

PATHWAYS TO INDEPENDENCE

NOVEMBER 26TH, 2020, 1:30PM TO 3:30PM

ZOOM VIRTUAL CONFERENCING MEETING NOTES

Hosted By:

Paul Gauthier

Individualized Funding Resource Centre Society

Ruth Marzetti

Technology For Living

Guest Speakers:

Nappy Limapichat for Tetra Society's netCle'

Shareen Pasco with ConnecTra Updates

More than ever, people with disabilities must come together as a unified group in society. How we support and help each other through crisis and every day hurdles will strengthen us as a community and as individuals. Living independently is a choice and comes with additional challenges. Through unification people with disabilities make a difference; each voice is important.

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The goal of this meeting was for Peers to come together and share information and updates on current issues facing people with disabilities. The meeting was attended by approximately 68 people.

Tetra Society's netCle' – Nappy Limapichat

- Nappy Limapichat is the Business Technology Coordinator at Tetra Society of North America

Assistive Technology for Computer Use Presentation

Tetra is a non-profit organization that finds solutions to overcome environmental barriers faced by people with disabilities. There are 30 chapters across North America and Nappy works out of the Vancouver office.

There are volunteers who work one-on-one with individuals with disabilities in order to create a customized solution for the barrier they are having an issue with. These solutions are often not available on the market or there are financial barriers. While these environmental barriers are still a part of the journey, Tetra believes that solutions help foster greater independence, quality of life, and inclusion.

Tetra provides one-on-one customization. As an example; an individual lost his arm, but still wanted to play his guitar. A Tetra volunteer assisted him by creating a 3D printed arm extension which allowed him to play his guitar.

Tetra's mission is to provide affordable solutions for the community. Tetra received Federal funding last year to develop and market an affordable, customized device which provides computer access to individuals who have mobility limitations.

The netCle' Device

netCle' means Net (Internet) and Cle (French for Key); a key to the internet.

The netCle' is a user friendly customizable device which enables people with various mobility limitations to independently operate a computer.

- There is a programable hub which is a slim visible switch which is different than what is shown on the video (following) because they have a second generation that has been launched this month. There is a choice of peripherals to choose from and there is a main joystick.
- Tetra is currently experimenting with an extension rod that could potentially be moved with the individuals chin.
- Available also are the 3 touch sensors: the regular sensor, the mini sensor and the dual sensor
 - The mini sensor is a lot more sensitive and useful for users who are not able to click as hard
 - The dual sensor is good for scrolling up and down.
 - There is a buddy switch which allows the user to click
 - With the bigger joystick, the user can remove the ball at the top and put in a cradle so that the user can move with wrists as well.
- The Gyroscope can be attached to eyeglasses or a headband
 - The Gyroscope allows the user to move the cursor with head movements.
 - The crane can perform a variety of different computer functions.
 - Moving the cursor up and down, left/right and it can be used for scrolling
 - It has a button for a double click
- The joystick can be used for everything that suits the user's mobility

- The joystick comes in regular size and small

A Tetra client wanted to use it for gaming. He was sent a touch sensory, programmed to be “ASDW” so with just one button he was able to go from A to S to D to W.

Client Participation:

Tetra is currently in product testing phase and is looking for clients to try the netCle’ and provide feedback. Clients can sign up for a netCle’ through the Tetra website and will participate in an assessment appointment with an Occupational Therapist and one of our Technician via Zoom. Clients will be assisted on the best peripheral to choose for their individual needs.

Due to the Covid-19 pandemic, Tetra has had to make significant changes to protocols. Tetra used to visit homes to perform assessments and do installations, but now all communication is done via Zoom in Canada.

An installation appointment will be held via Zoom. Tetra requests that the clients have a support person on hand to assist with the netCle’ installation. Despite this inconvenience, Tetra is working hard to assist as many people as possible.

The installation is followed up by several telephone calls to the client to allow for questions and feedback on the product. The client feedback will assist Tetra in making improvements.

As a token of appreciation for their time they will get to keep the netCle’ for free. So far Tetra has given out 100 netCle’.

