



**Abilities Manitoba**

agencies supporting people with intellectual disabilities

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**Abilities  
Manitoba**

# ANNUAL REPORT

## 2022-23

"Never underestimate the power of a  
planted seed."

-Lucie Dickenson



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## Strategic Plan 2022-2028

**Abilities Manitoba**  
Strategic Plan 2022-2028

- 1** Lobbying & Public Relations Plan
- 2** Strategic Communications Plan
- 3** Business Plan for Increased Revenue
- 4** Quality Framework: Resources & Promotion
- 5** Coordinate DSP Training Path
- 6** Member Consultation Program
- 7** Member Resource Hub
- 8** Future Leadership & Development

Goals 1 & 2 immediate goals: 2022-2024.  
Goals 2-7 midterm goals: 2022-27.  
Goal 8 long term goal: 2025-28.

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## Mission, Vision, and Values Statements

### Mission Statement

Abilities Manitoba is a network of agencies that exists to foster excellence in services for people with intellectual disabilities.

### Vision Statement

Together we can create a province where all Manitobans value the quality of life of people with intellectual disabilities, and the partnership between communities, governments, families, and agencies that support them.

### Our Goals

- To promote the interests of Manitobans with intellectual disabilities and the supports necessary to realize their chosen lives in their community.
- To act as a provincial body on behalf of members, promote member concerns to government, and represent members to relevant planning bodies.
- To strive for optimum service standards, advocate for the resources necessary to achieve those standards, and promote a shared code of ethics for all members.
- To facilitate the sharing of information and resources, both between members and with other interested parties.

### Values

**Community Participation:** We need community participation to make inclusion, choice and respect for all people a reality.

**Respect:** The people we are supporting are deserving of qualified staff. Member agencies must comply with all pertinent legislation such as The Adults Living with an Intellectual Disability Act (formerly, The Vulnerable Persons Living With A Mental Disability Act), Human Rights and all others to ensure all persons are treated equitably.

**Human Rights:** We promote the interests, rights and freedoms of supported individuals in member agencies.

**Transparency:** Member agencies will be respectful of and accountable to the people they serve, employees, funders/government, and the community at large.

**Not-For-Profit:** Services provided to the people we support will be not-for-profit.

**Natural Supports:** We recognize the value and contribution of natural supports for people with intellectual disabilities.



## Board of Directors



**Charmayne Dubé**  
President  
Director of Services at New Directions



**Katelyn Dykstra**  
Vice President  
Director of Operations at enVision Community Living



**Courtney Welch**  
Treasurer  
Director of Finance and Operations at Epic Opportunities



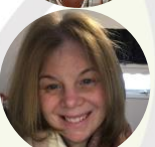
**Maria Freeman**  
Secretary  
Executive Director at Inclusion Selkirk



**Scott Smith**  
Past President  
Director of Program Development & Quality Assurance at Pulford Community Living Services



**Oly Backstrom**  
Director  
Executive Director at SCE Lifeworks



**Kim Nelson**  
Director  
Executive Director at Gateway Resources



**Jennifer Rodrigue**  
Director  
Acting Director of Communications & Public Affairs at St.Amant



**Jimm Simon**  
Director  
Executive Director at Community Living Interlake



## Our Staff



**Margo Powell**

Executive Director  
[margo@abilitiesmanitoba.org](mailto:margo@abilitiesmanitoba.org)



**Jeannie Alexander**

Capacity Builder  
[jeannie@abilitiesmanitoba.org](mailto:jeannie@abilitiesmanitoba.org)



**Leanne Fenez**

Project Specialist  
[leanne@abilitiesmanitoba.org](mailto:leanne@abilitiesmanitoba.org)



**Yolly Tang**

Administrative Assistant and Bookkeeper  
[admin@abilitiesmanitoba.org](mailto:admin@abilitiesmanitoba.org)

## Our Members

ACL Beausejour  
ACL Flin Flon  
ACL Interlake  
ACL Swan River  
ACL Virden  
Arcane Horizon Inc.  
Blue Sky Opportunities  
Career Connections Inc.  
Cerebral Palsy Association of Manitoba  
Community Ambitions Day Service  
Community Bridges Gimli  
Community Living Manitoba  
Community Respite Services  
Com-Span Inc.  
Connect Employment Services  
Continuity Care  
COR Enterprises  
Cornerstone Christian Care Society  
DASCH  
enVision Community Living  
Epic Opportunities  
Equal Opportunities West Inc.  
Fairfax Community Resources Inc.  
Gateway Resources  
GROW  
Hearthstone Community Group  
ImagineAbility  
Inclusion Selkirk  
Inclusion Westman  
Inclusion Winnipeg  
Initiatives For Just Communities Inc.  
Innovative LIFE Options  
Juniper Centre Inc.  
K&D Transitions & Supports Inc.  
Lanawae Housing Center  
L'Arche Winnipeg  
L'Avenir Cooperative

