

Introducing Disability
Alliance Canada

Fixing BC's
Earnings Cap

Employment
Disincentives
in the CDB

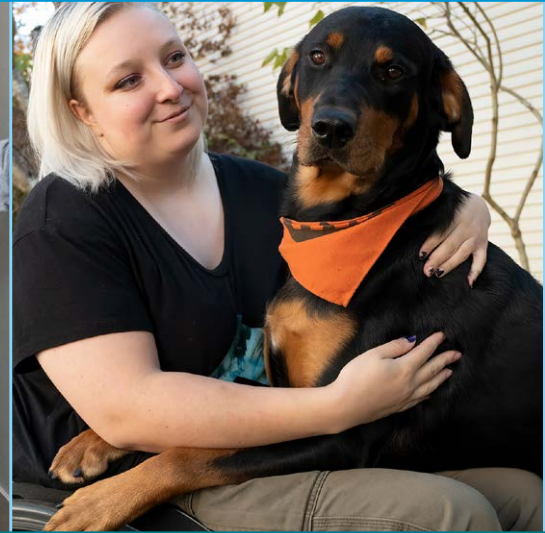
transition

The Magazine of Disability Alliance BC

WORKING FOR CHANGE

Disability and
the Fight for
Equity in
Employment





The Right Fit is a multi-partner service designed to address the crisis in wheelchair accessible housing.

We help match affordable, accessible homes and independent living supports with people who need them in the Vancouver region.

For questions about the program, to learn more about how to be involved, and for media inquiries, please contact:

Isabelle Groc, Right Fit Program Manager
rightfit@dabc.ca <https://therightfitbc.org>

Need a Vacant Accessible Unit?

If you are a wheelchair user or an organization representing wheelchair users, please contact:

The Right Fit Navigation Team
navigation@therightfitbc.org 604-777-7576

Have a Vacant Accessible Unit?

If you are a housing provider in the public or private housing market and have an accessible vacant unit, or you would like to learn about our

Accessibility Checklist, please contact:

Anna Chow, Accessible Housing Coordinator
housing@therightfitbc.org

Disability Alliance BC (DABC) is the Right Fit's sponsoring organization and oversees the program. The Individualized Funding Resource Centre (IFRC) is responsible for client management.

inside

featured articles

Editorial by Neil Squire Society	4
Living Wage Employers vs. the Earnings Limit by Helaine Boyd	6
Introducing Disability Alliance Canada	10
Employment Equity Campaigns	11
The CDB and Employment by Alissa Segal and Liss Cairns	12
How Workplace Accommodations Are Meant to Work by Chloe Krause	15
The Reducing Poverty Initiative by Bill Dyer	16
A Message From Neil Squire: A Look Inside Our Employment Programs	18
From the Hands of Many by Simon Driver	24
Employment Equity Work of NIDMAR by Wolfgang Zimmermann	26
Living, Parenting and Working After Brain Aneurysms by Gerald P.	29
Connection, Community and Redefining “Contribution” by Liss Cairns	30

selected content

Memorial: Pam Horton	9
DABC is Expanding our DTC Supports! by Cynthia Minh ...	20
Accessibility Projects Grants 2025/26	21
Contact Tax AID DABC	22
Contact DABC Programs and Services	28





editorial | by Neil Squire Society

There are many myths that need busting. When some employers see the word disability, they think it means “less ability” to do the job.

From submitting countless applications to waiting for that one callback, navigating the job market can be frustrating for anyone. But if you have a disability, it can be much more difficult.

It might start right at the beginning of the process when you’re reading a job posting. You may notice a requirement that excludes you.

There are too many barriers to count.

“Many times, postings unintentionally screen people with disabilities out of the process,” says Patty Lavakittichaiyant, National Program Manager for Neil Squire’s Creative Employment Options program. “For example, when a driver’s license is required, those who have mobility issues may be automatically screened out, even though they might have the other qualifications.”

Or maybe you’ve already applied, but a test is required as part of the hiring process. You have a visual disability and the test isn’t accessible.

Through our Creative Employment Options program, Lavakittichaiyant leads a team that works with people with disabilities to find job opportunities that fit their skills and experiences. She also works with employers to find roles for participants.

Busting Myths

There are many myths that need busting. When some employers see the word disability, they think it means “less ability” to do the job. But, employees with disabilities often bring creative solutions to problems.

“With the right accommodations and supports, workers with disabilities can be as productive as workers without disabilities,” says Lavakittichaiyant.

Another myth is that it will be too expensive for a business to accommodate employees with disabilities.

In reality, many accommodations are low to no-cost.

