



Community Living

VICTORIA

## From Our Executive Director - June 2010

The last few months have been challenging for Community Living Victoria (CLV) and for the social services sector across BC. Most Government Ministries have announced cuts to services. 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. There are two phases in CLBC's Budget Management Plan: the first is for all CLBC funded agencies to identify any immediate service level reductions and CLBC will reduce contracts by that amount to reduce the deficit; the second is to submit a proposal identifying service redesign that will also reduce costs over time. The service redesign is across all services, but focused on people currently living in group homes. CLBC wants us to determine whether anyone may be better supported in a home share model or another residential option. We want to be clear that CLV and CLBC recognize that many of the people we support are best suited in their current staffed residential homes. However, some individuals may have an opportunity to lead a more inclusive life by living with a couple or a family or in their own apartment with support. There may be some opportunities in service redesign to increase employment options, and to develop creative housing solutions.

Five weeks prior to the implementation of the Municipal Pension Plan (MPP) for unionized organizations, Government pulled back from their promise to fund this Collective Agreement commitment. This was negotiated in 2006, with an assurance that funding would be in place at March 31, 2010. A provincial initiative, led by the CEO Network, was undertaken to convince Government that they should honour the original agreement and fund the cost of the Municipal Pension Plan for our unionized employees. After an intense lobbying effort, the Government reversed their decision and funded the MPP. The CEO Network is a provincial network of CEOs from a broad social services membership base; involving various funders, representing union and non-union, private agencies and non-profit societies. The broad objectives of the CEO Network include facilitating a collective voice, promoting effective business practices and leadership development and mutual support. It has been my privilege to serve on the Leadership Team of the CEO Network. Our CARF accreditation survey was to be in June. As a result of budget concerns by Government, our survey has been delayed until late fall or early 2011. Despite the delay, our work continues to maintain the systems and processes in place and prepare for our site survey.

Our Foundation continues to meet the needs of the people we support. They have provided funds for much needed home improvements, furniture, and vans and recently approved a significant amount of money to completely refurbish the washrooms at our building on Cedar Hill Cross Road. We will have accessible washrooms which will greatly benefit the people we support who use our building daily. Our Foundation has confirmed another concert at the MacPherson Theatre on November 13th. They are about to announce a high profile entertainer, who without a doubt will sell out the House!

Despite the many challenges facing Community Living Victoria, there are many positive events and initiatives to celebrate. Our VOCYL youth group (for more information on VOCYL, go to our services and click on Community Services) were the recipients of the 2010 United Way Youth Now Award and the CLBC WOW! Award. These outstanding youth with and without disabilities make a difference in our schools and in our community. There is a Victoria self advocacy conference, My Community, coming up on June 16th, a BC People First Conference in Vancouver also in June and a provincial conference in October co hosted by CAACL, BCACL and Family Focus. Be sure to check the website regularly for more information on these events and much more!