Life's Journey  
Manitoba Possible  
New Directions  
Norshel Inc.  
Opportunities For Independence  
Options, Pathways & Transitions  
Oshki-Giizhig Inc  
Parkland Regional Community  
Prairie Partners  
Prairie Places Inc.  
Pulford Community Living Services  
Riverdale Place Homes  
Riverton Care Services  
Rolling Dale Enterprises  
ROSE Inc.  
Samtak Coop Inc.  
SCE LifeWorks  
Shalom Residences  
SPIKE Inc.  
St.Amant  
The Link: Youth and Family Supports  
Touchwood Park Association  
Transcona Springfield Employment Network  
Turning Leaf Community Support Services  
Visions of Independence  
WASO Inc.  
Wings of Power  
Winnserv Inc.

### Associate Members

Alliance of Direct Support Professionals of Manitoba  
March of Dimes  
Red River College



## 2022 – 2023 Achievements



### 2022-2023 ACHIEVEMENTS

Abilities Manitoba is proud to reflect on a number of our achievements from the past year. An enormous shout out to our Board of Directors, our Corporate Partners, our staff team, our funding partners, and our phenomenal member organizations for enabling us to collectively accomplish so much.

#### ORGANIZATIONAL GROWTH & DEVELOPMENT

- 69 members
- 6 Corporate Partners
- 9 Active Board Members
- 7 Employees

**COMPLETED**  
5-Year Strategic Plan

**Development of a Communications Strategy**

**New Website LAUNCHED**

**\$ 34,000 + FUNDRAISED**  
6th Golf Tournament & Payroll Jackpots

**5 PROJECTS TOTALING \$781,200**

- Quality Framework
- United Way's Organizational Development Grant
- Economic Development Investment and Trade Training funds
- Manitoba Accessibility Fund
- Economic Development Investment and Trade DSP Campaign funds

#### LEADERSHIP & ADVOCACY

**COMMITTEE REPRESENTATION**

- RRC Polytech D&CSP Advisory Committee
- SPECTRUM Partners
- Network of Networks
- The Coalition
- MDC Resident Transition Committee
- Barrier-Free Manitoba
- SRV Training Committee
- DMVote

**WAGE ADVOCACY**

- Development of Advocacy Strategies and Resources
- Active in Public Budget Consultations
- Partnered with other stakeholders to form a Coalition

#### TRAINING & CAPACITY BUILDING

- 400 HOURS of free training to POM Pilot organizations
- 12 Community of Practice Sessions
- 54 HOURS Rights training sessions
- 11 on-demand eLearning videos with resources
- 12 Regional Member Meetings held
- 600+ People Trained in Agency Guide To The Vulnerable Person's Act
- 400+ People Trained in Orientation to Protection of Vulnerable Adults
- 9 Innovation and Transformations Projects Funded
- Facilitated community engagement to inform Manitoba's Senior's Strategy
- CAMPAIGN LAUNCHED TO RECRUIT AND RETAIN DSPS**
  - 1.3 million DSP Campaign ads viewed
  - New website created to streamline DSP applications and demystify the direct support professions
  - Promotional Toolkit created for organizations to use

THANK YOU TO OUR CORPORATE PARTNERS







## Leadership Report

Charmayne Dubé & Margo Powell

[charmayne@abilitiesmanitoba.org](mailto:charmayne@abilitiesmanitoba.org) [margo@abilitiesmanitoba.org](mailto:margo@abilitiesmanitoba.org)

As we all spent the year trying to ‘bounce back’ from a pandemic that wasn’t over, we, like everyone else, strove to find our footing in a changed world. While our members were desperately trying to recruit and retain employees, we were actively finding ways to be part of solutions wherever possible. We are pleased to highlight Abilities Manitoba’s accomplishments in this report.

