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COMMUNIQUÉ

**A publication of the
Premier's Council on the
Status of Disabled Persons**



Fall Edition 2009

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Ce bulletin est disponible en français!

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New Executive Director of the Premier's Council



I feel privileged to have been named the new Executive Director of the Premier's Council on November 9th, 2009. I have had the opportunity to work for the Council as the Assistant Executive Director and have been working for the Provincial government for over 6 years.

I look forward to continuing the wonderful work of the Council in my new role. I will continue to push forward the issues for persons with disabilities to make positive changes for New Brunswickers.

I would like to take this opportunity to thank the members and staff of the Premier's Council for making this a smooth transition. I would also like to thank Randy for being a wonderful mentor to me over the years.

I am very passionate about the Premier's Council's mandate and I will do my very best to make a difference in the lives of people with disabilities.

"You have to believe in the impossible." –
Howard Head

Chairperson's Message



The Premier's Council on the Status of Disabled Persons has continued working hard with stakeholders to find solutions to break down the barriers faced by persons with disabilities.

Along with many other projects, the Premier's Council has been working on the *Status Report #2 - Response to Date on the Recommendations from the Disability Action Plan Strategy* which will be released on December 3rd, 2009. This report will give an update on each of the 100 recommendations from the original report, the *Disability Action Plan Strategy - The Path to Self-Sufficiency and Inclusion for Persons with Disabilities in New Brunswick*, which was released in December of 2007. We plan to keep up the exercise of public accountability to ensure continued and further concrete actions.

The Premier's Council would also like to take this opportunity to welcome Kara Reid as the new Council member for the Fredericton area. We know Kara will be a valuable asset to the Council. Welcome Kara!

Farewell Message to Randy Dickinson



The staff and Council members wish to take this opportunity to thank Randy for his outstanding dedication as the Executive Director of the Premier's Council on the Status of Disabled Persons and for helping better the lives of so many people with disabilities for over 24 years.

It has been such an inspiration to see someone so dedicated and committed to helping others.

We wish Randy all the very best and we hope that he has a wonderful retirement!

Best wishes,
Council and staff

“Real success is finding your
life's work in the work that you
love.” – *David McCullough*

Full Service Gas Stations

There have been several articles in the news about the lack of full service gas stations in the area. For those with mobility impairments or seniors, getting out of the vehicle to fill their gas tank is not always easy. Individuals are often left honking their horns, flashing their lights and/or waving their parking permits to try and get a gas attendant's attention. Some gas stations allow clients to phone the station ahead of their visit so someone can help them, but in many cases stopping for gas at specific locations is not always planned in advance.



For this reason, the Premier's Council on the Status of Disabled Persons has contacted several gas stations in New Brunswick, as well as requested locations of existing full service gas stations from our contacts, and has compiled a listing of the ones that offer full service. This list can be viewed on our website at www.gnb.ca/council. We also ask that if there are any other gas stations that offer full service, to please let us know so that they can be added to the list. Please call the office at 1-800-442-4412 (toll free in NB) or email pcsd@gnb.ca We thank everyone for their feedback!

What's New with the Website!

We've recently updated our website with some very useful information!

As mentioned on the previous page, we now have a link for a listing of full service gas stations in New Brunswick.



Recently added is the directory of *Vehicle Retrofit Programs & Mobility Access Programs* that can be found on the main page of our website. This directory provides information about sources of funding for vehicle retrofits. It also provides a listing of manufacturers that specialize in vehicle retrofitting and vehicle retrofit materials. We have also updated many of our various information directories and invite readers to have a look on our website.

We've also added another webpage with information for disability related items for sale. The link is located on the right hand side in the "Other Useful Information" section. The information provided has been submitted to us by consumers or non-profit groups looking to part with disability related items. If you have any items that you wish to have added please contact our office toll-free at 1-800-442-4412 or by email at pcsd@gnb.ca.

Please visit our website at www.gnb.ca/council to see the new information!

