

# IMPACT REPORT 2023

Building  
confidence  
in treating  
anaphylaxis

MARCH 2024







# FOOD ALLERGY CANADA

## Helping Canadians live safely and confidently with food allergy

We are a national charity and the country’s leading patient organization committed to educating, supporting, and advocating for the more than 3 million Canadians impacted by food allergy. We focus on improving daily quality of life by providing education and support needed to effectively navigate this medical condition, building informed and supportive communities, and acting as the national voice on key patient issues.



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# FOOD ALLERGY CANADA



## EDUCATION & SUPPORT

### Empowering those impacted to live well

We are the trusted provider of education and support for managing food allergy confidently. Through our educational programming, support services, and medically-reviewed resources, we help individuals and families living with the condition through life stages and events, while raising awareness of food allergy and educating the broader community.



## ADVOCACY

### The national voice for key patient issues

As the national voice for the millions of Canadians affected by food allergy, we take actions to improve daily living. We elevate this medical condition and engage key stakeholders nationally and globally within government, industry, and other sectors to make meaningful changes for the food allergy community.



## RESEARCH

### Keeping a focus on patient-centred research that can be translated into action

A research agenda that is rooted in patient engagement and focused on improving quality of life for Canadians with food allergy is critical. We ensure the patient voice is an integral part of the research process, and we translate the knowledge and insights gained from research into practical programming, resources, and tools.



# MESSAGES

## FROM OUR Executive Director



In 2023, we cracked the code in how to communicate the importance of epinephrine in the treatment of anaphylaxis and why using it early is crucial. How? By explaining the science behind it.

As a part of our student program, All About Food Allergy, we worked with Dr. Philippe Bégin to create a video that leverages his expertise in explaining what happens to your body during anaphylaxis and the impact epinephrine has in halting its progression. After we launched the program, we knew everyone should see this video.

Treatment with epinephrine within the first 30 minutes can result in better outcomes in a food allergic reaction and prompt use of epinephrine prior to going to the hospital has the highest impact on anaphylaxis management. Yet only 21% of children and 7% of adults globally use their auto-injector before going to the hospital. We need to change this picture.

Through education, we are also breaking down the myth that anaphylaxis always equals fatality. There are, in fact, different grades of severity, which is explained more so in our webinars. Even though anaphylaxis is rarely fatal, the fear of this is real and prompt use of epinephrine provides the best outcome.

There are a whole host of reasons people may hesitate in using their auto-injectors, including being confused on signs and symptoms and proper treatment. This is why we focus our educational programming on anaphylaxis.

You can get involved and amplify our reach so more Canadians are informed and knowledgeable. Participate in our [Know it. Treat it. campaign](#), share our resources like the [What is food allergy](#) and [What is anaphylaxis](#) videos, and [watch our webinars](#) to better understand anaphylaxis.

Together, we can close the knowledge gaps. Ensuring the public is informed will help elevate food allergy so others take it seriously and it will ensure people know what to do in case of anaphylaxis. This knowledge can save lives.

Jennifer Gerdtz

## FROM OUR Board Chair



Education is a core part of Food Allergy Canada's mission in serving Canadians with food allergy. Education is not just about ensuring those impacted are knowledgeable, it's about educating key stakeholders like government and industry, and the general public so they know that food allergy is serious and what it takes to keep people safe.

I am always impressed at the dedication of this organization in finding creative ways to engage with and educate others. For example, the Know it. Treat it. campaign includes the voices of the community, sharing their own stories to demystify anaphylaxis and take power away from it. Webinars have also been highly effective, providing experts with the opportunity to help others understand that anaphylaxis is not black and white and that there are different levels of severity where things like co-factors influence how your body reacts. Videos are another example, including ones with a leading allergist who explains complex concepts in a way that even elementary students can understand the science behind food allergy and anaphylaxis.

I hope you take a moment to go through this report to learn more about the various educational initiatives Food Allergy Canada has launched over the past year and be sure to take advantage of them. We can all learn new things and gain new perspectives on what it means to live well with this condition.