### Finding Solutions

We were very fortunate to take on a number of new initiatives and continue our growth and evolution. We had a historically high budget of \$1.4 million for the fiscal year and focused our efforts on launching new projects while also continuing the work of the Quality Framework. The new projects to directly relieve the experienced hardships of our members included:

**Training:** using funds from Economic Development, Investment and Trade, Abilities Manitoba began offering training on The Agency Guide to the Adults Living with an Intellectual Disability Act (formerly, The Vulnerable Persons Living with a Mental Disability Act) The Orientation to Protection to all CLdS-funded organizations. We doubled our promised outcomes and were able to push the majority of the funds into the new fiscal year. We also offered leadership and values training opportunities. Our hope is to continue to expand the types of training we offer and be responsive to our members’ needs. We are working to build training hubs in all regions of the province to ensure local expertise and move away from a reliance on Winnipeg-based support.

**Direct Support Professional Campaign:** with another set of funds received from Economic Development, Investment and Trade, we launched a campaign to promote awareness of direct support work. This included a website (<https://directsupportmb.ca/>), advertising campaign and assets for organizations to use in the future. The remaining funds will be used during September’s DSP Week to thank DSPs and offer organizations more assets for them to utilize internally.

We were also fortunate to take on two other projects related to our current Mission:

**Innovation and Transformation Fund:** Utilizing a steering committee, we were able to award financial support for 9 different projects around Manitoba. Some amazing work has been happening. This project spilled over to the new fiscal year and is now just wrapping up. We look forward to sharing more on the projects and their accomplishments. An info session is being planned for later this month. Updates will also appear on the website.

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**Manitoba Accessibility Grant:** we received just over \$44,000 to do a campaign to raise awareness of the Accessibility for Manitobans Act. We used these funds to make videos and promote them on social media.

The **Quality Framework (QF) Project** officially wrapped up on December 31 and received an excellent third-party evaluation. We were sad to bid farewell to most of the QF team – Branden Defoort, Natalie Giesbrecht and Wendy Humphrey all returned to their home organizations at the end of September, and we continue to miss them dearly. We always try to be conservative with money and at the end of the project had about \$50,000 left. With the blessing of CLdS, we planned an intensive training schedule from January –June 2023 that includes both the 1-day and 5-day Personal Outcome Measures (POM)© workshops and 3-day rights training for people with lived experience. This training is very impactful and powerful. Leanne has remained on as Project Lead, and we are grateful to have Branden, Natalie, and Wendy continue to assist with facilitating this training.

## Influencing Change

**Provincial Sector-Wide Funding Increase:** Our sector took a giant step forward with the **announced increase to \$19 per hour** for direct support funded wages. This \$100 million investment comes after tremendous and long-term advocacy efforts and represents the single largest investment in our sector's history. This came, in part, as a result of concerned people across Manitoba reaching out to their elected officials while provincial stakeholder groups banded together to form a Coalition. The **Coalition** included the Alliance of Direct Support Professionals Manitoba, Community Living Manitoba, the Family Advocacy Network, People First of Manitoba and Abilities Manitoba. We collaboratively worked on a strategy and approached the Premier, Minister, Assistant Deputy Minister and Executive Director of Disability Services to engage in discussion. It was tremendous to have so many stakeholders come together on such a critical topic.

The Department of Families has been moving forward with **amendments** to The Adults Living with an Intellectual Disability Act (formerly, The Vulnerable Persons Living with a Mental Disability Act) as per the Task Force's recommendations. The first round of changes was passed this Spring in the House. The Department also established the Intellectual Disability Issues Advisory (IDIA) Council to create a collaborative partnership with community stakeholders to better support Manitobans with an intellectual disability.

**Disability Matters Vote** enjoyed some success as Manitoba moved to a new income support program for people with disabilities. Beginning January 1, all CLdS funded folks moved to the new program which sees some minor increases to benefits. It's fair to say there were a number of items not included in the legislation that advocates were hoping to see.

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## Moving Forward

**Strategic Plan:** Abilities Manitoba took on **strategic planning** during COVID and it ran over 2 fiscal years. We wrapped up last July and have been pursuing our planned outcomes. The training and quality related items have seen good traction. We are finalizing a communications plan and are hopeful recipients of a grant that will allow us to move forward in all areas of the strategic plan. Many thanks to everyone who was interviewed, part of a focus group or who completed the survey. Our members guide our direction, and we appreciate your involvement in determining our future direction.

**Advancing our Financial Diversity and Transparency:** We also had our first ever Audit last year, which went remarkably well. We continue to build and grow! After careful investigation, Abilities has decided to **pursue Charitable Status** again. Around 2008, an application was submitted that was declined due to advocacy efforts. Much has happened since, including an important appeal that was won in Ontario. We've contracted with lawyer Florence Carey to assist us with our application. Florence brings expertise in this area and it's proving to be a very valuable investment. We expect to submit our application over the summer.

