

OPTIONS

Newsletter of the Independent Living Resource Centre (Manitoba)



Adapting Amidst
Change



Winter 2020-2021

Independent Living Resource Centre
311A-393 Portage Ave.
Winnipeg, MB R3B 3H6
Phone: 204-947-0194 (TTY)
Toll Free: 1-800-663-3043
Fax: 204-943-6625
Email: thecentre@ilrc.mb.ca
Web: www.ilrc.mb.ca

Chairperson

Ken Shachtay

Vice –Chairperson

Brian Baldwin

Treasurer

Grant Young

Secretary

John Pinkerton

Valerie Kardal

Sharon Olson

Executive Director

John Young

Contents:

Board Corner and From the Soapbox	3
Keeping PACE with Change	4
ADAPT is Change	5
Did You Know? & Impacts of Isolation	6
Going Paperless	7
Changes in Care	8
SFMC Peer Support	9
Changes Views at Qu'Appelle	10
Tech Corner	11
Unseen Enemy	12

Important Note:

All subjects, materials and dates contained within are subject to change due to the COVID-19 situation and closure of most facilities and programs at the ILRC.

Created/Edited through the ILRC Options Newsletter Committee. The views and opinions expressed in this edition are those of the original authors and other contributors. These views and opinions do not necessarily represent those of ILRC

Board Corner

Sharon Olson

I have gone through many changes in the past year, some due to COVID-19 and others just because it was the right time for me. After leaving my relationship of 28 years, I found myself in a shelter for a time. I was angry then and still am at times.

I am in a new place now. I went from a 2 bedroom apartment downtown to a smaller bachelor suite in a different area. It took me some time to adjust to the area, the bus routes and local shopping. The biggest change for me was moving away from an area I was familiar with, with many friends close by. Sometimes I feel lonely in my new place but it is a better location for me. It requires adjustment.

I am learning new things now. I am eating healthier and spending more quality time with family. COVID-19 was very hard as I couldn't see my friends anytime I wanted. I am a very social person and this pandemic has been difficult. One very important thing for me is, through all this change and adaptation, I find I genuinely like myself more. I am focusing on the positives and I am learning to appreciate myself. I am looking forward to an end to this pandemic! It has been very difficult for a lot of people, especially "huggers" like me who must continue to physically distance ourselves. Keep safe everyone – this will end eventually!



From the Soapbox



John Young

One of the things I would like to talk about in this article is the positive changes and/or tune-ups that we are making for our core programs. As most of you know, the individual advocacy program has been tuned up in order that it allow more community members to participate in learning some of the aspects of being your own self advocate. By presenting these workshops on a bi-monthly or quarterly basis we are able to reach more consumers who are craving a better understanding of self-advocacy. We find in the disability community there is a major shortage of advocates and or accessibility for advocates.

Another of our core programs, Information and Referral, is taking on new duties in partnering with like-minded agencies that view information referral through a disability lens. Information and Referral at ILRC has always been the expert in this process and will continue to be, while partnering with agencies that provide a service within the disability community.

Our peer support program has been somewhat of a challenge with the pandemic. We have applied for funding laptops in order that we could distribute some within the community for peer support purposes. This program will have to be coupled with some training on laptops and web conferencing but many participants do not have reliable internet access or access to a workstation.

Overall the agency has been able to develop and adapt to the pandemic. This is in no small part due to our dynamic understanding and dedicated staff and volunteers. ILRC has been pandemic-ready as much as anybody

can be prepared. We had to arrange a complete re-location from Portage Place to the Grain Exchange on Lombard. The new office design, construction, and move went very smoothly thanks to the constant persistence and leadership of the ILRC team. Although the office wasn't totally ready by January 1 of 2021, the contractor Durango has been very persistent and instrumental in ensuring we could resume operations by January 1 with follow-up work thereafter. This is no small feat – a complete build and relocation during a global pandemic.