Youtube netCle’ Videos

- Introducing netCle’: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=bjPnUx21jSE>
- netCle’ | Your Key to Accessible Computing: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=SCKUCIF9T90>
- Getting started with netCle’: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=XpX8X6a0a8w>
- Choosing netCle’ peripherals: https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=t_5FEuAHZpU
- Customizing your netCle’: https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=r14zxc_CzLs
- netCle’ Testimonials:
 - Tim Louis: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=iUO1JkdT4R0>
 - Omar: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=dEKRRReNbs4>

Join the Project: <https://tetrasociety.org/netcle/#join>

Fill out form which takes about 5-10min. Please be sure to answer the question about ‘How did you hear about NetCle?’ Please indicate **Pathways**, it helps ConnectTra keep track of where they are getting their referrals from.

Connect with them on Facebook, please hit like or unlike and follow along:

<https://www.facebook.com/TetraNetCle>

If you are interested in a netCle’ or know someone who may benefit from Tetra products, please go to their website for product and contact information: <https://tetrasociety.org/netcle/>

Presentation link can be found here:

<https://www.ifrcsociety.org/documents/pathways/20201126NetClePresentation.pdf>

Questions and Answers

Q. How sensitive is the Gyro? How much movement is needed to operate it?

A. The Gyro is still in development. It does take a lot of practice to get it moving; it is customizable so you can attach it to move all the way. Once you get more familiar with the device, it will get more easier to operate. Depending if you want to go faster or slower, this is something we can adjust as well.

Q. Are you able to control a Smartphone or a tablet with netCle'?

A. We have another product which is Bluetooth enabled, and compatible with ipad or Smartphone

Q. I use Dragon Voice Recognition; is netCle' duplicating Dragon?

A. You can use in combination. We recommend you use a keyboard like a joystick to move up and down, and us that with Dragon Voice Recognition.

Q. How much does netCle' cost?

A. The cost is about \$100.00

Q. Does netCle' access the keyboard; are you able to type?

A. Not directly; you access it with the mouse.

Paul Gauthier suggested the people could use an on-screen keyboard, which comes with windows, and then utilize the mouse for clicking the keys on the virtual keyboard.

Nappy stated it is an example when using the touch sensor.

Q. Does it work with a Trackpad? I have a Trackpad, but I cannot use it. Is Gyro compatible with Mac? Mac has gone to Big Sur for it's upgrades. If you get any inquires about Mac and you would like netCle' to work with Mac products as well.

A. It would replace the Trackpad because netCle' acts as a mouse. I will double check if it is compatible with Mac and follow up with Pathways.

ConnecTra Updates

December Community Forum

Shareen Pasco is the Program Coordinator from Disability Foundation

The ConnecTra Society is one of 7 affiliate societies under the Disability Foundation. ConnecTra is a connecting agency which links people with physical disabilities to activities and programs that will, over time, allow them to grow, gain confidence and become increasingly more active and involved in community life.

ConnecTra aims to get all people with significant disabilities living in the Lower Mainland as socially active and involved as possible through workshops and other resources.

In a normal year they host bimonthly workshops and bring people together and help them connect with work, leisure, and social opportunities by partnering with likeminded organizations, key agencies and service providers to inform and educate and share what their organization provides for the community.

Abilities and Expo Job Search

This is an annual event bringing people together, and their participants are local organizations and vendors who hire people with physical disabilities. ConnecTra provides opportunities for social engagement, education for existing, and new, clients all in one location with volunteer supporters and service providers. The job fair portion of the Expo hosts accessible inclusive employers and usually there is 300 people in attendance. Due to COVID-19 they are unable to have the event but are hoping to organize an event for 2021 and hope to see some of you there.

As with most other organizations they have had to put their programs online because of the pandemic. However, they are hosting activities through their online programming. It is called Connect Together, and they have reached over 10,000 people across the province and country since the beginning of May.

They offer weekly sessions of Meditation, Nutrition, Chair Yoga and Adaptive Fitness. Fridays are for presentations and workshops with likeminded organizations. Recently they partnered with Canadian Mental Health Association and are hosting 8 weeks of empowerment series to help people deal with everyday life challenges. Each event happens on Zoom. This is the best and easiest way to attend and you can visit their website for more information:

<https://connectra.org/events/category/connecttogether/>

This option allows participants to talk to the hosts by video as well as chat with other participants. You can also view it on Facebook page and watch it live and it is always free to attend.

Facebook: <https://www.facebook.com/ConnecTra>

ConnecTra is always looking for more people to join interesting, interactive and engaging webinars. If you have any ideas or like to host one yourself, please reach out to them. Technology For Independent Living put on a great presentation in May about Smart Phone Tech and it has received over 400 views and it is a personal favourite for Shareen.

