

Continuity News

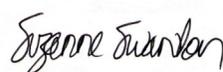
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Message From The Office

Autumn has officially arrived. There is a crispness in the air, the leaves have changed colors, the gardeners and farmers are finishing up with harvest and it's time to pull out those sweaters and socks again. I think we were all hoping that by Fall, this global pandemic would be over and we would be able to get back to our regular routines and life would feel more "normal" again. But what is normal anyways? Someone once told me, it's only a setting on a washing machine! Now people say this is the "new normal", so what does that mean? Will life ever go back to the way it was? How long will this pandemic last? There is so much uncertainty in the world right now. What we do know is that we need to continue to look after ourselves, our loved ones and others in our communities. These have been challenging times and we have all been impacted by COVID-19, in different ways; some more than others. What we have learned is that it is so important for our health and well being to stay connected with each other – if not in person, then by phone, email and virtually. Continue to help out others who are in need and when you are able. Keeping checking in on your family members, friends and neighbors. Offer a simple hello, how are you doing and a smile. Although we are still required to maintain physical distance from one another; we can still be kind, caring and connected.

Here at Continuity Care, we were hoping that we would be able to offer a "hybrid approach" for our support groups and workshops which would mean meeting in person in smaller groups and offering the option to join in using Zoom/teleconference. However, with the increase in cases in Manitoba these past few weeks, we have decided to stay with the virtual and teleconference options for our groups and workshops until December and will reassess at that time. We will continue to provide outreach and support by phone, email and Zoom and can meet safely in person at 120 Maryland when needed, but masks and physically distancing are required. We want to ensure that we are doing all that we can to support families during these challenging times. So if you are feeling isolated and are in need of assistance and support, please reach out to us by phone or by email.

Stay well!



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A Virtual AGM - A First for Continuity Care

Our first virtual Annual General Meeting was held on Tuesday, September 22nd, 2020. We had 23 people participate by Zoom. One of our board members even tuned in from the campground at Clear Lake! Karen Leggat, our board president, opened the meeting with her personal greetings and report. The board members were introduced; 11 of who were in attendance. Karen also introduced our team of three staff.



Merv Gunter presented the report from the Finance Committee and a review of the 2019-2020 financial report. This year's financial report was prepared by Ryan Rawluk, from Rawluk & Robert, as our previous accountant, Randall McElhoes has retired. Merv acknowledged the importance of the partnerships we have maintained with The Winnipeg Foundation and the True North Youth Foundation. It is due to their ongoing support, that our organization has been able to maintain our stable financial position, especially now during the challenges of this global pandemic.

Terry Williams presented the Human Resources Committee report followed by the Family Advisory Committee report, by Sherry Desilets. Chanique Phillips, our Member Support & Outreach Facilitator, provided reports on her progress with the Outreach to Lifetime Members and the Sharing Circle of Support Program.

Jane Schledewitz presented the incoming slate of Directors and Officers, noting the

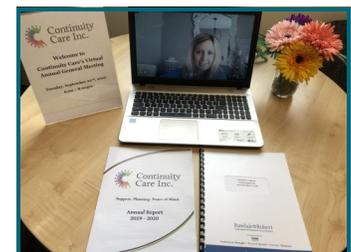
following changes: Sherry Desilets as our incoming Board President, Karen Leggat moving to Past President and the introduction of Kim Thiessen, who joined the board in May 2020. Jane also acknowledged Karen for her time and contributions to our organization as board president since 2016. A bouquet of flowers and gifts were delivered to Karen's home prior to the meeting as recognition for her valuable contributions.

Suzanne Swanton presented her Executive Director's report. The meeting was adjourned, followed by our guest speaker, Jeannie Alexander, Capacity Builder from Abilities Manitoba. Jeannie's presentation shared information on the valuable work of Abilities Manitoba, challenges that member agencies, individuals and families were experiencing during COVID-19 and actions taken to address these issues and challenges. A bouquet of flowers were also delivered to Jeannie's office prior the meeting as a special thank you for sharing her time and perspectives with our members.

Our first virtual meeting was a success and the motions and the motion and voting process went smoothly, due to the technical support from our staff team; Patti, Chanique and Suzanne.

Thank you to our members for your ongoing support and contributions to the success of Continuity Care this past year.