Our focus now is settling into our new office. We anxiously await the day that we can invite the public and community to our new offices. Many community members and stakeholders continue to participate during this pandemic, either through volunteering or using their own family/friend support system. One thing we've learned about this pandemic is that everybody has to participate in order to move through these trying times. We look forward to seeing our many friends, consumers, volunteers and board members face-to-face. We are hoping for a summer of positive change - let's keep our fingers crossed. Stay safe, and please participate under all provincial health directives.



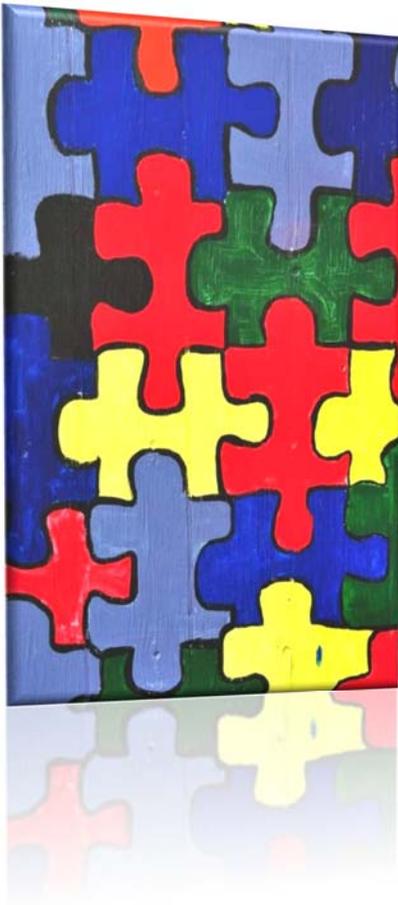
Keeping PACE with Change

Susianti Fierce

As one of ILRC's core programs, PACE (Personal Attendant Community Education) continues to have a big impact in the community in providing educated and community-certified independent Living Attendants. In this pandemic situation, PACE has implemented some changes and updates in order to continue, not unlike many other education programs. PACE suspended two sessions through 2020 during the lockdowns, back when the pandemic hit Manitoba in March last year. In the summer of 2020, PACE was able to restart again with a smaller number of participants and necessary health protocols in place. We maintained training, streamlining the program and expanding online module availability. With the second set of lockdowns reinstated in November, 2020 and ILRC's move from the old location to Lombard Place, we have faced some difficulties in a full restart.

We are pleased to report that PACE completed its first successful graduating class for 2021. The lockdown taught us many things, including online course preparation and updates to practicum training. PACE now has started online modules for several subjects. This is a great way to reduce the physical contact as the students can still continue learning from home. With the restrictions, PACE also created an in-class community training model to temporarily replace the practicum experiences. Students are still able to learn and practice their skills in a safe environment with our well-experienced trainers. In this 'new normal' PACE is ready and looking forward to training those who are looking for a career as an Independent Living

Attendant. At the same time, PACE continues to fulfill the needs of educated attendants in the community and the opportunities for persons with disabilities to remain in control of their resources and daily supports at home. If you are interested in attending a PACE session and kick-starting your career in attendant care, please contact the Centre. We would be happy to schedule the intake process for you!



SAVE THE DATE!! ILRC's Annual General Meeting Will Take place on Thursday, JUNE 17TH via ZOOM. Further details to be announced.

ADAPT is Change

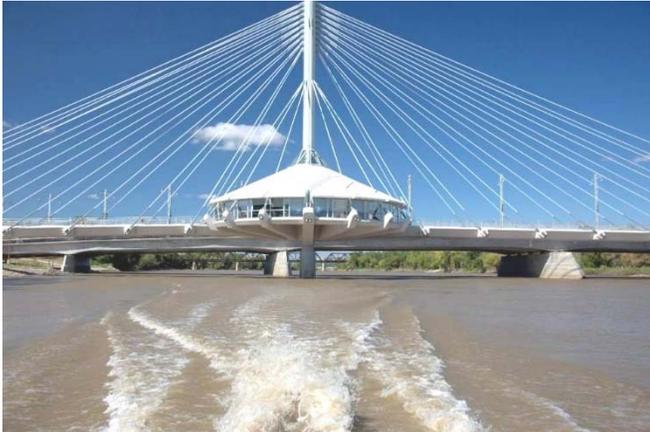
Doug Lockhart

I did a quick Google search to get a definition of Adapt and it reads: "to become adjusted to new conditions". With the introduction of COVID-19, we have all had to change our perspective and invent a new normal for ourselves. As a non-profit disability service provider, we are adept at adapting. In other words, we can be really good at it.