Bob Ellis



## Education and support needed to effectively navigate food allergy





# MAKING AN IMPACT IN 2023

## HELP US CONTINUE DRIVING CHANGE IN 2024 AND BEYOND

### Building informed & supportive communities

**201M** impressions of our Food Allergy Awareness Month & Halloween campaigns to build awareness, inclusivity & educate on the seriousness of the condition



**250k+**

AllergyAware.ca online course completions, ensuring teachers and school staff are more educated on food allergy and anaphylaxis

**500** registrants of our national student program to normalize food allergy = **15,000** children educated on the seriousness of food allergy



**24k**

healthcare professionals educated on anaphylaxis management and treatment

**3.8M**

impressions of our #MoreThanPeanuts campaign to educate on priority food allergens beyond peanut



### National voice on key patient issues



**3** research projects

with international researchers to understand food allergy severity, proper treatment of anaphylaxis, and food labelling

**6** government consultations

focused on food labelling regulations, access to care and medication, foodservice, and schools



**2** ongoing long-term initiatives

National Food Allergy Action Plan & access to accurate ingredient information so you know what is in your food with work happening globally



**1st**

allergist in PEI in part due to our advocacy efforts

**6** food safety conferences

in foodservice and food manufacturing where we represented the community to make food allergy a priority

**1** advocacy campaign

for affordability of specialized infant formulas







# 2023 MILESTONES ACHIEVED



## Empowered Canadians to recognize and treat anaphylaxis

Helped take the fear out of anaphylaxis and instill confidence around treatment with our [Know it. Treat it. campaign](#), webinars, and educational content on anaphylaxis management, including real life stories from the community and a national campaign with over 96 million views.



## Increased awareness of the seriousness of food allergy and fostered community support

Created a more inclusive Halloween for all kids with our [#ShineATeaLight campaign](#) that had over 105 million views across Canada. Launched a national curriculum-linked student program to help build knowledgeable and inclusive communities. Educated 24,000 healthcare professionals on food allergy and anaphylaxis management through conferences and direct outreach.



## Made food allergy a priority through advocacy

Participated in six government consultations focused on food labelling regulations, access to care and medication, foodservice, and schools, helped to ensure PEI has its first allergist, and led initiatives with food manufacturers and the foodservice industry so they know how to better support Canadians with food allergy.



## Kept Canadians safe by keeping them informed of food safety issues

37 alerts went out due to food recalls, allergen changes from food manufacturers, or labelling updates through our [Allergy Alerts](#) food safety service, keeping you informed on food safety issues that impact you.



## Provided evidence-based education and support at diagnosis and critical life transitions

Increased the confidence on managing food allergy in 53,500 families and youth by empowering them through webinars with medical experts, and with new content-rich resources like our [“What is food allergy?”](#) and [“What is anaphylaxis?”](#) videos.



## Ensured immigrant and vulnerable populations have the knowledge and support they need

Translated our care guide, a key resource into [Punjabi](#), [Simplified Chinese](#), and [Traditional Chinese](#) to ensure immigrant and vulnerable populations have access to information and support on how to prevent reactions and treat them if they happen.



# MAKING A REAL IMPACT

## Instilling confidence: Know it. Treat it.



I've been managing my food allergies for awhile, I'm careful and I take precautions to stay safe. Even so, it's good to be prepared for a reaction in case it happens – regardless of where you are. I know firsthand how important it is to be able to identify the symptoms of anaphylaxis, to treat it with epinephrine, and how much epinephrine can help you. While my family and friends are familiar with anaphylaxis, I was inspired to bring even more awareness to the topic. **Through the Know it. Treat it campaign, my story and the stories of others help more people understand anaphylaxis and reminds them to take reactions seriously.**

– Astrid E.

## Accessing experts and getting informed on the latest in food allergy management



To help me and my family manage food allergy, I look for credible sources of information like the kind I've found in Food Allergy Canada webinars. I've attended several webinars, and I especially like the ones with clinician-scientists and how they explain concepts in very understandable ways.

I also appreciate that the webinars are recorded, so I can access them at any time. **The webinars have given me a more fulsome idea of what food allergy is, possibilities for treatment, and other aspects of living with the condition. It's really helpful to hear directly from experts and I've become more confident through the knowledge I've gained.**

– E.P.