We are so grateful to our **Corporate Partners** who have stood with us through a long and challenging pandemic. So many thanks to Northway Pharmacy, Inclusion System, Therap and HUB. These businesses are trusted partners, and we are most grateful to them.

We have been fortunate partners with Northway Pharmacy in our **Annual Golf Tournament**. Over the past 6 years we've made \$175,000 which has been a tremendous pillar in our growth over the years. Thank you, Northway Pharmacy! This year's tournament is at Kingswood on July 18. We are almost sold out so get your team in quickly!

We appreciate enVision Community Living joining our **Payroll Jackpot**. In addition to paying the lucky winner, this fundraiser supports enVision Foundation and Abilities. Truly, we appreciate partnering with you on this.

**Board Updates:** Early in 2023 we bid farewell to our **Vice President** Ashley Seymour. The Board approached Katelyn Dykstra to assume the Vice Chair position. Katelyn graciously accepted and jumped in with both feet. They have very quickly assumed the position and responsibilities with enthusiasm. Thank you, Katelyn!

The Board continues to build towards a governance model. A **Governance Committee** has been struck, and a number of good conversations held about the need to review the committees of the Board with an eye towards our growth and the future. Years of work are starting to come together on a number of levels and our work becomes more refined each year.

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## Gratitude

We are ever so appreciative of the amazing **Board and staff team** at Abilities Manitoba. They are a passionate and dedicated group of humans who work hard on behalf of our members every day.

**To our Members** – thank you! You’ve faced tremendous uncertainty in the past years, and we see how much you’ve laboured and continue to push on despite everything. We hope that everyone uses the coming months to their full capacity to rest, restore and rejuvenate. The impacts of the previous years continue to be felt and need to be acknowledged. Take care of yourself! It is our honour to represent you.

In closing, Abilities Manitoba is in a strong position and is proud of the many incredible relationships and successes we’ve had. While our members continue to rebuild after an unimaginable pandemic, we aim to stand with them and move forward together, confronting the barriers and co-creating a path to a strong and bright future.

Respectfully Submitted,

Margo Powell  
Executive Director

Charmayne Dubé  
Board President



## Capacity Builder Report

Jeannie Alexander

[jeannie@abilitiesmanitoba.org](mailto:jeannie@abilitiesmanitoba.org)

**Background:** The Capacity Builder position was established to provide direct resources and support to benefit member organizations. Beginning as two half-time term positions in October 2018, and turning into one full-time term position in September 2021, the Capacity Builder role continues to expand to meet the needs of our member organizations.

**Update:** This past year has been another rollercoaster ride, filled with highs and lows and everything in between for our member organizations. Our small Abilities Team makes every effort to provide members with meaningful support through our General Membership Meetings, weekly member emails, training offerings, advocacy, and all the ever-important informal interactions we have with our members each and every day.

2022-23 brought a number of grant approvals for Abilities Manitoba, enabling us to carry out projects aligning with our mission of championing equity, access, participation, and rights for Manitobans with intellectual disabilities. The Manitoba Accessibility Fund grant supported the development of a public awareness campaign around the Accessibility for Manitobans Act – a project directly informed and produced by Manitobans with intellectual disabilities.

The Province of Manitoba awarded Abilities Manitoba contracts to carry out two projects, the first being a sector awareness and Direct Support Professional (DSP) recruitment campaign. The campaign ran through the fall of 2022, reaching hundreds of thousands of Manitobans through social media and billboard ads streaming viewers to a website showcasing the DSP profession and how/where to apply for work. A promotional toolkit was also developed and shared with organizations to use for their own recruitment efforts.

Abilities Manitoba carried out a training project, also funded by Manitoba, where a group of 11 facilitators on The Adults Living with an Intellectual Disability Act (formerly, The Vulnerable Persons Living with a Mental Disability Act) was developed. 2022-23 saw dozens of online and in-person trainings completed resulting in over 1,000 employees of CLdS-funded organizations trained in the Agency Guide to The Act. Abilities developed an Online Learning Platform to be able to offer the Orientation To Protection course in an online, on-demand format. Over 1,500 people have been trained in this 2-hour, self-paced course. A second online course has been developed and added to this same platform – a refresher for the Agency Guide To The Act which is now available to all CLdS-funded organizations.

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Abilities received an Organizational Development grant from the United Way to develop a high-level Communications Plan. With information collected from our members and from other pertinent stakeholder focus groups, the Plan is now complete and provides Abilities with the goals, messaging, target audiences and tactics needed to support the Abilities staff and Board to implement a successful communications strategy for the 2023-24 year.

