



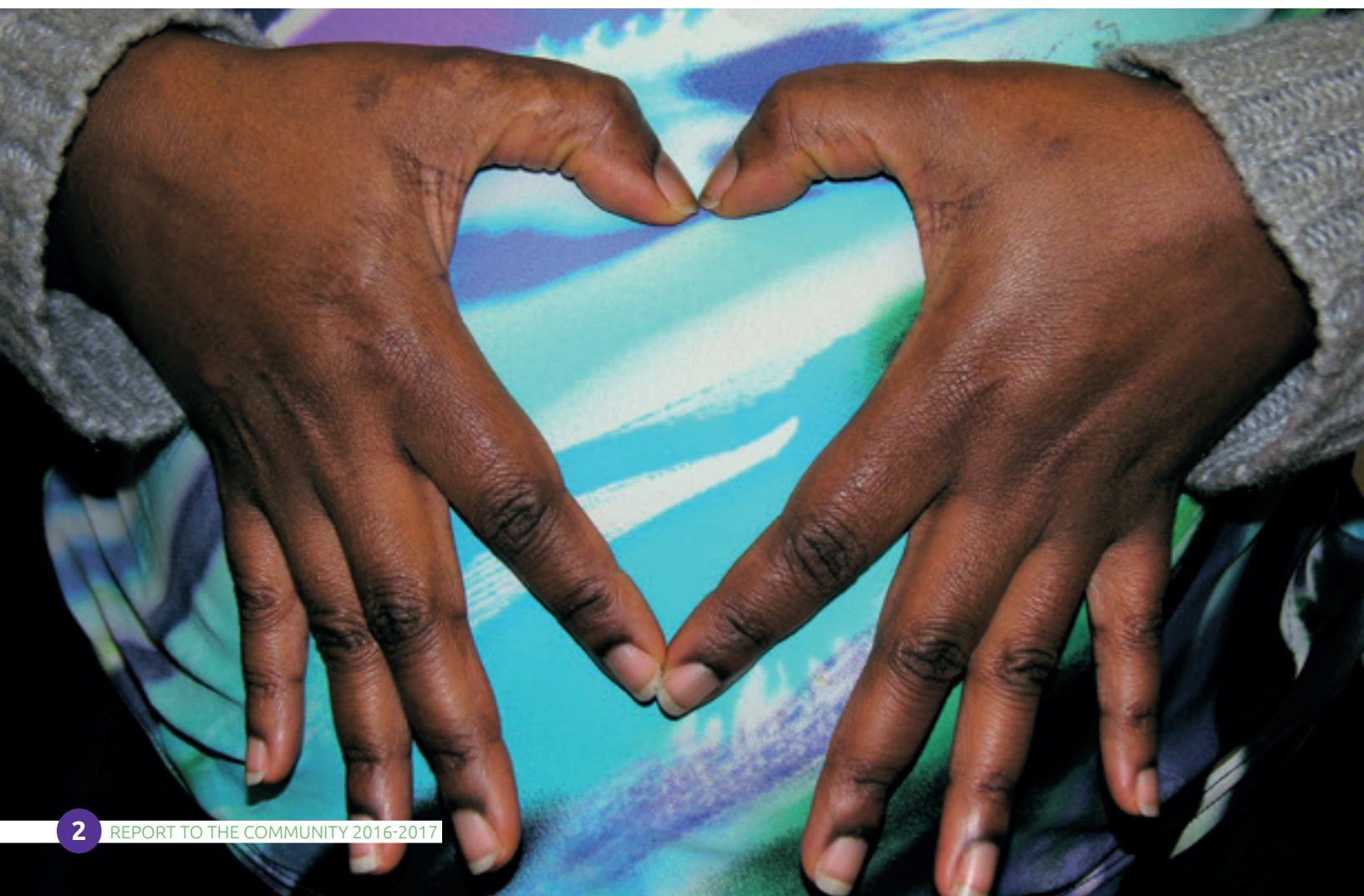
Report to the Community

2016-2017



Table of contents

A Word from the President and the Executive Director	page 3
The Dispensary and Social Nutrition	page 4
The Dispensary in the Service of Pregnant Women Living in Difficult Socioeconomic Circumstances	pages 5 to 9
The Dispensary in the Service of the Community	pages 10 to 14
Fundraising and Communication Activities	pages 15 to 17
The Dispensary Team: Who Does What?	page 18
What to Expect in 2017-2018	page 19



ME MARIE-CHRISTINE LEMERISE
PRESIDENT OF THE BOARD OF DIRECTORS

MRS JACKIE DEMERS, P.D.T.
EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

A Word from the President and the Executive Director

Openness, exploration, vision, action, and improvement: these are the words that best describe the past year at the Dispensary. In this second year of our 2015-2018 action plan, we continued the transformation of our organization, which began in 2015-2016. Our transformation is guided by three strategic priorities: **CONSOLIDATION OF OUR EFFORTS AND ACTIVITIES TO ALIGN THEM WITH BOTH OUR MISSION AND OUR SOCIAL NUTRITION APPROACH, INCREASED OUTREACH, AND THE RENEWAL OF OUR FUNDING SOURCES**. Meanwhile, we continued to provide the quality services that made such a difference in the lives of close to 900 expectant mothers living in difficult socioeconomic circumstances in Montreal this past year.

With Centraide's support, we employed the *Centre de formation populaire's* 'EvalPop' tool to schematize our social nutrition approach, define it in words, identify the results we wish to obtain beyond healthy birth weights, and implement a true culture of assessment in our day-to-day activities.

In order to make room for these improvements, we continued to find ways to innovate, both in the services we offer and in the organization itself. Three new positions were created this year: two are director positions (Director of Finance and Communications, Director of Programs and Projects) and one is a coordinator position (Family Services Coordinator). Because a strong team is a key element of adaptation and collaboration, roles and responsibilities were revised and our human resources management policies were modified to reflect the changes.

We initiated new projects and moved forward in several others. We took the time to reflect on the Dispensary's unique characteristics, to strengthen existing collaborations and initiate new ones, and to explore the many facets of social nutrition. Examples of projects include: Nurturing Life, the identification of the cost of Nutritious Food Baskets in Eeyou Istchee (James Bay) and the Magdalen Islands, the report on the Peter-McGill district food system, the redesigning of the Nutritional Profiles of Ethnic Communities tool in collaboration with the Fondation OLO, the continuation of the Documenting the Framework for Nutritional Interventions with Pregnant Women project in collaboration with the Fondation OLO and the CIUSSS Estrie-CHUS, and Véronique Ménard's Master's thesis on the Higgins® method.

