

Breaking Down Barriers

with the Canadian neuromuscular community



MUSCULAR
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CANADA

Breaking Down Barriers

Muscular Dystrophy Canada's 2023-2028 Strategic Priorities:

Expanding
research
infrastructure

Improving
public access
to healthcare,
information,
education and
other community
resources

Increasing
accessibility
to expanded
programs and
services

Driving
revenue
generation
to meet the
needs of our
community

Table of contents

- 3 Message from the
CEO & Board Chair
- 4 Board of Directors
- 5 Breaking Down Barriers
- 6 Year In Review: 2024-2025
- 10 Financial Statements
- 12 Financial Summary
- 13 Impact

Mission statement

Muscular Dystrophy Canada's mission is to enhance the lives of those affected by neuromuscular disorders by continually working to provide ongoing support and resources while relentlessly searching for cures through well-funded research.



Breaking Down Barriers, Together

This year, Muscular Dystrophy Canada stayed focused on breaking down barriers for people affected by neuromuscular disorders, delivering on its 5-year 2023-2028 strategic directions “Breaking Down Barriers”. Even as Canadians faced global uncertainty, rising costs, and pressure on healthcare systems, our commitment never wavered. With the support of donors, volunteers, partners, and Canadian Fire Fighters, we continued to provide equipment, connect families to services, fund critical neuromuscular research to find cures, treatments, and better standards of care, and advocate for access to clinical trials and approved therapies.

The Board of Directors and staff worked hand-in-hand to ensure strong governance and financial oversight. We took our fiduciary duty seriously, always looking for ways to be more efficient so that more of every dollar goes directly to our mission. This year, we made the careful decision to use a portion of our reserves to meet urgent needs. This allowed us to help more Canadians get the support, care, and equipment they required in a time of uncertainty.

We also moved important work forward. Muscular Dystrophy Canada advanced myotonic dystrophy genetic testing so families can get quicker answers and better care. We published research that

helps inform decisions on new neuromuscular treatments. Through journey mapping, we heard directly from Canadians living with neuromuscular disorders and caregivers about their experiences, ensuring their voices guide future programs and services and influence public policy.

This year marked a milestone: 70 years of partnership with Canadian Fire Fighters. Their dedication has fueled research, advanced treatments, and helped thousands of Canadians living with neuromuscular disorders and their families. Their commitment continues to inspire us all.

Our 2024/2025 Annual Report shares these stories of progress, partnership, and impact. For the first time, it is fully digital and accessible, making it possible for every Canadian to learn about and engage with our work.

To our incredible community—service users, families, donors, volunteers, partners, and Fire Fighters, we thank you for helping us break down barriers. We have achieved so much together, yet there is still important work ahead. With your continued involvement, we will keep pushing for better care, more treatments, and cures for all Canadians affected by neuromuscular disorders.

Sincerely,



Stacey Lintern,
CEO



Debra Chiabai,
Chair of the
Board of Directors

Breaking Down Barriers through Leadership and Governance



Debra Chiabai,
Chair



Nicole Coté,
Vice Chair



David Cluff,
Treasurer and Chair,
Finance, Audit & Risk
Management Committee



David Crawford,
Past Chair and
Chair, Governance &
Nominating Committee



Kerry Zado,
Secretary



Alfred Breton-Paré,
Director



Fanny Chagnon,
Director



Michael Low,
Director



**Stefanie
Marinich-Lee,**
Director



Scott Marks,
Director



Donna Nixon,
Director



Lise Poulin,
Director



Kara Reid,
Director



Liz Stirling,
Director



**Dr Jodi Warman
Chardon,**
Director

Who We Are & What We Do

Muscular Dystrophy Canada is a community that brings people together to break down barriers for Canadians affected by neuromuscular disorders. Canadians register with us to be part of our growing community, connecting people with neuromuscular conditions, their families, healthcare professionals, and researchers so we can share knowledge, support each other, and make progress in neuromuscular care and research.

Our community is growing:

(Numbers as of September 8, 2025)

People with neuromuscular disorders
12,304

Family members
19,791

Healthcare professionals
5,556

Researchers
607

By working together, we help remove obstacles, create new opportunities and break down barriers to make a real difference in people's lives.

