

New Directions

Spring 2016

GUELPH
Independent LIVING

Quarterly publication for GIL clients

www.guelphindependentliving.org



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Mark it in Your Calendar!

June 3 - Client Town Halls

June 15 - GIL Annual General Meeting

July 7 - GIL Annual Picnic

July 27 - Blue Jays Game

August 25 - St. Jacobs

September 28 - Grand River Raceway

Spring is upon us...

By Janet Redman

Mother Nature is making us all impatient for the warmer spring weather ...

During the month of March, GIL was again able to offer thorough cleaning of selected client homes utilizing the services of an outside company. We also replaced the training mannequins for CPR/First Aid classes, developed an online training platform for employees, replenished staff office equipment and contacted a firm to perform a Staff Capacity Audit which will investigate possible process improvements and/or task realignment within the Administration Team.

GIL provided a number of training opportunities for employees this spring: Business Writing Brush-Up for Administration; Mental Health for all at our Agency staff meeting on March 26th; Infection Control; and Drive for Life training for employees who drive as part of their job duties. Those that attended the drive training enjoyed the tablet simulation of driving hazards; the technology is amazing.

GIL's Board of Directors finalized the 2015-2018 Strategic Plan which is posted to the agency's website at www.guelphindependentliving.org. The Plan's focus areas include Organizational Identity, Service Models, Growth, Quality Assurance, Partnerships and Governance. One of the first tasks within the plan is to look at staff capacity within the Administration Team.

Over the past few months, we have been busy finalizing the rollout of the agency's Medication Policy and Workplace Civility and Respect Policy, participating in a Canada in Perspective episode and planning for this year's Leisure events. Please look for more information throughout the newsletter on these initiatives.

The agency's 2016 Annual General Meeting is Planned for June 15th at 6:00 pm at the Elliott Community room; please plan on joining us as the Board approves the audited statements for the 2015-16 fiscal year, introduces of the slate of Directors for 2016-2017 and celebrates the accomplishments of numerous long-term employees. Watch for details coming soon to your mailbox.

Upcoming Client Town Hall Meetings

238 Willow Road

Friday June 3, 2016

from 1:00-2:30 PM

(In the Activity Room on the lower level)

87 Neeve Street

Friday June 3, 2016

from 3:00 – 4:30 PM

(In the Recreation Room on the main level)

GIL Board Meeting Highlights

Highlights from the January 27, 2016 meeting:

- Welcoming of two new Board members, Leanne Warren and James Huntley;
- Renewal of Conflict of Interest, Confidentiality and Offense Declaration forms by all members;
- Union Gas rebate for Make-Up Air units
- Review and approval of December 2015 financial reports for GIL's Health and Housing portfolios;
- Final review and approval of GIL Strategic Plan; and,
- Executive Director's report on Quality Advantage project, Holiday celebrations, Succession Planning workshop, updates to operational changes, and payroll audit.

Highlights from the March 23, 2016 meeting:

- Discussion of the Succession Plan due to the County – workshop scheduled in April for Board Chair and Senior Leadership;
- Review and approval of January 2016 financial reports for GIL's Health and Housing portfolios;
- Approval of proposed 2016-2017 budgets for both portfolios;
- Governance policies approved; and,
- Executive Director's report on Transportation program, Canada in Perspective film shoot, year-end projects, PSW Training fund, and Admin Capacity audit



Willow Place being presented with a rebate cheque from Union Gas for installing new Make-up Air Units. This rebate will be reinvested into the building's capital reserve fund for future projects

GIL on Canada In Perspective

Accessible Media Inc. (AMI) is a not-for-profit multimedia organization serving more than five million Canadians who are blind, partially sighted, deaf, and hard of hearing, in English and AMI-télé in French. AMI's mission is to make accessible media for all Canadians. To learn more visit www.AMI.ca and www.AMItele.ca.

One of AMI's television programs, Canada in Perspective is committed to investigating current societal issues and their impact on Canadians of all abilities and backgrounds. Along with host Anna-Karina Tabuñar, each half-hour episode features documentary-style storytelling and a diverse panel of guests to analyze the issues and offer their personal thoughts and experiences. Information about this program can be found at

<http://www.ami.ca/AMI-tv/Pages/Canada-in-Perspective.aspx>.

Canada in Perspective was recently honoured with the 2016 Academy of Canadian Film and Television's Diversity Award, recognizing excellence and racial / cultural diversity in Canada.

Season five will premiere on AMI-tv in June 2016 and thanks to one of our clients, GIL was asked to participate in filming an episode for this upcoming season. Our topic was the Role and Importance of Attendants/Personal Support Workers for Individuals with Disabilities. The episode will air on **Sunday July 3rd at 6:30pm ET and PT on AMI-tv.**

By going to the link above or the channels below, you can find reruns of past episodes. Season 4 topics included:

- Perfect Parenting: Parenting is a challenge in itself, but what if you are a parent with a disability?
- Getting Away: Looking at accessible vacations for travelers of all abilities.
- Building A Better City: Are urban spaces made accessible for Canadians of all abilities?
- Love & Romance: How does having a disability impact dating life and what does that mean for the world of online dating?

