

BALUCHON

Répît long terme à domicile



ANNUAL REPORT
2025 - 2026

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Cover: Marie Gendron, Founder of Baluchon Alzheimer/Long-term Respite Care (left), and Izabella Piotrowski, Director of Clinical Services (right)

Photo credit: Gabriel Fournier

Graphic Design and Layout: Anaïs Demoustier, communpro.ca

A Word from the President

This annual report reflects a year of steady progress, marked by the consolidation of our achievements while remaining firmly focused on the future.

Over the past year, we have continued to build on the work of previous years, strengthening the foundation for our continued growth and impact. These achievements are, above all, a testament to the strength of our team. Dedicated, highly skilled, and deeply committed to our mission, it remains focused on expanding our impact and better supporting the families we serve.

The team can also count on the support of a Board of Directors composed of experts, whose commitment and rigour directly contribute to the quality of our work. Together, we form a strong governance structure, driven by a shared vision.

This vision began to take shape over the past year as we laid the groundwork for our next strategic plan, a process that will continue throughout the coming year. This essential exercise allows us to take an honest look at our strengths, identify emerging opportunities, and chart a clear course for the years ahead, ensuring that our work remains aligned with our mission and responsive to the growing needs of caregivers across Quebec. We also took the opportunity to review our previous strategic plan, enabling us to draw valuable lessons that will inform the work we are doing today.

Strategic planning is particularly important to us because there are so many challenges associated with ever-growing demand, which will become even more significant in the years to come. We are, however, determined to continue our mission and make

a real difference in the lives of the families who rely on us. True to Baluchon's values, we will continue to act with compassion, respect, and commitment to help as many family caregivers as possible.

As I begin my final year as President and on the Board of Directors, I look back on the past seven years with great emotion. I am deeply proud of all that we have accomplished together, and I am confident that my successor will rise to the responsibilities of the role.

I would like to take this opportunity to extend my heartfelt thanks to the Board of Directors, our Executive Director, all members of our team, and everyone who contributes, directly or indirectly, to making Baluchon a success we can all be proud of.

Isabelle Le Bourhis
President



A Word from the Executive Director

The past fiscal year has once again demonstrated our unwavering commitment to caregivers and their families. Every action we take is guided by a clear goal: to provide high-quality respite care in every region of Quebec.

The years following the pandemic have been a period of remarkable growth for Baluchon. While this growth has created new opportunities, it has also brought significant challenges. The fiscal year now coming to a close was no exception. Toward the end of the year, we faced a number of challenges that demanded both rigour and agility and required us to make difficult decisions. Rather than discouraging us, these experiences have strengthened our resolve to ensure a healthy and sustainable future for our organization.

This year will also be remembered for the special presence of our founder, Marie Gendron. Her contributions, her vision, and her deep commitment to Baluchon's mission have left a lasting mark not only on our team but on all of Quebec. Her legacy has sparked a wave of love and enthusiasm, while also serving as a reminder of the importance of staying true to our purpose.

In our day-to-day work, this means that values such as respect and empathy guide every decision we make. This is reflected both in the relationships we build with families and in the bonds we foster within our team. Because—and this is something we must never forget—to take care of others, we must also be able to take care of ourselves.

With this in mind, we have continued our long-standing efforts to enhance our employees' working conditions. Launched more than four years ago, this initiative has continued to deliver meaningful progress, with important advances made again this year that have been welcomed across the organization. Because supporting

and valuing our colleagues is essential to ensuring the sustainability and quality of our services.

I would also like to highlight the remarkable work of our wonderful team, as well as the energetic commitment of our partners and the Board of Directors. Together, we will continue to move forward with conviction, always guided by our mission and by the desire to honour the innovative and inspiring vision of our founder.

Finally, on behalf of our caregivers, employees, and everyone at Baluchon, we extend our heartfelt thanks to our outgoing President, Isabelle Le Bourhis. Over the past seven years, Isabelle has devoted countless volunteer hours to advancing our cause and putting her remarkable talents in service of our organization. Isabelle, your unwavering dedication has been an inspiration to us all. Your passion has always been contagious, and time and again, you have thrown yourself wholeheartedly into defending our mission and championing the families we serve. Fierce in your commitment and unwavering in your resolve, you have helped make a lasting difference to our organization.

