

Report From The Community Living Department

Submitted by Melanie Mendonca, A/Director, Community Living

This past year posed many challenges for the Community Living Program as some of our persons served presented complex health issues. One of the persons served was faced with overcoming an extreme self abusive tendency and a stay at the Provincial Assessment Centre. This stay proved to be beneficial and this individual is making incredible strides. In October 2008 we lost a long term person served to liver failure; due to the incredible strength of his support team, he was able to pass away at his home. Some of the persons served had to struggle through some minor health issues demonstrating the strength that these individuals call upon in their lives. On a positive note, we welcomed a young man into one of our homes and he has made some progress since joining the home.

In spite of the challenges, the staff ensured that celebration, fun and social opportunities were included in the lives of the persons served, and they enjoyed a number of events throughout the year. These included several milestone birthday parties held to recognize the individuals, and the annual Easter, barbecue, Halloween and Christmas parties.

The employees and management team geared up for the second Accreditation designation through CARF (Commission on Accreditation of Rehabilitation Facilities) which took place in May 2009. Although it was a lot of pressure and tremendous amount of work, the program

received its second three year accreditation. We are proud that this second accreditation came with few recommendations, and this demonstrates the hard work done and dedication that the employees, management and Board have for the individuals we support.

Staffing in the program has seen some changes this year. The Community Living Director continues to be away on an extended medical leave. The Community Living Program welcomed two new supervisors to our team, Tammy Abbott and Steve Webb.

We continue to practice community involvement for all of the persons served who reside in our homes. The individuals are kept busy with daily activities which include recreational, life skills and social activities. Some of the individuals' favourite activities include swimming, bowling, music therapy, movies and bingo.

Health issues faced by the individuals we serve during the past year clearly demonstrates a growing need for increased and specialized care for this population as they age. The Department will continue to assess this situation as it responds to these escalating health demands.

This has been a year full of challenges and we would like to thank our Community Living employees who take special care to meet the needs of the persons served.