On the communications front, we optimized our website, which was originally launched in 2015, and grew our presence on social media. We also produced video briefs and brochures in order to better reach our target clientele.

We introduced a new fundraising plan this past year. The 2016 Mother's Day Luncheon Benefit Event, where we showcased photographs of Dispensary families, was followed by the launch of our *Life Partners* program. Later in the year we held our *Christmas campaign*. Our *annual fundraising campaign* kicked off on Valentine's Day and was once again chaired by Sean Finn. This new schedule was a success, enabling us to generate even more revenue than predicted. Given that our main sources of institutional financing (Centraide, government) have been maintained, we were able to reduce the investment portion of our action plan implementation fund.

The board of directors completed a self-assessment at the beginning of the year and focused its efforts on following up on and supporting the changes that began in 2015 and the impacts that have resulted. **ONCE AGAIN THIS YEAR, THOSE AT THE HEART OF THE DISPENSARY WENT ABOVE AND BEYOND TO TAKE CARE OF THE FAMILIES WE SERVE**: our board members supported the development of our social nutrition approach and helped implement the necessary policies and activities. Despite any possible doubts and concerns they may have had, the team agreed to work differently, enabling our clients and their families to play a larger role in the organization itself. As usual, our volunteers put their hearts into their work, our work term students shared their expertise in exchange for valuable learning experiences, our donors responded to our appeals for support, and our partners joined forces with us to better serve the community. The women who benefited from our services also invested themselves further in the organization. We would like to extend them all our warmest thanks.

The transformation of the Dispensary is therefore well under way and our future holds many exciting consolidation challenges as we move into the third year of our ambitious transition-themed action plan. Once again, the Dispensary demonstrated its ability to adapt and take the necessary steps to completely integrate its social nutrition approach.

The Dispensary and Social Nutrition

Founded in 1879, the Montreal Diet Dispensary (Dispensary) is Quebec's leader in social nutrition for pregnant women living in difficult socioeconomic circumstances. It developed and put into practice the Higgins® nutritional intervention method. Since the 1950s, the Dispensary has helped more than 1,000 women per year in Greater Montreal receive adequate nutrition during their pregnancies and give birth to healthy babies. Its innovative nutritional and community services, provided **FREE OF CHARGE**, enable new parents to nurture the optimal development of their newborns and their families.

The Dispensary was behind the creation of the OLO programs in Quebec (distribution of eggs, milk, and oranges to pregnant women in need). It also inspired the Special Supplemental Nutrition Program for Women, Infants, and Children (WIC) in the United States and the Canada Prenatal Nutrition Program (CPNP).



Social Nutrition

Based on nutritional recommendations adapted to meeting the needs of pregnant women living in difficult circumstances and aimed at reducing poverty, **THE SOCIAL NUTRITION APPROACH** takes into account a number of health determinants (social, economic, and cultural status; access to health care; etc.) in order to provide interdisciplinary interventions enabling women to give birth to healthy babies, to nurture their babies' optimal development, and to flourish as parents and community citizens.

The Dispensary's social nutrition program is based on the Higgins® nutritional intervention method, a scientifically proven method that focuses on the pregnancy period.

Social nutrition also covers the first few months of the newborn's life and is characterized by:

- A warm welcome, free of judgment
- An analysis of the needs of each pregnant woman living in precarious conditions
- The implementation of a personalized, interdisciplinary action plan that includes counselling, support, and nutritional rehabilitation (consultations with a dietician/nutritionist and distribution of nutritional supplements and vitamins)
- Active breastfeeding support
- Group activities (preparing for childbirth, breastfeeding, parenting skills, healthy eating on a limited budget, child nutrition, etc.) and access to drop-in daycare
- Inclusion of family members in the intervention plan and the provision of psychosocial and community support (peer support, access to a network of organizations providing support and assistance)

Social nutrition relies on the involvement of other members of the pregnant women's social entourage and of her family.

The Dispensary in the Service of Pregnant Women Living in Difficult Socioeconomic Circumstances

The Dispensary differs from other nutritional support organizations in that its accessible services are offered free of charge in an inviting, family-style environment. Additionally, it takes into account the social, economic, and community factors surrounding its clients. The Dispensary accompanies expectant and new mothers from six months before birth to six months after birth.

INDIVIDUAL AND GROUP INTERVENTIONS

The key to our success is the implementation of personalized, interdisciplinary intervention plans that include counselling, nutritional support and rehabilitation (consultations with a dietician and distribution of vitamins and supplements), group activities (preparing for childbirth, breastfeeding, effective parenting skills, healthy eating on a budget, child nutrition, etc.), psychosocial and community support, and the involvement of family members in the intervention plan.

2016-2017 Results:

- Number of expectant mothers accompanied: 884
- Total number of individual and group consultations: 4,740
- Low birth weight (babies born weighing less than 2.5 kg): 4.6% (Dispensary) compared to 9.6% for the Montreal region amongst low-income families (Source : Espace informationnel du MSSS : statistiques générales, surveillance de la santé maternelle et foeto-infantile 2011-2102 et T26141 – Moyenne des années 2011-2012 pour la région socio-sanitaire de Montréal).
- Premature births: 6.6% (Dispensary) compared to 7.1% for the Montreal region amongst low-income families (Source : Espace informationnel du MSSS : statistiques générales, surveillance de la santé maternelle et foeto-infantile 2011-2102 et T2305 – Moyenne des années 2011-2012 pour la province de Québec).
- Number of group activities (preparing for childbirth, breastfeeding, parenting skills, healthy eating, etc.): 290; number of participants: 1,742
- Number of individual support to breastfeeding interventions: 322
- 96% of our clients initiated to breastfeed and 54% practiced it exclusively
- Number of psychosocial interventions: 256
- 17 women were referred to Rond Point for consultations
- 202 spouses took part in the consultations, for a total of 555 attendances

WELCOMING GROUPS

Our welcoming groups were created to provide support to expectant mothers as they await their first consultation with a dietician/nutritionist at the Dispensary. The groups' objectives are to explain the Dispensary's services, encourage expectant mothers to adopt healthy eating habits, and provide material and nutritional support to the clients with the greatest needs.

