

CO-CHAIRPERSONS REPORT

It has been another exciting year for the Manitoba League of Persons with Disabilities! This year, the Human Resources and Social Development Canada (HRSDC) Grant, of which MLPD receives a portion through the Council of Canadians with Disabilities, was cut a further 65% and will dry up completely at the end of March, 2015. This means MLPD must continue to become more and more aware of its fiscal responsibility. The MLPD Provincial Council has been working hard over the past two years to make cuts where possible and to look for other streams of revenue. The Provincial Government has committed to providing funds to MLPD for the next three years.

In February, we held a members meeting to gather ideas on the future direction of MLPD in light of diminishing resources. The Provincial Council has been operating without a Provincial Coordinator since July, and plan to re-work the position to provide clearer leadership for the organization. Members identified priorities such as taking a more focused approach to our work, increasing leadership, and raising the organization's profile within the community. Members also stressed the need for MLPD to form a more collaborative relationship with other organizations in order to become more effective.

This year, MLPD has been chosen to participate in the Run 4 Rights, an annual fundraiser to support local organizations working for social justice and human rights. The run will be an opportunity to raise funds for the League, but to also build a relationship with other organizations and raise our profile in the community.

Another significant event this year was MLPD's audit by the Canada Revenue Agency (CRA). The CRA has made changes to the criteria governing non-profit, charitable organizations. The extensive audit was conducted by Shane Menen, who was very thorough and clearly

asked to make a few minor adjustments to the by-laws to remain compliant with the Income Tax Act. The amendments will be reviewed at the annual general meeting and adjustments will be made according to membership approval.

December 5th, 2013, marked a pivotal moment in Manitoba history as Accessibility Legislation was enacted. *The Accessibility for Manitobans Act (AMA)* will develop standards in the following areas: customer service, information and communication, transportation, employment and the built environment. The first priority area will be customer service, with public consultations happening over the summer months. The Standard Development Committee on Customer Service will draft standards based on feedback from stakeholders and community members. MLPD looks forward to playing an active role in the creation, implementation and monitoring of this standard and future standards.

The MLPD is celebrating its 40th year! To mark the occasion, we will be collaborating with the University of Winnipeg Oral History Centre and the Canadian Centre on Disability Studies (CCDS) to create an oral history project. This will chronicle the efforts of MLPD members to reduce barriers and create a more inclusive province. The project will be a great opportunity for newer members to connect with founding members of the organization to document a history that has been unresearched for the most part.

Jess Turner & Carlos Sosa

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 got underway on August 6, 2013 and continued throughout the month. It then took a short break resuming in October and then again in January and February, 2014. It will wrap up in June, 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.

Several perspectives were presented during the inquest. Brian's family (in particular his sister) and some Aboriginal community representatives believe that Brian died because he was an Aboriginal man. A doctor pointed out that Brian abused solvents which affected his brain and was a contributing factor in evaluating his ability to function and communicate, and he believed Brian should not have been living independently. The Chief Medical examiner testified about the breakdowns in the triage system in the ER, and that these deficiencies could have occurred even if "Snow

White” was the patient. Some employees of the hospital also cited system breakdowns and a crowded ER with overworked staff and deficiencies in ambulance services. The disability perspective was not mentioned. The Ethics Committee drafted a press release indicating our availability to provide a disability perspective to the media. Unfortunately, there was no response to our release. Members of the Ethics Committee attended the inquest on a couple of occasions.

During Phase two of the inquest, 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.

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. The bills are a long way from being debated in the House. If the provisions against assisted suicide contained in the Criminal Code are struck down, vulnerable Canadians with disabilities will be put at risk.

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. The Council of Canadians with Disabilities and the Association for Community Living are awaiting a decision as to

whether they can act as co-intervenors in the case. David Baker of Baker Law would serve as legal counsel. MLPD members Rhonda Wiebe and Dean Richert co-chair CCD's Ending of Life Ethics Committee, and they are directing CCD's work on this case.

