

The Citizen

Connecting people with their community



COMMUNITY LIVING
BRITISH COLUMBIA

OUR COMMITMENT TO YOU.
IN ALL THAT WE DO, WE WILL START WITH HI AND:

Listen to You

Learn from You

Communicate Openly and Honestly

Respect You

Recognize Your Strengths

CLBC is committed to inclusion and honouring the rights to full citizenship of every person we serve and actively inviting communities to share in this commitment.

Compliments or complaints?
Go to: www.communitylivingbc.ca
Phone Toll Free: 1.855.664.7972

#startwithhi

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Seonag Macrae
CLBC Chief Executive Officer

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Welcome to the 2014 Fall Edition of our Community Living BC (CLBC) Citizen newsletter.

I would like to take this opportunity to introduce myself. My name is Seonag Macrae and I am honoured to be joining CLBC as its new CEO and excited about returning to British Columbia. During the 18 years I worked at BC Children's and Women's Hospital and BCIT, I traveled throughout the province getting to know its regional and geographic diversity. It will be great to return to those places and to meet many of you over the coming months.

Before joining CLBC, I was the Vice Chair of Surrey Place Centre's Board, a large provider of services to children and adults with developmental disabilities and autism spectrum disorders. I was also a Vice President for Woodgreen Community Services where I learned firsthand of the many services in community individuals and families utilize every day. I will draw upon these experiences in my new role.

This edition marks a turning point for The Citizen as it will be the last one prepared and edited by CLBC staff. Going forward, this newsletter will be prepared in partnership with a new Editorial Board made up of individuals and families we serve. We will be posting a short survey on the CLBC website to get your valuable input on the content and format of the future Citizen. You can also read more about the Editorial Board on page six.

In addition to supporting our strategic goal to enhance the participation and citizenship of individuals with developmental disabilities, the CLBC Editorial Board will encourage, develop and publish more content by self advocates for self advocates in this newsletter and on a safe, independent on-line hub for self advocates at www.selfadvocatenet.com.

In this edition of The Citizen you will find more information about these two collaborations that are part of a CLBC Quality Service Commitment released earlier this year. CLBC's Commitment has been developed with our staff and the people we serve as a clear and public pledge of the way individuals and families can expect to be treated by CLBC at all times.

We have published the Commitment on the front page of this edition and in multiple languages on page six. In addition to celebrating the work of our front-line staff across the province, the CLBC Commitment is supported by a series of quality service and communication improvements focused on our most important stakeholders. You can read more on pages four to eight.

Another focus of this edition of The Citizen is innovation. Our staff, service providers, self advocates, individuals and families we serve are innovative by nature. At CLBC, one of our strategic goals is to be an incubator of this innovative spirit. In this light, we are publishing a special feature in this edition of the Citizen to highlight some examples of CLBC innovations that are demonstrating how we are constantly looking for new ways to improve the quality of life of the people we serve.

As always, we welcome your feedback on these and any other articles you see in this report at editor@communitylivingbc.ca.

Yours truly,

Seonag Macrae
Chief Executive Officer, Community Living BC

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CLBC Quality Service Commitment

Community Living British Columbia has introduced a Quality Service Commitment to establish a clear and public awareness of the way people with developmental disabilities, Autism and FASD can expect to be treated by CLBC.

With the Commitment, CLBC is saying to people we serve that in all we do, we will Start with Hi and:

- **Respect You**
- **Listen to You**
- **Learn from You**
- **Recognize Your Strengths**
- **Communicate Openly and Honestly**

This Commitment has been developed over the past year with CLBC employees, self-advocates, families and our network of Community Councils across the province. In addition to celebrating the excellent work and daily dedication of our staff, the Commitment underscores our focus on continuous quality improvement and applies to our interactions with colleagues, government partners and service providers.

CLBC unveiled the Commitment at a Surrey conference attended by more than 75 self-advocate leaders from the Lower Mainland earlier this year. At the same time, two new measures were announced that will help honour CLBC's commitment to individuals and families:

- **www.SelfAdvocateNet.com** – Safe and independent on-line information hub for BC's self-advocacy movement with current and relevant content generated by people with diverse abilities.
- **CLBC Editorial Board** – Council of self-advocate leaders and family members from across the province to help develop and review all CLBC publications and plain language practices.

Speaking at the self-advocate conference in Surrey, CLBC's Regional Director for the Fraser Region, Jai Birdi said, "CLBC's Commitment is more than words on a poster. It includes action. We are thankful to the provincial government for recent funding increases to meet our growing service demand and proud of improvements we are making. We look forward to more progress in the coming year."