# MAKING A REAL IMPACT

## Credibility and access to experts and information



There is great value in educating patients, it positively impacts how they manage daily living. At the start and along the patient journey, connecting to a credible source is so important. This applies for food allergy and related conditions like eosinophilic esophagitis (EoE) and food protein-induced enterocolitis syndrome (FPIES). You can rely on Food Allergy Canada to provide access to medically-reviewed content and practical information, and to experts who share their knowledge and insights. Through their educational resources and programming, they offer ways to inform and expand the understanding of these conditions involving food.

As an allergist and clinical investigator with national and international research studies, I've come across many patients who have become empowered through education. **Food Allergy Canada helps with this, they have ongoing learning opportunities, and the information and support needed to help patients and their families live confidently.**

– Dr. Edmond S. Chan MD, FRCPC

## Making it easier to manage food allergy and anaphylaxis



The “Caring for a child with food allergy” guide covers lots of food allergy basics and is very easy to understand, which is especially helpful to those who aren’t as familiar with the condition.

The guide makes it easier to trust that others have accurate and understandable information on managing your child’s food allergy, including how to avoid a severe allergic reaction, recognize the symptoms of one, and how to treat it.

**As a parent of a child with food allergies, I see the value of this guide and it gives me confidence. I’ve shared it with family and friends, it’s a great resource to give to anyone who might be looking after your child.**

– Jen U.



# IMPACT THROUGH EDUCATION & SUPPORT



## Food allergy and anaphylaxis education

Empowering Canadians to recognize and treat anaphylaxis

[foodallergycanada.ca/anaphylaxisresources](https://foodallergycanada.ca/anaphylaxisresources)

With the understanding that reactions can happen despite best efforts, we continue to educate on the symptoms of anaphylaxis and treatment with epinephrine auto-injectors. While epinephrine is the only medicine that can treat anaphylaxis and is considered life-saving, it is underused. We also focus on demystifying anaphylaxis and building confidence.

Our latest anaphylaxis resources include videos, webinars, and downloadable handouts. Our “[What is anaphylaxis?](#)” video covers what happens to your body during anaphylaxis, the role of the mast cell, and why it’s critical to use epinephrine as quickly as possible. With over 3,000 views, this short, engaging video explains science concepts in a relatable way for both children and adults.

“ I love the anaphylaxis video! It made me realize how much I’ve forgotten about immunology since my university days, even about a topic that is so close to home. I’ve re-watched the video with my husband and son so they also learn how epinephrine works to treat a reaction and why it’s so important to use it early! ”



## Providing access to experts

Ensuring Canadians are informed on the latest in food allergy

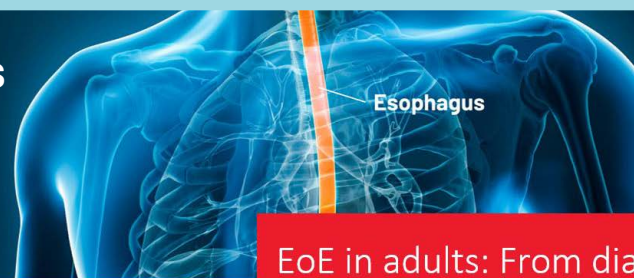
 [foodallergycanada.ca/webinars](https://foodallergycanada.ca/webinars)

Through our webinars, we provide access to experts on key topics of interest. In 2023, we held sessions on milk allergy, other conditions involving an allergic response to certain foods like Eosinophilic Esophagitis (EoE) and Food Protein-Induced Enterocolitis Syndrome (FPIES), immunotherapy, and anaphylaxis. We also engaged experts in our Facebook Live sessions on treating anaphylaxis with epinephrine auto-injectors, and in the inaugural episode of our new Listen & Learn audio series with insights shared on needle-free epinephrine options for treating anaphylaxis.

Through this programming, we have educated the food allergy community, healthcare professionals, and thousands of others on timely topics related to food allergy. The education is ongoing as many more continue to access the recordings.