Breaking Down Barriers: From Research to Real-Life Impact

“Muscular Dystrophy Canada’s research funding is critical for Canadian researchers to pursue bold ideas that would not otherwise move forward. As the sole national funder dedicated to neuromuscular research in Canada, Muscular Dystrophy Canada plays an essential role in ensuring this work can happen. These grants allow us to explore innovative approaches, collect critical data, and ultimately accelerate discoveries that can change the lives of people living with neuromuscular disorders. Every donation to Muscular Dystrophy Canada directly fuels research that would not take place without this support.”

– Neuromuscular Researcher

STRATEGIC PRIORITY #1 – Expanding Research Infrastructure

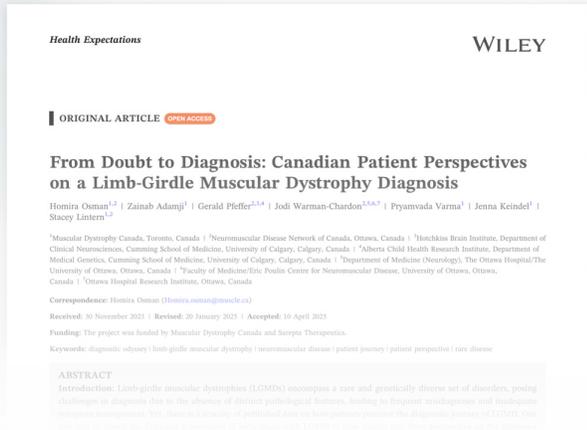
Muscular Dystrophy Canada invested in breakthrough science and critical supports that are driving real impact for individuals and families affected by neuromuscular disorders.

- **Research Leadership:** With **9 research grants (\$900,000)** and **5 fellowships (\$280,000)** awarded, Muscular Dystrophy Canada is fueling discovery, training the next generation of neuromuscular researchers, and accelerating the path to treatments and cures.
- **Knowledge Creation:** Research supported by Muscular Dystrophy Canada resulted in **2 peer-reviewed articles** and **6 treatment submissions** to drug regulators CDA and INESSS, advancing access to innovative therapies in Canada.
- **Patient-Centered Insights:** Muscular Dystrophy Canada developed **4 patient journey maps**, ensuring that lived experience guides research, care pathways, and health policy.
- **Trusted Information and Navigation:** Our **Research Hotline** responded to **1,750 requests**, with the most common needs being:
 1. Connecting with neuromuscular specialists
 2. Finding and enrolling in clinical trials
 3. Understanding diagnosis, prognosis, and expectations
 4. Interpreting complex research articles

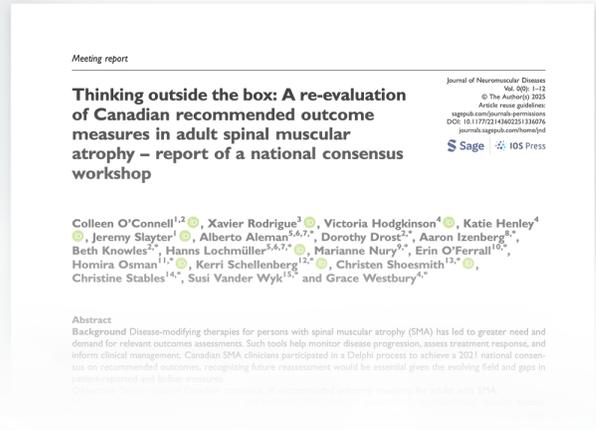
Through this work, Muscular Dystrophy Canada continues to be the trusted connector—linking research to real-world impact, supporting families through every stage of their journey, expanding neuromuscular research infrastructure, and critical supports that are driving real impact for individuals and families affected by neuromuscular disorders.



We're proud to share our first peer-reviewed publication!



Hot off the press: new research



STRATEGIC PRIORITY #2 – Improving public access to healthcare information

Muscular Dystrophy Canada advanced public policy advocacy to ensure that Canadians affected by neuromuscular disorders have clearer, timelier access to the information and care they need.

- We built **5 collaborations and partnerships** with health organizations, researchers, and policy leaders to amplify the neuromuscular voice at national tables.
- We increased public awareness by publishing **2 peer-reviewed articles** and **2 op-eds**, bringing forward expert and lived experience perspectives to influence decision-makers.
- Our advocacy directly contributed to **4 public policy changes**, breaking down barriers to information, treatments, and care pathways.

