

institution watch

PEOPLE
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PERSONNES
D'ABORD
DU CANADA



50 years

Canadian
Association for
Community Living

Diversity includes.

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Monitoring the
progress toward
a vision of full
community living
for *all* persons
with intellectual
disabilities.

This is a newsletter
written and produced
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On March 11, 2013, the government of Alberta announced its plans for the closure of Michener Centre, one of Canada's last remaining large institutions. Its closure over the next year signals a return to community of the 125 individuals with developmental disabilities currently residing in the Centre's facilities. This announcement also signals the end of an era of institutionalization in Alberta. More importantly it signals a commitment to ensuring a meaningful and good life in community for all persons with developmental disabilities.

"An institution is any place in which people who have been labeled as having an intellectual disability are isolated, segregated and/or congregated. An institution is any place in which people do not have, or are not allowed to exercise control over their lives and their day to day decisions. An institution is not defined merely by its size."

Almost 100 Years of Institutionalization in Alberta of Individuals with Developmental Disabilities Draws to a Close



Bruce Uditsky

It is a momentous day of celebration for all Albertans as we join almost every province in Canada in ending the large-scale institutionalization of Albertans with developmental disabilities with the closure of Michener Centre's institutional facilities and the return to a life in community of the adults with developmental disabilities who live there. Institutionalization began with the misguided and false assumption that institutions would provide for the safety and well-being of individuals with developmental disabilities. Many decades of evidence across the western world have proven time and time again that institutions are far more likely to place vulnerable individuals at risk and limit their potential.

Alberta's infamy of forced sterilization, and worse, within the walls of its institutions came to an end in the early 1970's with the moral leadership of Premier Loughheed and then MLA Dave King. Today that legacy is being honoured and completed thanks to the leadership of Premier Redford and Ministers Hancock and Oberle.

Barb MacIntyre, President of the Alberta Association for Community Living (AACL) and the parent of an adult son with developmental disabilities, stated, "While today marks the beginning of new and promising lives for those leaving the institution, I know they and their families will be anxious. We want to reassure them, we are prepared to support them in realizing the promise of a life in community to which they are entitled."

In 2006 AACL published *Hear My Voice*, stories in their own words of individuals with developmental disabilities who once lived in Michener Centre but now live in community. This book is a powerful testimony to the resiliency of the human spirit, its capacity for forgiveness and hope fulfilled.

Bruce Uditsky, AACL CEO and the parent of an adult son with developmental disabilities, noted, "We know from experience and research*, it is not enough to close an institution. The focus must be on the individual person first and foremost, ensuring access to a meaningful life and a real home in community. We know as well communities will benefit from welcoming individuals with developmental disabilities as valued friends and participating members."

A Return to Community

**Shane Haddad and
Laurie Larson**



The announcement by the Honourable Frank Oberle, Associate Minister of Services for Persons with Disabilities, of the closure of the North and South facilities at Michener Centre, a residential facility for people with developmental disabilities located in Red Deer and operated by the Persons with Developmental Disabilities (PDD) Central Region Community Board, confirms recognition by the government of Alberta that all people, including those with developmental disabilities, have a right to live and be included in community.

It is an announcement applauded by the Canadian Association for Community Living and People First of Canada. This announcement will witness the remaining 125 individuals at Michener Centre take their rightful place within community.

“The closure of Michener Centre brings this country one step closer to ensuring that all people are supported to exercise their right to live in community,” stated Shane Haddad, President of People First of Canada (PFC). “I commend the Alberta government for doing the right thing. People belong in community – not institutions!”

“Efforts have long been underway to move away from an institutional model in this country,” said Laurie Larson, President of the Canadian Association for Community Living (CACL). “With this announcement, we have moved closer to the reality promised within the United Nations Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities – especially Article 19, the Right to Live in Community.”

“As a member, and former Co-chair, of the CACL PFC Task Force on the Right to Live in Community, I congratulate the government of Alberta for this decision,” said Norm McLeod. “Further, as an Albertan, I am very proud that we, as a province, have finally indicated that institutions will no longer play a role in the lives of persons with intellectual disabilities.”

