



2010

BCPA ANNUAL REPORT

2011

< REFOCUSSED >

Our Vision is a World Without Barriers®



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Ed Milligan



BCPA Executive Director
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Four members of BCPA's Board are persons living with SCI

Visit www.bcpa.org to meet our SCI Service Programs Staff

Our SCI Community... Finding Solutions Together

- » BC Personal Supports Network
- » BC Wheelchair Basketball Society
- » BC Wheelchair Sports Association
- » Canadian Paraplegic Association and Provincial Partners
- » ICORD (International Collaboration on Repair Discoveries)
- » Neil Squire Society
- » Rick Hansen Institute
- » Sam Sullivan Disability Foundation

“It was the most terrifying and exhilarating experience of my life! I am grateful for the opportunity given to me by the BCPA Peer Program to participate in such an extreme endeavour.”



The British Columbia Paraplegic Association (BCPA) is a non-profit organization that helps people with a spinal cord injury (SCI) adjust, adapt and thrive by providing answers, information and community experiences.

Since 1957, BCPA has worked tirelessly to improve the lives of people with SCI — a devastating injury and permanent disability. Today BCPA supports individuals with SCI across the province.

People with a spinal cord injury can become isolated, inactive, depressed and unaware of

opportunities available to them. They want, and need, access to trusted information about what matters to them. Through BCPA's two core programs, Peer Support and Information Services, people with SCI, and their family and friends, have access to a vibrant and supportive community.

“BCPA is the ‘go to’ place for information and support from people who really know what you’re going through and how to help you get back into real living. BCPA has people who can really help because they have ‘been there’”.



Over the past few years, like many not for profit organizations, the BC Paraplegic Association (BCPA) has had to carefully re-examine our programs to determine how to use funds to deliver the most relevant and effective services we can.

Our Board of Directors worked with staff and various stakeholder groups to identify and extract what is the most meaningful impact our organization can have to someone with a spinal cord injury. With over 50 years of history and programs to reflect upon, it was an often exhausting but exciting task. We are confident that BCPA has emerged with greater energy and focus, resulting in a stronger and more effective organization.

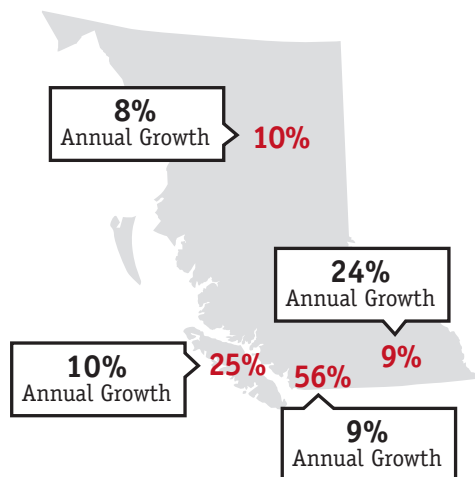
BCPA has refocused on the two areas of service that led to our reputation as experts in supporting people with SCI: peer support and information services. We are the organization people with SCI and their families can rely upon to help them adapt, adjust and thrive in their communities.

Our 2010-11 fiscal year marked the start of a new era and focus for BCPA and we would like to acknowledge those who made this transition possible: our Board members, former and present staff, volunteers, community partners and donors, and of course, our members, who keep us on the right course.

“BCPA is the ‘go to’ place for information and support from people who really know what you’re going through and how to help you get back into real living.”

PEER PROGRAM

1,253 Peer Members spread throughout BC



1,858 people with SCI, their family and friends attended at least one of the **44** Peer Events held*

207 people with SCI, their family and friends attended a Telehealth Session*

178 One-on-One Peer Matches were organized

120 new people were served by the Peer Program

*Combined total across the province

INFOLINE

2,016 Information requests were made

 **1,256** phone requests

 **760** mail requests

 Over **1,900** visits to online SCI database

Top 5 Information Requests

1. Accommodations
2. Equipment
3. Funding
4. Universal Design
5. Recreation and Leisure

Updates on accessible housing vacancies are sent regularly to a list of over **100** health care professionals and individuals

Who contacted us:

42% Persons with SCI or Related Disability

27% Community and Hospital Health Care Professionals

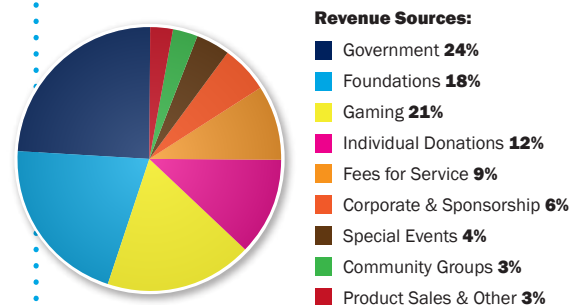
17% Family and Friends

14% Other Groups

OUR SUPPORTERS

60 volunteers gave **846** hours of their time

Over **\$1.9 million** was contributed by government, gaming, corporations, foundations, individuals and community groups