Panel Discussion on Assisted Suicide:

MLPD members (including April D'Aubin, Allen Mankewich, Dean Richert, Jim Derksen, Jess Turner and Colleen Watters) attended a panel discussion on assisted suicide on Wednesday, April 30, 2014. The session entitled: "Evolution of the Rights Culture: Do We Have a Right to Die", took place at the University of Manitoba and was part of the U. of M.'s Visions and Conversations series. This topic is timely given the recent private members bills on Euthanasia and Assisted suicide introduced in the House of Commons by MP Steven Fletcher. What struck us most was the range of issues and various points of view to be considered as part of the debate around euthanasia and physician-assisted suicide. The event was an important addition to the debate and conversations about this issue which continue in Manitoba and Canada.

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 and new member Donna Buchanan.

Colleen Watters
Chairperson

Fundraising

The MLPD is working to diversify its funding and this report will outline some of the key activities in this area.

The MLPD continues to solicit donations through direct mail campaigns. Josie Concepcion's leadership on this component of our fundraising, and, of course, in all other areas, is greatly appreciated by everyone associated with the League.

Supporters now have the opportunity to donate to the MLPD online through CanadaHelps.org.

In June of 2013, the Fundraising Committee organized at the Area Night Club the MLPD's second Bud, Spud & Steak.

MLPD members and allies came out and supported our efforts while enjoying good food and fun entertainment.

MLPD thanks all our donors who made the silent auction possible, the entertainers who shared their talents with us and the volunteers whose work resulted in an accessible and inclusive event.

A local business, As Nature Intended, has been sharing with the MLPD \$5.00 from the sale of its introductory skin care kit.

The MLPD continues to sell the "Closing the Gap", pendant created by local jeweler Hilary Druxman.

The Run 4 Rights selected the MLPD as a participating organization. The Run 4 Rights raises money in support of Winnipeg organizations working for social justice and human rights.

The Fund Raising Committee had discussed holding an Art Auction Gala in 2014 to celebrate the League's 40th anniversary. Due to staff changes and the funding cutbacks that the MLPD has experienced, it was determined that MLPD did not have the resources necessary to organize an art auction.

Submitted by:
Carlos Sosa

Housing

The committee held its first public forum on May 31, 2013. The event was well-attended and provided support for Manitoba Housing's initiative to introduce a gradual non-smoking policy to the administration of its properties. The concern that potential residents with tobacco addictions and concurrent mental health involvements would be deprived of their rights was examined, but the consensus was that the harm done to folks with respiratory and related conditions by smoking in the same building was of greater consequence that a firm position on their behalf had to be taken.

Thank you to the members of the Housing Committee for their work and to the ILRC for providing the venue and lunch. We plan to make our findings known to our affiliated groups across Canada and to encourage them to pressure their housing authorities to support healthy living for all.

The passage into force of the province's access legislation kept us on watch and anxious to know about implications for more and better housing opportunities for Manitobans with disabilities. We anticipate that the legislation will affect the construction industry even though private dwellings

are not included. Visitability has received increased attention over the past decades, and Winnipeg will soon have the largest cluster of visitable (or “flex”) housing in North America via the Waverley West project. As a result of research by the Canadian Centre on Disability Studies, benefits, such as aging in place, are also being recognized. To get private dwelling development on the official access radar will take time, and will be part of the committee’s future discussions.

There were times this year when we felt like we were working at cross-purposes. On the one hand, we were arguing for agencies who wanted to build group facilities and discovered their intentions were hampered by “safety” provisions imposed by the latest edition of the National Building Code. On the other hand and, in the wake of a December nursing home tragedy in Quebec, the news in Manitoba was that sprinkler systems need only exist in nursing homes and seniors’ facilities built since 1995. As a result, the Minister of Labour established a fire safety task force. MLPD Provincial Council was invited to join this Task Force’s Education and Training Sub-Committee. A report is expected in the fall of 2014.

Other issues we have discussed include:

1. Manitoba Housing’s capacity to provide emergency housing to ventilator users.
2. The federal government’s continuing withdrawal from Provincial housing issues.
3. The successful one-to-one activities on behalf of people with mental health involvements via the chez-soi program are out of financial support as is some experimental housing for addicts that was making good progress.