ConnecTra's newest initiative is their partnership with the Disability Foundation for the accessible community forums. These forums will happen bimonthly on Connect Together. Their approach to these forums is to have an open dialogue and hear from different perspectives for the intent to learn from one another. Their goal is to strengthen community further and create a comfortable environment for people to share and learn.

Link to register for the forum:

<https://www.eventbrite.ca/e/disability-foundations-accessible-community-forum-transportation-in-bc-registration-128895837921?aff=ebdssbonlinesearch>

For any questions please go to their website www.connectra.org or email Shareen at: info@connectra.org

Questions and Answers

Q. Are you posting on Youtube?

A. Yes, our webinars are streamed to Facebook and then posted on YouTube a week or two after the event. It is under the Disability Foundation account. A link can be found on the ConnectTra website and there is a link on Connect Together where you can register for events:

<https://connectra.org/connecttogether/>.

After Shareen mentioned that Lift was a sponsor of one of the presentations and the following question was asked:

Q. Does this mean that Lift is going to have accessible vehicles in their fleet?

A. Yes, they are looking to do that and will be able to answer all those question during the forum. You can register for the Accessible Transportation Forum on our site.

Updates

Federal Government \$600 PWD Pandemic DTC

Laura Mackenrot

An announcement was made in October (2020) that people with the Disability Tax Credit status, who were not seniors, would be getting a \$600.00 payment; to be received within the next few months.

As of November 6, 2020, several sources have stated that they have received it. At the time of the Pathways meeting, Laura Mackenrot had not received it yet, but she did know that people who were starting to receive it. She encouraged everyone to continue to check their mailboxes.

Questions and Answers

Q. How are payments being received; by Canada Post or direct deposit?

A. Members have reported receiving payment in both ways

Q. If you've not received the payment, how long should you wait until you start calling to enquire?

A. Probably by January, I will report back any information given through Planned Institute

Q. I only received \$300; is that because I am older than 65?

A. People receiving Old Age Security (OAS) will only receive \$300 for over the age of 65 for their Disability Tax Credit. They would have received \$300 because they would have received OAS already, they will basically top you up to the \$600.

If you are getting the OAS, you would have received the \$300 that comes with it and Guaranteed Income Supplement will get an extra \$200. That means that seniors getting OAS and GIS were getting \$500. It means if you have a disability tax credit as well you are only getting topped up by \$100. You are not getting an additional \$600 unfortunately.

Temporary Pandemic Pay

Chris Hofley, Director of Operations, Individualized Funding Resource Centre Society

We are aware that at least 3 CSIL employers have received the payment and it arrived via Canada Post in cheque form.

The funds should be deposited into your CSIL bank account; do NOT deposit it into your personal account. Advise your CSIL payroll person that you have made the deposit and make sure they have the breakdown of what hours were worked during that time frame are eligible.

Paul Gauthier: I would be very interested to know how many people across the province have received their payment. Our payroll department have over 80 clients, and as of this date [November 26, 2020] only about 10 or 15% have received their payment so far.

Peer Comment: Several CSIL Employers at the Pathways meeting confirmed that they had received their claim cheques.

Questions and Answers

Peer Comment: A peer stated she submitted hers in November, past the October 31st deadline and it was accepted as they took her circumstance into consideration.

Paul Gauthier: I know that our frontline workers are needing their money because it is getting close to the holiday time and there are those who really need those extra dollars. It is a continued waiting game, once they finish their verification process. We have had good communication with Fraser Health and it seems like each Health Authority are reviewing their own client list and trying to determine if it's close to what they expect or not. Once it is validated by the Health Authority, they forward it onto the Ministry of Finance for payment and that process takes approximately 7-10 days

Chris Hofley: Concerns from CSIL Employers are mainly about not getting it by the end of the year. They are concerned that their caregivers will be required to deal with it for 2021 taxes as opposed to this year when the Pandemic pay was set up. What will happen to those who don't receive payment this year?

Paul Gauthier: Unfortunately, there is not much that can be done as it will be taxable income for the year the funds were received.

Reminder: The TPP funds you receive for your employees will include the 10.1% employer cost fee. Having received the extra funds to cover your employer costs, you can provide staff with the full \$4.00 per hour Pandemic pay.