You leave behind an extraordinary legacy. Thanks to everything you have done for Baluchon, thousands of caregivers and care recipients, including people like your father, enjoy a better quality of life.

Sophie Morin
Executive Director



A Unique Respite Program

Baluchon Long-term Respite Care offers a unique respite program throughout Quebec.
Our respite care is provided in the home for periods of 4 to 14 consecutive days, 24 hours a day.

The goal: to help family caregivers maintain a better work-life balance and stay healthy so they can keep their loved ones at home for as long as possible.

Benefits of respite care:

- The care recipient maintains **their routine, habits, and familiar surroundings**.
- **4 days:** this is the minimum number of days needed to give a caregiver a break; 7 days allow for a meaningful rest.
- Long-term respite allows caregivers to **make plans** and **take time for themselves** (visiting family, travelling, hunting, and fishing...)
- Service available to **all families**.
- We work **hand in hand** with social workers and nurses to gain a better understanding of the family's situation.
- **Interaction and follow-up** before, during, and after the respite care by our clinical team.

Baluchon's Mission and Vision

Our mission

Baluchon Long-term Respite Care™'s mission is to provide multi-day respite care for caregivers who wish to keep their dependent loved ones at home, while supporting and accompanying the caregiver before and after the respite care. It is the only nonprofit organization offering long-term in-home respite care (4 to 14 days), 24 hours a day, 7 days a week. Its services have been available throughout Quebec since January 2019.

Our vision

To be the leading provider of multi-day in-home respite care throughout Quebec for a diverse range of clients.

Values

RESPECT :

For the caregiving dyad (care recipient-caregiver)

- Respect for privacy and personal space
- Respect for the person's autonomy
- Confidentiality, authenticity, and loyalty
- Professionalism

Of our employees

Of our partners

Our Pillars



"I recommend [my caregiver] 100% and I want her for my next visit. An exceptional woman. Completely dedicated, attentive to my needs, adaptable, and able to provide highly appropriate solutions. Excellent at handling the unexpected. Warm and caring toward the elderly, and adapts well to people with hearing impairments, as well as cognitive-behavioral issues. She was greatly appreciated."

*- Fernande L.,
Lanaudière-TNC*

Overview of Our Services

Baluchon Long-term Respite Care™ provides in-home respite services designed to help caregivers continue supporting their loved ones at home. Our respite stays range from 4 to 14 days, allowing caregivers to step away while their loved one continues to receive personalized care in the comfort of home. We support individuals with a wide range of needs and provide services throughout Quebec, from Chisasibi to Lacolle and the Magdalen Islands.

We also help caregivers strengthen their ability to support their loved one by providing guidance and practical strategies tailored to their unique circumstances.

2025-2026 Results: A Year of Transition

An A+ for Baluchon

Satisfaction surveys are clear: we provide excellent service.

98,27%

caregivers who
left with **complete
confidence**

98,40%

overall satisfaction

97,04%

Families who find
the **support journal
useful**

99%

caregivers who
felt heard

A rapidly growing supply (and demand)

Despite an impressive increase in the number of days of respite care, we are unfortunately unable to meet the demand.

1 092

Respite care shifts
requested

571

baluchonnages
completed

446

Families
served

4 137

Days of respite care
provided

7,2 Days
of **respite care**
on average

28 Day's wait
on average (an improvement compared to
previous years)

To better understand the scope of our mission

50

Employees

18

Partners

+ 264,000 km

travelled in a year,
rain or shine.
**Seven times
around the
Earth!**

A Magical Reunion

Some people change lives through the strength of their convictions, their unwavering optimism, and their willingness to act. Marie Gendron is one of those people.

This past winter, we had the privilege of welcoming her back to Baluchon, more than 25 years after its founding. It was an extraordinary reunion filled with emotion, and the entire Baluchon team travelled from every corner of Quebec to be there.