“As a parent of a child with food allergy, I appreciate these educational webinars as they help keep me and my family up-to-date, and it's easy to join a session or watch the recording at a later date.”

### Webinars



EoE in adults: From diagnosis to treatment



Webinar with Dr. Milli Gupta  
October 11, 2023

### Facebook Live sessions – treating anaphylaxis with epinephrine



### Audio series – educating on timely food allergy topics

## LISTEN & LEARN



Dr. Harold Kim



Jennifer Gerdts

Needle-free epinephrine for treating anaphylaxis





## IMPACT THROUGH EDUCATION & SUPPORT

# Outreach to healthcare professionals

Educating physicians and others

 [foodallergycanada.ca/healthcare](https://foodallergycanada.ca/healthcare)

With just over 200 allergists in Canada, there are significant disparities in access to care for the over 3 million Canadians impacted by food allergy. By educating almost 24,000 healthcare professionals on food allergy and anaphylaxis management through conferences and direct communications like mail and email, we helped to ensure family physicians, paediatricians, and other healthcare providers have the knowledge and resources they need to better support their patients with food allergy.

Our continued outreach efforts to physicians, particularly in rural and remote regions, will ensure even more Canadians with food allergy are supported.

“ Thank you for providing excellent resources, they will definitely help my patients with food allergy and risk of anaphylaxis. ”



# IMPACT THROUGH ADVOCACY



## Advocating for the food allergy community

Ensuring the community is represented  
with government

 [foodallergycanada.ca/advocacy](https://foodallergycanada.ca/advocacy)

By engaging with government we are helping to bring meaningful changes in support of the food allergy community.

We represented the community federally through several Health Canada consultations, where we put forth considerations for food allergen labelling, called for transparency and communication in case of future drug shortages and on the current infant formula shortage affecting babies with food allergy, and advocated for safe meal options for seniors with food allergy including ensuring there are effective allergen controls for foodservice in long-term care facilities.

We also provided input on a potential national school food program, highlighting the requirements for meeting the health, safety and inclusion needs specific to food allergy, so that all students have access to safe and nutritious food options.

Provincially, we participated in consultations and met with Ministries of Health and policymakers to help address issues in food allergen management in foodservice establishments, access to allergy care, and access to affordable specialized formulas which are necessary for babies with food allergy.



Food labelling  
regulations



Access  
to care



Access to  
medications



Foodservice



Schools



Infant formula





## IMPACT THROUGH ADVOCACY

# Ensuring patient-centric research

## Working with researchers

 [foodallergycanada.ca/advocacy](https://foodallergycanada.ca/advocacy)

As the leading national patient organization, we work with Canadian and international researchers to ensure the patient perspective and needs of the community are reflected in food allergy and anaphylaxis research.

In 2023, we engaged with researchers that are tracking anaphylaxis through registries to better understand the treatment of anaphylaxis and to find insights that will help address the underutilization of epinephrine and its treatment.

We also were a part of an international study focused on food allergy severity with the aim of developing a consensus-based scoring system that can be used globally. This is an important step forward to better understanding the different degrees of severity, which can ultimately lead to more individualized approaches for managing food allergy.

Through our continued collaborations with researchers, our reputation for promoting patient centric research also grows and more researchers from across the globe seek out our input and support.







# IMPACT THROUGH LONG-TERM ADVOCACY INITIATIVES



*Thank you to our industry partners for their support and commitment to improving food allergen management practices in Canada.*

Bimbo Canada  
Conagra Brands  
Daiya Foods Inc.  
Dare Foods Limited  
Dr. Oetker Canada  
Food, Health & Consumer  
Products of Canada

General Mills Canada  
Kellogg Canada  
Komo Plant Based  
Comfort Foods Inc.  
Kraft Heinz  
Loblaw Companies Ltd.

Maple Leaf Foods  
PepsiCo Foods Canada  
Riverside Natural Foods  
The Hershey Company  
Unilever Canada  
Université Laval



## Access to accurate ingredient information

Making food allergy a priority with  
foodservice and food manufacturing

 [foodallergycanada.ca/advocacy](https://foodallergycanada.ca/advocacy)

Action needs to be taken to support the improvement of food allergen management in foodservice environments to minimize the risk of reactions. This need is of even greater importance now given the dramatic increase in online ordering and the use of third-party delivery platforms, where effective communication between the foodservice business and the consumer with food allergy is further complicated.

