

2014-2015 Annual Report

“A Voice of Our Own”

1974-2015

**Manitoba League of Persons with
Disabilities Inc.**

CO-CHAIRPERSONS REPORT

The last year has been extremely busy at the Manitoba League of Persons with Disabilities. Thanks to our Provincial Council, committees, and our new Provincial Coordinator, Jennifer Sande, we have a strong team in place to move forward after a time of transition.

The current fiscal reality is challenging, and it has forced MLPD to look at ways to diversify its sources of income. The grant we receive through the Council of Canadians with Disabilities from Human Resources and Social Development Canada has been cut substantially. Thankfully, the Government of Manitoba has committed some funding to us until 2016 in order to give us a chance to seek out other sources of revenue.

A major accomplishment in the last year was hiring Jennifer Sande, our new Provincial Coordinator. We had been operating without a Provincial Coordinator for over a year, and Jennifer has done a great job in positioning MLPD to move forward in meeting the needs of our members.

A major project we have undertaken is the MLPD Oral History Project, which is being led by Carlos Sosa. Carlos took a leave of absence from his role as MLPD Co-Chair in September 2014 to work on this project, which is expected to wrap up by the end of this summer (2015). MLPD has been collaborating with the University of Winnipeg Oral History Centre and the Canadian Centre on Disability Studies on this project. It will highlight the efforts and accomplishments of our some of our original members who lobbied for the rights and removal of barriers for people with disabilities in Manitoba. It will also preserve our history in a way that can be shared and studied.

A significant change this year will be to bring our committee chairs onto Provincial Council. This is being done to enhance the structure of our organization, facilitate communication amongst committee chairs, and to help us monitor the activities of each committee to ensure compliance with Canada Revenue Agency standards.

MLPD continues to be active on a several fronts including public consultations on the provision of wheelchairs in Manitoba and the changes to regulations regarding assisted suicide. It is also contributes to committee work happening in the community such as: the Handi-Transit Policy Advisory Committee and other forms of accessible transportation, assisted suicide legislation, Manitoba Building Code Board, Canada Post activities around ending door-to-door mail service, and the Accessibility Advisory Council, which provides recommendations to the Minister responsible for Persons with

Disabilities on the Accessibility for Manitobans Act. This act will proactively prevent and remove barriers to accessibility for persons with disabilities in Manitoba.

Submitted by:
Allen Mankewich and Carlos Sosa

PROVINCIAL COORDINATOR'S REPORT

My role with MLPD began in November 2014. The majority of the activities since then have been administrative in nature. After more than a year without a Provincial Coordinator, it was necessary to re-connect with committees and revisit files and issues of importance to the disabilities community. It was just as important to study the financials and make some early decisions. As well, we have contributed to an increased number of community committees.

Our first public forum addressed the Wheelchair Services Program. This was a very successful event and is of interest to many MLPD members. David Steen, CEO of SMD, has been included in each step of this process and has expressed a desire to engage with MLPD regarding systemic concerns.

MLPD's Oral History Project is making great headway. First results will be on display **this fall** at an oral history conference hosted by the Oral History department at the University of Winnipeg. Please listen for the announcement of dates and times.

On a more personal note, I wish to acknowledge the efforts of my colleagues who helped my transition into the role of your Provincial Coordinator. You all know that Josie Conception's role as Office Manager is significant, but her unofficial role as "keeper of MLPD knowledge" cannot be overstated. She doled out information to me as I pieced together the historic contribution of MLPD – regarding both its achievements and its people.

David Kron, Executive Director of CPAM and MLPD Treasurer, shares the office space at 105 -500 Portage Avenue. Although relatively new to the MLPD Council, David is a veteran organizational leader and was a valuable resource to me while I got settled.

Allen Mankewich, MLPD Chairperson, and April D'Aubin, MLPD Secretary, have also been very generous with their time. As two busy, hard-working professionals, they carved out time to meet very regularly to keep things on track. Thank you also to the many MLPD members who have introduced themselves and made me feel welcomed to the community.