These efforts strengthen Muscular Dystrophy Canada’s role as the trusted voice for the neuromuscular community, ensuring that policy, practice, and healthcare information are more accessible, transparent, and person-focused.

Breaking Down Barriers to Care, Access, and Equity.

“As a clinician, I see firsthand the barriers my patients encounter in accessing therapies, equipment, and supports. Muscular Dystrophy Canada’s leadership in advocacy and public policy ensures that these systemic issues are not ignored. Their engagement with policymakers helps us move toward a health system that is more equitable, responsive, and better equipped to meet the needs of Canadians with neuromuscular disorders.” – Health Care Professional

STRATEGIC PRIORITY #3 – Increasing accessibility to expanded programs and services

Muscular Dystrophy Canada is dedicated to ensuring that every person living with a neuromuscular disorder and their families has access to the equipment, programs, and services they need to live fuller, more independent lives. Muscular Dystrophy Canada expanded programs and deepened support to meet the growing needs of our community.



- **Reaching More Canadians:** This year, **12,304 individuals living with neuromuscular disorders are registered**, strengthening our ability to provide personalized services and supports.
- **Critical Equipment Funded:** provided **1,366 pieces of essential equipment**, breaking down financial and accessibility barriers. The top three items funded were **life support alerts, mechanical lifts, and power wheelchairs**, each making an immediate difference in safety, independence, and quality of life.
- **Support for Families and Caregivers:** We hosted **4 family retreats (361 participants, 107 families)** and **2 caregiver retreats (46 participants)**, creating safe, inclusive spaces for connection, respite, and shared learning.
- **System Navigation:** Muscular Dystrophy Canada engaged in **21,133 interactions with the neuromuscular community**, helping individuals and families navigate complex healthcare and support systems. The top needs included:
 1. Accessing Muscular Dystrophy Canada's Equipment Program
 2. Information about clinical trials
 3. Guidance on Muscular Dystrophy Canada's services, including the Research Hotline, system navigation, and emotional support
- **Inclusive Education:** Muscular Dystrophy Canada delivered **38 MuscleFacts presentations to 829 participants**, helping schools build awareness and create more inclusive learning environments for children and youth living with neuromuscular disorders.

Through these programs, Muscular Dystrophy Canada is breaking down barriers to accessibility, ensuring that individuals and families across Canada have the tools, resources, and connections they need not only for today but for the future as well.

Breaking Down Barriers to Independence, Inclusion, and Support.

"I can't overstate how important this weekend was to me. I can now see a path where last week I simply felt overwhelmed. Genuinely life-changing!" – Caregiver Who Attended a Caregiver Retreat



STRATEGIC PRIORITY #4 – Driving revenue generation to meet the needs of our community

In 2024/2025, Muscular Dystrophy Canada celebrated a remarkable milestone: 70 years of partnership with Canadian Fire Fighters. Over seven decades, this collaboration has raised millions to fund research, programs, and services for people living with neuromuscular disorders.

- **Fire Fighter Fundraising:** 376 departments across Canada raised an incredible \$2,133,244, showing the power of community.
- **Walk and Roll Events:** 1,263 participants and 235 teams came together to raise \$1,065,116, building awareness and support through fun, inclusive community events.
- **Individual Donors:** We received 27,195 gifts, including over 1,700 new donors, highlighting the growing network of Canadians committed to breaking down barriers for those affected by neuromuscular disorders.
- **Corporate Support:** Over 13 sponsors contributed more than \$1.2 million, enabling programs, research, and services that directly impact lives.

This year, as we honor **70 years of Fire Fighter dedication**, we extend a heartfelt thank you to every Fire Fighter, participant, donor, and sponsor. Your compassion, commitment, and generosity make a real difference in the lives of Canadians affected by neuromuscular disorders.