2016-2017 Results:

14

welcoming groups were created and 148 expectant mothers took part.



NUTRITIONAL SUPPLEMENTS, REMEDIAL NUTRITION, AND DIETARY RECOMMENDATIONS

Due to their low incomes, 93% of the women who were accompanied by the Dispensary this year received nutritional supplements (one litre of milk, one egg, one dose of prenatal multivitamins, and food items from Moisson Montréal), which ensured they would consume the protein, calcium, and other essential nutrients they required to give birth to healthy babies.

However, the provision of nutritional supplements and vitamins is only one aspect of the Dispensary's nutritional intervention program. The Higgins® method bases its nutritional assessments and interventions on risk factors that help determine the type of remedial nutrition required for each pregnancy. 71% of the expectant mothers we accompanied presented with conditions that required at least one form of remedial nutrition. This involved increasing protein and calorie intake to compensate for nutritional needs caused by one or more of the following risk factors: malnutrition, a history of poor pregnancy outcomes, being underweight, insufficient weight gain during pregnancy, back-to-back pregnancies, pernicious vomiting, and severe emotional distress. Other risk factors exist which could not be corrected through these types of measures (poverty, gestational diabetes, smoking, drug abuse, etc.).

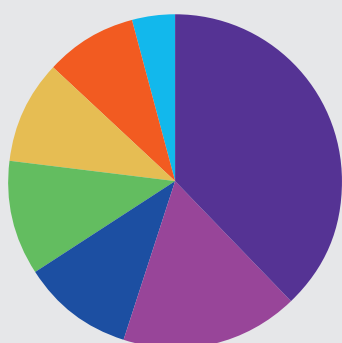
Every baby who is born healthy today will contribute to a stronger society tomorrow. Every parent who starts out with confidence will feel less anxious and be a more effective parent.

LE CLUB BÉDAINE

The Dispensary continued to provide group interventions (called Club Bédaïne) to women at a lower risk of delivering low birth weight babies. These group interventions incorporate both knowledge dissemination and the distribution of nutritional supplements. They have generated a community effect where peer support plays an important role in creating new social networks for participants, who are subsequently more likely to take part in informative workshops.

- One new cohort was formed between May and November 2016 (5 sessions)
- Eighteen women benefited from these activities this year

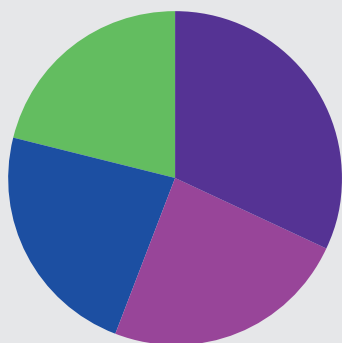
WHO DID WE HELP THIS YEAR?



Sources of revenue

- 38 % Insufficient income
- 17 % Income security
- 11 % Sufficient income
- 11 % Loans and bursaries
- 10 % No income
- 9 % Employment insurance
- 4 % Other

The income sources of the families helped by the Dispensary provide a clear picture of the realities of low-income families. These families belong to various demographic groups that do not necessarily have access to social assistance. The financial status of each family is assessed in relation to the minimum comfort budget established by the Dispensary, which is even lower than the low-income cutoff established by Statistics Canada. It must therefore be understood that even the "sufficient income" category corresponds to a precarious financial situation.



Number of pregnancies among our clients

- 32 % Fourth or subsequent pregnancy
- 24 % Second pregnancy
- 23 % Third pregnancy
- 21 % First pregnancy

Ten percent of babies born to families living in difficult socioeconomic circumstances have low birth weights (less than 2.5 kg). *The services provided by the Dispensary help reduce that number by half.*



Personalized services based on the Higgins® method form the core of our interventions. The method takes into account the whole person before suggesting improvements to dietary and other lifestyle habits. It focuses on the health of the mother and her baby by accompanying her throughout her pregnancy to reduce obstacles that may prevent her from maintaining a healthy lifestyle.

SOME INTERESTING FACTS

1%

of women were under the age of 19 and 32% were over 35.

19%

of families were headed by a single parent.

89%

of women had at least a secondary 5 education (or equivalent). Immigration, especially recent or transient, can create difficult socioeconomic conditions for families, even amongst those that are educated (and in some cases, overqualified).

44%

have lived in Canada for less than two years.

23,5%

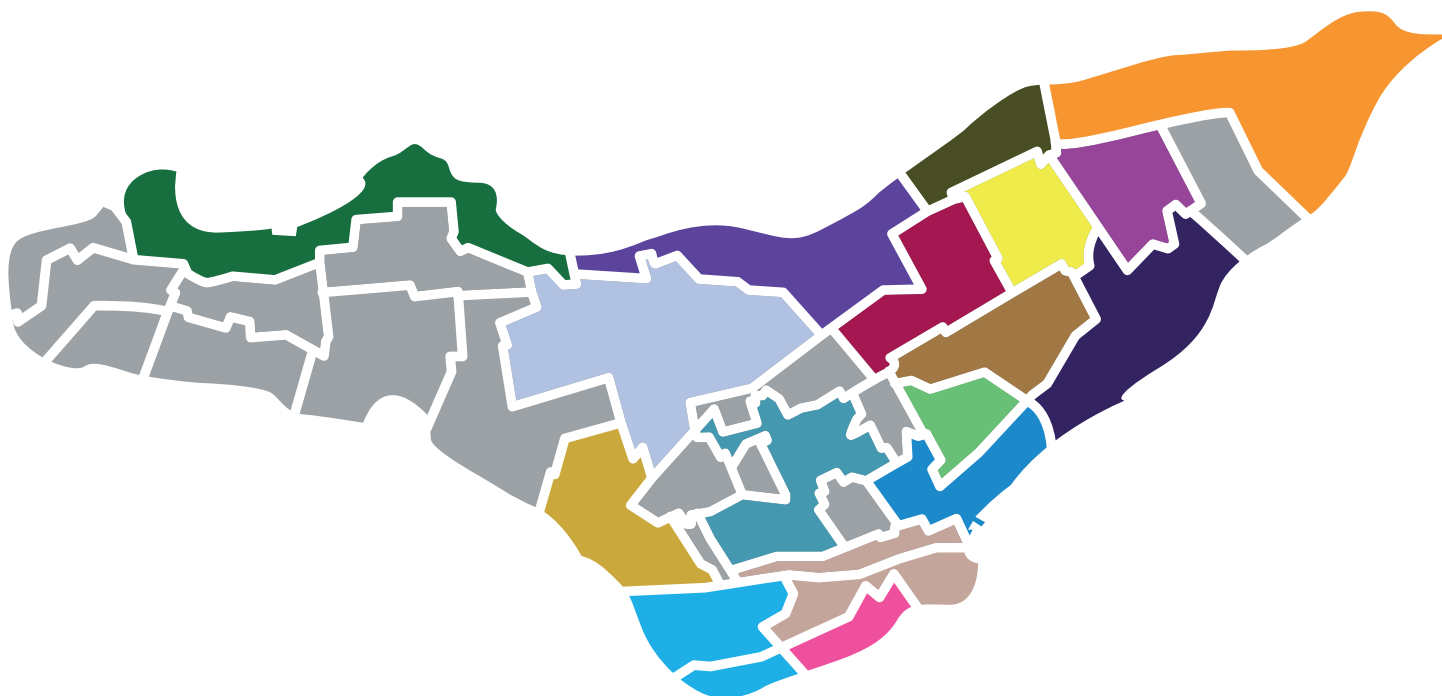
of clients were served in a language other than French. Among those who do speak French, some do so in a limited manner.