While the Commitment's goal is to guide the way CLBC responds to the people we serve, it is not a guarantee all demands will be satisfied. Due to the limits on financial resources and the complexity of the circumstances we work with every day, we understand that disputes and errors will still occur.

CLBC is committed to inclusion and honouring the rights to full citizenship of every person we serve and actively inviting communities to share in this commitment.



Listen to You



Learn from You



Respect You



Recognize Your Strengths



Communicate Openly and Honestly

The Commitment is supported by a series of quality and communication improvements at CLBC focused on key stakeholders, including:

- **self advocates and individuals with diverse abilities**
- **families and loved ones**
- **CLBC staff**
- **contracted service provider network**

With the Commitment, CLBC is promoting our toll-free/on-line complaint resolution process and a new Compliments feature on CLBC's web-site that provides people with an opportunity to recognize extraordinary employees.

Quality Improvements

With the support of increased funding from the provincial government, CLBC will build on a series of quality improvements that have been introduced over the past year in partnership with the Ministry of Social Development and Social Innovation.

To support CLBC's Commitment to the people we serve, CLBC will focus on the following initiatives over the coming year in response to feedback from our staff and community stakeholders:

- **Quality Service** – Improvements to CLBC home share services, strengthen Personalized Supports Initiative and update CLBC critical incident policy.
- **Jobs and Skills Training** – Ongoing implementation of CLBC's Community Action Employment Plan and CLBC/BCGEU Scholarship Fund.
- **One Government Approach** – Support development of Ministry of Social Development and Social Innovation early implementation sites with navigator and integrated service delivery model.
- **Community Engagement** – Strengthen the role of volunteer Community Councils across BC and update on-line/ social media tools.



Minister of Social Development and Social Innovation Don McRae visits with self advocates (left to right) Shelley Decoste, Sheenagh Morrison, Michael McLellan and Amanda Arnet.

Self Advocates and Individuals with Diverse Abilities

In addition to maintaining communication networks that have been established over the past year, CLBC is introducing a series of initiatives to support our Commitment to self advocates and individuals with diverse abilities:

- **BC Self Advocate Net** – Support expansion of a centralized, safe and independent on-line information hub for BC's self-advocacy movement at www.selfadvocatenet.com.
- **CLBC Editorial Board** – Council of self advocate leaders will help to develop and review CLBC publications and plain language practices.
- **Speakers' Bureau** – Coordinate list of self advocates interested in public speaking and provide their expertise to help educate and train CLBC staff, service providers and other community living stakeholders.
- **Employment** – Partnership with BC Self Advocacy Foundation will include people we serve more directly in the implementation of CLBC's jobs strategy to help secure more employment opportunities.



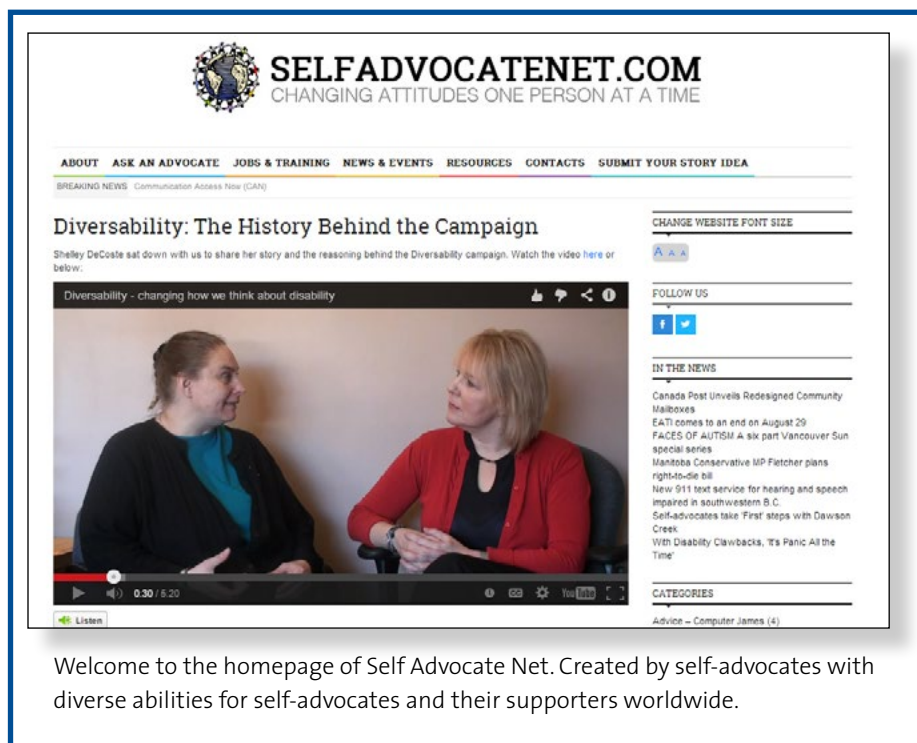
Plans to establish a CLBC Commitment and Editorial Board were first presented to self-advocate leaders in October 2013 at the 14th Annual Edenvale Leadership Retreat in Abbotsford.

