals being repatriated from the closing institutions. Two of the homes are located in Toronto and one is located in York Region.

MCSS announced several new community initiatives including innovative residential funding, funding for former crown wards requiring placement in the developmental sector and ten dual diagnosis units. Innovative Residential funding allowed families to develop individualized supports for their children – options included the family purchasing their own condo or providing an in-home apartment and an agency providing staffing support. Vita was approached by several families to be the support agency, two of which were successful in obtaining funding.

The Toronto Region announced 10 million in new funding to support individuals currently living in children group homes as crown wards under the care of Children's Aid whom due to their age (over 21) required placement in adult services. Through the creation of basement apartments in each of the new facility homes and an additional three bedroom unit at Bello Horizonte Vita has been able to respond to this need and has accepted several former crown wards into new residential options.

Finally Vita was approved for a joint proposal with COTA, a mental health agency that provides case management to operate ten single units for adults with a dual diagnosis. This unique program will be located in central Toronto within a thirty unit apartment building. Integrated into the building will be ten one bedroom apartments, an office and day program room. Vita will provide 24 hour staff support to the residents and COTA will provide case management. The program, which will become operational in September 2008 is specifically designed to meet the needs of individuals with a mental health illness and an intellectual disability. This model is similar to that planned for Mens Sana to be located in York Region.

The board also decided to use the grant of \$318,000 received in 2007 to renovate and expand the day supports provided at Casa Abruzzo. The new program which will be able to support fifty individuals will become operational in September 2008

#4 Priorities for Mens Sana

Operational Goal: Implement recommendations from Mens Sana Strategic Committee

A committee comprised of board directors and community members interested in assisting Mens Sana in developing a capital project was established. The committee is seeking to obtain funding to construct a building that will provide a minimum of twenty single residential units, as well as office and day space for individuals with mental illness. Discussions with municipal housing in York Region and an existing social group that has available land have been undertaken. Sources of operational funding to support the project continue to be explored. A proposal will be submitted to United Way in York Region which has identified mental health as one of its primary funding goals for 2008.

The ministry of community and social services is also amending its eligibility criteria for developmental services. This may result in some individuals now being eligible for programs funded under this division.

#5 Mission, Vision and Values

Operational Goal: Revise & Implement new amalgamated Mission, Vision and Value statements as per Strategic Plan.

The new amalgamated Mission Statement is: Vita Community Living Services and Mens Sana Families for Mental Health provide safety, respect and community through services for individuals with intellectual disabilities and/or mental health needs.

In addition a tag line was developed that is being used on all promotional and educational materials. The tag line is: Providing Safety, Practicing Respect, Promoting Community

We are now in the process of updating all information and ensuring communication with all staff and members in regard to the new mission statement.

OPERATIONAL GOALS FOR 2008/09

- 1 Operationalize new Dual Diagnosis Residential Program and expansion of Casa Abruzzo Day Program
- 2 Provide member Educational and Clinical Services to broader community
- 3 Develop a response to address need for Specialized Day Treatment
- 4 Seek long term funding for Mens Sana
- 5 Establish a new model of residential care for Mens Sana
- 6 Expand Day Supports for individuals with mental health needs
- 7 Launch new Vita / Mens Sana web site
- 8 Finalize and implement new orientation process and tools

Manuela Dalla Nora
Executive Director



Annual Report 2008



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