OUR COMMUNITY



22,000 visits to our website

21,826 views of our Employment HeadStart videos

4,000 people received The Spin Magazine



People often mitigate their stress and problems by seeking support and answers from others who have experience and knowledge of the issue. This is exactly the foundation upon which the Peer Program is built. It is faithful to the origins of the Canadian Paraplegic Association, when veterans returning from WWII with spinal cord injuries realized that their strength came as much from others as from within; the commitment to “members helping members” was born.

tive of “someone who’s been there”. One very popular activity has been our weekly “Rehab Rap” sessions at GF Strong, where newly injured people can take part in an informal session where they hear about the experiences of individuals thriving in the community with an SCI, ask questions and seek practical solutions to challenges they are facing. We are also fortunate to have office space at GF Strong where BCPA Peer Associates and volunteers can be available as needed

“It’s all too easy to have channel thinking and imagine that there is nothing new to be learned. Today’s session proved very much to the contrary. It is so very powerful to be exposed to the experiences and wisdom/knowledge of one’s peers...”

Today the BCPA Peer Program is a community of individuals with spinal cord injuries and other related disabilities, as well as their family and friends, who use this service to ask questions, make connections and share solutions. It provides opportunities for both experiential learning and professional health care information. The BCPA peer experience is about answers, support and inspiration.

In the past year, we’ve been able to expand our service reach from Vancouver, Prince George and Victoria to include Nanaimo, Kelowna, Fort St. John and Williams Lake, a step closer to achieving our goal of providing access to peer services for everyone in BC with a spinal cord injury. Our Peer Program calendar is a busy one, with opportunities for socializing, networking and learning being added on a near weekly basis.

Supporting Individuals with New Injuries

Our strong working relationship with Vancouver General Hospital’s Spinal Cord Injury Unit and the GF Strong Rehab Centre enables the Peer Program to support and provide information to newly injured people and their families through the perspec-

for those participating in the rehab process. We would like to thank Vancouver Coastal Health and the GF Strong Rehab Centre, its staff and volunteers, for the office space and support of our activities throughout the year.

Events

The BCPA Peer Program continued many popular annual events this year around the province for over 1800 peer members, family and friends. We cheered on local hockey teams, hosted barbeques and dinners, and again promoted use of the Lower Mainland’s accessible transit system with the 9th Annual Bus Stop Hop (the peer program’s very own “Amazing Race”). There were also some new opportunities for particularly courageous peers and a new twist to a few old favourites.

Last year, our Northern BC peer program rose to new heights with a skydiving event — this year they decided to try bungee jumping. Not content with just any drop, 18 of our bravest peers travelled to the highest bungee jump in BC to take a 160 foot plunge over the Cheakamus River! Down on the south coast, the very popular Women’s Tea was back, this year it was all about fashion. Almost 150 fabulous women with

physical disabilities and friends were treated to a fun mini-makeover, followed by a photo shoot with a pro photographer, and then to top it all off our peers hit the catwalk showcasing a range of fashionable clothing perfect for women in chairs.

Most recently and with greatly appreciated help from ICORD, we hosted the annual SCI Forum combining peer social interaction with a learning focus. Over 70 participants joined

and we are indebted to these volunteers for their time and commitment to helping others.

Telehealth

For people with a spinal cord injury living in remote parts of British Columbia Telehealth is in some cases their only way of accessing the information and support they need. BCPA



us at the Blusson Spinal Cord Centre in Vancouver, where we watched a cooking demonstration with peer chef and nutrition guru Cory Parsons and got some vital information for fueling your body for energy, healing and wellness from peer and registered dietician Joanne Smith.

“Educational sessions such as the SCI Forum are wonderful... lots of useful information and a nice chance to meet others”

Peer Mentor Service

A few years ago, recognizing that more and more people were being injured after the age of 50, we initiated a 50+ peer program; it is evolving into a very important part of our service. Significant progress has been made this year to develop some training and tools to help peer volunteers deliver support and up to date information for people with SCI and their families. Working with our 50+ group, we've engaged a group of true experts, individuals who average more than three decades of living with a spinal cord injury, to develop what will undoubtedly be an extremely relevant program spanning different injury levels, circumstances and experience. This approach epitomizes the “member helping member” philosophy

is now into its second year of providing monthly Telehealth sessions to our members across the province. From Nanaimo to Fort St John, this service enables our members and others interested in SCI to participate in BCPA's educational sessions at GF Strong in Vancouver. During these sessions participants can listen and see the guest presenters as well as actively participate in the discussion.