Visit www.SelfAdvocateNet.com

Another way CLBC is demonstrating our Commitment to the people we serve is through our support for the expansion of a centralized, safe and independent on-line information hub for BC's self-advocacy movement. Started 14 years ago by two self advocate leaders in the Fraser Valley, BC Self Advocate Net features current and relevant content generated by individuals with diverse abilities.

Self Advocate Net founders Bryce Schaufelberger and Joe Rikley said, "We are really pleased with the new look of the site and all of the innovations and hard work by the team. Many of the features we have dreamed about are now live. The fonts can be altered by viewers who need larger fonts and the "Listen" button lets users listen to the various posts. The site is not cluttered and it is well organized."

Bryce and Joe added, "We are thankful for the support in managing this update. The newly formed Self Advocate Net editorial board is already producing great articles. We have been carrying this site for 14 years. We really appreciated the support and the help. We are honoured to have this site recognized as a valuable resource for self advocates and the Community Living movement."



Welcome to the homepage of Self Advocate Net. Created by self-advocates with diverse abilities for self-advocates and their supporters worldwide.

In addition to featuring current news and events, the BC Self Advocate Net includes:

- **interactive social media links**
- **links to Scholarship Fund and Editorial Board applications when they are open**
- **a CLBC Corner where self advocates can ask questions**
- **opportunities for self advocates to submit story ideas and publish articles**
- **links to self advocate organizations and community service agencies**

SUBMIT YOUR STORY IDEA!

If you have a story idea for Self Advocate Net or would like to publish a story on the site, a special "Submit Your Story Idea" link has been established on the front page at www.SelfAdvocateNet.com.

Take a minute to fill in the short on-line form, submit your idea and the Self Advocate Net Editorial Board will follow-up with you directly. Here are examples of stories that have been published on Self Advocate Net:

- **Diversability: The History Behind the Campaign**
- **My Experience at the BC Accessibility Summit**
- **Nothing About Us Without Us: Trailblazing by BC's Self-Advocacy Community**
- **Tim's Place: Story of Restaurant Owner with Down's Syndrome**

CLBC Editorial Board

To support our Commitment to the people we serve, CLBC has established an Editorial Board of self advocates and family members to help ensure the perspectives of the people we serve are more present in the development of our communications, publications and community relations.

The Editorial Board is a paid position for people who are:

- **eligible for CLBC services**
- **a family member of someone eligible for support**
- **someone with extensive experience working in the community living sector**

Among other things, CLBC Editorial Board members will:

- **live in British Columbia**
- **have an understanding of CLBC and disability related issues**
- **be comfortable speaking in front of a group**
- **be friendly, flexible and like working on a team**
- **have good listening skills**
- **be respectful of other people's ideas**
- **show dedication to creating positive and supportive working relationships both in and outside CLBC**

CLBC helps Editorial Board members learn the necessary skills and offer guidance to prepare and support them during their work. Some travel is required.

In Spring 2014, CLBC invited self-advocates, family members and community living leaders to apply to become a member of CLBC's Editorial Board by filling out an online application at:

[www.communitylivingbc.ca/
Editorial Board](http://www.communitylivingbc.ca/EditorialBoard)
and
www.selfadvocatenet.com

People were also invited to download the application and mail it to:

CLBC Editorial Board Application
7th Floor, Airport Square
1200 West 73rd Avenue
Vancouver, BC, V6P 6G5

The response was very positive and many great applications were received.



To reflect the diversity of our staff and the people we serve, CLBC's Quality Service Commitment is displayed in multiple languages. Here are three examples.