Alberta transitions adults with developmental disabilities into the community

Press Release, Government of Alberta, March 11, 2013

The Alberta government is listening to the advice of experts and transitioning 125 adults with developmental disabilities into community homes from the North and South buildings at Michener Centre, an institutional care facility for people with developmental disabilities located in Red Deer. The change will improve quality of life and ensure that residents can get more personalized care in the community.

“The needs and well-being of the people who live at Michener will be top of mind for us, and we will offer our support to them and their loved ones. We’ll have plans in place to make this transition as smooth as possible,” said Frank Oberle, Associate Minister of Services for Persons with Disabilities. “Historically, institutional living was considered to be the best way to support individuals with developmental disabilities, but that’s just not the case anymore.” Preliminary planning is already underway, and a number of community service providers have been identified that are well equipped to support these individuals.

“Today, tens of thousands of Albertans with developmental disabilities grow up at home, are included in schools, participate in community recreation, enjoy friendships and move into adulthood as community members pursuing post-secondary studies, a career, employment and a place of their own to call home,” said Bruce Uditsky, CEO of the Alberta Association for Community Living. “This is a truly momentous day, to be celebrated by all Albertans, as we complete the final stages of a 40 year transition from a past history of isolation and institutionalization to a meaningful life in community for every person with developmental disabilities.”



The closure of Michener Centre's North and South site facilities follows the successful transition of people with developmental disabilities into community settings from Youngstown Home in 2011, and Edmonton's Eric Cormack Centre in late 2012.

"From a national perspective, the Canadian Association for Community Living is extremely pleased that Michener Centre, as one of the largest facilities of its kind in Canada, is accelerating the transition of its residents into community living," said Norm McLeod, a member of the Canadian Association for Community Living and the People First of Canada Task Force on the Right to Live in the Community. "We will be here to support the individuals and their families during this transition."

Over the next several months, the Persons with Developmental Disabilities (PDD) program will work closely with the residents, their families and guardians to plan their transition into the community. The preferences of individuals living at Michener and their families will be fundamental to the planning process, and residents will continue to get the support they need during and after the moves. The aim is to integrate residents into community settings by the spring of 2014.

Alberta Human Services will work with Michener Centre staff to ensure they are treated fairly and with the respect they deserve. "The staff at Michener contribute immensely to the lives of residents," said Oberle. "We are grateful for their compassion and dedication to persons with developmental disabilities, and we're committed to supporting them through this time of change."

MESSAGE FROM THE TASK FORCE



The announced closure of Michener Centre is truly a profound moment in our Canadian history. A historic moment in that yet another province finally recognizes the right of all people with intellectual disabilities to live freely and fully within community. A moment when another government finally hears and acts on the voices of people with intellectual disabilities who have been for decades calling for the closure of all such large facilities in this country. A moment when we cast aside any illusions that institutions were in the best interests of people with intellectual disabilities, and acknowledge that at best they were an attempt to compensate for

society's lack of ability / lack of desire to assist people to live in community. Those days are long past us; we now know how to successfully support people to live full and contributing lives within community. Institutions have no role to play in the lives of people with intellectual disabilities; they belong in and have a right to live in community. Nothing else is acceptable. Anything else is shameful.

We applaud the actions of the Alberta government, and thank the Alberta Association for Community Living for its ongoing efforts to ensure that all citizens of Alberta, regardless of label, enjoy the right to live in community. While there will be expected public opposition to this announcement, know that it is the right thing to do!

In recent years we have witnessed the closures of the last large government operated institutions in Ontario; and announced closure plans for institutions in Saskatchewan and now Alberta. The question to be asked now is why the government of Manitoba still firmly and inexplicably remains steadfast in its support of its last large institution...the Manitoba Developmental Centre. Why?