Topics covered in Telehealth sessions include ICORD spinal injury research, nutrition, bowel and bladder management, sexual health, physical activity and skin care.

Support for Injured Workers

For a number of years, BCPA has been contracted by Work-SafeBC to provide professional support to their clients with spinal cord injuries around the province. Our staff actively encourages these clients to connect with the BCPA Peer Program and planning is underway as to how we can achieve a closer collaboration between the two services that will deliver a stronger benefit to injured workers.



“The OT just left after assessing our house. I showed her all the wonderful info you sent me and we both agreed to how great you are! She asked if I could give her a copy of all your info and asked for your contact number, as she was so impressed that she just wanted to know who you were.”

Following a spinal cord injury, individuals face the challenge of adjusting and adapting to a new way of life. It's a steep learning curve; however BCPA Information Services is doing its best to assist by providing access to up-to-date information on community resources, methods of preventing and treating health issues, equipment advances, SCI research, accessible accommodation, recreation opportunities, and more.

“I'm sure you'll get my analogy that it's like having 999 pieces to a 1,000 piece puzzle. Although everyone I've asked for help has done their best, no one can put the entire puzzle together for us... and I muddle through, confused as to how I figure out what's best for my dad, and how to accomplish it. You've given me a lot of great leads to follow, and I am very grateful.”

BCPA's Information Services Program houses over 50 years' experience and knowledge, directly or where and how to obtain it, that's critical for optimizing the ability to adapt and thrive while living with an SCI. The program includes a

toll-free InfoLine, a comprehensive database available on our website, free classified listings online for buying and selling items relating to SCI, as well as additional products and information developed in collaboration with BCPA peers or community partners. This year we also introduced BCPA's refocused quarterly magazine, *The Spin*, to share news, views and stories about spinal cord injury, our SCI community and the individuals who inspire us, our members.

InfoLine and SCI Database

As we refocused our commitment to providing the best information service possible, we initiated a toll-free phone line, staffed with knowledgeable InfoLine Associates, to fulfill this goal. People who need an answer to a myriad of questions can connect quickly and easily to a caring and well informed BCPA staff member. Over the past year, use of this new service model has grown steadily, culminating in over 2000 queries about every aspect of living with SCI.



Employment HeadStart

Developed with funding from the Province of BC and created in collaboration with BCPA peer members, this project provides information and inspiration on possible career paths following a spinal cord injury. The intention is to encourage the realization that there are many and varied employment opportunities, targeted at those who've just recently been injured and may be facing a career change as a result. The project then aims to connect people with spinal cord injury to specific employment programs, such as the Ministry of Social Development's Employment Program for Persons with Disabilities (EPPD). Through the Employment Headstart project, a series of eight video profiles were developed and made available online. In addition, a companion booklet outlining strategies for finding career satisfaction was produced. This work has been complemented through the efforts of our Peer Associates and Information Service Associates, who help direct members to the Employment Headstart materials and to the EPPD program. This project has been an extremely effective merger of our two program focuses — peer and information services — which we hope to build on in future.

"Look to your peers for encouragement, you won't realize how important it is until you use it!"

The quality of the InfoLine service is dependent, of course, upon our program staff and the depth of our information. Emphasis placed on customer service and training has produced outstanding results. Our InfoLine staff also spend many hours seeking out websites, publications and programs where information can be obtained and to where people can be directed if necessary.

Our SCI Database, available online at www.bcpa.org, is the result of this intensive labour and is constantly evolving, expanding and improving. Staff are available throughout the day, Monday to Friday, to answer questions, provide assistance or point the way to the best information source. This is a province-wide service, developed as part of BCPA's refocus, and is available by emailing info@bcpa.org or phoning toll-free 1-800-689-2477.

"I am writing to inform you that you may now remove my name from your housing email list, because as of today I have secured accessible housing! Thank you very, very, much, from the bottom of my heart; it wouldn't have happened without your assistance."



The Spin Magazine

Our new quarterly magazine, *The Spin*, was launched in March 2011. A perfect complement to BCPA's refocused services, *The Spin* will help create a vibrant and engaged SCI community.

The Spin covers the successes and challenges of people living with SCI, new research, health and wellness information, new technologies, services and strategies. Information is sourced from British Columbia, across Canada and around the world.

Created primarily for people living with SCI and their families, the magazine has proven to be a valuable resource to the broader SCI community, including health professionals, community service providers, researchers, corporate service providers and people with related disabilities.