Q. When did people first receive their cheques?

A. Around November 13th, 2020

Peer Comment: I did send mine in by October 31st and I got an email back from Fraser Health Authority to say that my number of hours was more than we expected because I was very sick for a while and I used way more home support within my budget, within my surplus. I wrote back an explanation of why I used more over those 10 days and they wrote back and said no problem. If anyone used more hours than you would normally do because you were sick, give them a thorough explanation.

Q. Does anyone know how we pay this out to them? Are taxes taken off?

A. This is income. With the exception of Vacation, all other taxes are taken off; CPP, EI and WorkSafe BC

Q. Is there any indication that more Federal funds will be provided to the Province for pandemic pay?

A. This was a one time federal government funding transfer to the province. It is specific for the period in March to July 4th. There have been no discussions of any additional dollars yet from a Federal perspective coming through.

Paul Gauthier: There is much concern that other facilities are in a position to offer greater amount of dollars. Being able to offer our workers more of an increase on our regular basis is a priority, not just during that period because of the pandemic, and should be addressed to keep CSIL Employers pay in line with facilities.

Ministry of Health CSIL Policy Exception Extension

The Ministry of Health has extended their CSIL Policy Exceptions until July 1st, 2021.

Policy Link:

<https://www.ifrcsociety.org/documents/pathways/LettertohealthauthoritieswithextensionFinal.pdf>

Policies:

1. In the current CSIL Expense Guidelines, sick pay is listed as an optional expense at 2%-3% per year, to a maximum of five days per year. This pay is required to be expensed from the overall funding that is provided to CSIL employers
 - I. Exception to Policy: HAs to allow a time-limited exception and permit CSIL employers to allocate surplus funding towards two weeks of pay for CSIL employees required to self quarantine. If a CSIL employer lacks adequate surplus to cover the payroll burden, the HAs will provide temporary financial relief on a case by case basis, with adequate justification and supporting documentation from CSIL employers.
2. Current HCC policy: CSIL employers are responsible for creating a respite plan and a backup service plan to ensure care needs are met on a continuous basis and HAs may authorize home support services from an agency in exceptional circumstances, such as short-term acute illness, to augment CSIL funding
 - I. Exception to Policy: The Ministry allows HAs to temporarily suspend the requirement to obtain prior approval to use agencies for emergency staffing
3. Current Home and Community Care (HCC) policy states that “an immediate family member cannot be paid to provide care for a client unless an exception is approved by the HA.”
 - I. Exception to Policy: The Ministry allows CSIL Employers to temporarily pay immediate family members (including an immediate family member who has been appointed power of attorney or representative of the CSIL employer) to provide care, without the requirement to obtain prior approval, if their supply of regular staff and back up care plan staff has been impacted. This is recommended for a time-limited duration (3 months), during the COVID-19 outbreak. CSIL employers must continue to inform their case managers of any changes in their care, including the hiring of immediate family members

Please Note: ACE is concerned that the exception now seems to have a time limit of 3 months for family, requiring follow up contact with the Health Authority, and ACE will be following up with a request they

clarify this. We don't believe 3 months is reasonable as the COVID numbers in BC validate the exception to be until July 1st.

4. Current HCC policy: CSIL employers are responsible for creating a respite plan and a backup service plan to ensure care needs are met on a continuous basis and HAs may authorize home support services from an agency in exceptional circumstances, such as short-term acute illness, to augment CSIL funding.

Exception to Policy: The Ministry allows HAs to temporarily suspend the requirement to obtain prior approval to use agencies for emergency staffing

Personal Protection Equipment (PPE)

George Tomlinson - Webinar

The recommendations for Personal Protection Equipment (PPE) continues to change. Dr Henry, Provincial Health Officer, ordered that caregivers who are working with people with disabilities in close proximity require medical grade masks. CSIL Employers, like all businesses, are required to have Covid-19 Safety Plans. While adhering to the WorkSafeBC regulations for COVID-19 Safety plans, the documents will be different depending on your needs.

Update: A webinar was held on Tuesday, December 1st to review how to create Safety Plans that meet legislation and individual needs. Those who were unable to attend, but would like to receive the package can email George at George@ifrcsociety.org

Reminder to go to the IFRC website and browse through the online store for your PPE needs. The prices are competitive and are cost recovery only.