PROVINCIAL / TERRITORIAL UPDATES

MANITOBA

Manitoba is the last province in Canada to not have a closure announcement for its institutions. We wish we did, and as advocates for all people to experience the right to live in the community we will keep pushing. A date for closing Manitoba Developmental Centre and River Road Place (St. Amant Centre) would send the message that the Province of Manitoba no longer views living in large congregate settings as an option for people. As we continue to wait for an announcement, it is promising to observe some community champions proceeding on the basis of an inevitable end to institutional living for people.



The good news is that people have moved and several more are involved in planning moves that will take place over the next several months. Community agencies are responding and strategically planning how to welcome and include people in their communities. The team members who are assisting with the transitions have displayed much commitment and perseverance to overcome obstacles that may delay the transition period.

Inclusive communities must have some essential characteristics and we are proud that the Province of Manitoba has shown leadership in two very key areas. Minister of Family Services and Labour, Jennifer Howard is responsible for two important pieces of legislation. The Adult Abuse Registry Act, a first in Canada, has been proclaimed and is now a screening tool for agencies who hire support staff. Amendments were made to the Vulnerable Person Act which included a stronger requirement for all citizens to report cases of abuse and mistreatment and significant fines if they fail to do so.

The second piece of legislation is the Accessibility Act that we expect to be introduced and passed during the spring sitting of the Legislative Assembly. Barrier Free Manitoba, the community coalition that was responsible for introducing the idea of accessibility legislation in 2008, has worked tirelessly to ensure that we had strong and robust legislation based on a set of principles from which it never wavered. Manitoba will be only the second province to have such legislation. We asked for and received support from Ontario every step of the way and Barrier Free will pay it forward as other provinces move in this direction.

NOVA SCOTIA

Rally at the Legislature

On December 5th, Nova Scotia Association for Community Living along with Community Homes Action Group (CHAG) held a rally called "Crisis! Lack of Appropriate Homes for Nova Scotians with Developmental Disabilities" at the Nova Scotia Legislature. NSACL was proud to support this rally, and we were



pleased with the outcome. Approximately 100 people gathered in the rain to raise their voices. People came from all over the province for this event, and a smaller event also took place in Sydney.

In Halifax, speakers talked about the need for a range of community based choices, and the stress the wait lists and lack of capacity are causing. Jocelyne Tranquilla, from NSACL gladly accepted the responsibility of introducing the fabulous speakers that were on hand to share their stories and perspectives. Wendy Lill, co-chair of CHAG, gave a synopsis of the situation. Nova Scotia needs:

- more supportive residential choices in community,
- commitment to deinstitutionalization
- real choices for persons with developmental disabilities.

Donna Murphy and Alan Harris, both from People First Yarmouth, made it clear that people belong in communities and not institutions. Jean Coleman, NSACL, read a powerful letter from Judy Van Amerongen, parent advocate. Dr. Brian Hennen spoke about how the wait lists and lack of appropriate residential options impact the health care system. NSGEU group home worker, Kelly Murphy, talked about the pressure building on staff and residents because no choices exist. We heard from Anna MacQuarrie, Inclusion International, about Article 19 of the UN convention on the rights of persons with disabilities. She gave a passionate plea to respect the human rights for choice and real homes. Minister Peterson-Rafuse spoke, as well as MLA's from the Liberal and Conservative parties. Wendy Lill wrapped it up and urged everyone to continue to:

- put pressure on MLAs,
- get involved in the Continuing Care/Services for Persons with Disabilities consultation process,
- talk to families & friends and
- let politicians know we are watching for action.

We hope and pray that this grassroots expression will have a positive impact and lead to real commitments in dollars and policies.

SASKATCHEWAN



Since the closure announcement, the Saskatchewan Association for Community Living (SACL) has been providing ongoing advocacy and supports to the residents of Valley View Centre and their families. The SACL will become engaged at the family's request or automatically if a resident of the Centre has no next of kin.