AMI-tv is available as part of the basic digital package from the following television provider's channels at no additional cost:

Bell - 48

Cogeco Ontario - 555

Rogers, Shaw Cable, Telus - 888



GIL'S MEDICATION POLICY

Guelph Independent Living first introduced the intent to develop a Medication Policy at Town Hall meetings in May 2015 in an effort to provide consistent service provision by Workers when assisting with medications. Because this was a significant change to how we operate for both clients and Workers; the policy was implemented in several steps, including writing the policy and procedures, information sessions, Worker meetings and meetings with individual clients to review their medication assistance needs.

Rhonda Vanek from March of Dimes provided training for all Workers in November and December. All that time, GIL began tracking all reported incidents of medication errors to see where improvements to procedures and education could be made. Errors can be made by clients, Workers and/or Regulated Health Care Professionals (RHCP) like doctors, Pharmacies and hospitals.

From December to March, there were 51 reported errors. Details to learn from include:

- The root of the errors were related to Workers 30 times, clients 19 times and RHCP 9 times (Note - total adds to more than 51);
- No serious incidents occurred where transport to hospital was required;
- Incidents involved 15 different clients across all programs;
- Worker errors were related to medications not assisted with at scheduled time/day, medication left behind in blister pack, and medication given but not signed for;
- Client errors included not taking medications set out for later time, not picking up medications from Pharmacy (blister pack ran out), and medication dropped on floor and not retrieved; and,
- RHCP errors included medications not successfully delivered by Pharmacy, medications not poured correctly in blister pack, alterations made to blister pack without Pharmacy initialing changes, and doctor changing prescription without notifying client;

Now that GIL has had an opportunity to use and make improvements to the various procedures and forms, the policy is officially effective as of April 1, 2016. Thank you to everyone for their patience with this policy implementation; the feedback has been mostly positive. If you have any additional questions or concerns about how GIL assists with your medications, please contact your Program Supervisor.



Meet the Board - James Huntley

James Huntley chose to volunteer with the Board of Directors at GIL because he wanted to give back to the community and be a part in helping people. He said he was “instantly impressed with GIL’s long history of helping community members and its strong mission statement that guides them”. After that, he knew he wanted to be a part of this organization.

James brings a strong financial background to the GIL Board of Directors, which will make him a great asset to the team. He’s a designated Chartered Professional Accountant (CPA)/Certified Management Accountant (CMA) with a strong financial background, through his full time employment and studies. He also has a wealth of experience with internal controls, governance,



human resources and management. He feels that attaining his CPA/CMA was his greatest personal accomplishment to date, as it was the most challenging professional goal he’s undertaken, and the most fulfilling.

Some of his passions outside of work include volunteering through the CPA society to help university students realize their exciting potential in the business world; providing mentorship to them and promoting the CPA brand. He’s also an avid reader with a growing book collection at home. When not busy with family, reading or volunteering, he enjoys playing Tennis, going for a hike, watching movies, downhill skiing or heading out onto our Ontario lakes to do some fishing.

Ontario Special Olympics



Congratulations to Marion Zemann who has been selected from over 400 participating athletes to help promote the 2016 Special Olympics Ontario, Provincial Spring Games. The games will take place from May 26-28 at various locations in Guelph. For more information please visit their website at:

www.specialolympics2016games.com



FALLS PREVENTION OVERVIEW – 2015/2016 YEAR

Part of delivering quality support services is to identify risk to clients and provide recommendations and/or implement changes to improve/eliminate those risks. One significant risk to clients, especially as they age, is falls. GIL began tracking incidents of client falls in April 2014. In the 2014-2015 fiscal year, Workers reported 19 incidents where clients had fallen to the floor and our statistics for 2015-2016 again showed the same fall rate. Although we were hoping for a reduction in the number of falls, we are certainly glad that there was not an increase and will continue to promote falls prevention going forward.

The main root cause of falls was again identified as unsuccessful independent transfers; other causes included inappropriate equipment use (seatbelt too loose, brakes not on, bed rails not up) and tripping hazards. Although the majority of clients did not injure themselves more than experiencing some aches and pains the following day, there

was unfortunately three incidents where clients had to be transported to hospital for medical attention.

In an effort to prevent falls and/or reduce the severity, we remind clients to please:



- Contact Workers (within 24-hour programs) for assistance with transfers or wait until a Worker is present;
- Use equipment as required or work with an Occupational Therapist when changes to equipment needs are identified;
- Remove tripping hazards and clutter in your home;
- Always move in a forward direction to ensure good sightlines; and
- Use a personal alarm device so that help can be summoned quickly should an accident occur.