Our move from monthly to bi-monthly meetings has worked well and maximized committee participation. Louis Ricciuto, in particular, keeps us focused on community activism, which is important for people with disabilities, seniors, people on limited incomes, etc. We are always looking for new members.

Respectfully submitted by
Mel Graham
Chairperson

Transportation

Sadly, the Transportation Committee has not been as active as in past years due to only one or two members on average attending the meetings. This is most likely due to the terrible winter we experienced, making active participation difficult for many. The Transportation Committee has been monitoring both Handi-Transit and public transit service over the course of the year.

Handi-Transit is in the process of making significant changes to the delivery of service, which will eventually include a new fee from account payment system and a new cancelation policy. The Transportation Committee is particularly concerned with adjustments to the cancelation policy as these changes will have great impact on users. We are strongly encouraging Handi-Transit to restructure the Policy Advisory Committee before the cancellation policy is enacted to achieve full representation of all members of the disability community.

To increase public transit usage by wheelchair users (and subsequently attempt to reduce reliance on Handi-Transit), a new automatic locking

system is being piloted. The automatic locking system works on both manual and power chairs, and can be operated independently or by the driver with a push of a button. Although the Transportation Committee is pleased to see the city make public transit safer for wheelchair users, we are strongly encouraging the Handi-Transit Policy Advisory Committee to make greater changes to improve service delivery. These changes must include upgrading or replacing the scheduling system, increasing the number of vehicles on the road and providing greater disability awareness for drivers. Handi-transit continues to be a huge source of complaint from MLPD members. It is vital that Handi-Transit increase resources to provide better quality service, especially as ridership will increase with the aging population.

As accessible transportation continues to present numerous barriers, I would strongly encourage members to play a more active role in the efforts of the Transportation Committee.

Jess Turner

Council of Canadians with Disabilities (CCD) Report

These are challenging times for the Council of Canadians with Disabilities (CCD), but CCD's National Council of Representatives and Committees have been working hard to keep CCD vibrant. Currently, Carlos Sosa is the MLPD's appointee on the CCD National Council of Representatives. Below you will find a brief summary of the activities undertaken by CCD during the 2013-14 year.

It's Not Business As Usual! - For many years, CCD, and 17 other national organizations, have received funding from the Social Development Partnerships Program – Disabilities Component (SDPP-D). In 2012, the federal government made the decision to wind down this funding program, reducing funding by 35% in 2013-14, by 65% in 2014-15, with grant funding ending 31 March 2015. This decision also affects the MLPD, and CCD's other provincial member groups, because the SDPP-D funded these groups through CCD.

As a result of its diminished revenues, CCD has reduced staff, office space, and the number of meetings it holds.

CCD is also seeking out new opportunities that will lead to sustainability. For example, it is researching foundations and corporations which may fund new projects and it is exploring the possibility of creating a new partnership with Independent Living Canada. CCD is also seeking to do more fee-for-service work. For example, CCD, working in partnership with the PEI Council and the Saskatchewan Voice, now has a contract with the federal government to provide education sessions about the Registered Disability Savings Plan (RDSP).

Canada Post – In December, Canada Post announced its plan to discontinue door-to-door mail delivery in favor of communal mailboxes

located in householders' neighborhoods. This announcement came in the midst of one of the worst winters on record when Canadians were fighting snow and bitterly cold temperatures. Upon hearing Canada Post's announcement, Canadians with disabilities expressed concern because they knew that communal mailboxes would become another barrier to inclusion. Some Canadians with disabilities residing outside of urban areas, such as Tony Dolan, CCD's Chairperson, already have communal boxes. They shared how they cannot independently pickup their mail due to snow conditions and other barriers.

CCD representatives have been speaking out to a variety of audiences about the problems that communal mailboxes pose for people with disabilities. The following have heard from CCD about why Canadians need barrier-free postal service and how to keep the service accessible: the Hon. Lisa Raitt, the federal cabinet minister responsible for Canada Post; the Standing Committee on Transport, Infrastructure and Communities; Deepak Chopra, Canada Post CEO (Jess Turner, Allen Mankewich, and Carlos Sosa from the MLPD Executive Committee participated in this meeting at CCD's offices.); CUPW; and the print and broadcast media. MLPD rep. to CCD Carlos Sosa has been active in the media raising the disability community's concerns about Canada Post.