Please contact our office if you would like to receive a copy of the 2019-2020, available in digital or print formats.



Thank You to Abilities Manitoba

Abilities Manitoba has been an exceptional resource to us and other agencies during this time. Right when the pandemic hit, Continuity Care received a wellness check from Abilities Manitoba to see how our agency was doing, what we were hearing from families and if there was anything we needed. They became a resource and support for us and many others during this time; helping us stay up to date on the day-to-day changing policies, plans and rules and keeping us updated on their weekly conversations with CLdS. They mobilized staff and created an online staff deployment system so families without support had a way to find staff efficiently. They sought personal protective equipment for agencies and provided Continuity Care with masks as we resumed our in-person meetings with families and for the Baby Boomer Cafe event at Birds Hill Park in August. They created online resources (New Normal Workbook, Orientation for staff new to residential settings, Resources for DSP's etc), helped with problem solving and provided a voice for agencies and families. Abilities Manitoba will continue to assist agencies to plan for future waves of COVID-19; making more resources available, advocating for better testing options, particularly for people who need accessible transportation to get to testing and for hospitals to create protocols that will allow essential supports for people who are hospitalized. We are thankful the continued support and advocacy Abilities Manitoba has provided during these tough times and we will continue to work together to better the lives of our members and those living with disabilities. You can find more information about their advocacy work, resources, COVID-19 updates and more on their website abilitiesmanitoba.org

Federal Government support during COVID-19

A basic income will contribute to people with disabilities and their families living an inclusive life in Canada. It will help to tackle many issues such as poverty, access to resources and access to a good quality of life. We were thrilled to hear of these two announcements from the federal government.

In June, the federal government announced that Canadians who currently receive the Disability Tax Credit (DTC) would automatically receive a onetime payment of \$600, tax free, as of June 1. There was a delay in getting this into motion and it took advocacy from CACL and other provincial/ national advocates to push for this. After some debate, parliament finally put their differences aside and voted in favor of this benefit on July 17th. It is meant to offset the increased cost of food, transportation, medication, personal protective equipment, personal support workers, and other supports for people living with disability.

During the Throne Speech on September 23, The Honourable Justine Trudeau acknowledged that COVID-19 has not only disproportionately affected Canadians with disabilities, but has affected access to adequate programs and benefits. They have committed to establishing a *Canadian Disability Benefit* that will be modeled after the *Guaranteed Income Supplement for Seniors*.

For people with disabilities this means we are one-step closer to making a basic income become a reality.

Baby Boomer Café Annual Outdoor Café



Baby Boomer Café has been very fortunate to be able to hold our annual Bird's Hill Café Summer Picnic on August 29, 2020. There was much discussion around holding a safe event for our group, however, as we reviewed the opportunity of gathering in a safe environment while practicing the protocols for COVID-19, it was approved to proceed. This is the one outdoor event that we hold each year and everyone looks forward to. We had a group of 15 attend (max allowed, 50) this



special outing, which included the Executive Director of Continuity Care, Suzanne Swanton. We set-up a hygiene station and signage about Covid protocol. We provided & encouraged face masks to be worn and implemented social distancing when enjoying our meal by spacing groups of 4 at each table. Our usual shared potluck meal was revised to individually wrapped hotdogs and hamburgers along with other goodies that were distributed by only a few people to ensure food safety was followed. After our meal and some socializing, the group migrated to the firepit where our music maestro, Bob Hanley, led us in song. We all sat safe distances apart, while some



listened, others sang (mostly with masks on) from our songbook or responded to Bob's original songs that always make each of us giggle. It was such a wonderful opportunity to see each other, wish each other well during these trying times and just know that we all care about each other.

Our sincere condolences go to the entire Yanofsky family; especially to Albert, Debra and Arnold for the loss of their mother, Vivian Yanofsky, who passed away on September 16, 2020. Vivian had been a long time member of the Baby Boomer Café, dating back to the beginning. She was an active and caring member whose contributions to this special café were so appreciated by all.

May she rest in peace.

The Family Advocacy Network (FAN) of Manitoba

FAN is a network of parents, family members, & caregivers of people with an intellectual & developmental disabilities who support, share experiences and resources. Please visit their website: fanmb.ca for more information.



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