The MLPD office is pleased to welcome its new tenants, March of Dimes, who joined us in April. This change will help defray overhead costs and make better use of our space.

Going forward, MLPD plans to rekindle relationships with old community partners and strategically foster new ones. This summer we will invest in strategic planning to ensure the sustainability of MLPD. We are excited to be moving forward with further public forums in the fall, and there is renewed interest in many committees. I encourage you to speak to council to participate in committee service work.

Sincerely,
Jennifer Sande

TREASURER'S REPORT

I wish to present to you a summary of the Financial Statements for MLPD for 2014 – 2015. We have the Statement of Operations, Statement of Financial Position.

See Back of Package for Statements

Highlights:

- Deferred contributions (revenue) of \$13 332.00 (Grants for the Oral History Project)
- Restricted funds of \$5052.00 (Tracy Latimer Fund)
- Revenue of \$ 88 097.00
- Excess of Revenue over expenses of \$11 332.00
- We had expenses of \$86 097.00 vs \$106 027.00
 - Major difference is a reduction in Salaries & Benefits
 - (Prov. Coordinator started in Nov.)

MANITOBA LEAGUE OF PERSONS WITH DISABILITIES INC.
Statement of Financial Position
March 31, 2015
Unaudited

ASSETS

CURRENT

Cash and short-term deposits	\$	98,914
Accounts Receivable		4,867
Prepaid Expenses		<u>84</u>
		103,865

CAPITAL ASSETS

2,867

\$ 106,732

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LIABILITIES, DEFERRED CONTRIBUTIONS AND NET ASSETS

CURRENT

Accounts payable and accrued liabilities	\$	10,254
Deferred leasehold inducement		1,683
Deposit payable		<u>1,200</u>
	\$	13,137

DEFERRED CONTRIBUTIONS

19,436

32,573

NET ASSETS

Invested in capital assets		2,203
Internally restricted		31,041
Unrestricted		<u>40,915</u>

74,159

\$ 106,732

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MANITOBA LEAGUE OF PERSONS WITH DISABILITIES INC.
Statement of Operations
Year Ended March 31, 2015
(Unaudited)

REVENUE

Government of Canada	
Human Resources Development	\$ 19,884
Province of Manitoba Family Services	50,000
Community grants, donations, fees, and sundry	
CanadaHelps	1,575
Donations	4,590
Fundraising	345
Membership	220
Rental	18,956
Jewish Foundation of Manitoba (M. Rosner Memorial Fund)	901
Oral History	444
Run for Rights	<u>514</u>
	\$ 97,429

EXPENSES

86,097

EXCESS OF REVENUE OVER EXPENSES

\$ 11,332

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COMMITTEE REPORTS

Ethics

The Ethics Committee deals with ethical issues related to people with disabilities as they are brought to the attention of MLPD. Over the past year, the Ethics Committee was involved in the following activities:

Sinclair Inquest

The inquest into the death of Brian Sinclair concluded in June 2014, with the final report being released in December, 2014. Brian Sinclair was a 45-year-old Aboriginal man with a disability who used a wheelchair. He went to the emergency room in September 2008 with a bladder infection. He waited 34 hours in the ER and died there without being seen. An inquest was called to find out the reasons why Brian died and to make recommendations for change to avoid the same thing from happening again.

The Sinclair family and some Aboriginal groups withdrew their participation citing their loss of confidence that the inquest will result in meaningful changes to prevent future tragedies to vulnerable people. This was due to the judge's decision that the inquest would only examine how to relieve patient backlogs, increase patient flow in busy emergency rooms and how to provide appropriate health care for indigenous patients.

The inquest report made recommendations on how to relieve patient backlogs, increase patient flow in busy emergency rooms and how to provide appropriate health care for indigenous patients. Notably absent was the disability perspective and the media did not contact MLPD for a statement. Health Minister Sharon Blady appointed an implementation team to move forward with the recommendations within the health care system. The Sinclair family still believes that Brian died because he was an Aboriginal man and were disappointed in the inquest report. They have filed suit against the WRHA because they feel that racism contributed to his death.

