

Fall 2012

Disabilities Issues Office

E - B u l l e t i n



Information

Update

from the

DIO

Fall 2012



Dear Friends,

Welcome to the Disabilities Issues Office (DIO) E-Bulletin! The DIO is launching this bulletin to share information about provincial initiatives that are significant to Manitobans with disabilities.

This issue of the DIO E-Bulletin features highlights from the 2011-12 annual report of the DIO. You may also wish to read the full text within the larger annual report of Family Services and Labour (April 1, 2011 - March 31, 2012): http://www.gov.mb.ca/fs/about/annual_reports/2011-12/fsl_ar_2011_12.pdf

We want this bulletin to meet your information needs, so we welcome your suggestions about content and format. The DIO E-Bulletin is produced and designed so it can be shared electronically; as always, alternate formats are available upon request.

Special thanks go to the DIO Summer STEP student, Kelsey MacLean, for helping with production.

Sincerely yours,

Yutta Fricke
Acting Executive Director

Disabilities Issues Office Vision & Mission Statements

Vision: Our vision is a fully accessible Manitoba, where all abilities are valued, diversity and independence are celebrated, barriers are removed and human rights are protected.

Mission: The DIO was established to support the Province of Manitoba in fostering the participation of persons with disabilities as full citizens in all aspects of society within the framework of public policy and programs of the provincial government.

Role of the Disabilities Issues Office

The DIO works in four main areas:

1. Supporting the Minister responsible for Persons with Disabilities in ensuring the development of disability inclusive legislation, policy and programs
2. Using a disability lens to identify and address issues affecting persons with disabilities
3. Promoting positive attitudes about disability to help make Manitoba a more inclusive society for persons with disabilities
4. Supporting communication between the disability community and government with regular consultation.

Please find below 2011-12 DIO Highlights organized around the four main areas above.



John Wyndels, DIO staff person, prepares to repel down the wall of a downtown building in support of the Society for Manitobans with Disabilities.

Disability inclusive legislation, policies and programs

Inclusive legislation, policies and programs are essential ingredients of the Province's vision of full citizenship of Manitobans with disabilities. In June 2011, the Province proclaimed: *The Accessibility Advisory Council Act*.

In 2011-12, the DIO provided administrative support to the Accessibility Advisory Council tasked with the job of preparing a consultation paper on future accessibility legislation and standards. Members of the Council included representatives of persons with disabilities, seniors and other stakeholders, such as business and municipalities.

In June 2012, the Accessibility Advisory Council produced a discussion document based on public input on accessibility legislation. Its final report was submitted to the Minister Responsible for Persons with Disabilities and was made public in September. For further feedback, please see: www.gov.mb.ca/dio/aac/ndex.html

Using a disability lens

- All Manitobans have the right to be safe. For the past several years, the DIO has co-chaired the Inter-jurisdictional Working Group on a Protection Strategy for Vulnerable Adults. Significant accomplishments in 2011-12 include:
 1. Working on an adult abuse registry to screen potential employers and volunteers (led by Family Services and Labour)
 2. Making changes to *The Vulnerable Persons Living with Mental Disability Act* to increase the protection of adults with intellectual disabilities
 3. Expanding the mandate of the Protection of Persons in Care Office to improve patient safety in emergency departments, urgent care centres and geriatric hospitals.
- Ensuring the right to vote means elections must be fully accessible. The DIO worked in partnership with Elections Manitoba to make the October 2011 election accessible through multiple formats of electoral information, ballot templates and candidate lists, as well as and fully accessible polling stations.
- Manitoba is proud to join nations across the globe in supporting the United Nations Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities (CRDP). In 2011-12, the DIO helped prepare a cross-departmental baseline report on what the Province is doing to meet CRDP commitments and move forward to promote full inclusion.
- Last year, the DIO helped organize a conference entitled: “Assistive Technologies in Libraries and Education,” co-sponsored by Manitoba Library Consortium Inc., among others. The conference helped Manitoba libraries consider ways to improve access to library resources for persons with disabilities.
- In 2011-12, the DIO worked with members of the Joint Committee and Government Members Committee on Disability-Related Employment and Income Assistance Issues to explore new options for young adults transitioning from education to independent adulthood and employment.