NATIVE COUNTRY

North Africa	32%	Asia	12%
Africa	17%	Mexico, Latin America	6%
Canada, U.S.A.	13%	Middle East	5%
West Indies	13%	Europe	2%

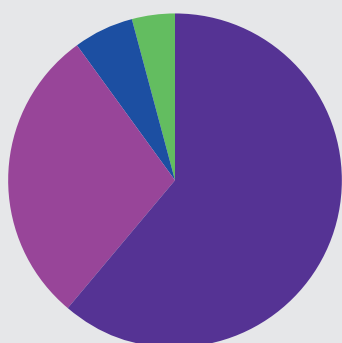
PLACE OF RESIDENCE

The Dispensary's mandate is regional, serving families from all over the island of Montreal. Many of our clients travel to our downtown location from outlying neighbourhoods such as Saint-Léonard, Ahuntsic, Montréal-Nord, and Saint-Laurent. For this reason, it is important that we be familiar with the community resources available across the island and that we develop partnerships with them so our clients can access services closer to home.



10,90% - Ahuntsic	2,85% - Notre-Dame-de-Grâce	7,81% - Saint-Laurent
2,73% - Anjou	0,74% - Parc-Extension	9,67% - Saint-Léonard
5,95% - Bordeaux-Cartierville	0,37% - Petite-Patrie	8,05% - Saint-Michel
3,10% - Côte-des-Neiges	0,37% - Pierrefonds-Roxboro	3,72% - Sud-Ouest
1,86% - Hochelaga-Maisonneuve	1,49% - Plateau Mont-Royal	5,08% - Verdun
2,85% - Lachine	1,36% - Pointe-aux-Trembles	0,87% - Villeray
2,35% - LaSalle	1,73% - Rivière-des-Prairies	4,83% - Ville-Marie/Centre-Sud
1,61% - Mercier	2,97% - Rosemont	8,30% - Other
8,43% - Montréal-Nord		

REFERRAL SOURCES



- Word of mouth: 62%
- Health network: 29%
- Community organizations: 6%
- Other: 4%

This year, 17 women received the services of a Dispensary dietician/nutritionist through the Rond Point perinatal and family drug abuse program at the Centre de pédiatrie sociale Centre-Sud. This is an example of the Dispensary's commitment to providing its services to expectant mothers in the riskiest situations.

OTHER PERFORMANCE INDICATORS FOR MEASURING THE IMPACTS OF OUR INTERVENTIONS THIS YEAR

In addition to adequate birth weights, some of the results we wish to achieve for families through our social nutrition program include the sharing of reliable information, client education, support and follow-up by community workers, the creation of spaces for mothers to exchange information, and the transmission of knowledge on promoting the proper growth of unborn children. See the following results **FROM THE PERIOD OF JANUARY TO MARCH 2017**.

Secure attachment (child feels secure in relationship with parent)

This is an important element of social nutrition because it is widely recognized that this type of attachment begins in the womb.

- 93% of the 272 mothers who received prenatal or postnatal services from the Dispensary between January and March 2017 retained the information they were provided on the development of their child (the importance of receiving adequate nutrition during pregnancy, the importance of carrying to term, the stages of fetal development, etc.).
- During group activities and discussions on topics such as childbirth, breastfeeding, and parenting skills:
 - 92% of clients expressed interest in speaking positively to their babies and close to 40% claimed to have already done so (to unborn children or to babies aged 0 to 6 months, as applicable).
 - 98% of participants stated that they intended to practise skin-to-skin techniques and 88% of those with newborns had already done so.

"Skin-to-skin techniques make babies feel good and less alone, and it facilitates communication with them." A Dispensary client.

Awareness of internal resources

A series of interventions promoting internal coping skills implemented by Dispensary staff led women to recognize the strengths they had within themselves and to develop not only self-assurance and self-confidence, but also the ability to surpass their own perceived limits out of love for their child.

Peer support (between Dispensary clients)

75% of respondents to a survey on group activities stated that they had shared knowledge and experiences during discussions with other participants. They claimed that these conversations had produced the following benefits: moral support and reassurance, a reduction in pregnancy-related stress, and new friendships (escape from isolation).

A sense of parental efficacy

Parental efficacy refers to a parent's perceived ability to execute a set of tasks related to raising and caring for a child.

- Thanks to the acquisition of parenting skills during various Dispensary interventions, discussion group participants stated that they felt confident in their parenting abilities and that they would be able to adequately meet their own needs in addition to those of their children.

A relationship of trust with a significant person from the Dispensary

The relationship of trust between a client and a community worker is indispensable to implementing recommendations leading to the healthy birth and development of a child.

- According to our community workers, 96% of Dispensary clients display significant trust in community workers and in the quality of their interventions.
- According to our clients, our community workers possess appropriate knowledge and experience, good listening skills, a non-judgemental approach, and a reassuring presence, in addition to being very available.

"That a perfect stranger can be so concerned about me and my experiences, well-being, and feelings, and can be so reassuring, is priceless to me." A Dispensary client.