Criminal Code Provisions Against Assisted Death Struck Down:

On October 6, 2014, the Supreme Court of Canada struck down the Criminal Code provisions against assisted death. The Council of Canadians with Disabilities (CCD) and the Canadian Association for Community Living (CACL) issued a press

release expressing disappointment in the decision and indicating the Canadians with disabilities have now lost the protection of the Criminal Code. Members of the MLPD Ethics Committee are also disappointed. The federal government now has one year to develop legislation on assisted death, and the provinces are also required to follow suit. We are currently drafting a letter to the Hon. Gord Mackintosh, Minister of Justice urging the Manitoba Government to hold a public dialog on assisted death (including safeguards) prior to developing provincial legislation.

We are in the process of organizing a public forum on assisted death. A date has not yet been set, but we hope to hold the event in fall, 2015.

Private Members Bills on Assisted Death:

In March 2014, MP Steven Fletcher introduced two private members bills on assisted death. The first bill deals directly with physician-assisted death while the second would create a Canadian commission to compile non-identifying information about physician-assisted death, including (but not limited to), information about those requesting it -- including age, sex, marital status, education level, income level, medical condition and reasons for seeking assistance. The commission would collect and analyze data from the completed forms, make available to the public an annual statistical report of information collected under this act, commission research based on patient medical record reviews, and make recommendations to the attorney general about potential law and policy reforms. It is ironic that Steven Fletcher and NDP MP Manon Perreault (both persons with disabilities) tabled and seconded these bills given the opposition to assisted suicide expressed by the disability community. Now that the provisions against assisted suicide contained in the Criminal Code have been struck down, these bills could be expedited.

Update on Gloria Taylor Case:

On June 15, 2012, the Supreme Court of British Columbia handed down its decision in the Carter case, opening the door for assisted suicide in Canada. Justice Lynn Smith found that the “provisions of the Criminal Code of Canada prohibiting physician–assisted dying, unjustifiably infringe the equality rights of Gloria Taylor, and the rights to life, liberty and security of the person of Lee Carter, Gloria Taylor and Hollis Johnson.” Gloria Taylor, a BC woman with ALS, was seeking the right for a physician assisted suicide at a time of her choosing when she felt it was necessary. The court ruled that physician-assisted suicide is constitutional under the Canadian Charter of Rights and

Freedoms, and the Government of Canada was given one year to change the law legalizing physician-assisted suicide under the Criminal Code of Canada. In the meantime, Gloria Taylor was granted an exemption which gave her the right to seek a physician-assisted death under certain conditions. In early October, Gloria Taylor died from an infection and did not act on the exemption granted to her.

The Government of Canada launched an appeal to Judge Smith's ruling through the BC Court and was granted leave to appeal through the Supreme Court of Canada. CCD and CACL acted as co-intervenors in the case. David Baker of Baker Law served as legal counsel. MLPD members Rhonda Wiebe and Dean Richert co-chair CCD's Ending of Life Ethics Committee, and they directed CCD's work on this case. The Supreme Court ruled that physician-assisted death is legal under certain circumstances.

Thank you to the members of the MLPD Ethics Committee for your work over the past year. Members include: April D'Aubin, Clare Simpson, Jim Derksen, Ronda Wiebe, Dean Richert, Valerie Wolbert, Harry Wolbert, Margot Miller, Paula Orecklin, Jen Anderson, Donna Buchanan and Eva Beaudoin.

Submitted by:
Colleen Watters

Fundraising

This past year, we have re-convened the Fundraising Committee. Although we don't have much to report in the way of new initiatives just yet, fundraising will increasingly become a new focus of MLPD. Our fundraising committee members will guide the development of our fundraising activities over the next year. We plan to host at least one fundraiser in the next year. These events give us the opportunity to raise funds and promote the organization to the wider community.

In the past couple of years, we have participated in the Run 4 Rights, an annual fundraiser to support local organizations working for social justice and human rights. Last year we also were given the opportunity to fundraise for the Oral History Project through a bingo through the Manitoba Liquor and Lotteries Corporation.

