



COMMUNITYLIVINGREPORT



COMMUNITY LIVING
BRITISH COLUMBIA



Message from the Board Chair

Welcome to the July edition of Community Living Report. On July 1st 2005, the hard

Lois Hollstedt work and vision of hundreds of people across BC became a reality when the provincial government signed the legislation creating the crown agency Community Living British Columbia. It took four years of thinking and planning to ensure CLBC was ready to assume responsibility for delivery of services to over 15,000 adults and children with developmental disabilities.

On behalf of everyone at CLBC, I want to thank all those involved in contributing to a process that will enable a transformation in how our service system supports individuals and families across BC. The work over the past four years was often difficult and challenging, but out of that process has come a vision and a set of principles that will guide our work and will put the people we serve at the centre of the system. Personal plans based on individual needs will guide future services, which we expect will increase the opportunities for people to live rich and full lives.

Over the next 18 months, the current system will evolve. All clients will have a personal plan developed based on their gifts and talents. The plan will

ask the question "what will it take to build a good life for this individual and how can our community help to make it happen?" Supports from CLBC will be just one part of the plan. Plans can be developed with CLBC's help or with others interested in the life of the individual. Individuals and families told us they want flexibility and choices. Our plan includes individual funding as an option, giving people the ability to shop for their own services.

We were told that we need to be more creative in designing services. The entire system will continue to rely on communities to provide the direct services, but also to be more completely involved in developing new ideas and monitoring how our provincial money is spent.

The months ahead are exciting but the hard, complex work of system change will need everyone's continuing support.

Since July 1st, I have been travelling through northern British Columbia and the Kootenays, talking with individuals and families. They told me they are cautiously optimistic, but many people are feeling cynical. They question if the work we are doing will actually result in more services to meet the growing needs of people struggling to cope - let alone excel - and truly help developmentally disabled people live rich and full lives. People also asked that our plan be flexible and able to adjust if we find it is not achieving the results we expect. We know our challenge is to make our vision of

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The Newsletter for Community Living BC

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positive change a reality. CLBC must earn the trust and respect of people across BC. With the feedback and involvement of individuals, families, service providers and citizens across the province, we will listen to concerns and make adjustments. This exciting

time is one of hope and optimism, and I believe we can be successful together.

For more information, please visit the CLBC web site at: www.communitylivingbc.ca

Sincerely,
Lois Hollstedt
Chair of CLBC

INSIDE VOICE

My Life After Release from Woodlands By George Fulcher, Self Advocate



I lived against my will at Woodlands for 17 years. I was released in the early 70's. My life sure changed after I was free from the institution. I have had a good life in the community. I lived in Sea View Guest Home in Powell River which was

not so great. But then I got out on my own and shared an apartment with my good friend Richard McDonald. I worked at the Artaban workshop for many years before it closed. I met Rose there. We married and I am proud to be celebrating my 28th wedding anniversary this year.

I value most the simple luxuries of going for coffee with someone I meet; chatting for a while with a friend without worrying about the time and getting back. I love socializing and hanging out with people in public. I have met a wide variety of different people this way.

I have a privacy in my life both at home and in the community that was missing at Woodlands. I can go to social events and nobody is watching me like a hawk or judging what I do. I can pick my own clothes in all the clothing stores. I have a dapper look and really enjoy looking smart. At Woodlands we were given clothes that looked like work clothes. I always felt like they were prison clothes.

I still take great pleasure in choosing my own food and cooking. I love ordering my favourite things in restaurants. I love snacking when I feel like it. This is so different than having a meal dished up for you from an institutional kitchen and nothing served after dinner. I also get chances to travel now - either through my involvement as a self advocate or with my wife, family and friends on holidays.

I feel safe in my home. I know that my money and my belongings are safe in my own apartment. I no longer have to worry constantly about snitching. I get to make my own choices - or pretty much... I am married after all. Sometimes I am ruled over like other husbands!

In my early years I struggled with alcoholism. I thought I was an angel but wasn't. I became a member of Alcoholics Anonymous and learned a lot about myself. I had a great sponsor and I learned to make better choices for my life.

I have enjoyed participating in many community groups. I continue to be an honourable member of the United Way. I have served for many years on the Powell River Association for Community Living Board of Directors. I got the chance to work with BCACL on the Inside Out show. This was an extraordinary experience. My other work as a self advocate helped to develop value-based services in the community.

I am very excited by the new challenge of serving on the CLBC Board. I love new experiences. I love contributing.



Children's Services MOU Provides Continuity, Stability for Families

CLBC and the Ministry of Children and Family Development (MCFD) share a long-term vision that sees children with developmental disabilities receiving support from CLBC that continues into adulthood. Based on this vision, a Children's Agreement between CLBC and the ministry was developed to guide responsibility for the future provision of children's services.

Since the development of that Agreement in June 2004, MCFD has worked diligently to prepare for its implementation, expecting this to occur by July, 2005, concurrent with the establishment of CLBC. However, given the complexity of the issue and in order to ensure the least amount of disruption for

families and children, completing the task has required more time.

To maintain continuity for families, from July 1st 2005 through June 2006, CLBC will continue to be the point of contact for children and their families who previously received service through Children's CLS services. During this time, MCFD will remain responsible for the budget, policy, monitoring and accountability.

As we continue to work toward implementing the Children's Agreement, families will continue to receive services from the same workers in the same offices where they currently do. The only difference is a technical one - those social workers will now be working for CLBC.