Chinese



Punjabi



French

Families

Over the past couple of years, CLBC has increased our emphasis on individualized funding and program models that empower families and encourage the people we serve to become much more involved in decisions that impact their future and quality of life. Among other things we have:

- **introduced an individual preference initiative across the province that provides individuals and families with an increased role in selecting their local service provider**
- **increased participation of family members on CLBC's network of 13 Community Councils**
- **established a family partnership advisor position at CLBC to ensure a family lens is applied to our policies as they are developed**
- **established a more accessible and transparent complaint resolution process**
- **worked with Ministry of Social Development and Social Innovation to simplify forms and administration procedures**

In addition to these measures and providing new funding in the coming year for approximately 2,000 individuals and families, CLBC is introducing a series of initiatives to support our Commitment to families:

- **include family members in CLBC's Editorial Board and Speakers Bureau**
- **collaboration with BC's Family Support Institute to enhance participation of families in CLBC's Community Action Employment Strategy**
- **establish a voluntary email database of family members across BC to improve two-way communication opportunities**
- **promote recruiting opportunities with CLBC's network of Community Councils to increase participation of family members and friends of people we serve**

Establishing Family Chapters - CLBC Partnership with Family Support Institute



**FAMILY SUPPORT
INSTITUTE of BC**

In collaboration with British Columbia's Family Support Institute (FSI), CLBC has provided \$50,000 to help family members of the people we serve to become more involved and supportive of employment services. FSI has expanded the successful **familyWorks** program to CLBC's Simon Fraser, Kamloops-Thompson and Central-Upper Island regions. Among other things, **familyWorks** will:

- **recognize most families organize much of the supports with their loved ones**
- **establish local family chapters to meet regularly to share, learn and develop an internal process to support the development of individual employment plans for their loved one**
- **inform potential expansion of this model to other CLBC regions**
- **ensure family perspectives are integrated into implementation of CLBC's employment strategy**

The Family Support Institute's Executive Director Angela Clancy said, "We are pleased to see the commitment to family focused, family directed approaches to employment conversations and strategies. At FSI we believe families are the experts when it comes to their sons and daughters and we are heartened to see that CLBC is committed to investing in families with this in mind as well."

For more information on the Family Support Institute, contact www.familysupportbc.com.

Employees

CLBC's Commitment has been developed over the past year with our employees, self-advocates, families and our network of Community Councils across the province. In addition to celebrating the excellent work and daily dedication of our staff, this Commitment is a catalyst for continuous quality improvements we are making at CLBC.

CLBC's Commitment is displayed at our offices and work stations across the province in multiple languages to reflect the diversity of the people we serve. The Commitment will also be featured on CLBC's refreshed web-site at www.communitylivingbc.ca.



To help our employees honour the Commitment together, CLBC will build on improvements made to our Learning Centre over the past year and continue to support the full-time provincial training positions that have been created to improve the consistency and quality of training services.

CLBC will also introduce a series of initiatives to support our Commitment that respond to recent employee survey results – particularly related to increased access to employee training opportunities and responding to work load pressures.

CLBC has over 450 employees in 39 offices across the province.



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Contracted Service Provider Network

Over the past year, CLBC has provided an additional \$5 million to our network of contracted service providers to help mitigate increasing payroll costs. In addition to supporting the provincial government's recent decision to fund the costs of future wage increases for the community living sector over the next five years, CLBC is introducing a series of initiatives to support our commitment to service providers across BC by:

- **funding training to develop and implement employment best practices developed by Canadian Association for Supported Employment**
- **streamlining regulations and administrative requirements for CLBC's Personalized Supports Initiative that serves adults with FASD and Autism**
- **responding to recommendations of external review of CLBC home share services**
- **reducing duplication and unnecessary administrative and reporting expectations**
- **eliminating non-essential requirements to allow more effort and funding for direct services**
- **exploring and developing opportunities to reduce operational costs and achieve economies of scale**

CLBC Home Share Review Complete

Earlier this year, CLBC released an independent review of our home sharing services as part of an ongoing commitment to continuous quality improvement. Home sharing is the most frequently used residential service by people supported by CLBC.

The review focused on the strengths and risks associated with this residential option to identify an overall approach to promote safety, well being and quality of life for individuals living in home sharing. Among other things, the report concludes:

- **CLBC's home sharing model has a coherent, comprehensive policy framework, with appropriate minimum standards that far exceed other Canadian jurisdictions.**
- **CLBC has responded appropriately to previously identified policy gaps and CLBC's website information is informative, user friendly and accessible.**
- **Respondents agree that home sharing options can provide a high quality of support when there is a good match between those individuals who choose this lifestyle and home sharing providers.**

The report suggests CLBC establish a five-year plan that:

- **ensures congruency between policy and values frameworks**
- **reviews monitoring requirements**

- **identifies and mitigates risks associated with the growth of this option, particularly with community service providers**
- **provides a learning, training and support framework**
- **identifies support needs, responsibilities and expected practice for individuals, families, home sharing providers, CLBC and community service providers**

Recommendations in the report focus on:

- **examining other innovative residential options**
- **managing the rate and pace of further growth**
- **communicating openly with families, individuals and providers about home sharing's strengths and vulnerabilities**
- **share information about successful practices**
- **track outcomes for individuals residing in home sharing arrangements**
- **improve information management technology to ensure data related to home share model is readily accessible for planning and forecasting**
- **conduct an internal time and workload study of regional staff**

Definition

Home sharing is an arrangement where an adult with a developmental disability shares a home with someone who is contracted to provide ongoing support. The home is the primary residence of both the individual being supported and the person offering the support.