The anticipation surrounding her visit had been building for weeks and reached its peak the moment she arrived. After a standing ovation, countless hugs, and dozens of selfies, Marie Gendron finally had a chance to sit down and listen as her longtime friend and one of Baluchon's very first clients, Édith Fournier, paid tribute to her in a moving and deeply personal speech.

Here are a few excerpts:

"Oh, Marie, without Baluchon, I could never have made it through seven years at home with my dear Michel."

"To all of you respite care workers, know that you are the batteries that recharge us. When our energy is gone, it's easy to lose our sense of purpose and grief begins long before the loss itself."

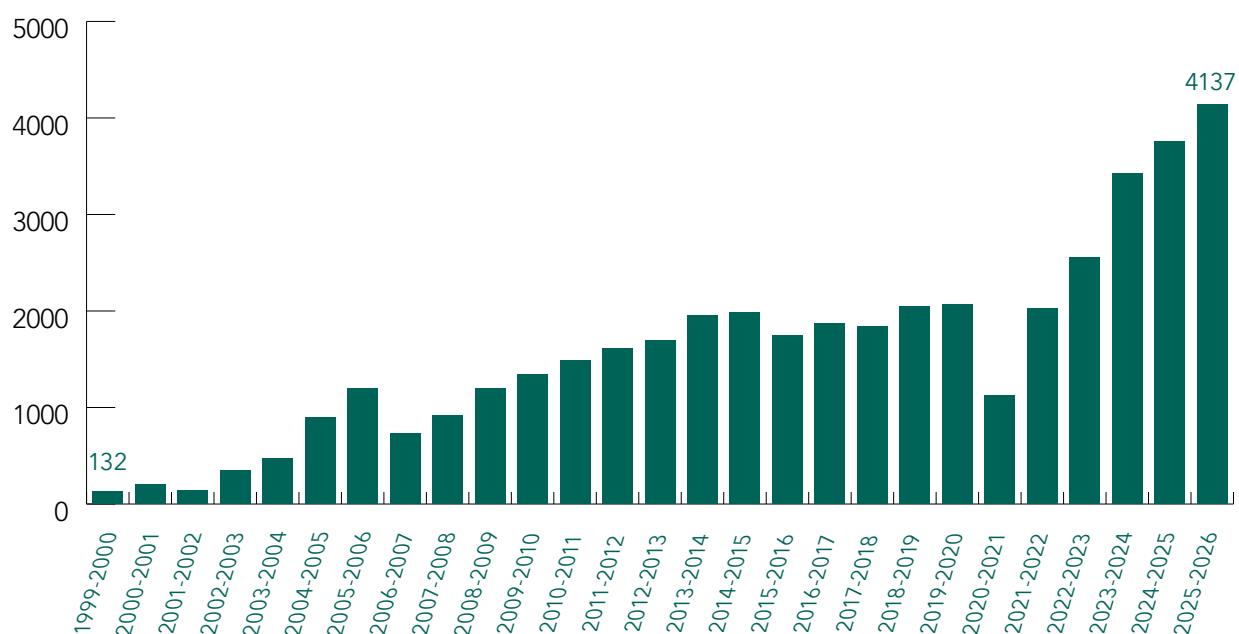
"Few people can truly be said to have changed Quebec society for the better. For everything you've given to Michel, to me, and to our society, Marie, it is my honour to pay tribute to you."



Marie Gendron, founder and first respite care worker, alongside Édith Fournier, a caregiver.

Marie Gendron's legacy is measured not only in years, but in lives touched. This graph captures the impact of her vision over the past quarter century. More than 42,000 days of respite care have been provided through an estimated 6,000 baluchonnages, supporting more than 10,000 caregivers.

More than 42,000 days since 1999



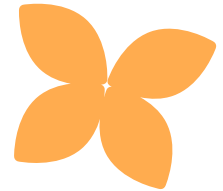
"We really appreciated your respite care service. As a caregiver, I felt respected and understood."

My spouse, who was initially hesitant, was very happy with his week. It's wonderful that your service exists. Thank you for everything!