Personal Protective Equipment (PPE) Project: <https://www.ifrcsociety.org/ppe>

A Peer Remembered

Harry Dollard was remembered in the Pathways meeting. Harry passed away on November 3rd, 2020 at the age of 70. A person with a disability, Harry was very active in the community and will be missed and remembered by many. With a strong background in technology, he continued to contribute to the community through Technology for Living and worked closely with their design team to assist with testing and providing many great ideas. He enjoyed attending the Pathways Meetings, and being a part of our community was meaningful for him as he expressed his appreciation for the support Pathways provides to peer.

Harry was a genuinely nice person and his contributions have impacted so many people with disabilities. His life was one to be celebrated and remembered.

As much as Harry did a lot for others, the Pathways Team hopes everyone takes comfort that all the Pathways Peers made a difference to Harry in his last days.

Developing Pathways Leadership Groups

As a group of peers, Pathways has come a long way in forging a solid group of participants who share common concerns, goals and challenges and we've identified many issues that should be put forward to policymakers; issues that impact the lives of people with disabilities every day.

We need change; I think we all agree that more needs to be done. The idea of having Leadership groups has come from the peers who wish to address various topics by way of different advocacy methods.

Smaller groups within Pathways can focus and make accomplishments with the support of the IFRC and TFL.

The groups can be as big or as little as we would like. Some individuals have come forward to discuss how they are in the position to be able to put forth different issues from an advocacy perspective. Others just want to be able to focus on specific issues.

- The goal of the leadership groups is to bring together small groups of peers who would like to focus on common issues and who are able to devote the time needed to work on the issue
- Participation would require a couple of hours a month, with zoom meetings outside of the main Pathways Peer Group
- The groups would be supported by the IFRC and the TFL
 - We all have strengths and talents that can be beneficial to groups
- The group will identify one person to coordinate activities and be the designated speaker for the group
- With support from the IFRC and TFL Management, the group leaders will
 - a. Establish needs, timelines and outcomes
 - b. Work with their groups
 - i. Develop communication
 - ii. Documentation
 - c. Manage project activities
 - d. Liaise back to Pathways managers for peer, business and administrative support
 - e. Give progress reports to pathways peers in meetings

Proposed Leadership Groups:

There was a brainstorm discussion on the topics of interest, and these are the starting points:

1. Home Support Hours:

- a. People receiving CLBC funding are allocated support hours in which to participate in their community; CSIL funding and home support in general does not
- b. Participating in the community is at the core of why CSIL was formed, to promote independence and community inclusion
- c. Peers believe that Ministry of Health should be providing funding for community inclusion hours, because we deserve to be involved in the community, and not be trapped at home.
 - i. CSIL employers work, go to school, volunteer and enjoy socializing and without support many are unable to attend these activities

2. Home Support Hours for Seniors:

- a. Seniors and people with a wide range of disabilities require home support that will meet all their needs.
 - i. They are facing the same hurdles getting onto the CSIL program
 - ii. We recognize that some seniors have onset dementia, mobility and health issues and basic home support does not meet their needs
 - iii. This is about supporting one another and connecting Seniors and their families as a voice

3. Re-evaluating the Time Task Analysis (TTA) used by the Health Authorities

- a. It should be based on individual circumstances and how they fit around activities and routines

- b. The TTA needs a review and overhaul of what is allowable tasks and reasonable amount of time for a task
 - i. Too many are stretching their hours for care or doing without
 - c. Implement all inclusive care hours so that people can remain in their homes, receiving;
 - i. Housekeeping Services
 - ii. Health Meal Preparation
 - iii. Adequate showers, daily if we choose
 - iv. Basic care
 - d. The Health Authorities don't allow CSIL Employers to allocate dollars for hours for activities out in the community, for school or volunteering.
 - i. Most of us are stretching our hours so that we can go and have something meaningful that we are doing in the community.
 - ii. People with physical disabilities deserve the support to participate in community
 - e. Is there is a way that we could start working with the Ministry of Health around Community Involvement and Community Inclusion.
 - i. Persons with Developmental disabilities have a component to have community inclusion and have dollars to allocate towards being able to participate in the community.
 - ii. Physical personal care is hardly being met, but the Community Component is critical and important to people with disabilities.
 - iii. A committee can focus on what the allowable support should be considered for people with disabilities and/or seniors, with the focus to change it.
 - f. Some Health Authorities allow activities such as physiotherapy and swimming, but in other Health Authorities they are not. Expanding what would be considered the allowable hours to be part of the assessment process should be standard, and consistent, across the province.
4. **Review and change of policy related to the issues related to marriage**, insofar that system determines that if you marry, your spouse must physically work to support your care needs
- a. Family members, spouses should not be the default caregivers
 - b. This is preventing people from marrying
 - c. This decision by governments impacts the rights of individuals
 - i. People are losing tax benefits
 - ii. Policies obstruct PWD benefits when married
 - iii. This is a Human Rights Issue
5. **Community Transportation Committee:**
- a. Address the transportation issues for PWD with city councils
 - b. Common issues throughout the province related to transportation
6. **CSIL Expense Guidelines:**
- a. Form a group to review the guidelines further with respect to payment to family members
 - b. Review other expense guidelines that need to be updated
7. **Media relations:**
- a. Thinking about promoting through video, radio and TV interviews
 - b. There are many different approaches to taking a video.