Photo : Éric St-Pierre

The Dispensary in the Service of the Community

NURTURING LIFE

Nurturing Life is a Dispensary program that provides community workers throughout Quebec with training and information on perinatal nutrition, enabling them to provide effective services to their clients. Nurturing Life is unique in that it focuses on nutritional needs during pregnancy and the newborn phase and is based on the Dispensary's practical experience with pregnant women.



- Twenty-six articles, 14 case studies, 11 write-ups, 16 information sheets, and 26 "*Saviez-vous que*" briefs were published on the Nurturing Life page of the Dispensary's website, and 129 posts (articles, write-ups, training briefs, etc.) were published on Nurturing Life's private Facebook page. Visitors viewed an average of 7 pages per visit.
- According to a survey we conducted:
 - 71% of members referred their colleagues to the Nurturing Life website
 - Nurturing Life has had an impact on the actions or intervention practices of 81% of members
 - 51% of respondents refer to information sheets provided by Nurturing Life during consultations with their clients
 - 65% of members state that the Nurturing Life website is their primary resource for information on nutrition during pregnancy

Nurturing Life has succeeded in positioning itself at the junction of scientific literature, official recommendations, and observations made through the Dispensary's practices, serving as a centre of expertise for those working "on the ground". The project continues to be supported by the Public Health Agency of Canada.

2016-2017 Highlights

- Eleven online training sessions were delivered with an average of 12 participants per session representing 16 socio-sanitary regions in Quebec. Twenty-eight participants attended more than one training session and 15 participants attended more than two.
- Five web training sessions were delivered, with an average of 8,75 participants per session from 10 socio-sanitary regions throughout Quebec.
- One hundred percent of participants rated the following aspects positively: session length, relevance and accessibility of content, professionalism, responses to questions, visual media, teaching materials, and availability of information sheets.

NUTRITIOUS FOOD BASKETS (NFB)

In 1932, the Dispensary created the Food Price List, which was a list of healthy foods available at low prices. This list later served as the basis for Canada's food baskets which evolved into the Nutritious Food Basket (NFB) in the 1950s. The NFB is a guide to meeting nutritional requirements at low cost. The Dispensary monitors the supermarket cost of the NFB every four months and publishes its findings, providing up-to-date information on the minimum cost of adequately feeding a family of four in Montreal. The NFB formed the basis for the Dispensary's positive reputation in the domain of food security.



Photo : Annie-Claude Bédard



Photo : Vladimir Antaki

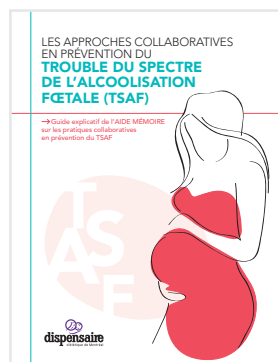
The NFB in the James Bay region (Eeyou Istchee)

At the request of the Cree Board of Health and Social Services of James Bay, the Dispensary conducted an initial study of the price of the NFB in the James Bay region in 2011. The findings from the study proved very useful to James Bay communities. The most striking fact was that certain basic food items cost 50% more in the region than they do in Montreal! Data from the study was used to create a snapshot of aboriginal communities during the 2016 edition of the *Grande semaine des tout-petits*.

In August 2016, the Cree Board of Health and Social Services of James Bay once again mandated the Dispensary to examine the evolution of the cost of the NFB in the James Bay region, five years after the initial study. The second survey showed that in 2016, the cost of the NFB in the James Bay region was \$11.50 per person per day, or 30% higher than in Montreal. However, a greater variety of food items was available than had been in 2011.

The NFB on the Magdalen Islands

In May 2016, the Dispensary accompanied two representatives of the group *Carrefour Jeunesse Emploi* from the Magdalen Islands in an assessment of the price of the NFB. According to their assessment, a food basket costs 16% more on the Magdalen Islands than in Montreal. The minimum cost of a healthy diet was determined to be \$9.86 per day for one member of a family of four (consisting of two adults and two children) on the islands. The results enabled the Magdalen Islands team to discuss potential avenues for improving access to healthy, affordable food, notably on regional radio shows.



FETAL ALCOHOL SPECTRUM DISORDER (FASD)

With the help of community and social workers from *Rond Point* (an initiative consisting of eight partners working in substance use and abuse in a family context), teams from the Dispensary and the Public Health Agency of Canada were able to reflect on best practices for preventing alcohol consumption during pregnancy and to consider how this information can be shared most effectively. The result of this work was the publication of an intervention guide and a checklist for field workers in the summer of 2016. These documents, along with other resources that were developed in 2015-2016 for the general public, are available at <http://www.dispensaire.ca/en/>.

Every dollar invested in services provided by the Dispensary represents a saving of \$17 for society in short-term health care alone.

NUTRITIONAL PROFILES OF ETHNIC COMMUNITIES

In collaboration with the Fondation OLO, the Dispensary revised the *Profils alimentaires des principaux groupes ethniques de la région de Québec* document, which was originally published in 1998 by the Direction de la santé publique de Québec. To complement the expertise of dietitians from the Fondation OLO, the Dispensary, and the OLO community of practice, 80 Dispensary clients and other citizens were consulted during the development and validation of the nutritional profiles of the 15 regions of the world included in the document. The profiles identify typical food items and the ways they are consumed in a typical meal as well as describing eating behaviours and culinary habits. They also describe regional beliefs and customs about nutrition and the perinatal period. This reference document is specifically tailored to those working with diverse ethnic communities in an immigration context in Canada; therefore, it focuses on the realities of those ethnic groups in a Canadian context. The project fostered the dissemination of tacit knowledge amongst workers in the field and provided an authentic experience of shared expertise between clients and community workers. We are very much looking forward to distributing the finalized version of this reference document.

PARTNERSHIPS

The Dispensary's position at the heart of its community is made possible through partnerships that enable women, who would not otherwise have access to its services, receive support appropriate to their needs (food aid, medical advice, specialized support, active citizenship, family aid, etc.). This is an integral component of social nutrition. In addition to the partnerships described in the following paragraphs, steps have been taken to initiate or secure agreements with other potential partners.

Rond-Point

The Rond Point initiative was created to provide families struggling with drug use and abuse with a place to go to receive the services they need. The program takes an interdisciplinary approach with the goal of creating relationships of trust in order to reduce damage to individuals and families. In addition to continuing to collaborate on our prevention of alcohol consumption during pregnancy project that began in 2015-2016, the Dispensary facilitated group workshops and provided individual consultations at Rond Point, which benefited 17 families.