Generosity and Giving is Breaking Down Barriers

“Being a Fire Fighter means showing up, not just for emergencies, but for people. After the Muscular Dystrophy Canada Conference and being introduced to one of the strongest kids I’ve ever met, I was inspired to host a charity golf tournament with my fellow Fire Fighters. It wasn’t just about raising money, it was about making that kid and others feel seen and loved. See you next year!” – Fire Fighter

Breaking Down Barriers with Every Dollar Donated

Condensed Statement of Revenue and Expenses

Year ended March 31, 2025

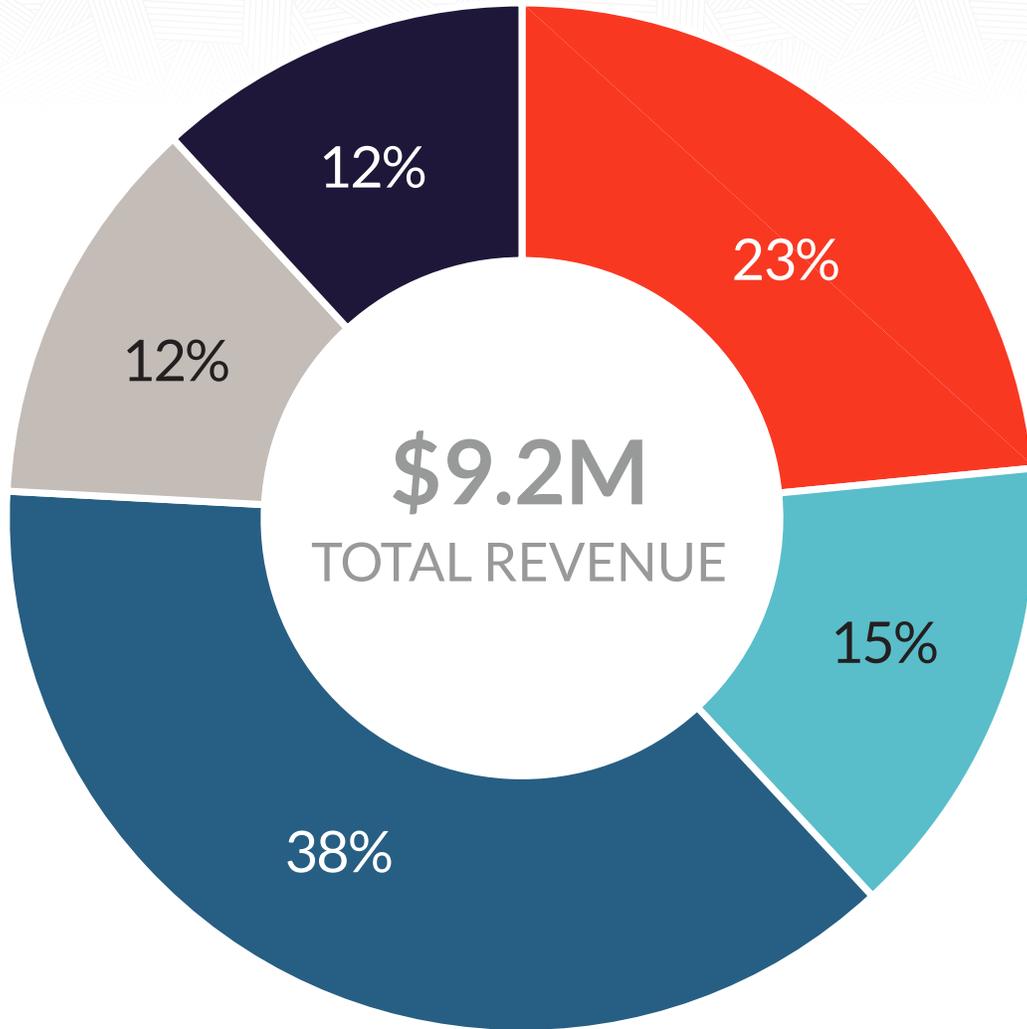
	2025	2024
REVENUES:		
General campaign and donations	9,198,721	10,159,262
Other revenue	212,381	251,000
	9,411,102	10,410,262
Investment and sundry income	557,448	500,450
	9,968,550	10,910,712
EXPENDITURES:		
Fundraising	2,000,352	2,079,056
Operations support	1,692,204	1,897,756
	3,692,556	3,976,812
Volunteer support and governance	291,541	263,271
	3,984,097	4,240,083
NET FUNDS AVAILABLE FOR PROGRAMS & SERVICES	5,984,453	6,670,629
PROGRAMS & SERVICES		
Research programs	1,714,707	1,990,474
Services	2,306,050	2,711,581
Education and information services	1,482,372	1,355,179
Other programs	404,623	448,185
Services operating support	153,484	178,675
	6,061,236	6,684,094
Deficiency of revenue over expenses before the undernoted	(76,784)	(13,465)
Amortization of capital assets	(16,204)	(25,824)
Change in fair value of investments	94,540	(200,898)
EXCESS (DEFICIENCY) OF REVENUE OVER EXPENSES FOR THE YEAR	1,552	(240,187)

