FIBROMYALGIA ASSOCIATION CANADA

Annual General Report 2024-2025

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Letter From The Chair

Trudy Flynn

Dear Members,

As we gather for the fourth Annual General Meeting of Fibromyalgia Association Canada (FAC), I'm reminded of just how far we've come in 4 years and how much we've grown together.

In the current environment where fibromyalgia continues to be misunderstood, not recognized, and under diagnosed, FAC has stepped up. Over the past year, FAC has worked to create more meaningful conversations around fibromyalgia and not just about symptoms, but about the people living with it every day.

2024 was a year of listening, learning, and laying foundations. From launching peer support pilots to forging relationships with researchers and health organizations, we've been focused on building something lasting: a truly national platform led by the voices of those with lived experience.

Our goals remain ambitious: raise awareness, influence policy, and ensure that everyone affected by fibromyalgia has access to support and credible information. None of this would be possible without you.

Letter From The Chair

To our volunteers, board members, and community partners: thank you for giving your time, insights, and compassion. To our members and donors: your support fuels everything we do, from social media campaigns to strategic advocacy work to day-to-day operations that keep FAC moving forward.

Looking ahead, we are entering a new chapter. One that demands even more collaboration, creativity, and courage. Whether you’re newly diagnosed, a long-time advocate, a caregiver, or a health professional, we invite you to help shape what comes next. There is space for you here.

Let’s keep building momentum, pushing boundaries, and ensuring that fibromyalgia is no longer invisible in Canada.

Sincerely,
Trudy Flynn
Chair
Fibromyalgia Association Canada

Chair Report

I’m pleased to share this year’s Chair’s Report on behalf of the Fibromyalgia Association Canada.

Over the past year, our board, volunteers, and community members have worked together to offer meaningful support, raise awareness, and continue growing as a national organization.

This past year FAC focused on connection and communication with our membership and all those with fibromyalgia across the country.

One of the most important ways we did this was to work together to respond personally and thoughtfully to people who reached out through our website in distress. These kinds of messages were deeply personal, and our responses reflected that and it is the hope of FAC that we helped them see that you can still live a fulfilling life with fibromyalgia.

Another way FAC connected to the fibromyalgia community was to host six Holiday Hangouts, which provided friendly and informal gatherings during the pre and post Christmas season. This is a time of year that can feel especially lonely for people living with fibromyalgia. These events helped people feel seen and supported.

As part of the educational component of FAC we offered educational presentations, throughout the year on a wide range of topics, from traditional Chinese medicine and movement-

based therapy to disability benefits, migraines, POTS, juvenile fibromyalgia, and building resilience. These sessions were well-received and contributed to a broader understanding of living with fibromyalgia from different perspectives. The committees have been busy writing blogs that educate and bring awareness to various topics that are beneficial to the fibromyalgia community.

FAC once again raised awareness with the Illumination Campaign having 150 buildings and landmarks lighting in purple across Canada. FAC added an educational component to each post to extend the reach and meaning behind the campaign. To keep in touch with the needs of the community FAC used monthly informal poll questions. Our Fibro Chats and newsletters continued to provide relevant and timely updates, and we made significant improvements to our website's search engine visibility with the help of our web developer, who also began training two new people to support the website team.

Behind the scenes, we successfully applied for and received a planning grant to help support the fibromyalgia community by developing tools for both healthcare providers and people with fibromyalgia. FAC amended our bylaws, created a volunteer human resources document, and introduced a clearer, more personal process for welcoming new members to the organization. This includes follow-up from a board member to provide committee information and explore opportunities for members to help with things like translation or becoming regional representatives.

Chair Report

This year, we were proud to partner with CanReview to support efforts toward creating a single national ethics review process for multi-site clinical trials in Canada, something that could significantly improve fibromyalgia research. We also partnered with the Canadian Arthritis Patient Alliance (CAPA) to provide resources for arthritis patients who also live with fibromyalgia.