Facts

In 2007, there were 2,207 adults living in home share.

Today, CLBC has over 3,300 individuals benefiting from home sharing arrangements – 1,200 in direct home shares and 2,100 through agency co-ordinated arrangements.

This year, CLBC will invest close to \$110 million in home sharing services across the province.

CLBC RESPONSE

CLBC has circulated the home share report to key stakeholders for comments to help inform a full response from CLBC that addresses the review's recommendations. This response will include a multi-year implementation plan and focus on:

- **collaborating with the sector to build and sustain program capacity**
- **allocating additional resources to respond to increased demand and to effectively support growth by developing capacity**
- **developing training and learning opportunities for different stakeholders – including CLBC staff**
- **developing additional resources for communicating with families and individuals**
- **surveying individuals who reside in home share about their satisfaction with their supports, services and quality of life**
- **updating CLBC's Handbook for Home Share Providers**

For a full copy of the report, visit: www.communitylivingbc.ca.

WOW Award Winners Announced

In early 2014, CLBC presented our annual Widening Our World (WOW) Awards to four community inclusion leaders across the province. Since 2009, CLBC has presented WOW Awards to recognize British Columbians who are creating opportunities and building awareness for a vision of full citizenship for people with developmental disabilities where they lead good lives, have rich relationships, choices in how they live and employment opportunities.

- Victoria self advocate **Sheenagh Morrison** was recognized with a WOW Award for her work to promote awareness of people with diverse abilities
- Prince George employer **Jay Maybin** was recognized for providing inclusive job opportunities for local people with diverse abilities
- Vancouver's **Ann Carr and her sister, Carol May** were recognized for creating a basketball program for youth and young adults with developmental disabilities – the Developmentally Challenged Youth Basketball Association.
- **Peter and Stephanie Chung** of Burnaby were recognized for their contribution to creating job opportunities for adults with developmental disabilities



Victoria's Sheenagh Morrison was presented with a WOW Award for her tireless work as a self advocate community leader



BCGEU/CLBC Scholarship Fund launched

In February, CLBC and the BC Government and Service Employees' Union (BCGEU) launched a \$100,000 Scholarship Fund to benefit adults with developmental disabilities being served by CLBC across the province. The fund was established as a result of bargaining negotiations between CLBC and BCGEU.

People being served by CLBC are eligible to apply for a scholarship to support their personal and professional development. The deadline for 2014 applications was March 31 and successful applicants have been contacted. Submissions were reviewed by a joint CLBC/BCGEU committee.

The fund was developed based on survey responses from self-advocates, families, service providers and CLBC staff. Scholarship funds totaling \$100,000 will be distributed over five years and allocated equally to CLBC's three regions (North/Interior, Fraser, Vancouver Coastal/Island). A maximum contribution of \$2,500/person will be established and funding priorities will focus on:

- **skills training related to securing employment opportunities**
- **training courses being offered by accredited BC institutions**
- **indirect costs associated with attending post-secondary education and training**
- **community recreation activities that promote quality of life and new skills**



BCGEU-CLBC Bargaining Unit Chair Charles Partridge said, "The fund will provide a great opportunity for CLBC-eligible individuals to access financial assistance to pursue post-secondary education, courses or other training programs. The BCGEU members working for CLBC are honoured to be able to offer this opportunity to the people we serve."

Special Feature: CLBC Innovation in Action

British Columbians, CLBC staff, self-advocates, families and our service providers are innovative by nature. We have a reputation for innovation that extends across national and international borders. This innovative spirit can continue to be a source of creativity, investment and growth.

CLBC is an incubator of innovation. Our community partners and staff demonstrate innovation in action on a daily basis. Over the past year, steps have been taken to ensure best practices are identified, catalogued, evaluated and communicate that focus on:

- **Existing and emerging sector challenges**
- **Business practices, systems and processes**
- **Resiliency**

In this special feature, we capture some popular CLBC innovations that are working to improve the lives of the people we serve.



“Goal Three:
Promote Innovation
and Resiliency”

CLBC Strategic Plan

Inclusion Works! The Dignity of Risk - PAGE 12

Individual Funding provides innovative solution for South Island youth and their families.

My include Me! Experience - PAGE 13

Rasika Aklujkar talks about her role as a surveyor for CLBC's Quality of Life project.