- i. Promoting CSIL as an alternative to home support agencies in a positive way, as making a difference to our lives and how it enriches our lives and the people we encounter
- ii. As CSIL Employers we are making it possible to employ people and help local economy
- iii. Generates taxes
- c. An alternative approach would bring up issues to the public

8. MLA campaigning

- a. Start an MLA campaign to educate the MLAs of BC on the current issues facing their constituents with disabilities
- b. This could focus on the CSIL program, or other issues that affect our community

9. Representation of CSIL Employers from each of the Health Authorities.

Having 2 or 3 people from each Health Authorities on a committee to talk about the CSIL Program that can provide feedback and information not just back to Pathways but to the Association of CSIL Employers so decisions can be made on how best to address the matters.

- a. This will provide a full provincial perspective

10. Have separate Committees from different Health Authorities; i.e. individuals who fall under Island Health can get together to talk about what is happening in this health authority when it comes to the CSIL program or other Home Support issues.

11. CSIL Application Peer Support

- a. Some peers would like to be on the CSIL program, but do not have family or friends who can support necessary components of their applications.
- b. This may be an opportunity for experienced CSIL employers to help others succeed on the program
- c. Some Health Authorities are requiring certain individuals with disabilities to have Representation Agreements in place as part of their CSIL application. Unfortunately, some people with disabilities who, for a variety of reasons, have no family or friends to participate in this responsibility
- d. Team Brainstorming leads to solutions

12. Michelle Hewitt's Advocacy Work

Michelle Hewitt, whom many of you know, is preparing to advocate on behalf of people with disabilities around client contribution. Michelle was unable to be with us today, but has provided an outline of her advocacy goals to share with you

- a. Michelle has a number of very important focus areas she has started to work on and if there are any peers who would like to support these initiatives by working with her, we will connect you and help her form a leadership group
- b. Topics she would like to see raised with policymakers
 - I. Rate increases in general
 - II. The lack of payment exemption for people on CPPD only
 - III. \$300 limit for those who have earned income
 - a. RRSP withdrawals treated as income - it's a form of double taxation (\$5200 of every \$10k you withdraw is taken in increased care costs, meaning you have to

- draw out double to get the \$\$\$ you actually need, compared to a non-disabled person)
- c. These are typically people who have acquired disabilities. They have worked so claim CPPD, but their CPPD is greater than PWD benefit, so they don't apply for that.
 - d. Using their own money from an RRSP, from working, and if they own a home, they wind up cash poor.
 - I. Michelle's focus topics impact people with disabilities across the province, and she hopes that her efforts will result in a deep systemic change.
 - II. In preparation to address the policy makers will be about long term care and making changes to policies that will allow adequate funding to reach people with disabilities.
 - III. Michelle is hoping that peers who are prepared to commit to this project will help her achieve success.

These are voluntary roles. We value and respect everyone for your knowledge and abilities and for the skills of leadership and for those who just want to be more involved. Ruth Marzetti and I will provide support as these projects move forward.

Smaller committees will empower us all and do some real advocacy. The goal is to build a vibrant network of team-oriented advocacy groups. We have a variety of topics, but we want to start off with 3 in order to fine tune the process. Any more than three, can be started in a staggered order so we can support everyone seamlessly.

If you are interested in becoming involved in groups supporting any of the topics, please contact Paul Gauthier at paul@ifrcsociety.org

Peer Comment: I have noticed that as soon as you talk about a senior going on to the CSIL program, a lot of Health Authorities have it in mind that unless you were a CSIL employer before you become a senior then it can't happen because CSIL is a business. One of these focus groups should spearhead this issue, we can help the aging population.