26th Edition of the Directory of Services Available

The 26th edition, October 2009 of the *Directory of Services Offered to Persons with Disabilities in New Brunswick* is now available! Please visit our website at www.gnb.ca/council for the most recent information, or contact our office toll-free in New Brunswick for hard copies at 1-800-442-4412.

United Nations International Day of Persons with Disabilities - December 3rd

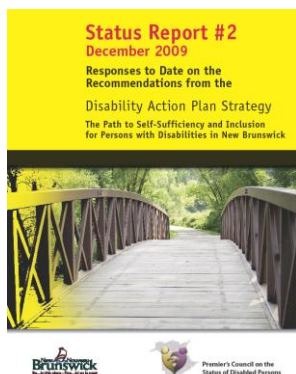


The annual observance of the International Day of Persons with Disabilities on December 3rd, aims to promote an understanding of disability issues and mobilize support for the dignity, rights and well-being of persons with disabilities. It also seeks to increase awareness of gains to be derived from the integration of persons with disabilities in every aspect of political, social, economic and cultural life. The theme of the Day is based on the goal of full and equal enjoyment of human rights and participation in society by persons with disabilities, established by the World Program of Action concerning Disabled Persons, adopted by General Assembly in

1982. The official title of the Day was changed from International Day of Disabled Persons to International Day of Persons with Disabilities by General Assembly resolution 62/127 on 18 December 2007.

The Premier's Council on the Status of Disabled Persons will host a press conference on December 3rd at 9:00am in the Press Conference Room at the Centennial Building located in Fredericton.

Disability Action Plan Status Report #2



We are in the process of printing the second Status Report to the *Disability Action Plan Strategy – The Path to Self-Sufficiency and Inclusion for Persons with Disabilities in New Brunswick* that was originally released in December 2007.

Copies of the *Status Report # 2 – Responses to Date on the Recommendations from the Disability Action Plan Strategy* will be available at the December 3rd press conference and then will be posted on the Premier's Council website at www.gnb.ca/council later that day.

Hard copies will be available by calling 1-800-442-4412 toll-free in New Brunswick.

“Remember, nobody wins unless everybody wins.” – *Bruce Springsteen*

Forum Participants Adopt First-Ever Poverty-Reduction Plan for Province

The 50 participants attending the Final Forum on Poverty November 13, 2009 adopted the first-ever poverty reduction plan for the province.

Overcoming Poverty Together: The New Brunswick Economic and Social Inclusion Plan aims to reduce income poverty in the province by 25 per cent and deep income poverty by 50 per cent by 2015.

"What has been agreed to here today is exceptional, and it will put us on the right path to achieving our poverty-reduction goals and helping thousands of New Brunswickers be more self-sufficient," said Premier Shawn Graham.

Participants at the forum agreed on specific initiatives to ensure ongoing collaboration between government, the business sector and the organizations delivering poverty-reduction initiatives at the local level:

- the establishment of a Crown corporation, which would be known as The New Brunswick Economic and Social Inclusion Corporation. It would oversee and co-ordinate the implementation of the plan. The corporation would be presided by one co-chair each from the community, business and government sectors as well as residents who have experienced poverty. The corporation would be run by a president, who would report to the co-chairs; and
- the establishment of community economic and social inclusion networks. They would be develop community poverty-reduction plans at the local level.

The participants reached agreement on several other topics:

- the need for a massive overhaul of the social assistance system;
- the introduction of a prescription drug plan for all uninsured residents by 2012;
- an increase in the minimum wage to the Atlantic average by the fall of 2011;
- initiatives in the areas of community transportation, housing and early learning as well as community schools, elementary literacy, co-operative education and access to post-secondary education.

"It has truly been an honour to serve as the government co-chair on this initiative and to work with so many who are committed to reducing poverty levels all across our province," said Social Development Minister Kelly Lamrock. "I thank everyone who participated in the three phases of this initiative for their valuable input, and I look forward to implementing the changes for government that have been identified through this process."

The New Brunswick Poverty Reduction Initiative was launched in October 2008 by Premier Graham and Health Minister Mary Schryer, who preceded Lamrock as minister of Social Development. "All sectors of society have a role to play in reducing poverty in our communities," said Gerry Pond, Poverty Reduction Initiative co-chair representing business. "I am excited that the business community has recognized the important role that it can play in improving the lives of those who are less fortunate in our society."