We received a grant through the Journey to Independence Fund which will support an employment-focused project with two objectives: creating employment opportunities for people who receive EIA, and developing supported employment toolkits for the organizations who support these individuals.

A number of regional member meetings were held online this past year to support members to connect by region. These get-togethers present an opportunity for members to share challenges, ideas and resources, and for Abilities Manitoba to get a sense of region-specific challenges which helps guide Abilities' advocacy path.

It is my absolute pleasure to support Abilities Manitoba's member organizations. Thank you for the tremendous work you do for our Manitoba communities.

Respectfully Submitted,

Jeannie Alexander  
Capacity Builder



## Quality Framework Project

Leanne Fenez

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### Background:

In October 2017, the Department of Families and Abilities Manitoba entered into a partnership to develop a quality improvement framework for Community Living disABILITY Service (CLDS), the program that provides services and supports to adults with an intellectual disability. Phase One of the project was completed in April 2019.

In part, the first phase of the project set out to identify an outcome measurement tool that could be used to gather data on quality of life indicators of people receiving CLDS-funded services in Manitoba.

The Phase One final report recommended the use of the Personal Outcome Measures<sup>®</sup> (POM) Tool, created and administered by The Council on Quality and Leadership. The POM is a valid and reliable tool used to gather quality of life information from supported individuals. The questions are conversational in nature and aim to determine whether quality of life indicators are present for the individual, and whether supports and services are present to help achieve those outcomes.

The full final report can be found here:

<https://www.abilitiesmanitoba.org/uploads/public/documents/practices-resources/quality-framework-report-2019.pdf>

Phase Two of the project was designed to implement several of the recommendations identified in Phase One. Specifically, the goal of Phase Two of the project was to increase capacity for services to support good lives for people with intellectual disabilities by:

- Completing the stakeholder engagement process of Phase One of the quality improvement work;
- Engaging with the Council on Quality and Leadership (CQL) to pilot and evaluate the recommended outcome measurement tool, the Personal Outcome Measures tool, in Manitoba; and,
- Introducing the Leading Practice Guidelines and supporting engagement with service providers to build capacity to utilize the resources and guidance articulated in the Guidelines.

Starting in February 2020 and extending until December 31, 2022, the Department of Families and Abilities Manitoba are piloting the POM tool with a small cohort of CLDS-funded agencies. The project aims to utilize POMs within eleven organizations that provide a variety of services to individuals with intellectual disabilities and evaluate the impact, data and benefits to inform possible future use in Manitoba. The plan is to interview a representative sample within each organization (approx. 20%). Significant training of staff within pilot organizations has also been done (and will continue).

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A formal evaluation of the impact of Personal Outcome Measures® is also underway via a third-party contract.

More information on Personal Outcome Measures® can be found at <https://www.c-q-l.org/tools/personal-outcome-measures/>.

### **Annual Report:**

The second phase of the Quality Framework project which wrapped up on December 31, 2022, resulted in the following main deliverables:

#### **Interviewing:**

A representative sample of 20% of the people served within the eleven organizations was created using de-identified demographic data. Care was taken to choose individuals within each organization that would be representative of the overall demographic characteristics of the total number of people they serve. This created more meaningful aggregate data for each organization. Our aim was to provide the opportunity for 20% of the people supported within the pilot organizations to participate in a Personal Outcome Measures interview.

Following the creation of their sample, organizations sought consent from the people identified with the help of a Consent Companion Guide and video we provided. If they declined, they were replaced by another with similar demographics to maintain the integrity of the sample. Consent can be tricky to obtain for many reasons and can take multiple conversations with people and/or their substitute decision makers.

Our team of four Certified Interviewers then delegated between themselves and interviewed 20% of people served by each participating organization (or program) one-on-one. In delegating these interviews, care was taken to ensure that the Interviewer did not know the Interviewee, whenever possible. Data and feedback were provided to organizations for follow-up.

Interviewing for the project ran from up until October 2022. Our identified sample size or target was 221 interviews. We received consent for 161 people or 73% of the sample size. Of those that we had consent for we interviewed 156 people or 96%.