Personalized Supports for Adults with FASD and Autism - PAGE 14

Improvements will strengthen innovative program.

Individual and Family Preference - PAGE 15

Policy gives individuals and families more choice and control over their services.

Community Action Employment Plan: One Year Report- PAGE 16

First year of Plan features significant accomplishments and a look ahead to year two.

Inclusion Works! The Dignity of Risk



InclusionWorks!

When youth with developmental disabilities and their families in Victoria began considering life after high school they didn't feel the programs available in their community met their needs.

Most programs continued to be provided in largely segregated settings and many programs served a wide range of age groups.

In contrast, these young people had been included throughout their education and were involved in their community with friends and their families. While each youth and their families knew they wanted something different, individually they did not have the resources to develop and maintain the full-time services they needed.

These families worked with the South Island CLBC office to contact others going through transition and held meetings of interested youth and their families.

From a series of meetings, values and service needs were explored and the plans for a family-governed group evolved called InclusionWorks!

InclusionWorks! now represents three family-governed groups in Greater Victoria in which transitioning youth and their families have pooled their resources in order to provide quality services and supports in the community.

The three groups are based on the values of inclusion, citizenship, supported decision-making, high expectations and the dignity of risk.

InclusionWorks! also focuses on the value of employment.

The formation of any new and innovative group is challenging. For each InclusionWorks! group the initial six months to a year was difficult, as

they developed partnerships, learned to work together, created weekly schedules of activities and created processes around such varied issues as challenging behaviours and inclement weather.

When things work, programming and relationships are richly textured and result in quality, inclusive lives. When things are out of balance, the group must work internally and with partners to problem-solve or the whole group is at risk.

Today, the three groups support 24 youth for 30 to 35 hours per week and have 12 regular support workers. Programming is now almost all done in small groups or on an individual basis. All programming is focused on employment goals, greater independence, and health and well-being, with a specific emphasis on developing social relationships.

Last year, InclusionWorks!, in partnership with its host agency, Community Living Victoria, was fortunate to receive a grant from Vancouver Foundation to support their efforts and explore and share how family-governed groups can provide employment supports.

An important part of the Vancouver Foundation grant project is a new partnership with GT Hiring Solutions, the WorkBC contract holder for Victoria. The grant project will also develop a guide for others on how to form an employment-focused, family-governed group.

As part of the grant project, InclusionWorks! has been working with customized employment expert Annette Borrows and contracted with a full-time employment facilitator to work with the groups' participants to find and maintain employment.

Community Living Victoria, the InclusionWorks! groups' Host Agency, is an organization known for being on the forefront of progressive services and was willing to try something new when approached by the first group of families.

Two other vital InclusionWorks! partners are the South Island Distance Education School which provides education services to the youth until they reach age 21, and the Centre for Outreach Education at the University of Victoria, which provides space on campus several days a week, along with access to practicum students and other university resources.

In total, the three InclusionWorks! groups have over 20 community partners allowing for creativity and personalization of services to participating youth.

InclusionWorks! families decided to limit the program to five years to follow the trajectory of typical youth who attend university, do apprenticeships or have their first jobs.

After the five years is completed, individuals can take their CLBC Individualized Funding and move on to the next stages of their adult lives.

MORE INFORMATION

To learn more about
InclusionWorks! visit:
www.inclusionworks.ca

My *include Me!* experience

By Rasika Aklujkar, *include Me!* Surveyor and Self Advocate

Hi I'm Rasika. I have been a surveyor for *include Me!* for over a year now. I am also a self advocate. I love the experience of listening to others talk about their quality of life. We don't know about all of these things when we just talk to someone on the phone or when we first meet them. It is good for CLBC staff to know that we need to focus on Quality of Life. This surveyor job has been a great learning experience for me. It has helped me both professionally and personally.