The New Brunswick Poverty Reduction Initiative enabled more than 2,500 New Brunswickers from all walks of life to become involved in the development of a plan to reduce poverty in the province.

"Everyone knows the importance of community to the well-being of individuals and families," said Léo-Paul Pinet, Poverty Reduction Initiative co-chair representing the community non-profit sector. "Today's announcement of a social and economic inclusion plan firmly entrenches the role that local communities have to play in ensuring that poverty issues address local needs."

To obtain the *Overcoming Poverty Together: The New Brunswick Economic and Social Inclusion Plan* report please visit the Department of Social Development website or contact your regional office.

Enhanced Emergency Fuel Benefit

An enhanced emergency fuel benefit is now available to help low-income New Brunswickers offset their energy costs. This new benefit was announced on October 6th, 2009.

The Enhanced Emergency Fuel Benefit Program builds on the Department of Social Development's existing emergency assessment by providing up to \$550 in emergency funding to qualifying New Brunswick households.



The enhanced benefit also removes the requirement that potential applicants deplete their assets to qualify for assistance. This means that items such as investments, cash-in-hand, and bank accounts with less than \$2,000 will not be considered in determining if a household needs the benefit.

All New Brunswick households who find themselves in an emergency situation may apply for the Enhanced Emergency Fuel Benefit by contacting their regional office. If an applicant requires the benefit in two consecutive years, their dwelling will automatically be prioritized for a low-income retrofit.

This enhanced program complements Social Development's other heating supplements. It is also supplemented by a variety of energy efficiency programs that can provide medium- and long-term solutions to high heating costs.

For more information please contact your regional office:

Region 1: 1-866-426-5191

- Moncton
- Richibucto
- Sackville
- Shediac

Region 2: 1-866-441-4340

- Saint John
- St. Stephen
- Sussex
- Hampton
- St. George

Region 3: 1-866-444-8838

- Fredericton
- Woodstock
- Perth-Andover

Region 4: 1-866-441-4249

- Edmundston
- Grand Falls

Region 5: 1-866-441-4245

- Campbellton
- Kedgwick

Region 6: 1-866-441-4341

- Bathurst

Region 7: 1-866-441-4246

- Miramichi
- Neguac

Region 8: 1-866-441-4149

- Caraquet
- Tracadie-Sheila
- Lamèque
- Shippagan

B.A.T. Mobile (Brunswick Accessible Taxi)



The official launch of Fredericton’s first wheelchair accessible taxi service, Brunswick Accessible Taxi, a.k.a. the BAT Mobile, was held in front of Fredericton City Hall on September 29, 2009. Doug Bridgman, VP Marketing & Public Relations, commented about the new fully accessible taxi service.

The BAT Mobile is an inclusive, service-oriented company, committed to providing the best possible service to all Fredericton area passengers with mobility impairments. Their state-of-the-art, dual entry taxi van specializes in comfortable, clean transportation for seniors and persons with disabilities, and safely accommodates wheelchair users and semi-ambulatory scooter users. The retro-fitted van is equipped with: rear and side entry ramps, tie downs, seat belts, low steps, first aid kit and fire extinguisher.

Services the city of Fredericton, Oromocto, Douglas, New Maryland, Marysville and surrounding area. Clientele include the Fredericton International Airport, hospitals, rehabilitation centres, hotels, schools, nursing homes, private senior residences, disability organizations and people with mobility impairments. 24 hours / 7 days per week availability. Reservations upon request. Due to anticipated high demand, it is recommended that clients pre-book their preferred pick-up dates and times.

For more information please call the BAT Line at (506) 458-2281 (455-BAT1), email them at: info@brunswickaccessibletaxi.ca or check out their website at: www.brunswickaccessibletaxi.ca

“One who lets slip by the opportunity to serve another misses one of the richest experiences life has to offer.” – *Pali Text*

Health Services Oxygen & Breathing Aids Program

The Health Services Oxygen Program provides clients of the Department of Social Development with coverage for specific equipment and supplies required to address specific respiratory issues.