#### **Training:**

A large and critical component of the use of Personal Outcome Measures® is ensuring staff at all levels of the participating organizations have information and knowledge of POM and how to utilize information received from its use. As part of the pilot, we offered a variety of training experiences that enhance the knowledge and application of POM. These included:





- Five Day Personal Outcome Measures® Workshop – initially delivered in person and converted to an online option in April 2021. We offered this workshop 24 times and trained a total of 243 people.
- One Day Personal Outcome Measures® Workshop – initially delivered in person, now online. We offered this option 13 times and trained 165 people.
- Half Day adapted POM workshop for Home Share Providers (online) was offered to over 20 Home Share Providers.
- Information sessions were provided to Department of Families staff. A short presentation on the project was provided at a monthly Program Managers meeting in March. A two-hour session was provided to over 20 CLdS staff in early June.
- Community of Practice Series: (1.5 hour facilitated conversations over Zoom on topics that build on one or more of the 21 outcomes in POM). We had 360 people engage in these 20 opportunities. Examples of topics that we covered were:
  - Getting Rights, Right
  - Building Connection
  - All About Sex
  - Amplifying Voice
  - Bridging Social Roles
  - Nurturing a Growth Mindset
  - Best Possible Health
  - Communication: More Than Just Talk
  - Importance of Language
  - Integrated Environments
  - Accessibility as a Sign of Respect
  - Identity & Intersectionality
  - Decision Making

In total, we provided 11 643 staff training hours to all participating organizations. We requested feedback via an online evaluation survey following all training offerings. The feedback was very positive with 98% responding either strongly agreeing or agreeing that the training was useful, relevant and of high quality.

In addition, we created an online community called Extraordinary, Ordinary Lives. This is a space to enable staff who have attended our training offerings to continue the conversation and learning in a safe and welcoming environment. We pose questions and ideas, share resources and network.



## eLearning Series:

The focus of this work revolved around creating highly accessible video shorts paired with exercises that organizations could use to supplement training and professional development. The topics arose from the trends we saw during interviews and training.

The eLearning journey was developed and is available on Abilities' website. These resources are available to all service providers and while they are mainly intended for staff, they may be helpful for families and other supporters as well.

The videos are short (5-15 minutes) and designed to be played at a staff meeting followed by guided activities and discussion. All videos are captioned, and most are translated in ASL. With high rates of turnover, these short videos are also beneficial; offering learning and a deeper understanding of the values that drive the work organizations do.

The series will take staff on a learning journey through topics such as Rights, Respect, Building Connection, Decision Making & Choice, and Inclusion. The eLearning resource was highlighted weekly through Abilities Manitoba email updates as well as social media.

The eLearning journey begins by clicking "Your eLearning Journey" on Abilities' webpage. The videos are also shared through Abilities' YouTube channel.

### eLearning Video Shorts:

- Day in the Life of Mary (Integrated Environments Explained): <https://youtu.be/kkUbY90fRMI>
- Vowels of Choice: <https://youtu.be/mEU59c9kqug>
- Empowering People to Be in Charge of Their Own Story: <https://youtu.be/esz7ib6p48s>
- Supporting Choice and Control: <https://youtu.be/-uhe92wvSXw>
- Nurturing Relationships: <https://youtu.be/Z0-w2bE945o>
- Bridging Social Roles: <https://youtu.be/8NVizxXe7mE>
- A Seat at the Table: <https://youtu.be/5RriFyXW0Zk>
- The Least Dangerous Assumption: [https://youtu.be/lho2UV5t\\_Ko](https://youtu.be/lho2UV5t_Ko)
- Talking the Talk: <https://youtu.be/PZJvAThMQ3o>
- Rights Restrictions 101: <https://youtu.be/jcAkcGRcgdI>
- Dignity of Risk and Duty of Care Explained: <https://youtu.be/lhZ4pRJJ3a4>
- Getting Rights Right: <https://youtu.be/tbkxqBOz37E>
- What the Heck is Consent: [https://youtu.be/-A7FkCGI\\_Us](https://youtu.be/-A7FkCGI_Us)

A wrap up video was created highlighting some of the activities accomplished within the Personal Outcome Measures Pilot. This can be accessed here: <https://youtu.be/9hdQ3ymzjMM>

### **Rights training for Self-Advocates:**

Throughout the Personal Outcome Measures pilot, it became clear that there was a significant need for people being served to learn more about their rights. We knew from research that when people are knowledgeable about and are supported to exercise rights, they are significantly more likely to have overall higher quality of life.

Each of the organizations that we worked with identified this as a major gap and there was a strong desire to enhance people's knowledge. Our team was uniquely positioned to begin to close this gap.

We worked with People First of Manitoba and other self-advocates to create and deliver a Rights Training Series to people with lived experience. We were able to provide this training to 23 people during two series of sessions. We also invited organizations to send staff observers to the second series to learn how to support the facilitation of the curriculum. The curriculum, facilitators guide and all required materials are available for free on the Abilities website so that organizations can utilize it to ensure that people they support are learning about their rights.