Condensed Statement of Financial Position

As at March 31, 2025

	2025	2024
ASSETS		
Cash and investments	6,709,235	7,168,926
Capital assets	15,263	29,122
Other assets	595,716	793,838
TOTAL ASSETS	7,320,214	7,991,886
LIABILITIES		
Accounts payable and accrued liabilities	980,093	1,296,668
Deferred revenue	73,742	119,338
Deferred lease inducements	6,235	38,282
Commitments for research grants	1,490,497	1,299,666
Long-term commitments for research grants	—	445,239
	2,550,567	3,199,193
DEFERRED CONTRIBUTIONS RELATED TO:		
Neuromuscular research	298,060	247,323
Services	1,362,606	1,446,906
Education	713,258	704,093
British Columbia gaming	10,592	10,792
	2,384,516	2,409,114
TOTAL LIABILITIES	4,935,083	5,608,307
NET ASSETS		
Net assets restricted for endowment purposes	1,274,141	1,217,136
Net assets invested in capital assets	15,263	29,122
Unrestricted net assets	1,095,727	1,137,321
	2,385,131	2,383,579
	7,320,214	7,991,886

Note: Complete audited financial statements available upon request or online at muscle.ca. Certain comparative figures have been reclassified to conform to the current year's financial statement presentation.



FUND DEVELOPMENT BREAKDOWN

- Major Gifts, Foundations, and Grants
- Fire Fighters
- General Annual
- Planned Giving, Direct Response
- Walk & Roll for Muscular Dystrophy Canada

Breaking Down Barriers through the Efforts of our Community

Muscular Dystrophy Canada was proud to have over 500 active volunteers contributing their time, skills, and passion to support our mission. Collectively, volunteers dedicated 3,861 hours, helping to expand programs, fundraise, and provide vital support to the neuromuscular community.

From organizing events, supporting neuromuscular research activities to assisting with advocacy and outreach, our volunteers break down barriers and create meaningful impact every day. Our work would not be possible without this incredible network of individuals who give so generously of their time.

Breaking Down Barriers with Every Dollar Donated

“I volunteer with Muscular Dystrophy Canada because of their strong commitment to supporting the neuromuscular community, both those living with neuromuscular disorders and the researchers working to improve their lives. As a member of Muscular Dystrophy Canada’s Medical and Scientific Advisory Committee, I value how Muscular Dystrophy Canada consults with scientists, clinicians, and individuals with lived experience, ensuring that every decision is thoughtful and impactful. Muscular Dystrophy Canada supports the ‘now’ through education, advocacy, and essential equipment, and the ‘future’ by funding research and training the next generation of neuromuscular experts. Volunteering allows me to help guide donations toward the most meaningful work and contribute to real change for the community.” – Neuromuscular Researcher



“Living with facioscapulohumeral muscular dystrophy (FSHD) means every adventure requires planning, but it doesn’t stop us from enjoying life. Raising awareness and funds for Muscular Dystrophy Canada is very important to us, knowing it supports research, equipment, and vital community services. We love connecting with others at fundraising events, hearing stories, and seeing the impact of collective support. Every donation, big or small, makes a real difference, and we are grateful to be part of such a caring community.” – Event and Community Engagement Volunteers

**Together, we've broken barriers
— and together, we'll keep
breaking down more**

"I was a participant for the Journey Mapping study and I finally felt seen and heard. When I shared I was overwhelmed by the possibility of joining a clinical trial, Muscular Dystrophy Canada connected me to the coordinator, broke down the information and helped me understand my options. Knowing that Muscular Dystrophy Canada is investing in research that could lead to new treatments while also helping people like me navigate today's choices makes me feel hopeful and proud."

