

CONTINUITY NEWS

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

APRIL 2013

From the Office



In our last newsletter, I said I would report back as to whether or not I was still embracing winter. Well, the reverse seems to be happening; winter is still embracing me, as well as the rest of us here in Manitoba. According to the calendar, Spring has arrived, but the chilly temperatures and the abundance of large snow piles tell us otherwise.

As we welcome Spring and the month of April, I ask that you join us in recognizing the importance of caregivers. In this edition of our newsletter, we are sharing some valuable information about caregivers and what is happening in Manitoba to recognize their valuable contribution. Continuity Care will be taking part in the Caregiver Recognition Day event that is being held on April 2nd.

Here at Continuity Care office, the staff and board members have continued work on our Strategic Plan, which has now turned into a 5 year action plan. We are also in the process of finalizing our budget for 2013-14 and finishing up our fiscal year end, which is March 31st. Thanks Irma for your valuable contributions in this process.

Speaking of our board, I also want to extend a warm welcome to Marc Piché who joined the Continuity Care board in March.

Our support groups continued to meet over the winter months and we welcomed some new members, which is wonderful to see. The workshops and two conversation evenings that were held in January, February and March were well attended and were valuable opportunities to share information and make connections with other families. Thanks to the following guest speakers and presenters for sharing your time, expertise and experiences with our members: Marshall Braunstein, Rose Flaig (Community Living Manitoba), Leslie Udell (Winnserv), Sheldene Guillas (Safety Aid Program), Zanna Joyce (SMD – Savings Circle Program) and Nicola Schaefer.

I would like to make a note of correction from our December newsletter – Anne Kresta is with Community Living **Manitoba** (not Winnipeg as I had written).

Along with this newsletter, we are including a membership application / renewal form and we invite you to consider supporting Continuity Care in this important way. Thank you to all of our members for your commitment to our Mission and for helping this little organization grow. **Happy Spring everyone!** *Suzanne Swanton - Executive Director*

WELCOME A BOARD Marc!



Marc Piché has recently joined the Board of Continuity Care. Marc has worked in the disability field for over 8 years. He graduated from the Red River College Disability and Community Support program where he met his wife, Sarah. They have 2 kids (ages 5 and 3) and another on the way. Marc is currently the Executive Director of L’Avenir

Cooperative. “I have really enjoyed working in this field since day one. I hope my perspective will be an asset to the Continuity Care Board”. We are pleased to have Marc on the Board of Continuity Care and welcome the perspectives and experience that he brings.

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“Celebrating Caregivers”

Did you know?

The Manitoba Government introduced **Bill 42 - The Caregiver Recognition Act** on May 26th, 2011 to "establish a legislative framework to increase awareness and recognition of Manitoba's informal or family caregivers, and acknowledge their valuable contribution to society" as announced by Healthy Living, Youth and Seniors Minister Jim Rondeau.

The key provisions of the **Caregiver Recognition Act (CRA)** include:

- proclaiming the first Tuesday of April in each year as Caregiver Recognition Day;
- creating general principles relating to caregivers, outlining how caregivers should be treated and considered when interacting with the public, health staff and in the workplace;
- instituting a progress report every two years, which would evaluate caregiver needs and supports;
- establishing a Caregiver Advisory Committee to provide the minister with information, advice and recommendations; and
- starting consultations with the minister and caregivers, organizations that provide care, appropriate government departments, the advisory committee and others.

The province would also establish a website for caregivers, which would provide centralized navigation to community and government resources. This would include information on support groups, financial benefits and human-resource policies.

More detailed information on **The Caregiver Recognition Act** can be found at <http://news.gov.mb.ca/news/index.html?item=11580>

“Caregiver Stories From Our Members”

Story #1

We are parents/caregivers of young man, who has an intellectual disability. He has been a blessing in our lives and has taken us on quite a journey; a totally different life than one thinks they will have with a son or daughter. To look at him, you would think that there are no issues; but there are many complexities to his life. He requires care twenty four hours, seven days a week. We have been fortunate to receive some respite over the years. This has allowed us to occasionally recharge/re-energize.

- He is an adult, but some areas of his development are like a young child.
- He can never be left alone and he has to be constantly monitored.
- Everything that comes naturally to you or I, has to be taught to him. Sometimes it takes many years and sometimes he just can't learn the skills. We take for granted closing our eyes so we can go to sleep; he had to be taught how to do it.
- He relies on us for assistance and reminders about his personal care, proper nutrition, ensuring he gets enough sleep and appropriate clothing choice for the weather
- We have to make sure he is safe, as he has no concept of danger.
- We attend many meetings and appointments with him for him, explaining over and over again to staff and professionals what his needs are.
- Every week there are different issues. Although he can speak, he is not able to tell us what is going on in his head or body; we are forever being “detectives” to solve issues.
- As he can't verbalize feelings and hurts etc., he gets very frustrated and then angry. As things are very confusing to him, he is very anxious. Because of this, he has developed obsessive compulsive tendencies and is seeing a psychiatrist.
- He is on medications to help him cope with his anxiety and obsessions. If these anxiety levels are not kept to a minimum he will shut all reality out, live in a fantasy world and become quite angry.

Although he requires great care, he gives us great joy. He has a great sense of humor which makes everyone laugh. The other day, his Dad took him shopping. In the course of the outing he talked to five different people. At the end of each of those conversations, these five strangers were all smiling! He has enriched our lives and many others. We wouldn't want our lives any other way.