Submitted by:
Allen Mankewich

Housing

We met once during this past year on February 5, 2015. The issue most requiring our attention involved bringing about an effective tie-in between visitability and the province's new access legislation. We were unable to complete the discussion, and we plan to revisit this topic in the fall.

Regarding both care facilities and group housing for people with disabilities, fire safety appears to have died down as a smoldering issue. The province's fire safety task force completed its goals. Sprinkler systems are now a feature in all Manitoba care facilities where they are required. There has been a meeting of the minds over the squabble between Fire Safety and agencies that had complained about onerous fire safety costs and one-size-fits-all regulations for their prospective construction projects. Wages and working conditions of homecare workers is the next issue to be dealt with.

After having spent over fifteen years on this committee, I have decided that August 31st will be my departure date. I have enjoyed my time as chairperson, although I miss the expertise of people such as the late Don Ament, who had extensive knowledge about disability and housing issues. The presence of Manitoba Housing and DIO representatives have been of much help in narrowing that gap for me and I hope their contributions will continue after I've left the committee.

Respectfully submitted by
Mel Graham

Transportation

It has been another quiet year for the Transportation Committee given low attendance and participation from members. MLPD continues to monitor the activities of Handi-Transit by occupying two seats on the Handi-Transit Policy Advisory Committee.

One of the most significant changes to Handi this year was the implementation of the Fare Payment from Account System. When the new system was proposed by Handi, MLPD Provincial Council reviewed the proposal and was in support of the new system. A new system was needed to reflect the changes being made to public transit buses (phase one: installation of electronic fare boxes, phase two: implementation of Smart Card to replace bus tickets and passes). Handi-Transit has since reported that close to 86% of riders have signed up for the new Fare Payment system and there have been few complaints or concerns from the community.

Another policy change implemented by Handi concerns “mandatory attendants”. Riders with cognitive impairments will be able to travel with a mandatory attendant at no cost. This change does not apply to other users. The Transportation Committee believes this change is too limited and should extend to any user based on their needs during the trip and at their destination. Handi users should be able to determine independently when the use of an attendant (at no cost) is necessary. (Please note - an attendant differs from a travel companion).

Winnipeg Transit is also looking at improving the safety of passengers with mobility aids. Since January, Transit has been piloting a new automated restraint system for manual and motorized power chairs. Other great news: Transit will be purchasing 8 new buses this year, making the entire fleet accessible.

In the fall, MLPD will be hosting a public forum on Handi-Transit. As Chair of the Transportation Committee, I look forward to seeing lots of MLPD members in attendance and the lively discussion that will be had.

Jess Turner

Council of Canadians with Disabilities (CCD) Report

2014-15 was a busy, but challenging, year for the Council of Canadians with Disabilities (CCD). The fiscal year began with a 65% reduction in the SDPP funding that CCD had been receiving from Employment and Skills Development Canada (ESDC) and as a result more belt tightening was necessary at the national office and throughout the entire CCD network. Additionally, CCD had been informed that ESDC would only be operating a competitive funding process going forward from April 2015. CCD made long-term sustainability a priority for the organization.

Tony Dolan, CCD Chairperson, Marie Ryan, Chairperson of CCD's Social Policy Committee, and Laurie Beachell, CCD National Coordinator, focused their efforts on improving CCD's financial position. They engaged key officials at the federal level in a prolonged conversation which explained how CCD throughout its history has played a key role in assisting the government of Canada develop policy responses that make Canada more accessible and inclusive. The first piece of good news in a long time came from the Hon. Candice Bergen who personally phoned Laurie Beachell to inform him that CCD's funding had been extended through 2015-16. This extension was granted to all the national organizations funded by the SDPP program. CCD continues to seek longer term federal government support.