Fair Elections Act – CCD was invited to appear before the House of Commons Committee reviewing how the Government wants to reform rules governing Canada's elections. CCD expressed concerns about the Bill's intention to:

- Eliminate identity vouching at the polls and the use of the Voter Identification Card as a valid form of ID,
- Limit Elections Canada's role in public education promoting engagement in the electoral process,
- Make changes to campaign funding rules favoring wealthy candidates and
- Put the enforcement arm of Elections Canada under the Justice Department.

Elections Canada has established a new Accessibility Advisory Committee and Laurie Beachell, CCD National Coordinator, has been invited to serve on the Committee.

Working Toward an Inclusive Labor Market – From the time we are teenagers until retirement age, a job is an integral part of life for Canadians. Regrettably barriers, which are all too well understood by members of the disability community, continue to prevent many people with disabilities, who want to work, from finding a job. CCD's Social Policy Committee prepared "Transforming Systems - A New Approach", which presents a number of priorities and steps that CCD recommends should be taken to make Canada's labor force more inclusive and accessible. In October, CCD shared "Transforming Systems" with the Federal/Provincial/Territorial Ministers responsible for employment.

Promoting Full Enjoyment of Human Rights – The Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities (CRPD) explains how human rights can be secured in the disability context. Steve Estey, Chairperson of CCD's International Development Committee, participated in the 6th Conference of State Parties to the CRPD in New York, 17-19 July 2013 and will be participating in the 7th Conference. Yutta Fricke, a member of CCD's International Development Committee, participated in the UN General Assembly's High-level meeting on disability and development (HLMDD), held in New York on 23 September 2013. The theme was "the way forward: A disability-inclusive development agenda towards 2015 and beyond."

In February 2014, Canada submitted its first CRPD-related report to the United Nations. CCD is starting the process for developing, in collaboration with other organizations, a civil society response to the aforementioned report. CCD's report will be submitted to the UN. Civil society reports are referred to as shadow reports.

This past year, Vangelis Nikias, CCD's CRPD Project Manager, promoted awareness about the Convention by conducting public information sessions to a wide range of civil society groups, such as university classes, the media, organizations of people with disabilities, and by consulting with organizations such as Amnesty International, the Canadian Council for International Co-operation (CCIC), Canada Without Poverty, etc. The Interchange Program, which funds Vangelis's work at CCD has extended his position until the end of 2014.

Barrier-free Travel – CCD's Transportation Committee promotes dignified and accessible travel for people with disabilities. CCD works closely with the Canadian Transportation Agency (CTA), which regulates modes of transportation under federal jurisdiction (rail, air, marine). This year, CCD provided input to CTA regarding how the agency addresses barriers to accessible transportation.

Disability Tax Credit - Carmela Hutchison, a member of the CCD Executive Committee, appeared before the Senate Standing Committee on National Finance hearing on Bill C-462, which seeks to restrict the fees charged by promoters of the disability tax credit. While before the Committee, Carmela stated, "We support the intent of Bill C-462 and agree that people with disabilities should have their rightful entitlement protected from unfair fees."

Access to Technology – We have all heard about the digital divide and how people with disabilities are at risk of being on the wrong side of that chasm. CCD has found a novel way to have an impact on technology – the Canadian Museum for Human Rights (CMHR). Since the CMHR's announcement, CCD has been pushing for the Museum to be accessible and inclusive of the human rights story of people with disabilities. As a result, the Museum formed an Inclusive Design Advisory Committee and CCD participates on this Committee. The Museum has made a public

commitment to being an accessible venue that meets the principles of universal design. In keeping with this commitment, the CMHR has been working on the design of accessible information kiosks. It is hoped that the Museum's kiosks will influence the kiosk industry, in a way that will improve access to this important type of technology.