**The respite care worker was wonderful. We really liked her!"*

- France M., Laurentides, Parkinson's disease

Human Resources



A Larger, More Stable Team

We are fortunate to have an exceptional team of 50 employees, including:

- 37 respite care workers
- 7 members of our clinical team
- 5 members of our administrative team

We have also improved employee retention. Many of our respite care workers have now reached the highest level of our compensation scale, a testament to their longevity with the organization. Despite the unique demands of the role, they have found a sustainable balance and a deep sense of fulfillment in their work.

Recognition and Advancement for Employees

This stability is due in part to our efforts to improve employees' working conditions and their level of engagement.

Exceptional Engagement

For the past three years, a confidential survey tool has allowed us to better gauge our employees' morale and identify areas for improvement. It has been central to our efforts to retain employees and improve working conditions.

Overall employee satisfaction stands at **85%**, three percentage points above the industry average. Unsurprisingly, compensation received the lowest rating. Addressing this remains a significant challenge, given that our public funding has seen little or no indexation, while caregivers contribute just 63 cents per hour toward the cost of services.

97%
of employees say
they are **proud** to work
at Baluchon.

90 %
would recommend
Baluchon as an **excellent**
place to work.

90 %
of employees say
they trust Baluchon's
management team.

These results demonstrate a strong sense of pride and belonging on the part of Baluchon employees. They also reflect a positive employee experience, with the workplace being valued and recommended by a large majority of staff. The trust in the management team also attests to inspiring leadership and a well-established relationship of trust within Baluchon.



"I'm new here and very enthusiastic about the management team, the support available, and the quality of the tools provided. I'm proud and grateful to work for Baluchon."



Team-building Activities

Every two weeks, we organize low-cost activities that encourage collaboration, connection, and team spirit, whether through arts and crafts, dance sessions, games, or friendly competitions. These activities foster an engaging and supportive workplace while giving us the opportunity to get to know one another better and maintain open, effective communication among our headquarters team.

The Team as of March 31, 2026

• Administrative Team:



Sophie Morin,
Executive Director



**Alexandra
Gravel-Fr  chette,**
*Director of Finance and
Administration*



Ying Xu,
*Clinical and
Administrative Assistant*



Georges Karam,
*Human Resources and
Operations Advisor*

• Clinical Team:



Mariama Jupille,
Executive Secretary



Izabela Piotrowski,
*Director of Clinical
Services*



Colin Pelletier,
*Clinical Services
Coordinator*



Cyrine El Ghouli,
*Clinical Services
Officer*



Fanny Gr  goire,
*Clinical Services
Officer*



Marie-Claire Barsalou,
*Clinical Services
Officer*



Sydney De Vega,
*Clinical Services
Officer*



Tracy Saouma,
*Clinical Services
Officer*

Community Activities and Board of Directors

As of March
31, 2026,
Baluchon has **97**
members.

The Board of Directors in Action

The Board of Directors fulfilled its oversight responsibilities through a series of reviews focusing on human resources, finance, and information technology. These reviews resulted in recommendations, which are currently being implemented. The Board met **six times** during the year. The Human Resources, Finance, and Governance Committees also met in advance of each Board meeting. The Annual General Meeting was held on June 18, 2025. All families receiving our services are invited to attend.



Mme Isabelle Le Bourhis,
President
Directrice régionale, Gestionnaire
en planification financière
à RBC



Mme Ghislaine Larocque,
Vice-President
Coach senior en management
- retraitée



Mme Isabelle Fournier,
Treasurer
Vice-présidente, finance,
Reitmans



Me Marlène Iradukunda,
Secretary
Labour Lawyer



Mme Christine Grou,
Board Member
President of the Ordre des
psychologues du Québec



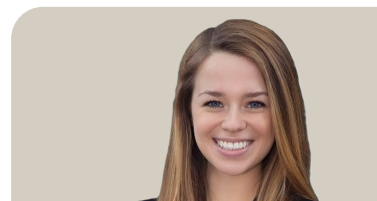
**Mme Natacha
Joncas Boudreau,**
Board Member
Managing Partner at
TACT Intelligence-Conseil



Mme Julie Langlois,
Board Member
Vice President, Talent and Culture,
Peace+



Me Jean-Simon Lamarre,
Board Member
Partner, Blakes



Mme Chloé Paquette,
CPA Auditrice,
Board Member
Corporate Finance

Meetings with the CIUSSS

Baluchon met with its CISSS and CIUSSS partners. Beyond the exchange of information, this was an opportunity for our executive director to discuss the financial challenges Baluchon is facing.