In the spirit of ongoing change, we named a program after the word itself, recognising our expertise in adjusting to ever changing conditions. ADAPT is Advancing Disability Awareness through Prioritised Training, a five-course training package designed to prepare people to better support and work within the disability community. ADAPT contains the tools, skills and knowledge to better support and represent diversity, inclusion and participation. To take ADAPT, participants pay a \$157.50 registration fee and we provide NCI (Nonviolent Crisis Intervention) at no cost, while other courses including Mental Health First Aid, Red Cross CPR/First Aid, Disability Awareness, Disability Emergency Management come at separate registration fees of \$210, \$110.25, \$78.75, \$78.75 respectively.

ADAPT is developed and delivered through people with disabilities from lived experience, adding value to the training but, more importantly, recognising and respecting the knowledge gained from our ability to adapt as new barriers and challenges present themselves. The community sees people with disabilities as leaders, teachers, mentors and

change-makers. Talk about a paradigm shift! Ask us about ADAPT and become a part of the changing perspectives on disability, while acquiring skills and understanding that will support your career.



Did You Know

Chelsey Sommerfield



S.A.M. (Management) Inc. is a non-profit property management corporation that provides socially responsible property management in partnership with organizations offering affordable housing options in the community. S.A.M. has many rental options including; Co-operative housing, family housing, life lease's, senior citizen rentals and single persons housing. Some provides rental subsidies and some are low/ affordable rent. The website provides detailed information www.sam.mb.ca or call 204-942-0991/ email admin@sam.mb.ca

The WINNpass program provides individuals with low income the opportunity to purchase adult monthly transit passes at a reduced rate. This is for both Winnipeg Transit and Winnipeg Transit Plus. With the WINNpass program you will receive a 40% discount from an adult monthly pass. For more information

on eligibility and how to apply go to <https://winnipegtransit.com/en/fares/winnpass> or you can pick up a paper form at any Transit Customer Service Centre location, call 311 to find your nearest location.

ILRC supports a “Stay Healthy” policy for all consumers, volunteers, visitors and staff members.

Please DO NOT come to the office if you are sick. Do your part to help everyone stay healthy!



The Impacts of Lockdowns and Isolation

Mandi P.

For people like myself, the lengthy times I had spent alone in the past have helped me cope during the pandemic. For others who haven't experienced periods of loneliness, this new reality has been more challenging to adapt to.

Extended periods of isolation can cause depression, anxiety, sleep disturbances, weight gain/loss and stress-related issues that greatly impact our physical and mental well-being. On top of that, the concerns over the on-going pandemic and how it affects each and every one of us have created a recipe for a systemic mental health crisis.

After a year of coping with these hardships, I had to evaluate myself, consider my lifestyle and choices and came to the conclusion that I needed help. I decided to discuss my situation with my doctor and was able to get the support I needed. Too often I have thought that being strong meant surviving without assistance when I was going through any rough period in my life. Now that my symptoms have subsided, my ability to face the adversities in my life has greatly improved. I have also realized that, regardless of strength or independence, there are times when we all need support and seeking that support is the right decision and one that should be confronted with pride and a sense of ownership.

I would like to encourage everyone to continue to be self-aware and reach out for support if you feel you are struggling to cope. Additionally, helping others who may need mental health support can bring us a sense of purpose and accomplishment. If you or someone you know is in need of mental health resources, please contact ILRC's Information and Referral or, for emergency assistance please call the Mobile Crisis Unit at 204-940-1781 or dial 911. Be safe and be well, everyone.