In 2023, we renewed our focus in foodservice with a goal to have food allergy recognized as a food safety priority. This is a 3-5 year focus where we hope to evolve the policy and practices of foodservice establishments, which will ultimately reduce the risk of allergic reactions and give all Canadians access to safe food choices.

Additionally, last year we built momentum with our newly launched [Allergen Management Guidelines](#), a collaboration with Université Laval, Maple Leaf Foods, industry partners and other key stakeholders, to help food manufacturers implement effective allergen control measures. This includes the use of “may contain” statements, so manufacturers can provide accurate labelling. Throughout the year, we extended the reach of these guidelines by hosting numerous webinars, participating in conferences, meeting with industry councils and associations, and engaging with government.



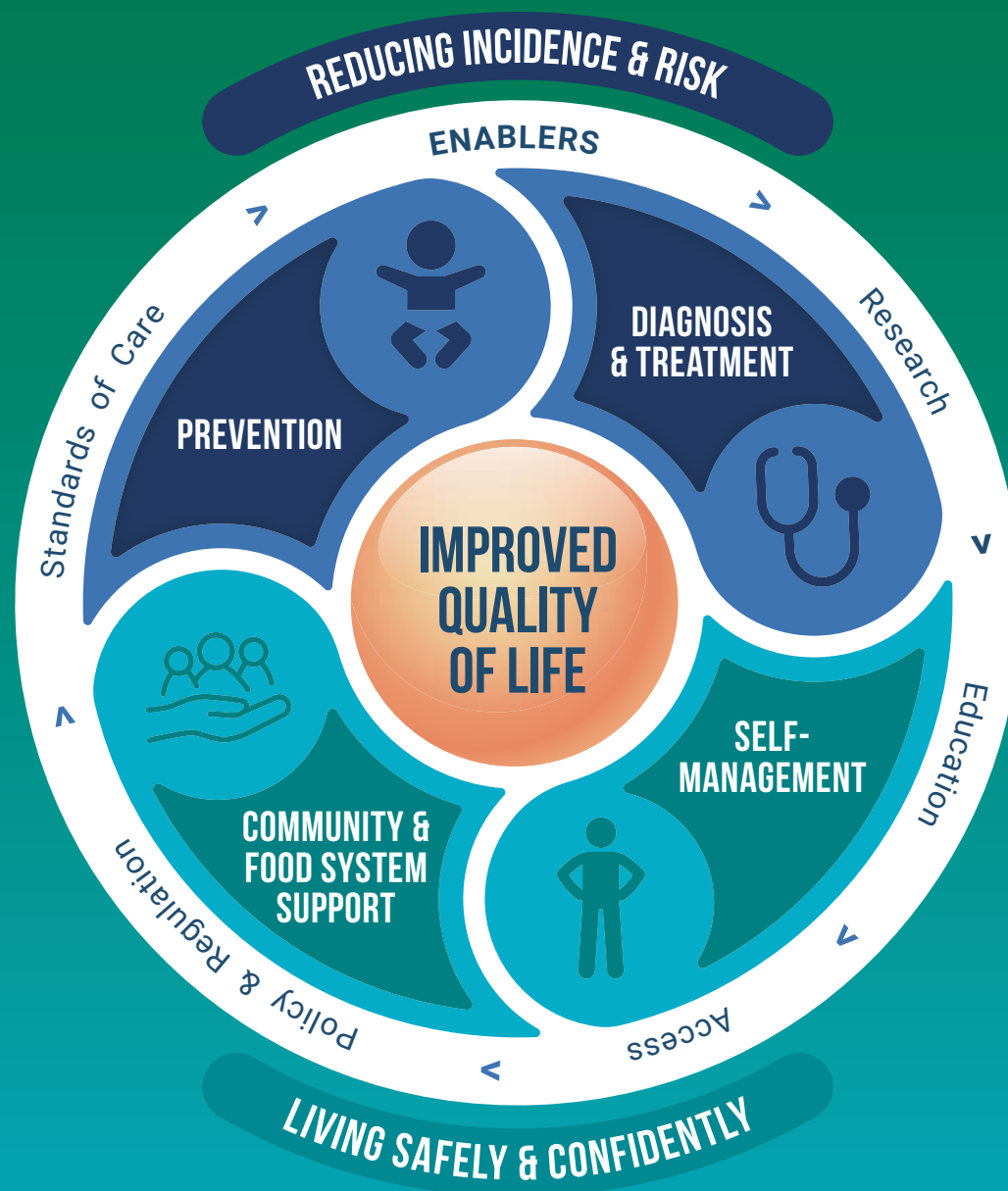
# National Food Allergy Action Plan to Make Food Allergy Count