The Rights Training Series: Self-Direction is a three-part training designed by and for people with disabilities. The curriculum is intended to provide a deeper understanding of the rights and responsibilities of people with disabilities. Upon completion of this training, people will feel more confident in their rights and feel empowered to make choices and take control of the areas that impact them. The content is introductory, and learning about rights should continue after this training as it is a continuous journey.

The curriculum and associated materials are being offered free of charge in an effort to create more capacity for people with disabilities to learn about their rights and be empowered to exercise them. This curriculum can be utilized on the condition that it is always delivered by people with disabilities as facilitators or co-facilitators. People learn best from those that have shared experiences and perspectives. This peer-to-peer design is at the heart of the training and shows deep respect for the unique viewpoint of those with lived experiences. Staff or professionals from organizations wishing to host the training may assist, support and co-facilitate but the intent is that people with disabilities play meaningful and authentic leadership roles in the delivery of this training.

### **Evaluation:**

Chalet Point Consulting was contracted to conduct a third-party evaluation of the pilot in November 2021 following a Request for Proposal issued by Abilities Manitoba. Dr. Terra Johnston led the evaluation design and implementation, delivering a full report on October 30, 2022. Evaluation activities included pre and post surveys of senior leaders, home share providers,



supervisors and Direct Support Professionals along with individual interviews with people who participated in a Personal Outcome Measures® interview. This includes people who receive services as well as family members who may have been included in the process. Finally focus groups with senior leaders were used to understand the impact on their organizations as a whole.

### **Leading Practice Guidelines and Self-Assessment:**

The Leading Practice Guidelines are set up on the Abilities Manitoba website in an interactive format along with associated resources, sample policies and documentation. You can access these here: <https://abilitiesmanitoba.org/docs/leading-practice-guidelines/> (note: the listing is dynamic and ever growing so come back often!)

As part of Phase #2 of the Quality Framework project, a tool has been developed to help Manitoba service providers assess their own services against the Leading Practice Guidelines. Once a self-assessment is complete, the tool strives to support organizations to identify and focus on the areas of opportunity that they wish to work on and to develop an operational plan.

There is a need to pilot the use of the tool with Manitoba service providers to evaluate whether it is user-friendly and accessible, and whether it results in the information and guidance that was intended.

### **Post Pilot Activities:**

Phase Two of the Quality Framework project officially wrapped up at the end of December, 2023, with the submission of the formal third-party evaluation and a final report. However, permission was sought and granted to utilize some left-over funds to extend some activities of the pilot to a larger audience. From January to June, we have completed the following:

- 5 – Five Day Personal Outcome Measures workshops – attended by 57 people
- 5 – One Day Personal Outcome Measures workshops – attended by 77 people
- 3 – Rights workshops for people receiving services – attended by 37 people
- 11 – Community of Practice sessions – attended by 262 people

Additionally, we are working on new eLearnings (short learning videos) scheduled to be done by mid-July.

Respectfully Submitted,

Leanne Fenez  
Quality Lead

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## Board Committees and Working Groups

### Board Committees

#### Finance Committee

Chair: Courtney Welch

Members: Charmayne Dubé, Katelyn Dykstra, Scott Smith

#### Membership Committee

Chair: Maria Freeman

Members: Scott Morden, Audra Penner, Chris Bauer, Jeannie Alexander, Margo Powell

#### Strategic Planning Committee

Chair: Charmayne Dubé

Members: Oly Backstrom, Jimm Simon, Margo Powell

#### Governance Committee

Chair: Jennifer Rodrigue

Members: Oly Backstrom, Katelyn Dykstra

#### Policy Committee

Chair: Jimm Simon

Members: Scott Morden, Ruby Reimer, Jeannette DeLong

### Working Groups

#### Barrier Free Manitoba

**Representative:** Leanne Fenez

**Background:** Barrier-Free Manitoba is a non-partisan, non-profit, cross-disability initiative that was formed in 2008 with a goal of getting the Province of Manitoba to enact strong and effective legislation that requires the removal of existing barriers and prevents the creation of new ones.

This legislation was passed and proclaimed on December 5, 2013 in the form of the Accessibility for Manitobans Act. This was accomplished because of the widespread support provided by organizations and individuals from and beyond Manitoba's disability communities. BFM has remained active since that time to ensure the full and timely implementation of the act occurs. In January, 2019, the majority of the BFM Steering Committee members who had served since 2008 along with BFM's consultant, stepped away and new members stepped in with a commitment to work at the mandate until at least 2023.