Going Paperless with Ceridian Powerpay Self Service

Sonia Muncal

Over the past years, employee pay-stubs have always been printed and mailed out on a bi-weekly basis. Issues with these process include costs and convenience, some delays in ILA's receiving their paper paystubs in the mail and some not getting them at all.

This year, to increase efficiency, reliability and accessibility for all employees, ILRC decided to go online. This idea was converted into reality when the Ceridian Powerpay Self Service was introduced to ILRC.

Powerpay Self Service enables employees to access, download and print their pay stubs and tax forms online whenever it is most convenient for them. This service reduces delays on paper pay-stubs sent out in the mail due to holidays or postal mishaps. With the help of this secure portal from Ceridian, employees have instant access to their paystubs on the day of the scheduled payment.

There is a one-time setup for all first-time users of Powerpay Self Service. Every employee would receive an e-mail from Ceridian including a secure link, username and a temporary password. After the initial successful login, employees will be able to access their account from checking their earnings to downloading year-end tax slips. All links and instructions are available online at ILRC.mb.ca

Volunteers – You’re Simply the Best!

Natalie Pirson

April is Volunteer Appreciation Month and we would be remiss if we didn’t recognize our amazing volunteer team.

We know the past year and more has been hard on you – being unable to come in and believe me when I say, we miss seeing you. We miss building that connection with you.

Although we must still be incredibly cautious and watch the traffic in the Centre, please know that we have appreciated all of your generous hard work in the past and look

Changes in Care

Natasha Klassen

During this past year, the whole world has had to adapt in so many ways. We have all had to adapt to wearing masks, practice social distancing and limiting gatherings and meetings with people. For consumers on our community living programs they have had to adapt to new and ever changing guidelines for how to manage staff or ILAs safely in their homes.

I have talked to many people in the community this last year who are on home care who have expressed their worries about having new homecare workers coming into their home and never knowing who exactly the worker will be. They are concerned with

forward to the day when we can welcome volunteers back to The Centre.

We would also like to extend our great appreciation to our Board Members and our Newsletter Committee who have continued to volunteer our time with us, virtually.



having new people in their home during this time. People want to feel safe and have control in their own homes.

This is leading to many more people looking towards the Self and Family Managed Care Program (SFMC) offered in Manitoba. This is also leading to more people being interested in our ILRC as Agent Option within SFMC. There is a lot of interest in this program as Agents have more choice and security in knowing who will be coming into their home, and what their schedules will be. I think we will only continue to see the SFMC program as well as our Agent program continue to grow as COVID-19 restrictions loosen in the coming months. What I am noticing when talking to people is that now that the cases are going down, they are starting to feel safer about making a change to a new program.

People are now feeling ready to make the change to a program where they feel more control and freedom. I am sure that health restrictions will continue to shift with the rise and fall of case numbers and variant viruses but I am encouraged by the ways I have seen consumers in our community living programs adapt to change and this truly gives me a sense of hope for our future. Feel free to contact the Centre if you are interested in any of our community living programs, including the ILRC as Agent model.



SFMC Peer Support Meeting Alternatives

Krystal Polson

In providing support to Self and Family Managers over the last 25 years, the Independent Living Resource Centre understands the often daunting task of managing care. We want to support Managers whenever possible. One of the supports the ILRC offers is a Self and Family Managed Care Peer Support Group.

The Self and Family Managers Peer Support Group is a group made up of Managers who want to share and learn together. This gives individuals the opportunity to connect with other Managers around common issues such as: recruitment, training, scheduling, and retention of staff, coping

with the pandemic, learning and understanding employment standards, and just an all-around support to one other.

Peer Group meetings have been suspended due to several lockdowns and restrictions on physical gatherings. We are exploring options to support members of the Peer Group to meet safely and regularly.

In order to support this process, we have included several questions below for interested members to respond. Once the responses have been reviewed, we will proceed with next steps. Please submit your responses in confidence to Krystal Polson at 204-947-0194 or email krystalp@ilrc.mb.ca.

1) Are you interested in attending the peer support group meetings? Yes ___ No ___

Why or why not?