 [foodallergycanada.ca/nationalplan](https://foodallergycanada.ca/nationalplan)

The need continues for a national plan to address gaps in policy, industry practices, research commitments, and public understanding of this medical condition, yet it remains unfunded. Our 2024 federal budget request outlined key recommendations to effectively prevent and manage food allergy. The goal is to have a fully funded plan that, once executed, will reduce the impact of food allergy, and improve the quality of life for the millions of Canadians affected by this condition.

Although the plan itself is not fully funded, there have been a number of initiatives undertaken that support this plan, including:

- Advocating for access to accurate ingredient information with food manufacturers and foodservice so every Canadian knows what is in their food and can make informed decisions
- Ensuring expectant parents and healthcare professionals know how they can help to prevent the development of food allergy through early introduction of allergens
- Advocating for increased access to allergy care and supporting vulnerable and immigrant populations
- Building community support and knowledge through our national school program





# #FOODALLERGYCHAMPIONS


# COMMUNITY AWARD WINNERS

Every year we discover new #FoodAllergyChampions within the community who are committed to making the world a better place through their passion to create awareness and support for this medical condition. Learn about our 2023 award winners.

## Robyn Allen Leadership Award



*The Robyn Allen Leadership Award recognizes an individual who has made a unique contribution to the lives of Canadians with food allergy through their efforts in education, advocacy, community building, leadership, or fundraising. The award is in memory of Robyn Allen.*

Learn about **Allison Kapp**, our award recipient. Allison is a Registered Dietitian, founder of the first food allergy support group in Regina, and has successfully influenced policy to better protect hospital patients with food allergy. Read more about her accomplishments,  [Click Here.](#)

## Sabrina Shannon Memorial Award



*This award is for individuals in post-secondary school who have contributed significantly to the Canadian food allergy community. The award is dedicated to the life of Sabrina Shannon.*


Our winners are **Benjamin Cruickshank** (pictured) and **Christian Kennedy**. We recognize their strong commitment to raising allergy awareness and educating others. Learn more about them,

 [Click Here.](#)

## Pryde Family Travel Grant



*The Pryde Family Travel Grant provides grants for graduate students, medical students or healthcare professionals who have an interest in food allergy/ anaphylaxis. The funds help to offset expenses for attending an academic program or event related to food allergy. This grant was established in honour of the Pryde family and friends, and the friends and family of Sean Delaney.*

Learn more about our recipients, **Lauren Wong** and **Kamila Lizée**, who used their grants to attend two important conferences,  [Click Here.](#)