Médecins du Monde

Médecins du Monde and the Dispensary maintained their existing referral agreement. By relocating its premises and reorganizing its clinical services for migrants with precarious status, Médecins du Monde improved its capacity to observe the evolution of the needs of the expectant mothers that walk through its doors and took the time to consider how collaboration between our organizations could better meet those needs. Eleven women received services from our two organizations this year, thanks to our agreement.

Moisson Montréal

Thanks to improvements in the quality of food items and to more efficient distribution logistics, Moisson Montréal enabled us to continue distributing food items that are adapted to the needs of our clientele and are based on our recommendations (value of this contribution: \$ 57,910). Moisson Montréal's efforts to serve the very young resulted in our being able to distribute diapers and personal care products for newborns. In addition to services provided directly to mothers, Moisson Montréal and the Dispensary aim to work together to improve food security in Montreal by measuring and creating a snapshot of food security, understanding the issues and their various aspects, improving communication, participating in consultations, etc.





Fondation OLO

Above and beyond the distribution of food items (value of this contribution: \$ 64,000), our partnership with the Fondation OLO is based principally on the exchange of expertise. Some of our projects include the nutritional profiles mentioned above, the documenting of the underlying foundations for nutritional interventions with low-income pregnant women (which began last year thanks to funding from the *ministère de la Santé et des Services sociaux* and the expertise of the *CIUSSS Estrie-CHUS*), webinars hosted by Dispensary dietitians for members of the OLO community of practice, and participation in community of practice activities.

Éco-Quartier Peter-McGill

Thanks to a donation from the TD Friends of the Environment Foundation, Éco-Quartier was able to harness its expertise and complete its mission of giving the Dispensary's yard a makeover. Its members removed grass to make room for bee-friendly plants, installed garden boxes on the balcony, and built a vegetable garden for educational purposes. They also delivered educational workshops and provided tours of the garden in order to help residents and other organizations see the types of possibilities that exist.

Fondation de la visite

The services of visiting mothers and visiting fathers are vital to many of the Dispensary's families and our collaboration with the Fondation de la visite dates back many years. It was strengthened when the foundation took over the distribution of baby clothes to expectant mothers living in difficult circumstances. The Dispensary can therefore count on the Fondation de la visite to fill in where it is needed and to ensure services will continue after childbirth for the women who need them most. The Fondation de la visite's field workers and volunteers benefit from the sharing of knowledge and expertise on perinatal nutrition and better services for their clients. Sixty-six newborn baby starter kits were distributed to Dispensary clients.

YWCA – Y des femmes Montréal

Despite a history of collaboration between the YMCA - Y des femmes Montréal and the Dispensary, no formal agreement existed between the two organizations, which have worked together in the past on local initiatives such as the Peter-McGill Community Council and Families Downtown. This year, the two organizations united their forces to provide shared services on Mother's Day and at Christmas-time. The toys collected by CHM Communications were therefore distributed to hundreds of families, who were also invited to take part in festivities hosted by the YMCA - Y des femmes Montréal.

CONCERTED ACTION, REPRESENTATION, AND THE SHARING OF EXPERTISE

Peter-McGill Community Council and Families Downtown

Once again this year, the Dispensary was very active in joint local activities. We coordinated the food security committee of Families Downtown (the committee of Inter-action Peter-McGill community council for children 0-5 years old and their families) and the production of the Portrait of Peter McGill's Food System as well as two public consultations: one on barriers to the consumption of fruits and vegetables and the other on potential solutions for increasing food security. In addition, resource directories for field workers and the general public were published. Also at Families Downtown, the Dispensary was involved in the coordination committee and the support group for field workers, and participated in community events.

The Dispensary was involved in the steering committee for the Collective Impact Project. Because the Peter-McGill neighbourhood is a hot spot for urban development, we submitted a brief supporting the integration of a community centre able to provide food security services on the future site of the Montreal Children's Hospital. We supported requests for green spaces and social housing for families on the site and its surrounding areas.

Food security

In accordance with our regional mandate, our role in local cooperation, and our global vision for improving food security, we were also involved in the *Table de concertation sur la faim et le développement social du Montréal Métropolitain* and the *Système alimentaire Montréalais* (SAM). We provided easy, economical, and nutritious recipes to the *Dépanneur Fraîcheur* project in order to help it get off to a successful start. We took part in a public conference held by the Food Sovereignty Coalition.



Clinical nutrition and public health

This year we joined the round table for co-development in the perinatal-youth field and pursued our involvement in the round table for nutritionists working in maternal-fetal health in hospital settings. The Dispensary also participated in consultation sessions with community organizations on public health funding.

Véronique Ménard, dietician/nutritionist at the Dispensary, submitted her Master's thesis on the impact of the Higgins® method. The results of her study, which were presented to our team, to the McGill University School of Human Nutrition, and to the attendees of the Canadian National Perinatal Research Meeting in Montebello, show that babies born to women who received our services were less likely to experience complications despite the fact that the women in the study had higher incidences of anemia and gestational diabetes than the national population.

Provincial initiatives

The Dispensary supports the *Regroupement pour un Québec en santé* and is a signatory of the *Lettre des grands à chacun des tout-petits*, which was drafted during the first edition of the *Grande semaine des tout-petits*.

Other activities

The Dispensary team also delivered workshops in line with its mission to several community organizations, participated in the Centraide campaign by delivering about twenty workplace presentations, and attended numerous forums, training workshops, and presentation spaces.

Fundraising and Communication Activities

FUNDRAISING ACTIVITIES

4th Edition of the Mother's Day Luncheon Benefit Event

On May 13, 2016, the Montreal Diet Dispensary (Dispensary) held its fourth annual Mother's Day Luncheon Benefit Event. Under the honorary chairmanship of Sean Finn, Executive Vice-President of Corporate Services and Chief Legal Officer at CN, the event raised over \$60,000 thanks to the support of our donors, partners, and the 120 attendees. The Dispensary made use of the occasion to showcase some of the families that have been served by the Dispensary over the past 60 years. With the collaboration of 17 photographers and 17 families, attendees were able to view a collection of exclusive photos.