Copies of the MOU are available at the CLBC website: www.communitylivingbc.ca

From Good to Great - an update on the Vernon conference

by Roberta Scott

Last month on behalf of Family Life Homes, I attended a conference in Vernon called *From Good to Great: Developing Person Centered Agencies in BC*. While the word 'agencies' was used, the terms 'person centered thinking and planning' will be ones we hear with increasing frequency now that CLBC is in the transformation phase.

This conference was organized by CLBC to bring people together, sharing what is now taking place and what possibilities may exist to ensure that people with developmental disabilities across the province have their dreams, gifts, talents and lifestyles acknowledged through a variety of planning options.

I was asked to be a member of the planning committee for this event in the early stages. The conference



Carol Goozh and Roberta Scott

was made up of 25 mini presentations by many individuals over the two day period. Each presentation captured the experiences of agencies and individuals, including self advocates

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An update on the Vernon conference *continued...*

who all did an amazing job of sharing information. One session was called *Planning Our Own Lives*. Self advocates described how they actually wrote their own life plans and what that meant for them. I was most impressed by guest speaker Michael Smull who is from the United States. His comments included some catch phrases such as "dead and happy are incompatible" and "miserable and alive are unacceptable." This was in reference to how some folks currently live. He emphasized that "Best Practices" is a moving target and therefore we should never accept that our current successes shouldn't improve. He talked about how those of us who provide services and supports need to begin to be more person centered in our thinking.

Now that we have moved to community governance, many people receiving services will be given the opportunity to create a plan for their lives. Planning can be provided in a number of ways, including: using the services of a CLBC facilitator; using an existing agency with trained staff; having a family develop a plan for their family member; or having an individual write his or her own plan. Formats for plans include using recognized systems such as PATH, MAPS, PFP, Essential Life Style Planning, Individual Planning or just a means that captures the life and future of a person with sufficient detail that satisfies those involved, most importantly the individual. While many people may wish to create a plan for themselves, others may not. Families may or may not want a planning process. However, the options will be made available. All plans that require a funding component will need to be submitted through CLBC and meet specific criteria before being approved or funded. This will not mean that a person will lose any of the funding they currently have. These are early times and as we move along more information will be available.



Roberta Scott and Michael Smull

In conclusion, I found the conference very interesting and inspiring in terms of what others are doing across the province. As the conference closed, a declaration was drawn up that recognized the combined wisdom, the future direction, and the commitment of so many. It was particularly inspiring to see so many present and listening intently to what was being shared: family members, self advocates, service providers, and CLBC staff, including most of the CLBC board of directors. I believe that this is an area where we would be wise to gain a better understanding and consider how each of us can become more person centered in our thinking.

I know we will welcome more clarity about the implications of person centered thinking and planning for all Family Life Homes across the province as a means to honour and value the individuals being served and supported through our unique residential option.

Special thanks to Brian Salisbury and Dan Collins for their leadership in pulling this conference together!

Roberta Scott is the President of enVision Society for Choice and Inclusion



INNOVATE, CARING, INCLUSIVE... How do you spell 'Community'?

*By Doug Woollard
Vice President,
Community Planning and
Development, CLBC*

At the heart of CLBC's vision is children and adults with developmental disabilities leading a good life and living as full citizens. To achieve this vision, we must all rethink how we support people with disabilities to participate in their home communities.

While CLBC will be responsible for formal supports and services, community is the place where many positive changes happen. The word 'community' includes families, friends, neighbours, co-workers and informal organizations like sports teams, hobby groups, service clubs, Scouts and Girl Guides, car pools, churches, non-profit societies, support groups and cultural, ethnic and Aboriginal groups.

Community is about welcoming and hospitality, and is where citizenship is realized.

Caring communities have many opportunities for engagement and belonging. Community groups have strong connections between them, creating opportunities for dialogue and partnerships. As well, these groups welcome newcomers, and can grow to figure out how to make inclusion work better for everyone.

Finally, because caring communities work together, they respond to both crises and opportunities. This reflects a belief that social issues are an entire community's concern, not the sole responsibility of government or service agencies.

This definition of community can serve as a model for the "look and feel" we might like for all communities in British Columbia. In supporting inclusion for people with disabilities, community development can contribute to building stronger, more connected, caring, and welcoming communities.

While CLBC will help communities develop, growth and innovation can also be initiated from an individual or a network. When this occurs, we build community connections that support a person's dreams and goals. When community development is initiated by a group, the group itself is addressing an issue that can best be resolved within their community.

The New CLBC Call Centre: Up and Running

Our Call Centre has been fully staffed and operational since July 1, and we've already fielded over 100 calls from throughout the Province.

The nature of the calls have ranged from 'who

is my worker?' to 'what services does CLBC provide?' and have given us a good picture of what is on people's minds. In several instances, calls to the centre have allowed us to respond to issues we were unaware of, and as a result we have developed new processes and better responses.

We will continue to review

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New CLBC Call Centre *continued...*

the calls we're receiving with a view to ever improving service quality.

Queries about service delivery or eligibility should continue to be directed to your local office.

You can reach our call centre, between 10 am and 6 pm, Monday to Friday at:

604-660-CLBC (2522)
or toll free
at **1-877-660-2522**.

I live in Enderby - where is the closest CLBC office?

How do I apply for services for my son?

My neighbor has a developmental disability, but she has no family or friends. Who can I call for information on services for her?

**CLBC Call Centre: 604-660-CLBC
or toll free: 1-877-660-2522**

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

We want to hear what you think about issues or events in your community.

Send us your letters in 250 words or less. Please include a valid email address and phone number. We may edit letters for reasons of space or clarity. The newsletter reserves the right to publish your letter, unless it is labelled 'not for publication.'

Please email your letter to:

info@communitylivingbc.ca

Or mail it to:

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c/o the Editorial Board
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