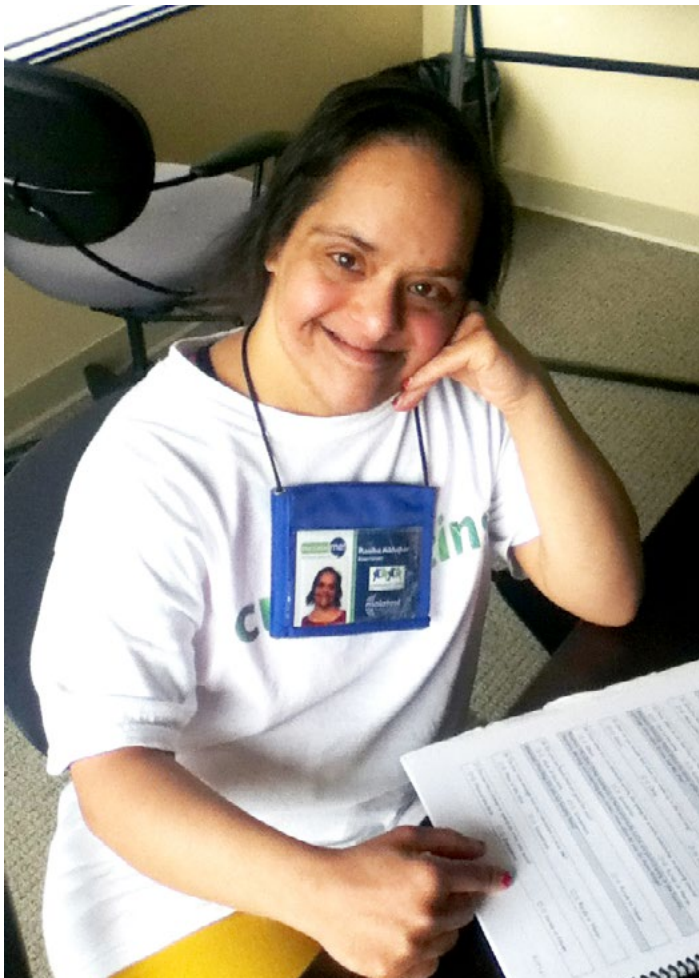
I have been trained by a survey company called Malatest. I have been trained to ask the questions. I have a training manual and have learned all of the important things I need to know. I have taken the survey myself so I could know what it is like for other people doing the survey.

When I am asking someone the survey questions it can be touchy at times. Sometimes the person gets nervous and shy. So I let them know that they can trust me as a surveyor to keep their information private, safe and secure. It is important for people to feel safe when they are doing the survey. I make sure I am polite and courteous and I greet them with a smile. I hope this makes them feel comfortable.

It is important that people know their rights and understand them. As a surveyor I let people know that it is their choice to do the survey or not to do the survey. Most people choose to do the survey and seem to like it. I also let them know that they can choose not to answer any of the questions if they are not comfortable. They can skip that question. Some questions are personal and may be sensitive. So I pay attention to see that the person answering the questions is comfortable.

Being a Surveyor with *include Me!* has helped me to meet many different people with multiple intelligences, and many different ways of communicating. We now use iPads for the survey. It is also available for people to do online.

I am excited to be doing more surveys in September. For me it feels good to take a stand for Quality of Life! If you have any questions about *include Me!* give Jen Wheadon a call at 604-209-5848.



include Me! Quality of Life Project

include Me! is a CLBC initiative focused on measuring things we are doing to improve quality of life for people we serve. Driven and facilitated by self advocates, *include Me!* incorporates a well-established survey tool focused on independence, social participation and well-being.

More than 2,200 people served over the past year in the Fraser, Vancouver Coastal and Interior regions were interviewed. In the coming year, an additional 1,000 people will be invited to participate.

For more information on *include Me!*, visit: www.communitylivingbc.ca/include-me.

Personalized Supports for Adults with FASD and Autism

Increases to program funding and service provider training are among improvements CLBC is making to the already innovative Personalized Supports Initiative (PSI) for adults with autism spectrum disorder or fetal alcohol spectrum disorder (FASD).

Improvements to the PSI support CLBC's renewed commitment to continuous quality improvement and respond to feedback from staff, service providers and people receiving services.

B.C. is a leader in Canada with a specific community living program for this group of adults. CLBC introduced the PSI in 2010 to provide support and service to adults who did not meet the developmental disability criteria but who do have significant challenges in adaptive functioning and a diagnosis of either autism or FASD.

PSI is intended to augment existing community and government supports and where necessary provide funding for services such as supported living, respite, employment support, skill development, homemaker support, and development of support networks.

In response to feedback received over the past year, CLBC has developed a work plan to strengthen PSI is being implemented over the next 12-18 months and includes:

- **streamlining the contracting process in partnership with service providers to improve efficiency and accessibility**
- **increasing integration of PSI supports with CLBC's Community Action Employment Plan to help create more job opportunities for people we serve who want to work and are able to work**
- **CLBC staff and service provider training**
- **updating communication and program guides with families and self-advocates**
- **strengthening collaboration with government ministries and agencies to improve health, housing and community inclusion options**
- **establishing a stakeholder advisory group to provide advice about the response to the review**

Approximately 650 people were registered for PSI services as of December 31, 2013 – up from 20 in 2009/10 and 169 in 2010/11.

CLBC's 2014/15-2016/17 Service Plan confirms an investment in PSI services of \$18.7 million in 2014-15 and \$22.5 million in 2016-17.