Photo : Fk7 Photographie

The Dispensary would like to thank the sponsors that made the event possible: CN, Braque Agency, BMO Financial Group, Miller Thompson, and Pharmaprix. We would also like to thank the following technical partners: Diverso Productions, Fk7 Photographie, Hachem Framing, Massy Forget Langlois Public Relations, PhotoLab Yves Thomas, and Témoin Production.

Dispensary Calendar

The photo exhibition enabled the Dispensary to create a beautiful calendar, covering the months of August 2016 to December 2017, which can be purchased for \$20. The families, who were photographed engaging in daily activities at home or in a location of their choice, included stories of their interactions with the Dispensary team, adding texture and life to the project.

Life Partners

The concept behind Life Partners is to invite people close to the Dispensary to sponsor one of our expectant mothers by making a \$1,000 donation (*it costs \$1,000 to provide the Dispensary's services to one expectant mother for a period of one year*). This new fundraising method allowed us to raise \$11,000 (*11 Life Partners*).



Photo : Déisoft

Our Spokesperson:
Marie-Élaine Thibert, Singer and Entrepreneur

"Bringing a child into the world should be a sweet and joyous experience. New parents want nothing but the best for the tiny, fragile person who quickly becomes so important to them."

"By caring for and comforting mothers-to-be in need and providing them with unanticipated support, the Dispensary enables close to 1,000 new babies to be born healthy and happy despite the difficult circumstances of their mothers. For me, supporting the Dispensary is like taking young children by the hand and guiding them as they take their first steps in life."

Christmas Campaign

Because we moved this year's main fundraising campaign to the period between February 14 and May 12, 2017, we decided to introduce a fundraising campaign over the holiday season, when supporters are accustomed to making donations. The strategy proved successful: we raised close to \$55,000!

Twenty-six Christmas baskets were prepared by our donors and distributed to the families with the greatest needs. In addition, through our continued partnership with The Gazette, we were able to provide additional donations to 130 families.

Also as the last fourteen years, Telefilm Canada employees rallied and raised, this year, a total of \$2,363.

Annual Campaign 2017

The winds of change blew through the offices of our annual fundraising campaign organizers. This year, the Dispensary created a solid honorary committee of 13 Montreal business people chaired by Sean Finn, Executive Vice-President of Corporate Services and Chief Legal Officer at CN. We also completely revised our partnership and sponsorship formulas. Beginning with our campaign launch on February 14, 2017, our donors were invited to make donations and to help make the 5th edition of the Mother's Day Luncheon Benefit Event a success by purchasing tickets or sponsoring the event. The campaign will come to a close on Friday, May 12, 2017, at the luncheon benefit event. The campaign results will be announced at that time.

CHRISTMAS PARTY

On December 22, 2016, we organized a big Christmas party with the goals of hosting as many families as possible, of enabling parents to pick out their own gifts for their children, and of encouraging the entire Dispensary staff to participate. It was a great success: more than 125 people (adults and children) attended!

Thank you to the YWCA for lending us the party room and for the toys distribution, to CHM Communications for their donation of toys for all the children, to our Santa Claus Ibrahim Ouedraogo, to our elf Eric Mallette, and to the *Fabulous Dream Girls* from the Dispensary dance troupe, who put on a cheerful, festive performance.



Photo : Nathalie Choquette

THANK YOU

The Dispensary would like to thank all those who solicited donations on its behalf from their friends, acquaintances, and the members of their networks. We are deeply grateful for your contributions toward the success of our mission.

Photo : Marie Sébire

COMMUNICATION ACTIVITIES

"Another step forward" would be the best way to describe our communication activities over the past year. Some highlights include:

- Design and implementation of the organization's first annual communications plan
- Improvements to the content and accessibility of our website
- Increased frequency of publication on social media accounts and the addition of signature phrases such as: *The Dispensary in the Service of the Community* and *The Dispensary in the Service of Pregnant Women Living in Difficult Socioeconomic Circumstances*
- Implementation of a nutritionist-led information campaign during Nutrition Month
- Purchase of video production materials and the production of five video briefs
- Creation and publication of a new corporate brochure and a leaflet inviting pregnant women in difficult socioeconomic circumstances to take advantage of our services
- Participation in the radio broadcast of research results on Nutritious Food Baskets (NFBs) on the Magdalen Islands
- Drafting of our first newsletter: *Nourrir la vie, bâtir l'avenir*
- Publication of articles on the services of the Dispensary in some Quebec media
- Participation at the Parents and Kids fair in April 2016

IN MEMORIAM DONATIONS

In memory of the following, a donation was given to the Dispensary

- Michel Desrosiers
- Louise Desjardins Joubert
- Bernard Lamarre
- Pierre Lamarre
- Leona Serbey
- Georges Serbey
- Alessandro Antonecchia
- André Lamarre
- Enrico Riggi
- Pierrette Desjardins
- Anne Marie Laporte

The Dispensary Team: Who Does What? (at 31 March 2017)

In order to carry out its mission, the Dispensary relies on the contributions of its volunteer board members; on the exceptional expertise of its dietitians/nutritionists, community workers, educator and perinatal and lactation consultants; and on the hard work of the volunteers and trainees that provide their services.

BOARD OF DIRECTORS

Me Marie-Christine Lemerise, **President**
Delegatus Legal Services Inc.

Mrs. Solange Blanchard, **Vice-President**
Cumul Inc.

Mrs. Pierrette Poézévara, **Treasurer**
Collège Beaubois

Dr. Jean-Marie Moutquin, MD, **Secretary**
Retired

OTHER ADMINISTRATORS

Mrs. Astrid Bicumapka Shema
Student, Université de Montréal

Mrs. Isabelle Bonneau
City of Montreal

Mrs. Annie Bouthillette
Vidéotron

Mr. Jean-Marc Demers
Braque Agency

Mrs. Zeina Khalifé
BMO Private Banking

Mrs. Annie Langlois
Massy Forget Langlois Public Relations

Me Francine Martel
Gowling WLG

Mrs. Fanny Zúñiga
Former client

Mrs. Elizabeth Jarry, Mrs. Patricia Fourcand
and Mr. Daniel-Marc Paré were replaced at the
beginning of the fiscal year.

COMMITTEES

Committees are composed of administrators, volunteer professionals, and staff members who generously donate their time and expertise.