2) If you are interested in attending meetings, would you prefer to meet in person or via Skype/Zoom?

In person ___ Skype/Zoom ___

3) What time of day and time is best for meetings?

4) What topics would you like to see discussed at Peer meetings?

5) Are you interested in receiving meeting notices, workshop schedules, revised manuals and materials, other pertinent information?

Yes ___ No ___

6) Are there other areas where you feel you need information (eg. PPE access, accessing attendants, managing staff, Covid protocols, annual reports)?

Thank you for your interest. Stay safe everyone!



Changing Views at Qu'Appelle Housing

Kelly Thurston

So much has changed over the last year for consumers and tenants at the Qu'Appelle Housing Project. In this new era of physical distancing and isolation, computers, cell phones and televisions became a lifeline for those feeling disconnected and lonely. Services like online shopping and door-to-door delivery were happily welcomed and will continue to see broad use by many.

Unfortunately, Qu'Appelle had to cancel all group gatherings for 2020, focusing instead on web-conferencing or teleconferencing whenever needed. We are turning our views towards the future and planning for gatherings when restrictions are eventually loosened. We are planning for a Christmas Party in 2021 for consumers and staff. We are hoping

to have a few barbeques this year, depending on provincial health restrictions, that will get people outside in the nicer weather. Consumers are feeling more positive with vaccines in sight and becoming more available. The weather is warming as spring brings new beginnings and, maybe, life as we know it, can return to a pre-pandemic reality.

Qu'Appelle Housing, consisting of eight individually adapted suites, shares the philosophy promoting consumer control. The project has been running strong since 1987. Although we are currently full, we will have a suite opening in the near future. Applications are on the ILRC website. If you require further information, don't hesitate to contact us.



Tech Corner

Jason Hirose

I'm willing to bet that if you asked the average person in 2019 what Zoom was, they would have no idea. Fast forward to today, and Zoom is a household word. The idea of video conferencing, web conferencing, virtual meeting, whatever you want to call it, is everywhere. People can use it to connect to others for keeping in touch, organizing groups, or learning something new. It is

similar to a phone call but with the benefit of visual resources. However, this also increases the requirements. Does this place it out of reach of some? Is there a way to compensate for this? We will examine all of this after a quick overview.

A web conference starts with an invite. This is an e-mail sent out by the host which outlines the date and time of the meeting. The invite will also contain a link that is used to connect to the meeting at the appropriate time. Most platforms have both mobile and desktop clients, so if the conference uses a platform that you are unfamiliar with, it is best to download the platform in advance to be sure there are no issues before the meeting starts.

When joining a meeting, some will use a waiting room feature, so you might find yourself in one. After you are admitted into the meeting, you will see a grid with the other participants' names and video feeds. Unless you have notified the host in advance, it is considered polite to keep your video on at all times. Face-to-face interaction is, after all, the reason why we are using a video platform. You are in control of your audio and video at all times if there is a reason to turn it off. The presenter also can share their computer screen, allowing for videos or presentations to be visible to all participants.

The last feature that may confuse someone new to video conferencing is the idea of a chat window. Every platform has a way of typing something visible to every participant. This is very useful if you want to communicate something but don't want to interrupt the person who is currently speaking. It can also be used to share other information that can supplement the spoken word.

It may be obvious, but those with visual or hearing impairments are at risk of being left

out. There is no native way of captioning what is being said, so unless the presenter has hired some form of translation service, it is very easy for those with impairments to be left out. The other side of accessibility is that of equipment. Since the beginning of the pandemic, the idea of shared computer access has gone out the window. Not everyone can afford both computer or smartphone access as well as Internet access. This affects more than just the community of people with disabilities. In our rush to find solutions, have we further marginalized those who may need services most? Don't get me wrong, most, if not all, services provide a way to engage via a regular phone call presenters are rarely prepared to describe everything shown on the screen. This is something that everyone needs to consider going forward: why do we present something if we can't deliver it to those who may need it most?