As a community partner, the SACL has representation on the Transition Steering Committee and the working groups. The SACL has hired two Transition Plan Advocates (TPA) located at Valley View Centre who are currently providing ongoing advocacy supports to 96 Centre residents. They have also hired a Housing

Initiatives and Research Coordinator (HIRC) acting as the SACL project lead. Families can ask for the SACL to become involved at any time during the transition.

On February 8, 2013, Valley View Centre Family Group Co-Chair June Avivi and the Saskatchewan Association for Community Living President Gloria Mahussier released the Interim Report of the Valley View Centre Transition Steering Committee to the Minister of Social Services June Draude.

A unique partnership has formed between the Valley View Centre Family Group, the Saskatchewan Association for Community Living and the Ministry of Social Services following the February 24, 2012 announcement that the Province would begin planning and consultations with residents of Valley View Centre, their families and key stakeholders for new services to replace the current Valley View Program. The February 8, 2013 Interim Report provides a summary of the work completed to date to support the transition of the 198 residents of Valley View Centre to their future homes.

The interim report identifies the values and principles used to guide the Valley View Centre Transition Planning. It highlights the research completed and identifies best practices in the provision of housing supports. It also includes findings from the initial meetings that were held with all Valley View residents and/or their families, which indicate that the majority of people would prefer to remain in Moose Jaw. Their initial preferences were: 65% Moose Jaw; 8% Saskatoon; 6% Regina; 4% Prince Albert; 2% out-of-province; and 2% rural areas across the province; 13% have not yet expressed a preference.

Most importantly, the interim report confirms that there will not be one overarching and imposed plan, but rather 198 unique, person-centred plans to meet the diverse needs of each Valley View Centre resident. The interim report also identifies next steps and future direction for the transition.

“The team is pleased to present our interim report to the Minister. We can now begin the next stage with strong purpose and direction,” Valley View Centre Co-Chair June Avivi said.

“Being able to present this report to the Minister is welcomed. Drawing from the comprehensive research the team has gathered throughout Western Canada, and the UN Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities, we are prepared to take the next step in developing a list of recommendations and ensuring each individual will have a transition plan that includes choice, a support network and flexibility to meet their individual needs,” Saskatchewan Association for Community Living President Gloria Mahussier said.

The Valley View Centre Transition Steering Committee will release a full report in March, which will include recommendations for the Government of Saskatchewan to consider.

“I want to thank June, Gloria and the other Steering Committee members for their comprehensive and thoughtful work over the past year,” Social Services Minister June Draude said. “It is clear that Valley View residents and their families are at the very heart of the planning that has taken place to date. I look forward to receiving the Committee’s final report and recommendations for transitioning Valley View residents to their new homes.”

The Interim Report is available online at www.sacl.org and www.gov.sk.ca.

THANKS FROM A PARENT

by Rick Tutt

The following are excerpts from a letter from Doug Graham, father of Richard Graham a former resident of Rideau Regional Centre (RRC) in eastern Ontario. Mr. Graham was for many years involved in the Parent’s Group at RRC and was strongly opposed to the facility being closed. When he realized that closure was a reality, he took a proactive stance and worked with both the planning team at RRC and the staff at the community agency that would eventually support his son. The result of that work is apparent in Mr. Graham’s

THE RIGHT TO LIVE IN COMMUNITY

The National Task Force on the Right to Live in Community has produced two timely and important documents that will assist with the closing of large institutions and ensuring people who have an intellectual disability can live meaningful and inclusive lives in their communities.

The Right Way published in March of 2010 is an excellent and comprehensive guide for closing institutions and reclaiming a life in community for people with disabilities.

The Right to Live in Community will shortly be available. It is a brochure that addresses key elements of what people with disabilities want their lives look like in community. An informative and "must read" guide for families, advocates and service providers.

comments. He passed away this past year, comfortable that his son was being well supported in his community. The letter was written to the former administrator of the institution.