Personalized Supports Initiative

In 2010, the provincial government asked CLBC to establish a program unlike any other in North America to provide supports to very vulnerable adults: those with diagnoses of fetal alcohol syndrome disorder (FASD) or an autism spectrum disorder (ASD) and significant challenges in adaptive functioning. The Personalized Supports Initiative (PSI) was designed to provide services that these individuals could not obtain elsewhere in the community.

PSI was established to help individuals meet their goals by augmenting existing community and government supports and where necessary provide funding required for services based on person centred planning. The program was reviewed in 2011, and again in 2012-2013, to determine its progress in helping individuals and to identify how it could be improved. Individuals, families, service providers and CLBC staff were asked about their experience with PSI supports and we looked at our data to see which aspects of PSI were working, which were not, which parts could be improved and how they could be improved.

Everyone agreed that PSI is a valuable and much-needed program which has helped people lead better lives. We determined that there were ways to improve PSI to lead to even greater success.

“Through the Personalized Supports Initiative, many people, who in the past have not been able to access services, are now successfully receiving flexible supports that demonstrate an understanding for the unique needs of those being assisted. The new work plan CLBC announced further reflects a commitment to continuing to evolve and improve on the PSI.”

Linda Perry
Executive Director, Vela Society

Individual and Family Preference

CLBC believes individuals and their families should have as much choice and control over their services as possible.

“Individual Preference” is one innovative way CLBC is assisting and empowering individuals and their families to have a say in who provides support in their life.

Because each individual and family is unique, the “Individual Preference” process may differ from situation to situation. There are typically five steps to the process where a CLBC facilitator can provide guidance and support.

STEP ONE: RESOURCE ALLOCATION

CLBC confirms you are eligible for CLBC-funded services, works with you to determine your needs and implements supports when funding is approved and available. The Individual Preference process begins when CLBC confirms funding is available.

STEP TWO: IDENTIFY QUALIFIED SERVICE PROVIDERS

CLBC will ask you to consider three possible service providers so you can make a more informed decision about which one you prefer. If you already have a service provider in mind, CLBC will ensure they have the proper qualifications and refer two additional service providers for you to also consider.

STEP THREE: MEET SERVICE PROVIDERS

Your CLBC facilitator can help you arrange meetings with the service providers that you are considering to learn about them, talk with the staff and ask questions important to you.

STEP FOUR: STATE YOUR PREFERENCE

Let your CLBC facilitator know which service provider you prefer – if any. If you are still not sure of which service provider you prefer, your CLBC facilitator will assist you to explore appropriate options.

STEP FIVE: ARRANGE SERVICES

Once you have identified your preferred service provider, CLBC will work with them to arrange services and create a contract that ensures quality standards and reasonable costs.

In March, CLBC and its community partners marked the first anniversary of the innovative Community Action Employment Plan introduced to help create job opportunities across the province for adults with developmental disabilities, Autism and Fetal Alcohol Spectrum Disorder (FASD) who want to and able to work.

To build on the successes achieved in the first year of the plan, CLBC has introduced additional elements to support the strategy's goals, including:

- developmental disabilities, Autism and Fetal Alcohol spectrum Disorder (FASD) who want to and able to work.
- CLBC's jobs plan is a collaborative strategy that promotes inclusive and supportive employment opportunities. Among other things, the plan supports coordination of local resources and community engagement with government, service providers, volunteers, self advocates, families, community leaders and CLBC staff. Accomplishments over the past year include:
- **CLBC recognized as the first government body funding community living services in Canada to adopt national best practices established by the Canadian Association for Supported Employment**
 - **funded large-scale pilot projects in the Thompson-Cariboo, Central-Upper Island and Simon Fraser regions to develop local employment strategies**
 - **funded training opportunities for contracted employment service providers and supported development of BC-based trainers/mentors**
 - **developed ongoing collaboration with local and provincial Work BC offices and Aboriginal communities**
- **increased focus on people with autism and FASD being served by CLBC's Personalized Supports Initiative**
 - **establishment of a framework to measure increases in employment for the adults CLBC serves and the success of contracted employment services**
 - **multi-year funding for three regional projects and a process to select a fourth pilot location**
 - **funding awards from the CLBC/BCGEU Scholarship Fund**
 - **ongoing training and professional development for CLBC staff and service providers**
 - **strategic collaborations with community partners and Work BC**
- "The Plan is a significant undertaking with its dedicated focus on employment. The collective work accomplished in the past year is moving the plan decisively toward its goals, and will result in more and better employment opportunities for people with developmental disabilities who wish to work."

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**Susanna Gurr, Managing Director
BC Centre for Employment Excellence**