FAC's committee meetings now function as working groups, which has helped us move ideas into action more effectively. It's been a full and rewarding year, and I want to thank everyone who helped make these accomplishments possible, our board, our volunteers, our partners, and every person who is part of this community. Together, we are making a real difference in the lives of people living with fibromyalgia across Canada.

Board of Directors

Chair

Trudy Flynn
Halifax, Nova Scotia

Board Member

Janice Sumpton
London, Ontario

Vice Chair

Sherry Wasdal
Calgary, Alberta

Board Member

Lina DeMattia
Chatham, Ontario

Treasurer

Maggie O'Brien
LaSalle, Ontario

Board Member

Natasha Flynn
Halifax, Nova Scotia

Secretary

Mary Delaney
Kingston, Ontario

How It All Began

In February 2021, fifteen people came together with a shared goal: to raise awareness and improve the lives of people living with fibromyalgia.

We saw a gap in fibromyalgia care, there was limited treatment, limited support, and understanding, and no national voice for people with fibromyalgia in Canada.

Subsequently, Fibromyalgia Association Canada (FAC) was created.

The newly formed Fibromyalgia Association Canada identified five key areas of focus:

- **Awareness**
- **Research**
- **Education**
- **Advocacy**
- **Finance**

What Is FAC

Our Vision:

To build one unified national voice to advocate for fibromyalgia for increased awareness, research, education, and funding that improves the quality of life for all Canadians living with fibromyalgia.

Mission:

Fibromyalgia Association Canada is dedicated to improving the quality of life for Canadians with fibromyalgia.

Financial Update

Basic Operating Budget per Annum

Name of Expense	Amount of Expense
Insurance	$1825.20
Web Hosting Canada Website	Paid Until May 15, 2026
Zoom	$247.14
Bank Monthly Fee	$44.55
Domain Name	Donated Until February 2029
French Translation SEO	$107.16
Incorporation Fee	Donated
Total	$2224.05

Financial Update

March 31, 2024 to April 30, 2025

Bank Account March 31, 2024	$308.47
Total Revenue	$32,878.03
Total Donations	**$32,878.03**
Total Expenses	2227.05
Bank Fees	**$44.55**
E-Transfer fees	**$3.00**
Insurance	**$1825.20**
Zoom	**$247.14**
French Translation SEO	**$107.16**
Bank Account March 31, 2025	$30,959.45

Motions:

Motion AGM25-01
Accept the Financial Report

I would like to make a motion to accept the financial report as presented.

Motion AGM25-02
Accept Amended Bylaws

I would like to make a motion to confirm acceptance of the amended Fibromyalgia Association Canada Bylaws.

Awareness Report

The Awareness Committee meets the third Thursday of every month at 2:30 p.m. ET to promote awareness on behalf of people living with fibromyalgia. The Awareness Committee is amalgamating with the Advocacy Committee to work on similar projects.

Purpose

- **To raise awareness that fibromyalgia is a life-altering chronic illness**
- **To address and reduce stigmas and stereotypes and to influence changes in attitudes, behaviours, and beliefs toward fibromyalgia**
- **To raise awareness of fibromyalgia through national campaigns**
- **To develop social media campaigns in collaboration with the other committees**
- **To work with other fibromyalgia related groups to raise awareness**

Accomplishments

- **Created Reels for Symptoms of Fibromyalgia Campaign for social media**
- **Awareness Calendar**

Blogs

- **Fibromyalgia and Anxiety**
- **Mini Goals: Focus on Achievable Targets for Better Fibromyalgia Management**
- **Living with Fibromyalgia and Setting 5 SMART goals**
- **Understanding Life with Fibromyalgia and POTS**
- **Winter Self-Care Tips 4 People with Fibromyalgia**
- **Supporting Someone with Fibromyalgia This Christmas: A Heartfelt Guide for Family and Friends**
- **Fibromyalgia and Men’s Mental Health**
- **The Impact of Changing Seasons on Fibromyalgia: From Summer to Fall**
- **Thriving with Fibromyalgia: Unique Summer Tips for a Comfortable Season**

If you would like to get involved, or know more about the Awareness Committee, feel free to contact us at awareness@fibrocanada.ca

Research Report

The Research Committee meets on the 4th Tuesday of every month at 2:30 p.m. ET to discover what research is currently being done on fibromyalgia.