CCD continues to promote the human rights of persons with disabilities by advancing adherence to the Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities (CRPD). Canada produced its First Report for the UN CRPD Committee in 2014 and the CCD Council reviewed that report in June 2014. Through its International Committee, CCD has been preparing to develop a shadow report which it will submit to the UN CRPD Committee. Through shadow reports, organizations have the opportunity to bring information beyond what is in a government's report to the attention of the CRPD Committee. Vangelis Nikias, CRPD Awareness Project Manager, has been assisting the International Committee with its work on the Shadow Report. Steve Estey, Chairperson of CCD's International Committee, participated in the Seventh Session of the Conference of States to the Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities.

This year, CCD's research project *Disabling Poverty, Enabling Citizenship* came to an end. Co-principal Investigator Michael J. Prince synthesized the policy recommendations developed by the project in a document titled, "*Disabling Poverty, Enabling Citizenship: Recommendations for Change*". (This document is available on the CCD web site at <http://www.ccdonline.ca/en/socialpolicy/poverty-citizenship/policy-reform/recommendation-change15May2014>.) These recommendations were shared publicly at a forum held in Ottawa on 2 December 2014. Ontario MPP Christine Elliott was a keynote speaker at this event. CCD will be publishing an e-book anthology, containing all the material produced by the project.

On Friday, 6 February 2015, the Supreme Court of Canada (SCC) handed down its decision in *Carter v Canada (assisted suicide)*, altering the *Criminal Code's* prohibitions against assisting someone to commit suicide. CCD and the Canadian Association for Community Living (CACL) co-intervened in the Carter case at the SCC, because both organizations opposed the effort to strike down statutory provisions designed to prevent assisting anyone, disabled or not, to die. The language of the Supreme Court's decision in the Carter case could make physician-assisted death available to people with terminal illnesses and people with disabilities. The Supreme Court's decision will not take effect for a year. In the next year, it is expected that the Federal Government will develop legislation to guide practices related to physician-assisted suicide. Now that the SCC has set the stage for the development of a new policy framework, the Ending of Life Ethics Committee has been assisting CCD ready itself for this next phase of discussions.

This year the Canada Transportation Act (CTA) underwent review. The CCD Transportation Committee provided recommendations to the Review. It was recommended that access be regulated and that the CTA complaint process be expanded to implement systemic solutions. CCD also participates in Canadian Transportation Agency's Advisory Committee on Accessible Transportation.

CCD Social Policy Committee assisted CCD draw attention to barriers being created by Canada Post's decision to eliminate door-to-door mail service. CCD has shared its concerns on this service cutback with Deepak Chopra, CEO of Canada Post, the

Canadian Union of Postal Workers and with the Federal Government. There are a number of ongoing consultative forums where CCD shares its expertise on barrier removal and prevention - the Canada Pension Plan –Disability Roundtable, the Technical Advisory Committee on Data Collection, the Elections Canada Advisory Committee on Accessibility and the Canadian Museum for Human Rights' Inclusive Design Advisory Council.

CCD's priorities remain: poverty alleviation, increased labour force participation of people with disabilities, creating greater inclusion and access.

April D'Aubin
CCD

***Thanks to All Our Funders and Corporate Donors
Your Support is Greatly Appreciated!***

The Province of Manitoba Department of Family Services
Human Resources Development Canada
The Winnipeg Foundation
The Michael J. Rosner Fund
Administered by The Jewish Foundation of Manitoba
Manitoba Hydro Selkirk & Interlake Employees' Charitable Donations Committee
Hilary Druxman
Global Innovations Computer Consultation Services
Missionary Oblate Sisters
Starstruck Holstein Ltd.

***Provincial Council Members
2014-2015***

April D'Aubin	Danielle Otto
Kristian Hooker	Carlos Sosa
Justine Kiwanuka	Mindy Tucker
David Kron	Zephania Matanga
Allen Mankewich	Valerie Wolbert

***Executive Committee Members
2014 -2015***

Co-Chairpersons - Allen Mankewich & Carlos Sosa*
Secretary - April D'Aubin
Treasurer - David Kron

MLPD Staff

Jennifer Sande - Provincial Coordinator
Josie Concepcion - Office Manager
Emily Ternette - Communications/Program Assistant*
**On Leave*

This report is available in alternate media upon request.