Help the senior be able to stay home and be able to be as independent as possible. The Health Authorities has it on their mission that they want people to stay home but at the same time, continue to talk to families about people going into facilities when they get older, it's contradictory.

Peer Comment:

Being at home has benefits, but it also has many challenges such as the need for 24 hour care. I am interested in being in the group to share strategies.

Peer Comment:

Hardy Dart can be booked starting December 1st even though Dr Bonnie Henry says you are not supposed to. It may change but if you want to book ahead for Christmas Day, Boxing Day or New Year's Day it will be available.

Paul Gauthier: If this group is interested in forming a Community Transportation committee, this committee will feed that information to other committees that are out there.

We are all peers here, people with disabilities family members as well, and we may have a lot of ideas about Handy Dart.

People with disabilities can start thinking about transportation We represent the whole province and I know that different city councils work on different transportation issues for people with disabilities and getting insight from all of us is worth looking into if someone wants to propose that we can work on that.

Paul Gauthier: Stated that it would be interesting to form a group regarding having pets as service animals for people with disabilities. It doesn't have to be an advocacy theme, but there are other issues involved such as around Strata's laws and the rights of people with disabilities to have service animals. Some are needed companion animals, while others are trained service dogs. There is a lot of misinformation about pets and service animals.

Peer Comment:

I think that is a great theme even to just get together to talk and see how they are handling things because it is hard to train from a wheelchair. Some of us also have a service dog and it would be nice to have a general training conversation.

Peer Comment:

They need to consider not just activities but everyday issues such as medical appointments besides just personal care, as to what takes time. I have had people come with me to medical appointments and it has been instrumental because there is no one else to go with me. We need more hours to be able to have this support.

Peer Response:

I agree, I have also brought my attendant with me. I need an attendant, I cannot there by myself. I also think yoga or exercise class should be considered. In my case doing yoga is exercising and keeps me more mobile and a lot more independent in the long run and not be so dependent.

Peer Comment:

How do they determine how long they came up with a number to do a routine? I want to be a part of a group to review their policy and investigate the times that they allot and see if we can change that because there is something definitely wrong with their evaluation of how long it takes to do things. I would like to give them some solid reasons to why their policies do not work.

Paul Gauthier: Re-evaluating their Time Task Analysis and determining how they came up with those numbers is a great idea. We have shown you the time task analysis guidelines that are provided around how much is allowed per each item that you are talking about. Redefining how it should be looked at and how it should be based on individual circumstances fits in around activities and refines the tasks that are allowed.

Peer Comment:

I also agree; we need to wake the Health Authorities up!

Peer Comment:

For marriage and family support, I am worried to say anything to the health Authorities about my friends, family members or spouses work for me. They are having to do a lot of my care and it's very pervasive of them [Health Authority] to assume they can and should do it, I worry they might take some of my hours away [if the Health Authority finds out]. As soon as they see another person in my life, they say "Oh they can take care of you." Family members should not be the default caregivers. I want to be part of a group that investigates this.

Paul Gauthier: People are afraid to get married because there is the expectation that their loved one must work to support the person with the disability. That goes for seniors as well. Their expectation to have them do the physical work to provide support for you and not necessarily provide the hours is wrong. There is a choice option if you want a family or friend to do the work and be paid for it, others may choose not to have their family and friends do it at all because that is not their role and it should not be expected. Their role is to be a brother, a father, a spouse etc.

Peer Comment:

In regard to the Health Policies and reviewing what is going, and possibly changing the policy, we need to show what exactly is independent living and healthy living. If we can show that going to sports, doing other things and eating well is cost effective, then there is money to be gained from that through the Smart fund and there is advocacy that we can do to change what the policy says for what are our Human Rights? What is a Right? Why can we only live with people for only these hours at home?

Peer Comment:

Regarding marriage, we seemed to get hit hard if we get married. We are expected to have our spouse be our caregivers, and we lose tax benefits. The government has almost put in policy that people with disabilities should not get married and it is sort of bizarre - anyone else can get married except us. Revisiting policies and revitalizing and advocating for change is a must.

Paul Gauthier: This is a reality for us; that there appears to be a stigma that people with disabilities shouldn't get married; both on the tax side and on the care side.