Evaluation and Practices Improvement Committee

Amarachukwu Anaduaka-Obi, Astrid Bicumapka Shema, Annie Brodeur-Doucet, Lise Comtois (now retired), Eileen Curran (departure during the fiscal year), Jackie Demers, Véronique Ménard, Dr. Jean-Marie Moutquin, France Proulx, Isabelle Renaud, Beatriz Rivera Oropeza, and Fanny Zúñiga

Finance Committee

Jackie Demers, Elizabeth Jarry (departure early in the fiscal year), and Pierrette Poézévara

Fundraising and Communications Committee

André Bertrand, Solange Blanchard, Annie Bouthillette, Annie Brodeur-Doucet, Jackie Demers, Jean-Marc Demers, Muriel Ide, Annie Langlois and Marie-Christine Lemerise

Human Resources Management Committee

Isabelle Bonneau, Jackie Demers, Marie-Christine Lemerise, and Daniel-Marc Paré (departure early in the fiscal year)

Nominating Committee

Isabelle Bonneau, Jackie Demers, Élizabéth Jarry (departure early in the fiscal year), Annie Langlois, Marie-Christine Lemerise, and Daniel-Marc Paré (departure early in the fiscal year)

STAFF

Executive Director
Jackie Demers, P.Dt.

Fundraising and Communications Coordinator
André Bertrand

Programs and Projects Director
Annie Brodeur-Doucet, P.Dt.

Family Services Coordinator
Tammy Tran, P.Dt.

Administrative and Communications Assistant (position abolished during the fiscal year)
Nathalie Choquette (depart during the fiscal year)

Accounting Assistant
Phuong-Lan Pham

Administrative Assistant
Beatriz Rivera-Oropeza

Dietitians/Nutritionists
Lise Comtois, P.Dt. (retired during the fiscal year)
Isabelle Dubé, P.Dt.
Catherine Labelle, P.Dt.
Suzanne Lepage, P.Dt.
Emmy Maten-Fellows, P.Dt., IBCLC
Andréa McCarthy, P.Dt.
Karen Medeiros, P.Dt.
France Proulx-Alonzo, P.Dt., Psychologist (M.A.)
Véronique Ménard, P.Dt. (Master's candidate)
Dina Salonina, P.Dt. (maternity leave)

Perinatal and Lactation Consultants
Selma Buckett, IBCLC
Carole Ann Girard, IBCLC

Early Childhood Educator
Rosy Buonocore

Community Worker
Chantal Grand Maison

Writers for Nurturing Life
Laura Li Ching NG, P.Dt.
Caroline Rouleau, P.Dt.
Jenny-Lyne St-André, P.Dt., M.Sc.
Carine Youssef, P.Dt.

Substitute Receptionist
Marie-Christine Viens

VOLUNTEERS

This past year, our board members and more than 70 volunteers helped carry out the Dispensary's mission. By helping care for children at our drop-in daycare, sharing expertise in committees, completing administrative tasks, calling clients to invite them to group activities, and completing countless other tasks, volunteers provide crucial services to the Dispensary and the families it serves. More than 2 500 hours of volunteer service were provided to the Dispensary in 2016-2017.

TRAINEES - OTHER RESOURCES - SUMMER EMPLOYMENT

Fatima Abbass, Hiba Al-Masri, Denisa Maria Boila, Catherine Boudrias, Janine Desrosiers-Choquette, Fatiha Djoudi, Joëlle Fogelbach, Stéphanie Fortier, Alexia Hammal, Sophie Morel, Leandra Rabinovitch, Safia Riat, Philisha Richards, Caroline Rouleau, Roya Safari, Ola Saran, Marie-Christine Viens, and Iordanka Vodenitcharova.

CORPORATION

In addition to the directors of the Board of Directors, the Dispensary Corporation has a total of 100 members.



2017-2018 Year

WHAT TO EXPECT IN 2017-2018



A practices guide that places social nutrition at the heart of all our activities

Using our definition of social nutrition and our logic model as starting points, we will document our interventions, adapt our services, and consolidate our efforts around the impacts made through our approach. In order to do so, we will set up an intensive work area involving the entire Dispensary team. Our goal: the creation and implementation of a practices guide that integrates the definition of social nutrition into our intervention methods.



Improved management tools and defined indicators that will enable us to better follow up on and measure the impact of our interventions without relying solely on birth weight as an indicator

Over the course of the year, we will implement organizational performance indicators, on both financial and intervention levels, to ensure we meet our objectives, provide optimal services to families, and continually improve our efforts.



A more precise partnership development framework that will foster the forging of alliances with organizations that are able to meet the needs of our clientele, thereby providing more efficient services

The impacts of social nutrition can be augmented through the creation of effective partnerships, which are made possible through a clearer understanding of the services we offer and the needs of our clientele as well as a more comprehensive awareness of available resources.



A louder voice for the families we serve

In our quest to continually improve the services we offer and work more collaboratively, we will listen closely to our clients in order to understand their needs, be more familiar with their living environments, and help them find their place in their communities.



Updated organizational policies

In 2017-2018, we will define and implement an internal and external communications policy as well as a donation management and donor relations policy, and we will ensure our management and human resources practices remain current. We will also complete our employee handbook.



New fundraising activities

We will introduce two new fundraising activities in 2017-2018: a sports challenge that reflects who we are, with choice spots reserved for our staff and clients; and new approaches to help us increase the number of planned gifts we receive. In addition, a new partnership formula will be introduced for the 5th edition of our annual Mother's Day Luncheon Benefit Event. Our Life Partners program and our Christmas campaign will return this year and we will continue to solicit donations through our 2017 fundraising campaign, which began in early 2017.



A large-scale communications campaign

To increase our visibility in the eyes of the general public, we will launch our first-ever large-scale communications campaign designed to reach a broad audience.



Rejuvenated facilities

Our beautiful house in the heart of the city needs some TLC so we will undertake the necessary maintenance and repair work to ensure our facilities remain warm and welcoming for the families we serve.



Montreal Diet Dispensary

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Founded in 1879, the Dispensary is Quebec's leader in social nutrition for pregnant women living in difficult socioeconomic circumstances. Each year, the Dispensary helps approximately 1,000 women in Greater Montreal receive adequate nutrition during their pregnancies so they can give birth to healthy babies. Through innovative clinical and community interventions, the Dispensary enables new parents to nurture the optimal development of their newborns and their families.

The Dispensary is a not-for-profit organization supported by Centraide and is a member the Fondation OLO.



Report to the Community

2016-2017