The magazine goes to 4,000 homes and organizations across the province. It is also available online at www.bcpa.org.

BCPA Website | www.bcpa.org

Changes in focus for the organization necessitate, of course, a new website that will provide the foundation for communication, information and peer education initiatives. Many improvements were made during the last year from an organizational perspective as well as to enhance the user experience. The SCI database is now online and is updated on a weekly basis and the Swap 'n Shop online classified service is now housed at bcpa.org.

Our website is easier to navigate and provides better opportunities for supporting BCPA through online donations, as well as membership and volunteer registrations. During 2010-11 there were over 1,900 searches of our SCI database and 22,000 visits to the BCPA website. While the additions made last year were a great start, BCPA is continuing to move forward with the website refocus bringing greater functionality, flexibility and increased interactive capacity. *Stay tuned!*

< FUND DEVELOPMENT >

BCPA is forever grateful for the donors and volunteers who help us improve the quality of life for people with SCI in BC. There are many ways in which individuals and organizations can support BCPA, from volunteering time, to funding a service, to making a cash or online donation.

Over the past year we've seen an exciting trend emerge as more individuals and organizations have volunteered to plan and host independent community events to raise funds for BCPA. Sarb Bains is one individual who wanted to make a difference by hosting an evening of entertainment to raise funds for BCPA. Sarb had some personal reasons for hosting her event, dedicating the occasion to her dad, Chamkaur Singh Dosanjh, who passed away in a car accident that left her brother a paraplegic and mom a quadriplegic, as well as her

uncles who took care of her after the accident. *"I finally have the chance to do something that might make a difference in someone's life and I want to make a difference."* said Sarb.

For the third year running Freedom 55 Financial in association with BCPA held their annual charity golf tournament. Over 100 golfers participated in the tournament raising over \$25,000 for our organization. In April 2010, in partnership with Boys & Girls Club Services of Greater Victoria, we held our annual Monopoly Madness event. 200 guests joined us for some serious monopoly action, raising \$43,000 for BCPA.

For more information on how you can help BCPA make a difference visit www.bcpara.org. **Thank you!**



BCPA greatly appreciates each and every gift, of any amount. While space limitations dictate that we list here only our major supporters, we invite you to visit our website for a complete acknowledgement of our valued donors.

- 7 Eleven Canada Inc.
- Allen & Loreen Vandekerkhove Family Foundation
- Andrew Mahon Foundation
- Aqueduct Foundation
- Aquabus
- Authentic Wine & Spirits
- BC Club Challenge
- BC Paraplegic Foundation
- Canadian Paraplegic Association
- CIBC
- City of North Vancouver
- City of Vancouver
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- The 1988 Foundation
- The Dominion
- The Melusine Foundation
- The Wolrige Foundation
- Thrifty Foods
- TransLink
- United Way of Northern BC
- Vancouver Coastal Health
- Vancouver Regional Construction Association
- WestJet Airlines
- WorkSafeBC
- Victoria Airport

< FINANCIAL SUMMARY >

SUMMARY OF OPERATIONS

	2011	2010
Revenue		
Donations, Bequests and Fundraising Projects	\$677,700	\$1,875,442
Government Funding	420,890	850,965
Gaming	428,000	428,129
BC Paraplegic Foundation	325,000	365,000
Fees for Service	194,304	184,782
Community Groups and UW Donations	59,750	129,561
Interest and other	15,881	55,593
Membership Fees	2,120	2,810
	\$2,123,645	\$3,892,282
Expenses		
Program Delivery	\$1,058,125	\$1,852,713
Fundraising	441,775	390,125
Administrative, Facilities & Support Services	684,219	1,366,758
	\$2,184,119	\$3,609,596
Surplus (Deficit)	(\$60,474)	\$282,686

SUMMARY OF FINANCIAL POSITION

Assets		
Current Assets	\$1,144,167	\$1,353,507
Restricted Cash	313,621	251,120
Capital Assets	151,656	188,688
	\$1,609,444	\$1,793,315
Liabilities		
Current Liabilities	\$748,349	\$856,430
Deferred Contributions	67,560	82,876
Net Assets	793,535	854,009
	\$1,609,444	\$1,793,315

Complete financial statements, audited by KPMG LLP, as well as the auditors' report on those financial statements, are available upon request by calling 604-326-1225 or emailing info@bcpara.org.





Our mission is to assist people with spinal cord injuries and related physical disabilities to achieve independence, self-reliance and full community participation.

BCPA InfoLine 1.800.689.2477

www.bcpa.org

< C O N N E C T W I T H U S >



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