GIL will continue to track incidents to determine if any additional strategies can be implemented to keep our clients healthy and safe!

Infection Control

As mentioned in the fall newsletter, gloves are used in community health-care for two main reasons:

1. To reduce the risk of contamination (infection) of attendants' hands from blood and other body fluids
2. To reduce the risk of spreading germs to the environment, and from attendant to client, client to attendant, as well as from one client to another

For safety, GIL requires that attendants use only nitrile gloves for all client-care activities that may involve exposure to blood and other body fluids to minimize and/or eliminate risks.

GIL has a new glove supplier and nitrile gloves can now be purchased for the at-cost rate of \$12.00 per box (200 gloves). Clients wanting to purchase gloves elsewhere should contact their Program Supervisor to ensure that the brand being considered meets all GIL standards.

This spring GIL invited representatives from the Waterloo Wellington Infection Control Network (Public Health Ontario) in to review Infection Control Practices, including how using Routine Practices can decrease the risk of spreading infections.



While Personal Protective Equipment (PPE) such as nitrile gloves are essential, so is performing proper hand hygiene before initial client contact, before performing tasks requiring a sterile environment, and after body fluid exposure. For this reason, GIL clients are required to provide the following proper supplies:

- Liquid soap dispensers
- Soap
- Paper towels
- Paper towel holders
- Plastic bags

To provide the safest environment possible for both you and your attendants, please ensure that these essential supplies are readily available during your care and cleaning activities.

Accessible Transportation

Some accessible transportation options around and outside of Guelph:

Guelph Transit 519-822-1811

Three public transit services are available through Guelph Transit. Conventional transit has buses on a set route with bus stops. The Community bus service is also on a set route but has far fewer bus stops. The Mobility bus service is a members-only service. All three transit services are accessible and charge the same fare to use the service.

Paying

Transit fares are: exact cash, tickets or monthly passes. Guelph Transit's current fares are posted online at www.guelph.ca/living/getting-around/bus/fares-and-passes.

The City of Guelph allows people with a disability to be accompanied by a support person. On Guelph transit the support person rides for free. This program is called the Personal Assistant for Leisure (PAL). A support person can be friend, relative or support person who is acting in a support capacity. The person with the disability shows their PAL card and pays their fare, the support person then rides for free.

Passengers of both Mobility and the conventional bus service who have the Canadian National Institute for the Blind (CNIB) identification card, hold a Guelph Transit Veterans Pass, or are under five years of age, ride for free.

Mobility Service

People with a disability may be approved to ride the Guelph Transit Mobility bus service. This service is a vestibule to vestibule transportation service for

people with a disability who would have difficulty riding the conventional bus service.

Applying

The application for this service is available at the City Hall administration office or at http://guelph.ca/wp-content/uploads/Mobility_Services_Application_Form.pdf. You and your registered health care professional (for example: doctor, OT or PT) will complete a form. If the criteria for using mobility services are met, the applicant will be approved and issued a mobility client number.

Conventional Bus System

Conventional transit buses are accessible with a ramp and have at least two spaces for a wheelchair. Passengers who want their wheelchair secured can ask the driver for assistance.

Accessibility Services is offering a Travel Training program for those with a disability who would like to learn how to ride the conventional bus system. This program is currently a pilot program and is free of charge. Participants are matched one to one with a volunteer who knows the conventional transit system inside and out.

If you want to learn the basics of riding a conventional transit bus before you try the bus, download Transit's Magnusmode app for step by step information on buying tickets and passes, riding the bus, riding the bus with your wheelchair, how to transfer, and tips on having a safe and comfortable ride.

If you want to learn more, Guelph Transit does presentations for small groups or call Guelph Transit and they will be happy to answer your questions.

Agency Updates

Red Top Taxi 519-821-1700

Red Top has mobility vehicles in their fleet. This is a private company and the individual is responsible for paying the fare. Individuals who are registered Mobility customers and who use a wheelchair may purchase Taxi Scrip (\$40 dollars of scrip costs \$20) to ease some of their transportation costs in or outside of Guelph. It can be purchased at City Hall.

VON 519-323-2330 or 1-888-506-6353

Located in Mount Forest, they have one accessible vehicle within their Transportation program. It is necessary to register with VON Transportation Services prior to booking rides with them. They will provide transportation to out-of-town medical appointments. These trips must be booked



a week or two before the trip is required. There is a per kilometer charge for the trips.

Greyhound Bus 1-800-752-4841

Requests can be made to the Greyhound Travel Assist Office for wheelchair accessible coach.