Purpose

- **To promote and develop fibromyalgia research**
- **To explore past and present studies on fibromyalgia worldwide**
- **To reach out and build relations with:**
    - **Health researchers and clinical trial organizations in Canada**
    - **Professionals and organizations worldwide who are interested in fibromyalgia research**
- **To maintain a list of current Canadian and international fibromyalgia research**
- **To determine where the gaps in fibromyalgia research are**
- **To support efforts to attract financial investments for fibromyalgia research; and**
- **To encourage patient-oriented fibromyalgia research in Canada**

Accomplishments

Layman's Summaries:

- **CADENCE trial (pregabalin and alpha-lipoic acid) in fibromyalgia (2023 Gilron)**
- **Physician's knowledge, attitudes, practices regarding fibromyalgia (2024 Agarwal)**
- **MicroRNA discriminate myalgic encephalomyelitis from fibromyalgia (2023 Moreau)**
- **How effective are alternative treatments for fibromyalgia (2024 Ye)**

Blogs

- **How to avoid being misled by fibromyalgia research and promises**

Evidence Summaries

- **Evidence summaries explained and a list of McMaster Evidence summaries about fibromyalgia topics with links were posted on the website.**

Research Grant

- **In July 2024, FAC applied for and received funding for its first Research Planning Grant. This research project is patient driven and will be focusing on planning and grant writing for a larger fibromyalgia project topic which is yet to be decided on.**

Research Participants Wanted

- **Networked with national and international researchers to help them get participants for their research studies.**

If you would like to get involved, or know more about the Research Committee, feel free to contact us at research@fibrocanada.ca

Education Report

The Education Committee meets the 2nd Tuesday of every month at 2:30 p.m. ET to work on educational materials for the fibromyalgia community.

Purpose

- **To provide patient-led education on fibromyalgia to people with fibromyalgia, their families and caregivers, the medical/healthcare sector, the insurance companies, legal professionals, businesses and employers, government agencies, community agencies, educational institutions and the general public.**
- **To educate our target audience on the life altering symptoms of fibromyalgia which often lead to debilitation, disablement, and impoverishment;**
- **To debunk the myths and misconceptions of fibromyalgia;**
- **To de-stigmatize fibromyalgia; and**
- **To emphasize the importance of early diagnosis in order to successfully manage and improve patient outcomes.**

Accomplishments

- **Added to Book List**
- **Created Myth Busters for Social Media**
- **Contributed to the FAC Newsletter**
- **Updated the Peer Support Groups Document**

Education Report

Fact Sheets

- **Fact Sheet Cymbalta or its Generic Duloxetine**
- **Fact Sheet Fibromyalgia in Children and Youth**
- **Fact Sheet for Patients and Families**
- **Fact Sheet on Traditional Medications**
- **Fact Sheet on Herbal and Other Natural Products**
- **Fact Sheet on Supporting Employees with Fibromyalgia: A Guide for Canadian Employers**
- **Fact Sheet for Fibromyalgia Guide for Employees**
- **Fact Sheet on Low Dose Naltrexone**

Blog Posts

- **Understanding the Side Effects of Fibromyalgia Medications**
- **Struggling to Sleep with Fibromyalgia: 6 Strategies for a better night**
- **Finding the Right Mattress for Fibromyalgia: A Guide to Individual Comfort**
- **Managing Fibromyalgia During the Holiday Season**
- **The Holiday Season is not always the most wonderful time of the year**
- **Fibromyalgia and Anxiety**

If you would like to get involved, or know more about the Education Committee, feel free to contact us at education@fibrocanada.ca

Advocacy Report

The Advocacy Committee meets the third Thursday of every month at 2:30 p.m. ET to advocate on behalf of people living with fibromyalgia.