At present, three of the five standards required under the legislation are in force (Customer Service & Employment Standards and Information & Communications), with two others having been drafted. (Transportation, & Design of Public Spaces Standards). The legislation calls for significant improvement of accessibility by 2023.

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**Membership:** The Barrier-Free Manitoba Steering Committee is currently made up of representatives with the following organizational affiliations: Manitoba Possible, Abilities Manitoba, Children’s Coalition, Manitoba Supported Employment Network, and New Directions.

## Professionalization

**Representative:** Jeannie Alexander

**Background:** This working group was established to assist with developing a province-wide strategy that will enhance training standards and wages for direct support staff.

**Membership:** Charmayne Dubé, Krista Bissett, Jeannette DeLong, Leanne Fenez, Maria Freeman, Jennifer Hagedorn, Holly Thede, Kristin Knockaert, Scott Smith, and Michelle Tomchak (Alliance of Direct Support Professionals Rep). Abilities Manitoba: Jeannie Alexander.

## Red River College Advisory Committee

**Representative:** Jeannie Alexander

**Background:** The committee meets twice yearly to provide guidance and advise on all matters related to the Disability and Community Support Program at RRC Polytech (formerly Red River College) to ensure program relevance to both students and employers.

**Membership:** The Advisory committee consists of community members as well as representatives from RRC Polytech including student reps.



## Membership Committee

**Background:** The Membership Committee is responsible for enhancing the quality of membership experience, engaging the membership to promote Abilities Manitoba, educating members on the requirements and benefits of membership, developing and overseeing the implementation of orientation programs for onboarding new members, maximizing opportunities to have reciprocal communication with the membership and ensuring opportunities for membership to participate in meetings fully, developing and implementing membership satisfaction surveys, and promoting membership peer recognition reflecting optimization of members expertise.

**Members:** Maria Freeman, Jeannie Alexander, Scott Morden, Audra Penner, Chris Bauer, Margo Powell

**Update:** The membership committee was so happy to return to in-person meetings. Margo and the team have worked hard to move to a blended model of online and in-person so people from all over the province can still attend in real time. We will continue to assess how this is going and keep working to improve the experience of those attending virtually.

As we reintroduced in-person meetings, we spent some time talking about what people get from being in the room with each other and we took some time to think about how we can get more engagement from members, so they are actively engaged at the meetings. At our May meeting in Gimli, we asked the people attending to share information on their meeting experiences and ways we can improve to help guide the work of this committee.

Regional meetings have been coordinated with a varied response from membership. This forum presents opportunities for members to meet in smaller groups with other service providers in their region. The agenda is built around issues or topics that the attendees are dealing with. Information from these sessions allows Abilities to see if issues are regional or provincial and can support Margo in her discussions with CLdS leadership.

The short topic specific meetings for member agencies have been a big hit. These sessions allow staff from specific areas of service to connect with other agencies and hear what is happening around the province. Members share information and get feedback on sector-specific things. Once again Margo can use information from these sessions to guide her conversations with CLdS leadership based on member experiences.

A huge THANK YOU to Abilities Manitoba's Capacity Builder, Jeannie, who supported the work of the membership committee. Jeannie has taken on the tasks related to regional meetings, topic specific meetings, membership meetings and general membership engagement, working diligently to ensure members have the best experience.

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This year will be the last year that the Membership Committee oversees the nominations as we will be moving this task to the Governance Committee. The slate for nominations is shared in a separate document for your review. The Membership Committee would like to thank the Board for their work over the last year.

Members of Abilities – Thank You – We know how busy the job can be, and we value the time you take to attend meetings and other events with us. Please continue to share feedback and ideas so we can make the time you spend with us valuable to you and your work.

***“Networking is a lot like nutrition and fitness:  
We know what to do, the hard part is making it a top priority.”***  
*Herminia Ibarra*

Respectfully Submitted,

Maria Freeman  
Committee Chair

## Governance Committee

Members: Oly Backstrom, Katelyn Dykstra and Jennifer Rodrigue (Chair)

The newly established Governance Committee identified a number of key priorities including creating a Board Manual, a Board evaluation tool, skills and diversity matrix and fulsome by-law review. We've identified and begun to draft a number of policies including risk management, diversity, equity and inclusion, and board succession and recruitment. We are looking to restructure the Governance Committee and bring the Policy Committee in as a sub-committee of the Governance Committee.





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## Abilities Manitoba 7th Annual Golf Tournament

7TH ANNUAL GOLF TOURNAMENT

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agencies supporting people with intellectual disabilities

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