Promoting positive attitudes about disabilities

- June 3 - 9, 2011 was proclaimed Manitoba Access Awareness Week. Highlights included a forum focusing on disability services for newcomer populations, a week-long community information display at the Legislative Building, daily training events by community organizations and an award ceremony to celebrate community and business leadership.



- The DIO promoted the implementation of the Manitoba Policy on Access to Government (MPAG) with a full-day training session for departmental coordinators and a new inter-departmental quarterly e-newsletter. A “Words with Dignity” card was developed to promote respectful language when describing persons with disabilities. Work also started on the development of an accessibility tool kit for front line staff.
- The DIO joined the Allan Simpson Memorial Fund Steering Committee to celebrate Allan’s life by documenting the history of Manitoba’s disability community history. To view *The Voice of People with Disabilities: Making a Difference in Manitoba*, please see: <http://www.mlpd.mb.ca/download/making-a-difference-in-manitoba-2012.pdf>



Minister Howard in conversation with Shannon Martin, Executive Director, REES, Legislative Building information display.



Some participants at the 2011 MAAW luncheon convene in front of the Legislature Building ramp.

- An evening celebration of political champions of disability inclusion, held on March 21, 2012, was followed the next afternoon by a symposium focused on disability and poverty.
- The Association of Manitoba Municipalities helped raise awareness about disability inclusion among its members with an article from the DIO in its quarterly magazine the *Municipal Leader*, Spring 2012.

Communication with the disability community

- On December 3, 2011, the DIO celebrated the United Nations International Day of Disabled Persons with a public forum about the UN Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities. A number of departments were on hand to provide Manitoba highlights of the Convention's implementation. Some of the initiatives described were Manitoba's Mental Health Court, the Adult Abuse Registry, Transitioning from Education to Adulthood, and Housing First.
- The DIO collaborated with the Canadian Centre on Disability Studies in organizing a Manitoba Disability Research Forum to bring together individuals who are conducting disability-related social research with those who benefit from the results. Special guests were Wilf Falk of the Manitoba Bureau of Statistics and Laurie Beachell of the Council of Canadians with Disabilities. Together, they offered an overview of the future of disability data collection following the elimination of the Participation and Active Living Survey (PALS) of Statistics Canada.
- In 2011 - 2012, the DIO represented Manitoba on a number of community initiatives such as the City of Winnipeg's Access Advisory Committee and the Disability Health and Wellness Organizing Committee.
- The DIO regularly responds to general inquiries from the public regarding disability. This year the DIO responded to approximately 2,000 individuals and organizations with resource information and referrals via the website, phone and in person.

WORDS with DIGNITY
Language is powerful

Use respectful terms when
referencing persons with disabilities.

For the complete Words with Dignity card, see: www.gov.mb.ca/dio/pdf/dio_information_card.pdf

October 2012 Proclaimed Disability Employment Awareness Month



Manitoba is the first province in Canada to acknowledge National Disability Employment Awareness Month (NDEAM) with a provincial proclamation.

This year, Disability Employment Awareness Month was celebrated with a learning event organized by Manitoba's Civil Service Commission on October 18, 2012 entitled, "Employment of Persons with a Disability – A HIRE Awareness."

Among the highlights of this event were: a keynote address by the founder of NDEAM Canada, Bob Santos and the viewing of the NDEAM video "a HIRE Awareness" and a panel discussion related to the hiring and retention of persons with a disability with 3 managers from the Manitoba Government. Three Manitoba Government managers provided examples of great employment practices that allow persons with disabilities to thrive!

Next year's celebration will be bigger and better, highlighted by a new date for the Ability Axis Employment Expo, October 23, 2013. To make **Disability Employment Awareness Month 2013** a success, we need your participation. Are you interested in joining an organizing group? Could your organization or agency contribute by planning an event? For more information, please contact Ability Axis at: info@abilityaxis.com, or by phone at: 204-487-0307.

Mark Your Calendar ✓

Please join the Disabilities Issues Office in celebrating the International Day of Persons with Disabilities with the 2012 theme: "Removing barriers to create an inclusive and accessible society for all backgrounds" on:

Monday, December 3, 2012, 9:00 a.m. to Noon (Registration 8:30 a.m.)
First Floor, Winnipeg Convention Centre, 375 York Avenue in Winnipeg
To register, please contact Tracy.MacMillan@gov.mb.ca or call at (204) 945-7613

Contact Information:

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Available in alternate formats, upon request.