Stéphanie Desgagné, from the SAPA-SAD department at the CIUSSS de Centre-Ouest-de-l'Île-de-Montréal

Michelle Blanchet and Karine Ferland from the direction du soutien à l'autonomie des personnes âgées at the Lanaudière CISSS



Inter-organizational Collaborations

Baluchon believes in the strength of numbers. That's why we are members of two groups that share our interests.

Proche aide Québec

Since 2000, this organization's mission has been to protect, promote, and defend the fundamental rights, economic well-being, and physical and mental health of family caregivers in Quebec.

Coalition for Access to Palliative Care

Since 2018, the *Coalition du Québec pour l'accès aux soins palliatifs* (Quebec Coalition for Access to Palliative Care) has been dedicated to ensuring access to palliative care for people at the end of life in Quebec. Comprising 26 organizations and led by the *Association québécoise de soins palliatifs*, it works to promote the well-being of Quebecers with serious illnesses and their loved ones.



"You are an extraordinary team. I felt truly heard, and you responded to our needs with care and compassion. Our respite care worker showed genuine empathy for everything we are going through and stepped into her role with confidence, providing exceptional support to my husband throughout her stay. Her deeply compassionate approach made it feel like she is an angel sent to give us this much-needed respite. She is an exceptional and highly professional person. I sincerely hope we will have the opportunity to work with her again for a future respite stay. I am deeply grateful. Thank you for everything."

- Caty T. - Laurentides - Frontotemporal dementia



Baluchon France

Baluchon France continues to expand its work across the Atlantic. Progress has been made on the regulatory front, but significant challenges remain, particularly when it comes to funding respite care. Unlike in Quebec, where services receive direct public funding, respite care in France is financed through pension funds and private insurers. Sophie Morin serves as Vice-President of the Board of Directors of Baluchon France.

Operations et IT

Security Audit

A security audit confirmed that Baluchon was already doing many things right, but it also revealed the need to make certain adjustments. Corrective measures were implemented immediately, and we plan to conduct a second audit later in the fiscal year to compare the results and ensure the sustainability of our progress.

IT Tools to the Rescue

Over the past few years, Baluchon has taken a decisive turn toward technology. The tools we've adopted have allowed us to achieve significant administrative cost savings, enabling us to focus most of our energy on expanding our service offerings. Since we've doubled our direct services, it became essential for us to optimize our time and overhead costs.

Digital Case Management

Our digital tool for managing care placements, Répix, is in its second phase of development. We still have several adjustments to make, but everything is going smoothly. We have received a grant from Appui Proche aidant for Phase 3, which will be rolled out in 2026-27.

Digital Application for Payroll and HR

This is a new web-based tool designed for payroll and human resources that has enabled us to save time and improve efficiency. This new, centralized, and intuitive approach has freed up time for our finance director. The tool automates several processes, including leave management, timesheets, payroll, and accounting entries. We've implemented stronger controls with built-in approval processes to ensure we maintain sound management practices. Next year, we'll continue the rollout to integrate expense account management.



"Although I had some concerns before leaving, the respite care assignment was a complete success. My husband often talks to me about it, and he's really looking forward to seeing the respite worker again during the next baluchonnage, which is coming up soon."

- Johanne L. - Centre-Sud de l'Île de Montréal - Parkinson's disease

Information Dissemination and Communication

Bilingual Publications

Following the translation of our website, we also produced bilingual brochures and guides.

Entraide mémoire

We have published two issues of our newsletter for our donors and those who utilize our services.

Social Media

Our Facebook and LinkedIn audiences continued to grow steadily over the past year. While Facebook remains our primary channel for engaging with service users, LinkedIn allows us to connect with donors and supporters. We expect the platform to play an increasingly important role in advancing our fundraising efforts in the months and years ahead.

Our followers continue to reflect the realities of caregiving. More than 86% are women, while fewer than 14% are men.