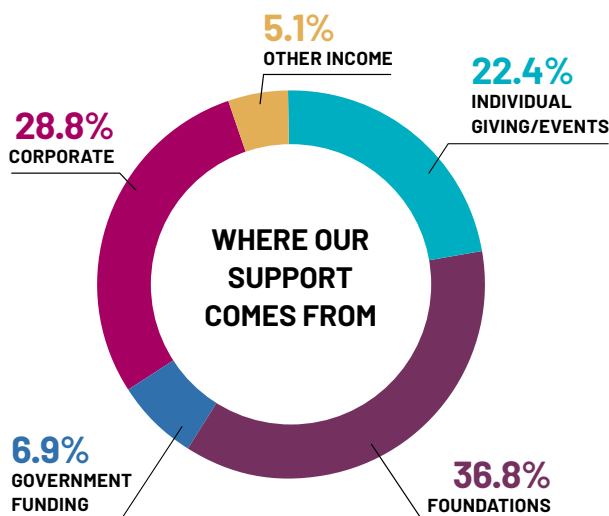


# DOLLARS DRIVING IMPACT

## OUR FINANCES: 2023

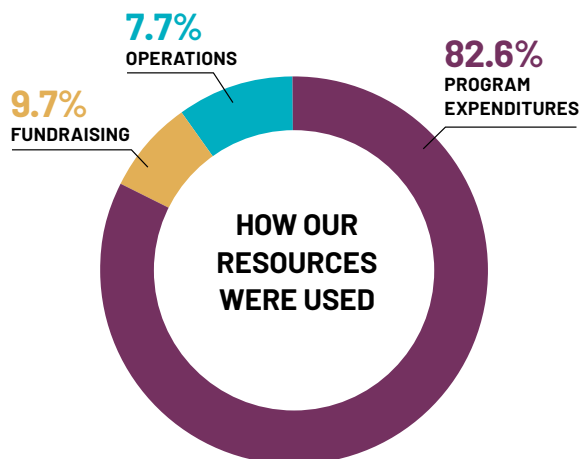
### Revenue

Total Revenue: **\$1.723M**



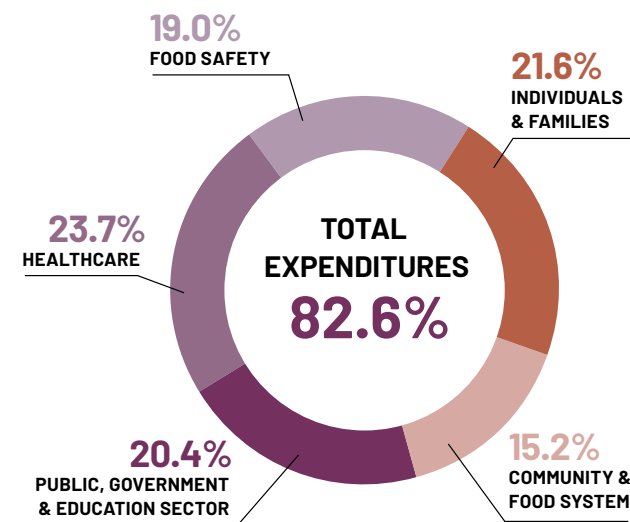
### Expenditures

Total Expenditures: **\$1.338M**



### Program Expenditures

Areas of work this funding supported:



- Education and support programming
- Awareness and engagement initiatives

**NOTE:** Third party event with a directed donation to research is excluded from 2023 revenue and expenditures.

### Programs Expenditure Ratio

Food Allergy Canada is committed to keeping administrative costs low and educational and support programming along with key stakeholder engagement high, enabling us to advocate effectively. The costs of fundraising and operations are at an average of 17 cents of each dollar raised, with the remaining 83 cents of every dollar going towards programming and awareness/engagement initiatives benefitting over 3 million Canadians affected by food allergy and their families.

### Download

[Registered Charity Information  
Return – 2023](#)

[Food Allergy Canada Detailed Financial  
Statement – 2023](#) (coming soon)



# THANK YOU: 2023 SUPPORTERS

## TRANSFORMATIVE SUPPORTERS

The Schroeder Foundation

Family and friends  
of Sean Delaney

## FOUNDATION SUPPORTERS

The Charles Norcliff Baker &  
Thelma Scott Baker Foundation

Sonor Foundation

TD Securities Underwriting Hope  
Foundation

Williams Wilson Sherport Foundation

## INDIVIDUAL SUPPORTERS

Thank you to the 435 individuals and  
families who supported Food Allergy  
Canada in 2023.

## CORPORATE SUPPORTERS

Adapt Media

Captivate Network

Dare Foods

Kellogg Canada

Nestlé Canada

Peanut Bureau of Canada

PepsiCo Canada

Pfizer Canada / EpiPen®

Sanofi Canada

UB Media

Valeo Pharma / ALLERJECT®

VENDO Media

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