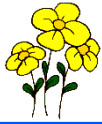




CONTINUITY NEWS



Supporting families in Manitoba to plan for an enriched quality of life
for their family member with an intellectual disability

APRIL 2010

In the News....

On March 11th, 2010 in New York, Canada ratified the UN Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities. This is day of celebration for people with disabilities and their families, as well as for the many advocates, representatives from disability organizations and government representatives from all political parties that have worked so hard over the past years to reach this milestone.

The Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities is an international human rights treaty that identifies the rights of people with disabilities, as well as the obligations on the State parties to the Convention to promote, protect and ensure those rights. The Convention was adopted by the UN General Assembly on December 13th, 2006 and opened for signatures on March 30th, 2007, at which time Canada signed on. Now that Canada has ratified the Convention, both the federal and provincial levels of government will be bound by the obligations of the treaty.

The eight guiding principles of the Convention are as follows:

- a) Respect for inherent dignity, individual autonomy including the freedom to make one's own choices and independence of persons
- b) Non discrimination
- c) Full and effective participation and inclusion in society
- d) Respect for difference and acceptance of persons with disabilities as part of human diversity and humanity
- e) Equality of opportunity
- f) Accessibility
- g) Equality between men and women
- h) Respect for the evolving capacities of children with disabilities and respect for the right of children with disabilities to preserve their identities



The Convention provides people with disabilities and their families a new tool to promote and advance the rights of people with disability and to build an inclusive and accessible Canada.

On March 4th, 2010 Finance Minister Jim Flaherty announced the 2010 federal budget. There was some good news included for people with disabilities with regard to the Registered Disability Savings Plan. The two proposed improvements are:

- 1) To allow for a 10 year carry forward of the Canada Disability Savings Grant and Bond entitlement. This would allow people to make use of any unused Grants or Bonds going back to 2008, up to 10 years.
- 2) To allow for a rollover of deceased individual's RRSP or RRIF proceeds to be transferred, on a tax free basis to the RDSP of a financially dependent child or grandchild who has a disability.

It is important to note that the budget has to be passed before these proposed changes are finalized and also that they may not come into effect right away. Please consult with your financial institution, CRA or HRSDC for more information and questions you may have about your RDSP.

Sources used for this article: UN Enable and CACL press release. For more information on the UN Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities, you can visit www.un.org/disabilities , www.cacl.com, www.barrierfreemb.com, or www.gov.mb.ca/dio/

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Primary Caregiver Tax Credit

Manitobans who act as the primary caregivers for family members or others may now be eligible for a \$1,020 tax credit. This credit recognizes the vital support caregivers provide to those needing care. Manitoba's new Primary Caregiver Tax Credit provides up to \$1,020 a year to people who act as primary caregivers for spouses, relatives, neighbours or friends who live at home in Manitoba. The credit will assist in covering the caregiver's expenses, such as respite care, taking the person shopping, to medical appointments or on recreational outings.

The individual must be assessed either by the regional health authority, Family Services and Housing or by a Health Care Professional (physician, occupational therapist, physiotherapist, social worker or nurse) as requiring the equivalent of Home Care Level 2 or higher. The assessment looks at the type of care required for tasks like bathing, dressing, eating meals, mobility and receiving medical care.

To be eligible, the primary caregiver must be identified by the person receiving care (or their parent if the person receiving care is under 18), and must not be paid to provide care to this person. The credit came into effect January 1st, 2009, following a three month qualifying period and can be claimed on the 2009 income tax return. The caregiver can claim up to \$1,020 per year per person for up to three people.