Peer Comment:

I must divide my staff into two when I must go to a medical appointment or bringing along a companion if I need it. There is no expectation that my boyfriend must be my support system.

Peer Comment:

From a nursing perspective the new theory in Canada is that inactivity is as bad as smoking. You will gain more independence with exercise and I can't imagine how CSIL can argue that. It is presented by The Ministry of Health and Canada, by the Provincial, Federal that the lack of exercising is as bad as smoking.

As a Community Health Nurse, which I have done for the past 40 years, I always promoted the idea that you should be together because you want to be together not because you have a disability. Having a disability doesn't mean I need a partner to do my care. I need a partner to be with me as a partner.

Peer Comment:

Regarding the PWD component, I used to get supplements, but once I got married and because my wife was working, they stopped that payment.

Peer Updates & Contributions

Recruitment Alternatives

Art Jonkerino Contribution:

I have been given an opportunity of hiring a student on a co-op work experience through Sterling College's Work Experience program. They offer this program to facilities, institutions and big employers of health

care workers, but the program is not normally offered to individuals. When I filled out my application, I listed all the facts that I live in a building run by the Vancouver Resource Society (VRS).

I advised them that VRS has onsite care workers, 24-hour staffing, [Overnight] Shared Care for those who use it and they also have people who use the CSIL program and they are individual employers who have the support of the building and the staff provided by the Vancouver Resources Society.

They filled out the form and sent it back to me to for my signature and they put the hosts name as the Vancouver Resource Society. I let them know that they cannot do that because I am not a representative of the Vancouver Resource Society, I am a sole employer. Since they already know me, they were interested even though I didn't technically qualify as an employer. I asked them to put my name as an employer and in brackets (Supported by the Vancouver Resource Society).

In terms of having back up support, they are concerned that their students are:

1. In a safe environment
2. The presence of other care workers around their students
3. Not put into any dangerous situations, obligations
4. Required to have adequate Transportation requirements filled such as close to bus or Skytrain locations.
5. Wages payed by the employer and take the proper deductions and make the contributions

I have made a case where the individual employer is requesting assistance which is not commonly done.

Paul Gauthier: Has a final decision been received?

Art Response– No final decision has been made, will follow up for future reference

Peer Shopping Tips During the Pandemic

- Indigo Chapters has 20-40% off,
 - Free delivery for purchases over \$35
- Shopping locally supports our regional economy which has been hit hard by the pandemic
- Google item for nearby merchants
- Taiga Works
 - Outdoor activity, but also outdoor clothing
- Grocery delivery
 - Shop online and have your groceries delivered to your home

Closing Remarks

Ruth Marzetti: As the year draws to a close this is the last Pathways for 2020. It has been a difficult year for many and I would like to thank Paul, Chris, and Hilary and the entire IFRC team for creating this forum for all of our peers to come together and navigate their way through some very difficult topics and situations. Wishing everyone a peaceful season and with great hopes that 2021 will be better.

Paul Gauthier: I would like to take a moment and thank not only the Pathways team from the IFRC and TFL, but all the peers whose contributions and support have been very meaningful this year. Peers have shared information and shared their advocacy work and have helped other peers in many ways. Peer engagement has been increasing with enthusiasm and the new year will see much needed activities in the

community as a result. I wish everyone a safe and happy season and I'm looking forward to starting the New Year with all of you.

- If any other peers are involved in outreach projects and/or activities for individuals with disabilities and would like to announce them to the group, or do a presentation, please contact Hilary Currie at hilary@ifrcsociety.org

Pathways To Independence Meeting January Topics

- Topics to be confirmed
- Peers are reminded that if they have a topic idea for a future meeting, to please send an email to pathways@ifrcsociety.org

Pathways To Independence Meetings Dates

Upcoming Meeting Date:

- Wednesday, January 27th, 2021 1:30pm to 3:30pm
- A doodle poll will be sent out shortly to gather peer feedback for February, March and April dates and times for the Pathways To Independence meetings.

Pathways To Independence Peer Group Meeting Notes and pertinent documents are uploaded to <https://www.ifrcsociety.org/pathways>

This was a virtual Pathways To Independence Meeting via Zoom technology. In partnership with Technology for Living, whose Technical Team, headed by Ean Price, successfully ensured that peers could connect to the meeting from across the province.

THANK YOU EVERYONE, FOR YOUR ATTENDANCE AND CONTRIBUTION TO THE MEETING!