Facebook: **2,253 followers**, including 93 new followers (+4.5%)



LinkedIn: **631 followers**, including 28 new followers (+5%)

Geographic Breakdown

The majority of our visitors come from Quebec and French-speaking countries where our model has been adopted:

- Canada/Quebec: 85.3%
- France: 10.4%
- Belgium: 2.3%

Looking at the age of our audience:

24.7% are between the ages of 45 and 54 > **24 %** aged 55 to 64 > **21.5 %** aged 65 and older

Given that the majority of family caregivers in Quebec are between the ages of 45 and 64, representing approximately 30% to 39% of the caregiving population, our audience demographics once again closely align with data from the Observatoire québécois de la proche aide.

Our community continues to grow at a fairly steady pace, as observed in recent years.

Philanthropy



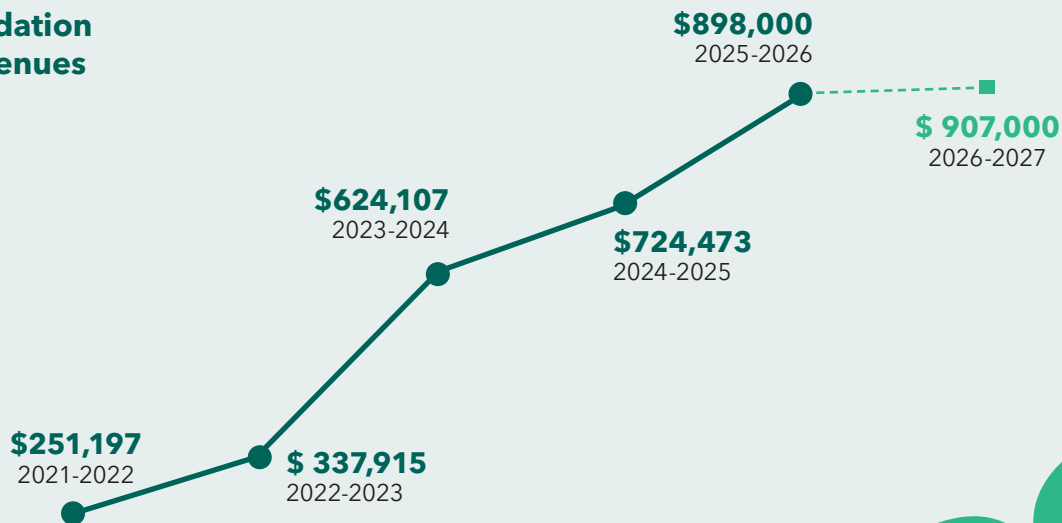
\$898,000
raised in
2025-2026

At a time when demands on the Foundation are increasing and government funding remains uncertain, we are pleased to report that the Baluchon Foundation had an outstanding year. The generous support of several major donors contributed to its strong growth, as illustrated in the chart below.

In 2026-27, the Foundation will fund approximately 26% of the cost of each day of respite care. This is an important milestone and a clear indication that our philanthropic efforts over the past several years are paying off.

The Foundation's support has been instrumental in expanding Baluchon's respite care services.

Fondation Revenues



"Thank you so much for this respite. I was anxious about being with someone who didn't know my condition, but everything went well thanks to the respite care worker, who has such a great sense of humour and so much patience."

- Manuel R. - Estrie - Bulbar-onset ALS and traumatic brain injury



Finances

A More Challenging Year Financially

Maintaining the organization's financial health is a constant priority, but some years bring greater challenges than others. We ended the fiscal year with a deficit of \$176,000. Fortunately, we already know we will be able to restore a balanced budget in the year ahead. Even so, this shortfall had tangible consequences for both family caregivers and our employees. Among other measures, we had to cancel respite care days in some regions during February and March.

The New Fiscal Year

We are entering the new fiscal year facing a number of uncertainties. Chief among them is funding from the ministère de la Santé et des Services sociaux (MSSS). At the time of writing, the funding that will cover nearly half of our budget has yet to be confirmed.

We hope to learn more over the summer. But with the change in Premier and the elections scheduled for October, we may have to wait several more months before we know where we stand.