For more information about the Primary Caregiver Tax Credit, you can:

- Go online <http://www.gov.mb.ca/finance/tao/caregiver>
- Call the Manitoba Government Inquiry at 1-866-626-4862
- Call Manitoba Health and Healthy Living (204)788-6646
- Manitoba Tax Assistance Office at (204) 948-2115 or toll free at 1(800) 782-0771
- If you are caring for someone who is in the Supported Living or Children's Special Services Programs, contact Manitoba Family Services and Housing at (204) 523-5230 or toll free at 1(800) 563-8793



Registered Disability Savings Plan (RDSP)

A registered disability savings plan (RDSP) is a savings plan that is intended to help parents and others save for the long-term financial security of a person who is eligible for the Disability Tax Credit.

Contributions to an RDSP are not tax deductible and can be made until the end of the year in which the beneficiary turns 59 years of age. Contributions that are withdrawn are not to be included as income for the beneficiary when paid out of a RDSP. However, the Canada disability savings grant (CDSG), Canada disability savings bond (CDSB) and investment income earned in the plan will be included in the beneficiary's income for tax purposes when paid out of the RDSP.

Financial Institutions now offering the RDSP

- BMO
- TD
- RBC
- Scotiabank
- CIBC



Quick Reference

Line 214	Child care expenses
Line 215	Disability supports deduction
Line 232	Other deductions
Line 303	Spouse or common-law partner amount
Line 305	Amount for eligible dependant
Line 306	Amount for infirm dependants age 18 or older
Line 315	Caregiver amount
Line 316	Disability amount (for self)
Line 318	Disability amount transferred from a dependant
Line 323	Tuition, education and textbook amounts
Line 324	Tuition, education and textbook amounts transferred from a child
Line 326	Amounts transferred from your spouse or common-law partner
Line 330	Medical expenses for self, spouse or common-law partner and your dependent children born in 1992 or later
Line 331	Allowable amount of medical expenses for other dependants
Line 365	Children's fitness amount
Line 367	Amount for children born in 1992 or later
Line 368	Home renovation expenses
Line 369	Home buyers' amount
Line 452	Refundable medical expense supplement
Line 453	Working income tax benefit (WITB)

Home Buyers Amount

Under proposed changes, you can claim an amount of \$5,000 for the purchase of a qualifying home made after January 27, 2009 (closing after this date). You do not have to be a first time home buyer if you are eligible for the disability amount or if you buy the home for the benefit of a related person who is eligible for the disability amount. However, the purchase must be made to allow the person eligible for the disability amount to live in a home that is more accessible or better suited to the needs of that person.

For the purposes of this amount, a person eligible for the disability amount is one for whom a disability amount may be claimed for the year in which an agreement to buy the home was entered into, or could be claimed if costs for attendant care or care in a nursing home were not claimed as medical expenses at line 330 or 331.

Home Renovation Expense



Some home renovation expenses may be eligible for the home renovation tax credit. Under proposed changes, you can claim an amount for eligible expenses incurred for work performed or goods acquired **after January 27, 2009 and before February 1, 2010**, under an agreement entered into after January 27, 2009, related to an eligible dwelling. The amount can only be claimed for the **2009 tax year** and applies to eligible expenses of more than \$1,000, but not more than \$10,000.



From the Office



March came in like a lamb; will it go out like a lion? Spring in Manitoba has proven to be unpredictable and we have learned over the years, not to put away the winter coats and boots just yet. In the meantime, we can enjoy the longer days, feel the warmth of the sun on our faces, listen to the birds chirping and watch as the grass and leaves turn green once again. For many, Spring is also a season of rebirth and hope and with that comes a renewed sense of physical, emotional and spiritual well-being.

Here at Continuity Care, we have not been hibernating like bears this winter, rather it has been more like a bee hive of continuous activity. The support groups have been meeting over the winter and the workshops have been well attended. We continue to respond to inquiries for information and meet with families to provide assistance with planning, support and advocacy as needed. We have finished work on the Sharing Circle of Support Tool Kit and the brochure is finally ready for distribution. We are in the process of hiring new facilitators to begin developing new circles for those who have expressed interest in this option.

The end of March is our fiscal year end and we have been busy developing the budget for the coming year and will be completing our year end financial report. March is also our membership renewal time and we encourage our current members to renew their memberships and also invite new families to join Continuity Care.