"...4 weeks have passed since my son Richard moved from Rideau Regional Centre (RRC) to a new home operated by Community Living North Grenville"...after 4 weeks I am elated to report that none of the anticipated problems and anxieties that we have anticipated might develop, because of the move from his home for the last 46 years, have happened. I think that we can consider the transfer a 100% success."

"I credit the foresight of ...the supervisor of (Richard's ward) at the time of the closure announcement...I expressed...my concerns about how Ricky would react to a move... He has a history of adversely reacting to any change. We agreed that moving with familiar faces might help."

The facility staff introduced Mr. Graham to other residents who knew his son and he subsequently contacted their families and they visited a number of service providers who might be in a position to support their family members...*"We quickly concluded that we preferred a rural rather than an urban environment..."*

The families met with the Executive Director, staff and Board of Director of the Association in North Grenville. *"They agreed to take the four men from RRC...and agreed to new home for the four men"...a beautiful large bungalow"*

"...moving day...a day I had dreaded ...for 20 years...the four men were picked at 8:15 am....the four men spent the morning at the Community Living North Grenville Activity Centre." In the interim Mr. Graham removed all of his son's possessions from RRC and set them up in his new bedroom...*"when Rick arrived at noon hour, he quickly surveyed his new bedroom, climbed up on his new bed and took a short nap between two of his stuffed animals."*

"To date there hasn't been any sign of tension or teeth grinding. I attribute this to careful planning by a lot of people...At the final Transition and Planning and Discharge Meeting, besides myself and my daughter, there were 8 people around the table who had a major role in Richard's successful move. Janice Rowe chaired the meeting. By a copy of this letter to her I request that she send a copy of this letter to them so that they will know how happy I am with the outcome of this long process."

Mr. Graham went on to thank the staff of RRC for their years of care and talked about how his son's transition to the community included satisfactory medical and dental care. He ended his letter with *"I feel very lucky and grateful to a lot of planning for the way things have worked out."*

Inclusion International Global Forum and Global Report on Living and being included in the Community

Anna MacQuarrie, Inclusion International

In October 2012, Inclusion International (II) in partnership with the Arc of the United States, hosted a three day global forum and national convention, Achieving Inclusion Across the Globe. The forum brought together over 900 families, self-advocates, professionals and partners from over 35 countries around the world to discuss inclusion and key issues facing people with intellectual disabilities and their families. A pre-conference day on self-advocacy was also held. The pre-conference day focused on the development of self-advocacy around the world and attracted over 170 participants with representation from self-advocates from every region in the world.

The forum also marked the launch of our Global Report on Article 19, *Living and Being Included in the Community, Inclusive Communities = Stronger Communities*. The report was the result of a two-year global campaign to hear from people with intellectual disabilities and their families about what living and being included in the community means to them. II received contributions from thousands of people in over 95 countries; country profiles from 41 countries; individual stories from 36 countries and input from focus groups in 23 countries and 5 regional forums.

People with intellectual disabilities and families told us that living and being included in the community is about: Choice; Support and Community Inclusion.

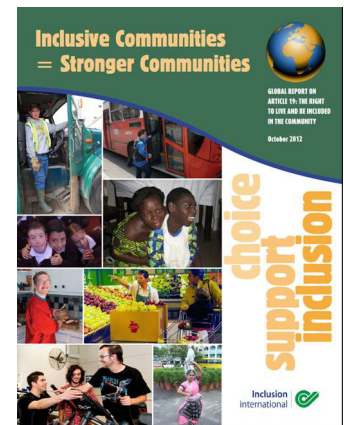
Inclusive Communities = Stronger Communities confirms that the majority of people with intellectual disabilities live at home and do not have choice in where they live. The report reveals that the major source of support and care which people with intellectual disabilities receive is from their families yet families receive little or no support from communities or governments. II heard clearly from all regions that individuals and their families do not get the support they need and for the most part, community systems continue to exclude people with disabilities. The report highlights that transforming communities to be inclusive and ensuring that people with disabilities are included in mainstream programmes is essential for securing the rights of people with intellectual disabilities.