Who is eligible?

- Department of Social Development clients and their dependents who hold a valid white Health Card indicating
 - “Supplementary” in the Basic Health Eligibility section
 - or
 - “OX” (Oxygen) in the Additional Health Eligibility section for oxygen related items
 - “CREQUIP” (Convalescent/rehab) in the Additional Health Eligibility section for Breathing Aids, CPAP and BiPAP related items.

- Department of Social Development clients who hold a valid yellow Health Card that indicates
 - a “Y” under the OTH in the Valid Only For box
 - or
 - an “X” under SUPP in the Valid Only For box

They cover items for: oxygen supplies, beathing aids, CPAP/BiPAP, and ventilation.

For more information please contact the Department of Social Development at (506) 453-2001.

Valley Suites in Quispamsis

The residents of the Valley Suites in Quispamsis started moving in on November 1, 2009. Valley Suites is affordable living for seniors and the disabled and includes 8 wheelchair barrier free units. For availability please contact the Department of Social Development at 1-866-441-4340.

Information from Elections NB for the September 2010 Elections

During the 2008 municipal elections, Elections NB introduced an innovative project that provided several new accommodations designed to increase independence in voting for individuals with a disability throughout New Brunswick. Some of the accommodations that were introduced were: Audio Vote Machine with Braille and Sip and Puff controllers, Visual

Language Interpreters, TTY machine, Magnifiers, Pocket Talkers, unscented markers and wheelchairs. The project also included extensive training for all Elections NB staff so that they are better prepared to help individuals with a disability.

As part of the project, individuals with a disability were also encouraged to run as candidate or apply to work for one of the available jobs during the election period. In addition to Mobile polls and Special Ballots, these accommodations have now become the standard for all municipal elections and are also being used whenever there is a municipal By-Election.

In preparation for the next provincial election scheduled for September 2010, Election NB is planning to enhance these existing accommodations to voters and will also introduce new accommodations. This initiative is part of an Outreach project that will facilitate voting for all New Brunswickers.

Once again, Elections NB has committed to continue their accessibility mandate by hiring the services of the Neil Squire Society who will provide a project coordinator who will represent the needs of individuals with a disability. Over the next few months, this coordinator will work and consult with all interested community groups and individuals to represent the needs of New Brunswick voters and inform them of the support that is available during the next provincial election.



For more information on this project, you may contact Elections New Brunswick at:

Monday to Friday: 8:15 a.m.- 4:30 p.m.

Telephone: 1-506-453-2218

Toll free: 1-888-858-VOTE (8683)

Toll free: 1-800-308-2922 (New Brunswick)

TTY: 1-888-718-0544

Fax: 1-506-457-4926

E-mail: www.electionsnb.ca/sendmail-e.asp

Web site: www.gnb.ca/elections or www.electionsnb.ca

Mailing Address:

Elections New Brunswick

P.O. Box 6000

Fredericton, NB E3B 5H1

Canada

N.B. Disability Awareness Week 2010



There will be a number of projects, activities, media spots, contests, promotional items and special events undertaken to help celebrate the annual N.B. Disability Awareness Week leading up to the May 30th – June 5th dates.

Keep checking our website for more details by going to the Premier's Council website at www.gnb.ca/council and clicking the link to the Disability Awareness Week webpage.

Strengthening Families Together Program

Strengthening Families Together is a free ten-session program created by the Schizophrenia Society of Canada in 2003 to help families/caregivers and friends find ways to cope with a relative or friend who is experiencing a serious mental illness. It provides an opportunity to discover the information they are searching for in an environment of mutual support.

Strengthening Families Together is more than education. It gives families /caregivers an opportunity to discuss the daily challenges they face; learn to connect with others; gain access to reliable and consistent information on mental illness and mental health services; and offers techniques in problem solving, coping, advocacy and communication skills.