Story #2 Katelyn's Contribution to the World

People often say to me, "Katelyn is so lucky to have you." I tell them I'm the one who has gained so much, unfortunately at her expense. She is the one who has to struggle to get through each day with a compromised brain that causes her so much hardship. I am the one who has learned to live compassionately, something I don't think I would have learned any other way. Katelyn has taught me patience, and the importance of staying in the present moment. She has given me skills in assertive advocating. In so many ways I am a better person because Katelyn came into my life. If I am able to improve Katelyn's quality of life in some small measure, I am only repaying a tiny bit of the huge debt I owe her.

Since Katelyn has been living away from me with 24-hour staff, I have seen many different people come into regular contact with her. When they first start working with her, they engage in power struggles, determined to "fix" her. Over and over Katelyn does her teaching, and I see the staff grow in their capacity for compassion and understanding. They too become better people.

Written by: **Kathy, Katelyn's Mama**

CRA introduces new Family Caregiver Amount

For 2012 and subsequent years, if you have a dependant with an impairment in physical or mental functions, you may be eligible to claim an additional amount of \$2,000 for one or more of the following non-refundable tax credits (Schedule 1, Federal Tax):

- **spouse or common-law partner amount** (line 303);
- **amount for an eligible dependant** (line 305);
- **amount for children born in 1995 or later** (line 367); and
- **caregiver amount** (line 315).

Note: The maximum amount for infirm dependants age 18 or older (line 306) includes the additional amount of \$2,000 for the FCA.

The dependant with the impairment must be:

- an individual 18 years of age or older and dependent on you because of an impairment in physical or mental functions; **or**
- a child under 18 years of age, with an impairment in physical or mental functions. The impairment must be prolonged and indefinite and the child must be dependent on you for assistance in attending to personal needs and care when compared to children of the same age.

You must have a signed statement from a medical doctor showing when the impairment began and what the duration of the impairment is expected to be. You can claim the FCA for more than one eligible dependant.

For more information - visit Canada Revenue Agency's website page - follow this link <http://www.cra-arc.gc.ca/familycaregiver>.

Improvements to Manitoba's Primary Caregiver Tax Credit

Manitobans who act as the primary caregivers for family members or others may now be eligible for a \$1,275 tax credit. The Primary Caregiver Tax Credit is a \$1,275 (increased from \$1020 starting in 2011) annual refundable personal income tax credit that can be claimed by any Manitoban who is providing ongoing voluntary care to a family member, a friend or a neighbour in Manitoba. The care recipient must be assessed by the Regional Health Authority (RHA), Family Services and Labour (FSL) or a health care professional (e.g. nurse, social worker, occupational therapist, physiotherapist or physician), as requiring the equivalent of Home Care Level of Care 2, 3 or 4.

The tax credit will help cover caregiver expenses. This could include respite care, taking the person shopping, to medical appointments or on recreational outings.

The caregivers can claim up to \$1,275 per year per person for up to three people.

To be eligible, the primary caregiver must be a resident of Manitoba on December 31, 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.

For more information, visit their website at <http://www.gov.mb.ca/finance/tao/caregiver.html> or call Manitoba Government Inquiry at 1-866-626-4862 or Manitoba Health at (204) 788-6646.

Coming of Age

The Dialogue Continues

There is still time to register for the Coming of Age Conference April 18 to 20, 2013 at the Viscount Gort in Winnipeg, Manitoba.

Coming of Age; the dialogue continues is an important cross-Canada, action oriented dialogue that focuses on growing older for people with an intellectual disability and will have great importance for family members, people with an intellectual disability and service providers who support older adults with and without a disability. Our aim is to bring together the perspectives of aging in general and aging with an intellectual disability, and to share best practices that will benefit all older adults.

Conference highlights include **keynote speaker Sharon Carstairs** addressing aging from a national perspective, as well as three **workshop sessions** featuring 12 relevant topics and **break-out group discussions** on current "hot topics".

Conference Agenda and Registration:

Register online at www.winnserv.ca

Baby Boomer Café

The Baby Boomer Café is an opportunity for adult siblings and their brothers or sisters with a disability to spend time together. There are 3-4 Café's planned each year and gatherings include musical entertainment, playing games, honoring the memories of past members, celebrating faith and family traditions and sharing a meal together. Our celebrations have a serious purpose as well. As our parents pass away, our siblings with a disability need relationships and friends more than ever. The Baby Boomer Café is a place where you and your sibling can build relationships and community. New members are warmly welcomed.

You are invited to join us. The next Baby Boomer Café will be held on:

Thursday, April 18th, 2013
7:00pm to 9:00pm
Viscount Gort Hotel and
Conference Centre (Royal ABC Ballroom)
Light snacks, cake and refreshments

As a part of the 

So come one, come all to the next Baby Boomer Café! If you haven't attended a Café before, but are looking for a new opportunity to spend time with your sibling with a disability, then this may be the group you are looking for.

Everyone is invited to participate in the very special and exciting musical ensemble conducted by the famous Bob Hanley and the Boomers!!

Admission is free to all Baby Boomer Café Members and their family/friends!!

RSVP to Albert Yanofsky at (204) 334-1839 or Jane Schledewitz at (204) 667-4596

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.

(see attachment or insert for membership form)

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