The report identifies that to build inclusive communities we need to re-examine how people with intellectual disabilities are being supported and make fundamental changes including:

- Transitioning from segregated models (i.e. employment, housing, education) to community based models that enable individuals to access systems and supports in the community.
- Building and supporting self-advocacy groups.
- Developing family resource and training programmes and assist families to build and sustain natural supports in the community.
- Securing budget allocation for disability supports and inclusion in mainstream budgets.

The report demonstrates that inclusive communities are better communities for all. The report can be found on our website, www.inclusion-international.org.

Inclusion International's next global gathering will be our 2014 World Congress in Nairobi, Kenya. Check our website for regular updates. Hope to see you there!



What Home Means to Me Video Release

People First of Canada has been developing videos based on the priorities of employment, education, legal capacity, standard of living, and living in the community. Recently, PFC released a video called *What Home Means to Me*, under the priority of living independently and being included in the community (Article 19).

“For people with intellectual disabilities, having a home means a lot. It means having freedom, having rights, having a life, and most importantly, being included,” stated Shane Haddad, President of People First of Canada. “We wanted to make this video to show that people with intellectual disabilities want the same things as everybody else in where they live, and to show people how much better life is for people with intellectual disabilities when they do have a place they call home,” said Mr. Haddad. “Home is fundamental to a good life in the community.”

“In Canada today, people with intellectual disabilities are still at risk of being institutionalized or placed in inappropriate settings. The people in the video represent a group that has experienced living in an institution, in foster care, and in group homes. Many have also experienced being a ‘ward’ rather than a citizen – things that the average Canadian doesn’t have to consider or live through,” explained Shelley Fletcher Rattai, Executive Director of People First of Canada.

Created by People First of Canada and the Canadian Association for Community Living, the video gives the unique perspective of home from the life experiences of people with intellectual disabilities. Canadians with intellectual disabilities hope the video will raise awareness of how important living in the community is to being included in the community and how vital it is to have welcoming communities to live in.

The video was launched on March 11, 2013 and can be viewed at www.peoplefirstofcanada.ca or on youtube at www.youtube.com/user/PeopleFirstofCanada

Written in Stone: The Importance of Getting Woodlands’ History Right

**contributed by Richard McDonald,
Meaghan Feduck and Fred Ford**



For many years, community living advocates in BC have worked hard with the City of New Westminster to make sure that the wishes of former residents of Woodlands institution are respected and that the history of the institution is properly understood and accurately represented. Members of groups such as the BC Self Advocacy Foundation, BC People First Society, Inclusion BC, and the Community Living Society took lead roles in advocating for the repatriation of gravestones and creation of the “Woodlands Memorial Garden” and more recently, the demolition of the Centre Block buildings. Now, advocates are working alongside City staff, heritage advocates, current residents of the area and the site developer to create an appropriate legacy to carry Woodland’s history into the future. This article provides an update on recent developments and underlines the importance – and the challenge – of getting this history right.

When the City finally agreed to demolish the final section of the Woodlands Centre Block Tower in July 2011, Council created the “Tower Task Force” to help “determine appropriate themes, content and images for four interpretive panels to be located at the site of the former tower”. The Task Force was made up of heritage advocates, current residents of the new condominiums on the site, a former resident of Woodlands and community living advocates.

With the assistance of an external writer, draft content was developed for history panels under the themes *Architecture*, *Building History*, *The Decision-Making Process* and *Individual Voices*. Community living representatives on the Task Force have expressed concerns that the content of the history panels does not reflect former residents' experiences and presents a view of the institution that is unbalanced and in many instances, inaccurate. One particular concern is that the history excludes the many problems that existed at the institution from its very beginnings, including architectural deficiencies and inadequate care that led to suffering, injuries and deaths and which prompted a reporter in 1882 to refer to the institution as "the home of misery".