Hopefully, if you have the necessary equipment, this has prompted you to at least try participating in a web conference. In the long run, you have very little to lose and lots to gain in this increasingly digital world.



UNSEEN ENEMY

Romeo Recalde

We want to share with you Shella's' family experienced with the unseen enemy. The reason why we are sharing this, is for you to learn from their experience and for people to realize that COVID-19 can affect us all.

Month ago, Shella's parents tested positive for COVID. That time they still do not know how they got infected. Shella's mom hasn't been to the grocery or the church since the lockdown last year. It has been her daily routine before this pandemic, but since the beginning of the lockdown, she had been compliant. Shella's Dad also stayed at home for a couple of months, however, during the 3rd and 4th quarter of last year, he had to go to their construction sites because their staff/laborers depend on her dad so that they could provide for their families.

Shella's dad had mild symptoms and recovered well at home. They did not tell to Shella at first since they didn't want her to worry as she's miles away from them. Shella only found out about the problem when she called her dad and saw him wearing a mask

inside their room. Thankful to her niece, Dr. Cindy G who prescribed Azithromycin to everyone at home.

After more than 2 weeks at the hospital, her mom was discharged. They had Moral support and well-wishers, relatives and close friends in Canada, Philippines and in USA.

Photo taken during day of discharge





Personal Attendant Community Education (PACE) trains able-bodied persons to become Independent Living Attendants (ILA's) for people with disabilities. PACE is a recognized curriculum, developed, designed and delivered by people with disabilities to promote consumer choice and control in daily decisions that impact their lives. Follow-up surveys indicate over 90% success rate in obtaining employment in this field following graduation. The training is five weeks long. It runs Monday to Friday with classes from 9:00 AM – 4:00 PM daily. Community training hours are early morning, afternoon and late evening.

We are currently taking applications for any of the following sessions:

(dates subject to change)

Session Dates

Registration Deadline

Session 95:	April 6 to May 7, 2021	March 22, 2021
Session 96:	May 17 to June 18, 21, 2021	May 3, 2021
Session 97:	August 16 to September 17, 2021	August 2, 2021
Session 98:	September 27 to October 29, 2021	September 13, 2021
Session 99:	November 8 to December 10, 2021	October 25, 2021

**100 – 167 Lombard Ave. Winnipeg
Winnipeg, MB R3B 0R3
(Grain Exchange Building)
204-947-0194**

MEMBERSHIP APPLICATION FORM

Your membership helps support newsletter distribution. Being a member has its benefits in that you can vote at our next annual meeting and receive exclusive invitations to community events. If you have not renewed your membership, please do so. The cost is **\$5.00**.

Please inform us about the following:

New Member

Renewal

I prefer not to receive any mailings from ILRC.

Name: _____

Org. Name: _____

Visit Us at www.ilrc.mb.ca

Phone: _____

Address: _____

Postal Code: _____

ILRC STAFF

Executive Director: John Young
Project Development and Training Coordinator: Doug Lockhart
Operations and Administration Coordinator: Robert Mitchell
Finance and Accounts Coordinator: Eugene del Mundo
Payroll Coordinator: Sonia Muncal
Reception: Mandi Panetta; Volunteers
Media/Web Administrator: Jason Hirose
Information & Referral:
Independent Living Skills/Peer Support:
 IL Consultants: Chelsey Sommerfield, Natalie Pirson
Individual Self-Advocacy:
 DART Team
Personal Attendant Community Education (PACE)
 IL Consultant: Susianti Fierce

Community Living Program
 IL Consultant: Natasha Klassen
 IL Consultant: Krystal Polson

Qu'Appelle Tenant Resource Coordinator:
 Kelly Thurston

Independent Living Staffing: Romeo Recalde, Christina Buebos

MIST Housing Team Leader: Francesca de Fiesta

Leisure Education:
 IL Consultants: Natasha Klassen, Yonas Bekele, Oliver Gutierrez, Shelly Walker
Disability Awareness Resource Training (DART)
 IL Consultants: Patrick Stewart, Mandi Panetta