– Person Living with a Neuromuscular Disorder

"As a postdoctoral fellow, receiving Muscular Dystrophy Canada funding has been a pivotal step in my career. It not only provides the critical resources to advance my research, but also gives me the training and mentorship I need to grow as a scientist within Canada's neuromuscular research community. This support empowers emerging researchers like me to make meaningful contributions that bring us closer to effective treatments and cures." – Postdoctoral Fellow



"It's difficult to tell a patient that a treatment exists but isn't accessible where they live. Muscular Dystrophy Canada's advocacy helps change that. By working with policymakers and health systems, they ensure that once therapies are approved, they are equitably available to all Canadians with neuromuscular disorders." – Health Care Professional



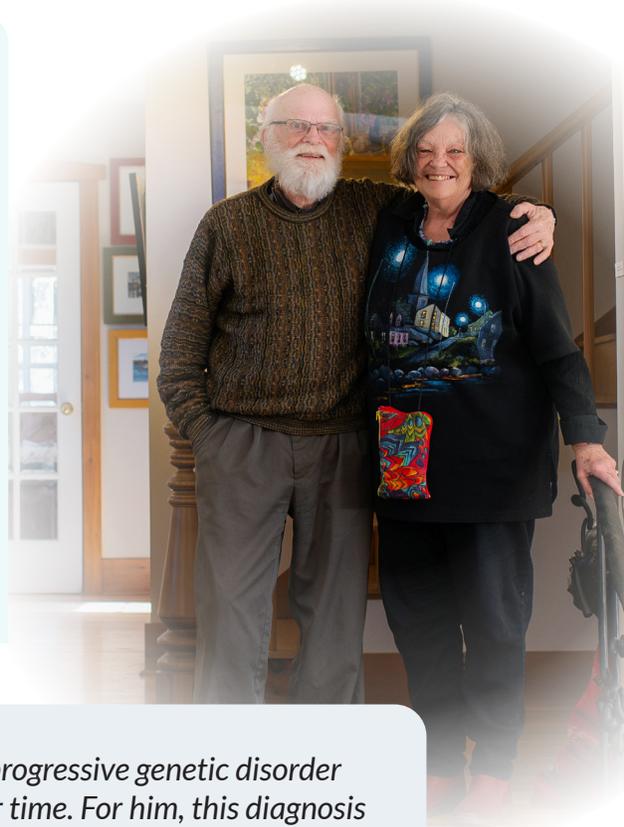
"The costs of living with a neuromuscular disorder add up quickly: every piece of equipment, every adaptation comes with a price. Muscular Dystrophy Canada's advocacy for the Canadian Disability Benefit and for programs that cover assistive devices is critical." – Person Living with a Neuromuscular Disorder



"I am profoundly moved by the care and dedication Muscular Dystrophy Canada has shown to each of my children. Your unwavering support has made our lives simpler and infinitely more enriching. I can't thank you enough for the positive impact you've had on our family. With all my heart, thank you for your compassion and commitment." – Parent of a Child Who Attended a Family Retreat

"When I was preparing to transition from high school to university, I was excited but also overwhelmed by all the changes ahead. I worried about how I would manage in a new environment, especially living away from home. Through Muscular Dystrophy Canada's Equipment Program, I received the mechanical lift I needed to live independently in residence. Just as important, the Service Specialist guided me through the process of arranging accessible housing, connecting with campus supports, and making sure I had what I needed before classes even started. Knowing I had this support allowed me to focus on my studies, make new friends, and fully experience university life. I'm grateful that Muscular Dystrophy Canada was there to break down the barriers that could have held me back."

– Person Living with a Neuromuscular Disorder



"At the age of six, my son was diagnosed with muscular dystrophy, a progressive genetic disorder that affects the muscles, making movement increasingly difficult over time. For him, this diagnosis brought challenges that would change the course of his life, but it never defined him. He has shown remarkable resilience, and while Muscular Dystrophy has its physical challenges, his determination and positivity have always outshone his condition. My son's needs are evolving. It is expected that he may require mobility aids in the future, and this is why I fundraise and donate, not only for my son, but for others like him so that they can focus on keeping their bodies as strong and active as possible while holding onto their independence and love for life." – Walk and Roll Donor and Participant

"I've been giving to Muscular Dystrophy Canada for over 30 years because I know the impact of my gifts help thousands of people and families like ours lead productive lives. As a parent of children affected, I know our beautiful life wouldn't be possible without the kindness of others. Giving back is so important to me and I'm proud of my support." – Individual Donor



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To read more about Muscular Dystrophy Canada or
make a donation, visit muscle.ca or call 1-800-567-2873.



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