The program is available throughout the province upon request to small groups of approximately ten persons. They are conducted by two facilitators with guest speakers who are experts in their field (social worker, nurse, pharmacist, person in recovery, etc). Upon completion of the course the participants receive a Certificate of Achievement as well as an invitation to become a member of the Schizophrenia Society of NB and attend support group.



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The facilitators follow the following agenda each week:

Sessions at a glance

- Introduction to the program
- Facts about psychosis
- Psychosis – causes and treatment
- Coping as a family
- Self care
- Communication
- Living with psychotic illness
- Recovery
- Advocacy & understanding the mental health system
- Wrap up

All inquiries are confidential. For program information contact Schizophrenia Society of NB:
P.O. Box 562, Miramichi, NB E1V 3T7
Telephone: (506) 622-1595
Fax : (506) 622-8927
E-mail: ssnbmiramichi@nb.aibn.com

“Nothing great is ever accomplished by one person.” – *Sheryl Leach*

The Paradoxical Commandments

By Dr. Kent M. Keith

1. People are illogical, unreasonable and self-centered. Love them anyway.
2. If you do good, people will accuse you of selfish, ulterior motives. Do good anyway.
3. If you are successful, you win false friends and true enemies. Succeed anyway.
4. The good you do today will be forgotten tomorrow. Do good anyway.
5. Honesty and frankness make you vulnerable. Be honest and frank anyway.
6. The biggest men and women with the biggest ideas can be shot down by the smallest men and women with the smallest minds. Think big anyway.
7. People favor underdogs but follow only top dogs. Fight for a few underdogs anyway.
8. What you spend years building may be destroyed overnight. Build anyway
9. People really need help but may attack you if you do help them. Help people anyway.
10. Give the world the best you have and you'll get kicked in the teeth. Give the world the best you have anyway.

It Couldn't be Done

by Edgar A. Guest

Somebody said that it couldn't be done,
But he, with a chuckle, replied
That maybe it couldn't, but he would be one
Who wouldn't say so till he'd tried.
So he buckled right in with a trace of a grin
On his face; if he worried, he hid it.
He started to sing as he tackled the thing
That couldn't be done - and he did it.

Somebody scoffed, "Oh, you'll never do that,
At least, no one ever has done it;"
But he took off his coat and he took off his hat,
And the first thing we knew he'd begun it.
With a lift of his chin and a bit of a grin,
Without any doubting or quiddit,
He started to sing as he tackled the thing
That couldn't be done - and he did it.

There are thousands to tell you it cannot be done,
There are thousands to prophesy failure;
There are thousands to point out to you - one by one
The dangers that wait to assail you.
But just buckle in with a bit of a grin,
Just take off your coat and go to it;
Just start to sing as you tackle the thing
That cannot be done - and you'll do it.

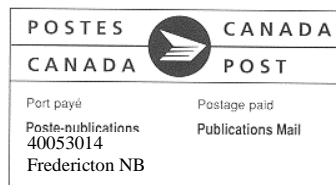
"Toughness and perseverance require a willingness to work hard even when things are difficult. They also help encourage others to work just as hard as you do." – *Pali Text*



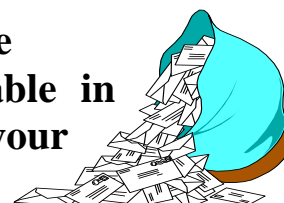
**THANK YOU RANDY!
ENJOY YOUR RETIREMENT**



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We welcome submissions for our newsletter on any topic relative to persons with disabilities. This newsletter can be available in alternate formats. Please circulate the Communiqué within your office and with friends.



NOTICE

The recent 2009 edition of the *Directory of Services Offered to Persons with Disabilities in New Brunswick* is available. If you wish to receive a copy, please fill out the following and return to our office by fax or mail.

Name: _____

Organization: _____

Address: _____ Postal Code: _____

Telephone: _____ Fax: _____

E-mail: _____ Language: English _____ French _____

Return to: Premier's Council on the Status of Disabled Persons
 440 King Street, Suite 648, Fredericton, N.B. E3B 5H8
 Fax: (506) 444-3001 E-mail: pcsdp@gnb.ca

Updates are available upon request throughout the year