This Spring, the Board Members will be reviewing our Strategic Plan and evaluating our progress on the goals that we have set and looking at what we want to achieve in the coming years. As well our Board Committees have had a busy winter. We would like to take this time to introduce these dedicated folks to you and thank them for their time, input and dedication.

Human Resource

Adeline Berg (Chair)
Jo Verstraete
Linda Ormonde
Jane Schledewitz

Family Advisory

Linda Ormonde (Chair)
Jane Schledewitz
Dolly Chudnow
Adeline Berg
Kathy Enns

Fundraising

Merv Gunter
Jeoff Chipman
Brian Coughlin
Karen Leggat
Pino Pisano
Mike Keane

Our own Merv Gunter has been in the news and has been spotted on bill boards around the city. Merv was recently named as one of Red River College's Distinguished Alumni. Merv is one of Continuity Care's founding members and continues to be actively involved with the organization. He graduated from Red River College's Business Administration program in 1970 and is the owner of Frontiers North, one of Canada's premier operators of wildlife and nature viewing programs in Canada's North. In addition to his work with Frontiers North, Merv is also a founding member and President of Destination Churchill, an Advisory Board member for Polar Bears International, and a former President of the Churchill Chamber of Commerce. We are proud of you Merv and all that you have achieved.



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We also are beginning our plans for our Annual General Meeting which will take place on Wednesday June 23rd, 2010 from 5:00 – 7:00pm. This is a great opportunity for our members to get more involved and informed and exercise your voting privileges. It is also a great way to get to know other Continuity Care members. We hope that you can join us.

Happy Spring!

Suzanne Swanson

[Signature]



"An optimist is the human personification of Spring."

Susan J. Bissnette



It's Membership Time!

Don't forget to renew your membership with Continuity Care Inc.

- 1 Year Family Membership \$20**
- Lifetime Family Membership \$250**

With your membership enjoy free workshops during the year, voting privileges at AGM, one to one planning and a copy of The Circle of Life workbook.

We are now able to accept membership fees and donations by VISA or MasterCard

(see attachment or insert for your membership form)

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Fax: (204) 786-6766
contcare@mts.net
www.continuitycare.ca



If you would like to be removed from our mailing list, please contact our office

Facilitators Wanted

Continuity Care is currently looking to hire Facilitators for our new Sharing Circle of Support Program for Winnipeg, Selkirk and Altona areas.

What is involved?

- One year contract
- Flexible schedule mainly evenings & weekends
- Approx. 3-5 hrs per month, per circle
- Approx. 2-3 circles per Facilitator
- Training and supervision provided
- Criminal Record & Child Abuse Registry checks
- Ability to work independently and as a team

For more information, please contact Suzanne at (204) 779-1679 or by email at contcare@mts.net

Continuity Care Resource Library



The PATH & MAPS Handbook
Person-Centered Ways to Build Community
By John O'Brien, Jack Pearpoint & Lynda Kahn



This new version provides a stronger foundation for PATH and MAPS by connecting person-centered planning to the work of community building. It makes the basis for good facilitation more explicit and suggests some ways that facilitators can improve their practice.

Coming Soon!

The Boy in the Moon - A Father's Search for his Disabled Son
by Ian Brown

Reviewed by Adeline Berg

The discovery that your child has a disability brings with it a myriad of emotions. As the child grows older you wonder, "Who is this child?" If he/she could speak, what would they tell me? What are all the adjustments she/he and our family will need to make? Will caregivers care for my child as I would like to care for them?

These are questions Ian Brown asks himself over and over again as he and his wife become more and more fatigued from caring for a son they love intensely. Then there is the whole matter of trying to understand who Walker is, what is his purpose in life, and most of all, what can I learn from him?

Ian Brown is remarkably frank and intimate in portraying the disorderly chaos as well as the immense joy that their son, Walker has brought to their family.

A book well worth reading!