Richard McDonald, the sole former resident represented on the Task Force, requested support to review the panel drafts in greater detail and propose alternative content as needed. The City agreed to meet with Richard, his supporters, and committee members representing community living upon completion of the review. Over the past several months, this review was completed by Richard, Meaghan Feduck and Fred Ford. This group reviewed the content of the panels line-by-line in a series of meetings, noting concerns and issues and proposing alternative content where needed. Research was done to analyze the content and to support the changes being proposed.

Richard expressed particular concern with the "voices" panel because it provided equal space to the perspectives of former staff and former residents. In his view, this downplayed the facts of mistreatment and abuse of residents – facts confirmed by external reviews and reports throughout Woodlands history and following its closure. McDonald, who lived at Woodlands from 1952 to 1962, stated that the panels should not include "fabrications" and should tell "the real story". Former residents were contacted regarding the use of their voices in the "Individual Voices" panel. In about half of these instances, changes were made to the quotes attributed to them to reflect their wishes. Richard asked that his own quote be changed to the following: "We had to keep quiet or we'd be confined to a side room with only bed springs and with the door locked. It shouldn't have happened – human beings shouldn't be treated that way. If you understand this then you know where we're coming from."

"We had to keep quiet or we'd be confined to a side room with only bed springs and with the door locked. It shouldn't have happened – human beings shouldn't be treated that way. If you understand this then you know where we're coming from." (Richard McDonald)

Richard, Meaghan and Fred met with Tower Task Force Members Faith Bodnar and Ross Chilton to review their work at the end of January. Together, the entire group met with City representatives on February 8th to present the analysis of current content and to propose alternative content. Community living representatives are currently awaiting the City's response to the proposed changes. If changes are to be made, further meetings may be needed with the entire Tower Task Force.

Meaghan Feduck concludes that the current versions of the history panels represent an "overwhelming orientation to a sanitized past, the downplaying of abuse and atrocity experienced by residents, and the misrepresentation of care and treatment throughout the interpretive panels. These representations serve to silence and threaten to erase the memory of victims. The risk in pursuing this course in the case of Woodlands is that an important piece of history is left out – one that can offer lessons in how society responds to vulnerability (Feduck, 2012).

It is likely that the current struggle will arise elsewhere in Canada. As institutions continue to close across the country, it will be up to community living advocates to ensure that the history of what happened to people in our country's institutions is accurately reflected and never forgotten.

PFC CACL Joint Task Force on the Right to Live in Community

First established in 2002, the PFC CACL Joint Task Force on the Right to Live in Community works toward ensuring that continued and full deinstitutionalization is and remains a national priority. The Task Force ensures a strong and reciprocal relationship between CACL and People First of Canada. PFC, CACL and PTACLs appoint Task Force members on an annual basis.

The Task Force believes it is essential, in order to ensure a good life within community, that persons with intellectual disabilities have a right to:

- choose where they will live, and with whom,
- direct and control services/programs that are respectful of their right to make choices and take risks,
- individualized living arrangements and control over the required individualized funding,
- a full range of disability related supports needed to participate in the community, and
- a recognition of a supported decision making model and the support from friends/family necessary to ensure an appropriate planning process.



Task Force member and institution survivor, David Weremy, is pictured above with Shelley Rattai of PFC, as he gave the opening plenary at the CACL Conference and AGM held in Winnipeg in September. David spoke eloquently and passionately about the threat that institutions still play in the lives of people with intellectual disabilities, and the need to ensure, as quickly as possible, that these facilities are closed, and people assisted to reclaim their rightful place in community.



In recognition of their dedication and efforts toward the full inclusion of people with intellectual disabilities within community, members of the Task Force were honoured by being presented with Queen Elizabeth II Diamond Jubilee Medals. At a recent meeting of the Task Force, medals winners – Shane Haddad, Don Gallant, Norm McLeod, Peter Park, Roy Skoreyko and David Weremy (seated) – were pictured together.

Acknowledgements

CACL and People First of Canada gratefully acknowledge the Government of Canada (Social Development Partnerships Program – Disability Component) for supporting our national Community Inclusion Initiative.