



Community Living

VICTORIA

## From Our Executive Director - December 2010

December marks the 55th anniversary of Community Living Victoria (CLV). Today, we are a vibrant and dynamic organization that is both forward thinking and respectful of our roots. As in the past, we face ongoing challenges to review, revise and restructure our services. However, we remain steadfast in our commitment to provide quality supports to individuals and their families, and stay responsive and relevant as an agency.

Our funder, Community Living BC (CLBC) has a projected 22 million deficit for the 2010/11 fiscal year that will need to be found to meet projected expenditures. As a result of this, CLBC embarked on a service redesign initiative. CLBC also committed to funding individuals on the waitlist with money found through service redesign. There were two identified phases in CLBC's Budget Management Plan: the first was for all CLBC funded agencies to identify any immediate service level reductions that could be made with CLBC reducing contracts by that amount to reduce the deficit; the second was for all agencies to submit a proposal identifying service redesign initiatives that would also reduce costs over time. It became necessary for each of us to find more cost effective ways to provide support if possible and to ensure that the limited resources we receive can reach more people.

The service redesign process is occurring across all service areas, but the focus is on people currently living in group homes as these tend to be the most expensive services funded by CLBC. We needed to explore with the individual and their support network whether anyone might be better supported in a home share model or another residential option. Both CLV and CLBC recognize that many of the people we support are already best served in their current staffed residential homes. However, it is possible that some people may benefit from the more individualized support they'd receive by living with a couple or family, or by living in their own apartment with support. During the spring and summer we talked to individuals and families about whether they wanted to explore living differently. We have supported many people in our homes for more than 25 years and with few exceptions, they were not interested in change. While we may have fewer homes in the future, in the short term there will be no closures of our homes.

The other opportunities explored as part of CLV's service redesign was to increase employment options for people in our day programs and to develop some creative housing solutions. We are very pleased that we recently received a \$20,000 grant from the Victoria Foundation to assist people who currently are in our day programs to explore the possibility of securing employment.

Our third CARF (Commission on Accreditation of Rehabilitation Facilities) survey is scheduled for January 10 – 12, 2011. CARF accreditation reflects CLV's capacity to deliver services according to internationally recognized standards. Since all of our systems are in place and we are a strong organization, we are confident we will successfully achieve another three-year accreditation.

During 2010 our Foundation launched a successful "Hope. Help. Home." media campaign that brought greater community awareness of CLV, our values and the issues that people with developmental disabilities face. In addition, the Foundation provided funds for much needed home improvements, furniture, vans and major upgrading of our main building. In the New Year we will have new, accessible washrooms which will greatly

benefit the people we support who use our Cedar Hill Cross Road building daily. Our Burnside home will be receiving a much needed kitchen renovation, thanks to grants received from Terasen Gas, Home Depot and the Greater Victoria credit Union Foundation.

Our Foundation had a successful benefit concert at the MacPherson Theatre on November 13th featuring Michael Kaeshammer. Check out our photo gallery to see some wonderful pictures!

We celebrated Community Living Month with the screening and discussion of the R Word at the University of Victoria, which chronicles the incredible struggles of people with intellectual disabilities and their families to be recognized and treated as any citizen in society. The screening attracted 200 people, including 100 students from the university and Camosun College. In addition we co-hosted One Day Together, which brings people together to celebrate our diversity in friendship, food and fun.

The Foundation's Reach for the Stars direct mail campaign has been very successful and the people we support will benefit from the generosity of our donors this season. Thanks to Terasen Gas who is providing hampers for many of our needy families.

Our volunteers and staff work very hard to ensure a good life for the people Community Living Victoria supports. Season's greetings to all the wonderful people who are part of the Community Living Victoria family. Together, we do make a difference.