An Impact on Respite Days

The current situation is therefore forcing us to project a 5% decrease in respite days for 2026-27. This is due to several reasons:

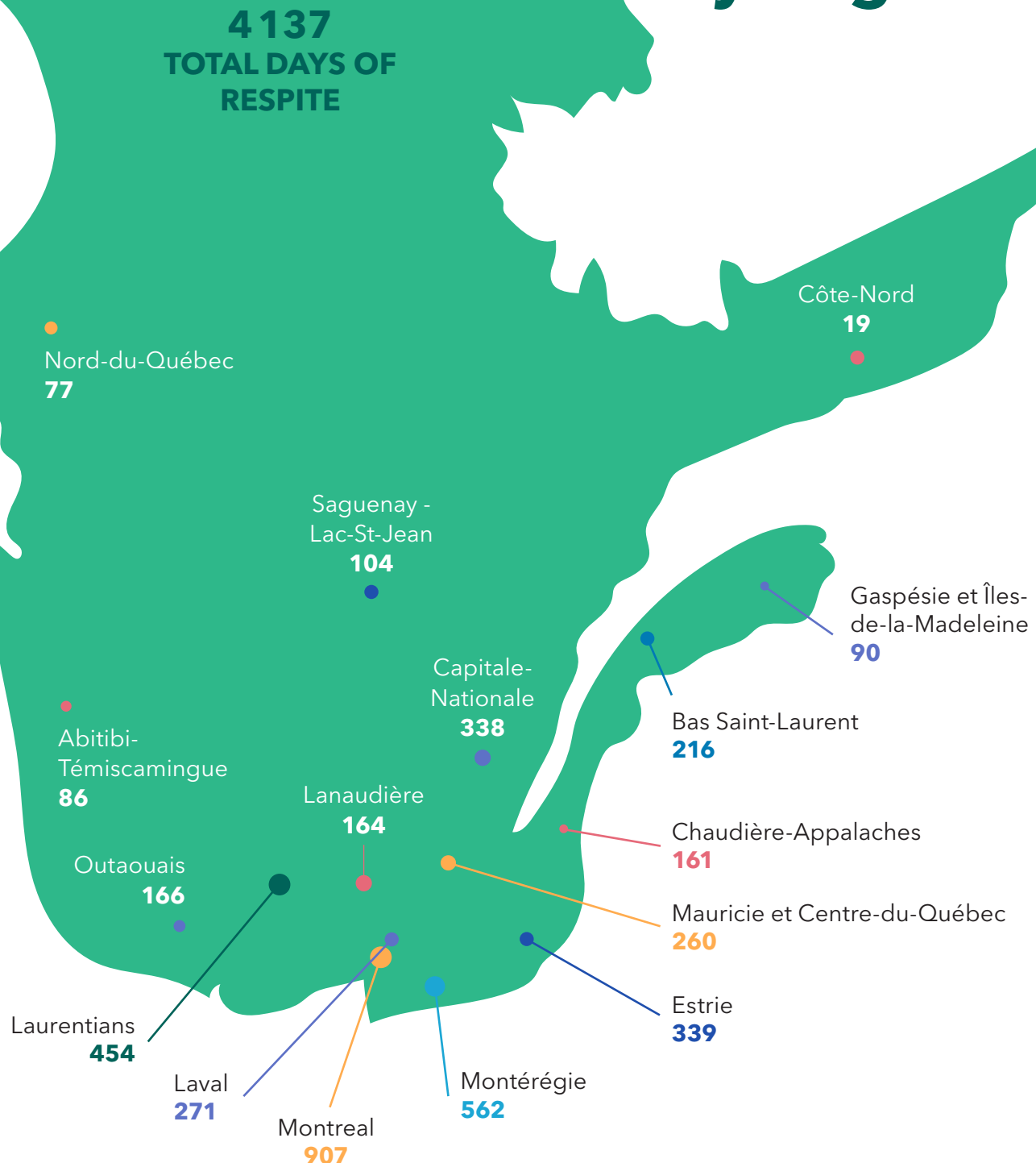
- The end of the days carried over from the pandemic (which has been anticipated for some time)
- The low indexation of CISSS budgets
- The lack of indexation of the per-day subsidy from the MSSS

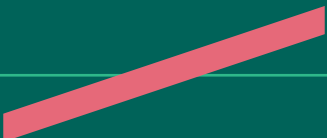
That said, these projections are far from set in stone. Additional funding from the 14 CISSS partners with which we work could allow us to revise our forecasts upward. We are also in ongoing discussions to increase the value of our funding agreements, so there remains the possibility of securing additional funding in the third quarter. If that happens, we will be able to adjust our course and provide more respite care days.