Opposing Euthanasia and Assisted Suicide – During the past year, individuals such as Dr. Donald Low, Edward Hong and Susan Griffiths, all people with disabilities, have made emotional public pleas for the legalization of assisted suicide. While CCD acknowledges the personal distress that these individuals and others feel as they negotiate the stages of progressive illnesses, CCD, nevertheless continues to oppose the legalization of assisted suicide. In our analysis, legalized assisted suicide would put people with disabilities and seniors in harm's way. The practice of assisted suicide would serve to stigmatize people with disabilities as a group in that all people legally assisted to die would be people with disabilities. CCD has been intervening in the Carter case, speaking out to the media. It has a project, *Toujours Vivant/Not Dead Yet*, staffed by Amy Hasbrouck who has been undertaking public education on assisted suicide and euthanasia from a disability rights perspective. Through the medium of Google Hangout and YouTube, each week, Amy holds a public discussion about a particular aspect of the assisted suicide issue. Follow this link to access one of Amy's presentations:

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=vrVFtBMG9M4> .

In conclusion, CCD expresses appreciation to the Manitoba disability community for the strong support shown to the Council over the years.

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

Fort Garry Industries

Hilary Druxman

Global Innovations Computer Consultation Services

Missionary Oblate Sisters

Hi-Tec Industries

Wakshinsky Bros. Ltd.

Empire Spice

Nichol Orthopedic Innovations

Starstruck Holstein Ltd.

Transcona Veterinary Hospital

As Nature Intended - Joelle Moon

MANITOBA LEAGUE OF PERSONS WITH DISABILITIES INC.
Statement of Financial Position
March 31, 2014
Unaudited

ASSETS

CURRENT

Cash and short-term deposits	\$	72,990
Accounts Receivable		4,820
Prepaid Expenses		<u>84</u>

77,894

CAPITAL ASSETS

2,786

\$ 80,680

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LIABILITIES, DEFERRED CONTRIBUTIONS AND NET ASSETS

CURRENT

Accounts payable and accrued liabilities	\$	8,295
Deferred leasehold inducement		2,244
Deposit payable		<u>1,200</u>
	\$	11,739

DEFERRED CONTRIBUTIONS

6,114

17,853

NET ASSETS

Invested in capital assets		2,786
Internally restricted		31,041
Unrestricted		<u>29,000</u>

62,827

\$ 80,680

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MANITOBA LEAGUE OF PERSONS WITH DISABILITIES INC.
Statement of Operations
Year Ended March 31, 2014
(Unaudited)

REVENUE

Government of Canada		
Human Resources Development	\$	36,928
Province of Manitoba		
Family Services		50,000
Community grants, donations, fees, and sundry		
CanadaHelps		1,375
Donations		9,095
Fundraising		4,602
MAAW		400
Membership		370
Rental		16,940
Jewish Foundation of Manitoba (M. Rosner Memorial Fund)		877
Project administration fees		<u>1,750</u>
		122,337

EXPENSES

Amortization of capital assets	\$	450
Equipment		3,532
Fundraising		6,690
Liability insurance		1,417
Meetings		2,004
Memberships		1,000
Printing, postage, supplies and general office		2,189
Professional fees		2,500
Rent		36,123
Salaries and benefits		46,108
Sundry		911
Telephone		<u>3,103</u>
		106,027

PROJECTS

Revenue		
Winnipeg Foundation - Thumbs Up	\$	9,854
Expenditures		
Thumbs Up		<u>(9,854)</u>

EXCESS OF REVENUE OVER EXPENSES

\$ 16,310
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Provincial Council Members

2013-2014

April D'Aubin	Danielle Otto
Shayani Fernando	Carlos Sosa
Kristian Hooker	Mindy Tucker
Justine Kiwanuka	Jesse Turner
Allen Mankewich	Colleen Watters
Zephania Matanga	Valerie Wolbert

Executive Committee Members

Co-Chairpersons - Jesse Turner & Carlos Sosa
Vice Chairperson - Allen Mankewich
Secretary - April D'Aubin
Treasurer - Justine Kiwanuka

MLPD Staff

Diane Driedger - Provincial Coordinator*
Josie Concepcion - Office Manager
Emily Ternette – Communications/Program Assistant**
Deanna Ng – Thumbs Up Project Assistant
Laura Schnellert - Thumbs Up Coordinator

* Resigned during fiscal year

**On Leave

This report is available in alternate media upon request.