Go Bus Service 1-888-GET-ON-GO (438-6646)

A wheelchair accessible bus can be requested in advance of your trip; a companion and/or specially trained dog for assistance may ride free of cost.

Private bus companies – Denny’s 1-800-265-3389 and Voyager 1-800-263-7163

Accessible small or large buses that may be rented for larger groups, especially for longer trips. Call for details.

GIL’S New Transportation Program

GIL is set to launch its Transportation program. The program will address the gaps left by existing mobility services available to GIL clients. The Transportation program will be set up similar to GIL’s Endowment Fund. Just as the Endowment Fund is used to assist when there are funding shortfalls for equipment, the Transportation fund will assist with transportation costs. We plan to allocate an annual amount as funds continue to be available. Requests for assistance will be awarded to assist with out of town medical appointments and social, leisure and educational opportunities (for example).

When the original option to purchase a vehicle was found to be unaffordable and complicated, staff moved to the idea of a “transportation fund” as a more responsive option. Staff first completed a draft of policies and procedures that will govern the “how to” of this fund. We then invited our fund benefactor, Linda French and clients, Ken Keating, Sarah Mathison and Evelyn Herron, to review the work and thinking to-date. The work continues and the committee hopes to launch a “pilot” of the Transportation Fund Program in the fall of 2016. Stay tuned!

Ontario Introduces Reloadable Payment Card for Social Assistance

Province Offering New, Safer Option for Clients

Ontario is making it safer and easier for people to receive and use their social assistance benefits. Ontario Disability Support Program (ODSP) clients who do not have a bank account will be able to receive their benefits on a reloadable payment card rather than receiving a paper cheque.

The card, provided by the Royal Bank of Canada, works in the same way as a debit card but does not require a bank account. Each month that a client is eligible for ODSP benefits, funds are loaded onto the card and clients can then use their card to make ATM cash withdrawals, as well as in-store or online purchases or payments. To ensure client privacy and safety, the cards are not monitored and do not identify the cardholder as a social assistance client or a recipient of government services.

For individuals without bank accounts, reloadable payment cards offer many benefits, including:

- Not having to use expensive cheque-cashing services and avoiding the risk of carrying large amounts of cash
- Four (4) no-fee ATM withdrawals per month and unlimited in-store or online payments and purchases
- Enhanced security with PIN and chip technology.

The province will phase the new cards into use. In the first phase that is already underway, clients can volunteer to test the reloadable payment card and will provide feedback on the kinds of supports, information and processes needed to benefit fully from the card. This summer in a second phase,

the card will be issued to all ODSP clients who are unable to open or maintain a bank account - with some exceptions, such as those who have limited access to a bank machine.

The reloadable payment card is part of the government's plan to enhance social assistance, improve customer service, and make programs work better for clients. Providing vulnerable Ontarians with the support they need to realize their potential is part of the government's economic plan for Ontario. The four-part plan is building Ontario up by investing in people's talents and skills, making the largest investment in public infrastructure in Ontario's history, creating a dynamic, supportive environment where business thrives and building a secure savings plan.

QUICK FACTS

- There are approximately 465,000 individuals on ODSP in Ontario.
- 14 per cent, or 46,000, of ODSP clients still receive paper cheques, while 86 per cent use the preferred option of direct bank deposit.
- The cost to implement the card is approximately \$3.1 million. Replacing cheques with the card will save the government up to \$1.7 million annually.

ADDITIONAL RESOURCES

- About Ontario Disability Support Program Income Support

Source: www.news.ontario.ca

Agency Updates

Upcoming 2016 Leisure Events

DATE	EVENT	TIME	PRICE
Wednesday, May 18	The Museum	1:00-3:30pm	\$5.00 for clients & guests
Wednesday June 15	Toronto Zoo	11:00am-4:00pm	Clients: \$14.00 Seniors \$11.50 Guests: Box office pricing
Thursday July 7	GIL Picnic	1:30-4:00pm	Free
Wednesday July 27	Blue Jays	12:30-4:00pm	Clients: \$10.00 Guests: \$15.00
Thursday August 25	St. Jacobs	10:00am-3:00pm	Clients: \$10.00 Guests: \$25.00
Wednesday September 28	Grand River Raceway	5:30-10:00pm	\$25.00 for clients & guests
Sunday, October 16	Footloose at the Dunfield Theatre Cambridge	2:00-4:30pm	\$40.68 for clients & guests
Wednesday November 30	Christmas Shopping Trip	10:00am-3:00pm	Clients: \$10.00 Guests: \$20.00

Annual General Meeting

Wednesday June 15 - Guelph Independent Living Annual General Meeting

Join us at the Elliott Community Centre at 6:00pm where we will celebrate GIL's accomplishments from the past year, including service awards for long-term GIL Employees.

If you are interested in presenting a staff service award please contact Janet at (519)836-1812 x30.