2025-2026 Financial Statements

	2026	2025
OPERATING EXPENSES		
Psoc_MSSS Grant	\$386,022	\$377,712
Expenses	[642,728]	[681,61]
Amortization of tangible capital assets	[7,477]	[6,042]
BALUCHONNAGE FEES		
CIUSSS service agreements & MSSS funding	\$2,174,150	\$1,887,600
Expenses	[3,083,981]	[2,582,493]
MSSS expansion grant	\$209,950	\$200,000
Donations and other revenue	\$787,994	\$802,690
Insuffisance des produits sur les charges	[176,070]	[2,144]
BALANCE SHEET		
ACTIF À COURT TERME		
Cash	\$222,747	\$214,060
Temporary investments	\$56,795	\$455,363
Amounts receivable from the government	\$212,095	\$146,742
Prepaid expenses	\$17,985	\$13,009
Other receivables	\$144,053	\$83,536
Total current assets	\$653,675	\$912,710
Tangible capital assets	\$21,663	\$16,408
Total assets	\$675,338	\$929,118
CURRENT LIABILITIES		
Accounts payable and accrued expenses	\$240,379	\$294,202
Deferred contributions	\$220.81	\$244,698
Total liabilities	\$461,900	\$538,900
UNALLOCATED ASSETS	\$214,148	\$390,218
TOTAL LIABILITIES AND NET ASSETS	\$675,338	\$929,118

Figures and Breakdown of Respite Care by Region





Outlook and Conclusion

The 2026-27 fiscal year marks the transition between two government action plans on caregiving. Although the 2027-2031 plan is expected to be released this summer, the arrival of a new Premier and the provincial general election scheduled for October mean that priorities could shift quickly. Our ability to navigate this uncertainty will therefore be put to the test.

For the first time in years, we also expect to provide fewer respite care days. This is not a decision we take lightly. However, given the current uncertainty and the fact that our government funding has not kept pace with rising costs, we have no choice but to make difficult decisions to safeguard the organization's long-term financial sustainability.

This means we will have to work twice as hard at the Foundation. Philanthropy offers significant growth potential and could eventually allow us to temporarily absorb the ups and downs of public funding.

Another avenue worth exploring is an increase to our daily fee. Keeping the cost to families at \$15 per day for more than 18 years has been a point of pride for our organization. However, we must now consider whether it is sustainable to ask family caregivers to contribute only 63 cents per hour toward the cost of care.

After years of uninterrupted growth, Baluchon is facing headwinds for the first time. It's up to us to draw inspiration from our founder and demonstrate the determination and creativity needed to weather these challenges and come out even stronger.

Family caregivers now see us as indispensable. We will do everything in our power not to let them down.

List of Acronyms*

ACAS	Activities entrusted to nursing assistants
CBHSSJB	Cree Board of Health and Social Services of James
CISSS	Integrated Health and Social Services Centre
CIUSSS	Integrated University Health and Social Services Centre
CLSC	Local Community Services Centre
CPA	Chartered Professional Accountant
ID	Intellectual disability
PD	Physical disability
MC	Trademark
MD	Registered trademark
MSSS	Ministry of Health and Social Services
NPO	Non-profit organization
PPA	Caregiver
PSOC	Support Program for Community organizations
HR	Human resources
SAD	Home support
ALS	Amyotrophic lateral sclerosis
MS	Multiple sclerosis
IT	Information technology
NCD	Neurocognitive disorder
ASD	Autism spectrum disorder
TNC	Trouble neurocognitif
TSA	Trouble du spectre de l'autisme

*Translations provided for some organizations are not official.



BALUCHON

Répit long terme à domicile

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