Purpose

- **Unite people living with fibromyalgia**
- **Improve their quality of life**
- **Promote and safeguard their rights**
- **Network and influence decisions regarding fibromyalgia with government, medical, healthcare, and the insurance sectors**
- **Focus on addressing needs and identify gaps in services for people with fibromyalgia**
- **Collaborate with fibromyalgia-related organizations, associations, foundations, and support groups, so we strengthen our united voice to address the needs of those affected by fibromyalgia**

Accomplishments

- **How to Be Your Own Advocate**
- **Continued to work on Bill C-22 Canada Disability Act**
- **In Progress: Navigating Life: A Guide to Newly Diagnosed Fibromyalgia in Canada**
- **In Progress: Fibromyalgia after the Diagnosis**
- **In Progress: How to Make the Best of Your Medical Appointment**
- **In Progress: Acceptance is a Choice**
- **In Progress: What We Want**

If you would like to get involved, or know more about the Advocacy Committee, feel free to contact us at advocacy@fibrocanada.ca

Finance Report

Purpose

- **To provide financial analysis, advice, and oversight of the FAC budget**
- **To ensure the organization is operating with the financial resources it needs to provide programs and services to the fibromyalgia community**
- **The transactions of Fibromyalgia Association Canada are in accordance with the bylaws; and,**
- **The financial, human, and physical resources of Fibromyalgia Association Canada are managed and operated economically and efficiently.**

If you would like to get involved, or know more about the Finance Committee, feel free to contact us at funding@fibrocanada.ca

FAC BOARD

Accomplishments

- Increased Membership from 641 to 857
- Worked as a Team to respond to sensitive contact requests from the website (people who were struggling and needed personalized replies)
- 150 Illuminations and used an Education Fact in each post for each Illumination
- Monthly informal poll questions for website
- Hosted Holiday Hangouts
- Wrote and Received Funding for a FAC Planning Grant to develop tools to improve life for those who have fibromyalgia
- Fibro Chats
- Improved SEO standing on Website working with Web Developer
- Web Developer Trained / Training 2 people for website team
- Newsletters
- Amended Bylaws
- Created a Volunteer Human Resource Document
- Committee Meetings became Working Groups
- FAC- identified a clear process & assigned responsibility to a board member to follow up with new members of FAC a) to welcome them to FAC, b) provide the new member with details of committees they expressed interest in joining and c) explore their interest to aid us with document translation or to act as Regional Representatives for our National initiatives.
- Partnered with CanReview, who are campaigning for one Canadian National Research Ethics Review for multi-site clinical trials

FAC BOARD Accomplishments

- **FAC partnered with CAPA (Canadian Arthritis Patient Alliance) as a resource for arthritis patients who also have fibromyalgia.**
- **Educational Presentations**
- **Dr. Heather Fulker Sept 4 2024 – “Chinese Medicine & Fibromyalgia”**
- **Tyler Dillman Nov 6 2024 – “How Movement & Exercise can help Fibromyalgia Pain”**
- **Wendy Gerhart Migraine Canada Nov 13, 2024 – “Talking About Migraines”**
- **Dr. Kate Bourne Feb 13, 2025 – “POTS (Postural Orthostatic Tachycardia Syndrome)**
- **David Brannen March 19, 2025 Fibromyalgia and Disability Benefits**
- **Dr. Andrea Furlan, Physiatrist, Tyler Dillman, Physiotherapist and Eleanor McGroarty, Psychology, May 20, 2025 Round Table on Building Strength and Resilience While Living with Fibromyalgia**

Social Media Highlights

4,628
Followers on Facebook

1361
Followers on Instagram

3,222
Followers on Twitter

679
Followers on LinkedIn

Acknowledgements

Fibromyalgia Association Canada (FAC)
would like to extend its appreciation to those members who have provided support.

Thank you to those who have generously contributed by donating to our funding initiative, which assists in building a national fibromyalgia organization.

All FAC members are appreciated and valued. We inspire each other.

We Can't Do
This Alone
...
But We Can
Do It
Together

We thank you for your ongoing support of Fibromyalgia Association Canada