“Everyone is different. But for most people, honestly, the accommodation they need is flexible work hours. It doesn’t have to be an expensive accommodation or technology that we are talking about,” Lavakittichaiyant explains. She also says that many of the participants with disabilities hired through the Creative Employment Options program are retained long-term.

For more costly accommodations, there are some programs available which can provide funding, like WorkBC Assistive Technology Services.

Systemic Obstacles

Of course, many employment barriers for people with disabilities go beyond employer perceptions. With disability benefits, for example, you can only earn so much before the benefits you receive are reduced — along with the incentive to work.

"It's a tough choice that people have to make. 'Do I keep my benefits or do I work?'" says Lavakittichaiyant. "We have a discussion with our clients about the pros and cons. At the end of the day, it's their decision."

Tips for Job Seekers with Disabilities

One of the big questions that job seekers with disabilities face is when—and if—to disclose their disability to potential employers (see Free DABC Employment Resources on p. 19).

"Our program staff tend to recommend people do so early on," says Lavakittichaiyant, though it's a personal decision.

"It's a tough choice that people have to make. 'Do I keep my benefits or do I work?'"

Disclosing your disability early in the process helps an employer know your needs from the start and gives them an opportunity to provide accommodations. If they don't know, they can't help. And while being screened out of a job is a valid concern, it raises an important question about how inclusive this employer will be.

If you see a job description that seems like a good fit for you, except for one detail — like a driver's


license requirement — it might be worth reaching out to the employer to see if accommodations can be made. It's also worth looking up a company's missions and values. It's a good place to get a feel for a company's culture.

In This Transition...

- DABC's challenges as a living wage employer for people with disabilities
- How the incoming Canada Disability Benefit needs to change to support employment
- A look at the amazing work of the National Institute of Disability Management and Research
- What workplace accommodation can (and should) look like
- ...and more.

Get in Touch

If you need help with your employment journey, reach out to the team at Neil Squire, either by email at info@neilsquire.ca or by telephone at 604-473-9363. You can also learn more about our employment programs on page 18 in this Transition.

NEIL SQUIRE SOCIETY USES TECHNOLOGY, KNOWLEDGE AND PASSION TO EMPOWER CANADIANS WITH DISABILITIES. 

transition

The views and opinions expressed within the pages of Transition are not necessarily those held by the total DABC membership or Board of Directors. The material presented is meant to be thought-provoking and to promote dialogue.

Planning Team Helaine Boyd, Liss Cairns, Chloe Krause, Cynthia Minh, Lauren Stinson, Ann Vrlak

Editor | Designer Ann Vrlak

Cover Designer Fiona Gamiet

Administrative Assistant Livia Turnbull

Proofreaders Chloe Krause, Danielle Gauld

Subscriptions and Ads

Transition is published three times a year by Disability Alliance BC. Any advertising in Transition is for readers' benefit and does not constitute an endorsement by Disability Alliance BC.

Submissions and Reprints

Articles and creative work are very welcome for consideration from individuals and organizations. Publication and editing of submissions are at our discretion. Transition content may be reprinted without prior permission, when accompanied by this citation: "From Transition magazine, Disability Alliance BC, [edition date]."

Contact Us

Disability Alliance BC
1450-605 Robson Street,
Vancouver, BC V6B 5J3
T: 604-872-1278 F: 604-875-9227

Traditional, ancestral, and stolen Territories of the Musqueam (xʷməθkʷəy̓əm), Tsleil-Waututh (Səl̓ilwataʔ/Selilwitulh) and Squamish (Skwxwú7mesh Úxwumixw) Peoples

Transition general and advertising:
transition@dabc.ca

Online:
disabilityalliancebc.org/publications/transition-magazine/

DABC general:
feedback@dabc.ca



Living Wage Employers vs. the Earnings Limit

BY HELAINE BOYD

This article is excerpted from a 2024 editorial in the [The Tyee](#).

I often hear from clients on disability assistance who feel that they have become trapped within a cycle of poverty, due to the punitive restrictions put in place by the Ministry of Social Development and Poverty Reduction (MSDPR).

A stark example is the annual earnings exemption limit. This limit means that a person receiving disability assistance can make only up to \$16,200 from employment income before their Persons with Disabilities, or PWD, benefits payments are cut off for the rest of the year.

A single person on disability assistance receives \$1,483.50 in PWD income per month. If they can also work enough to reach the maximum

What I want, and can't have, is a discussion with my staff on how many hours they can work based on their own understanding of what they are able to do.

earnings limit without exceeding it, then their total monthly net income would be, on average, \$2,833.50.

This means that, even if they're working as much as they can, people on disability assistance are generally still making far less than other living-wage employees, despite having higher costs of living due to disability-related costs.

As an employer, I feel disgusted by the fact that I am complicit in working within the constraints of an ableist system.

It's a system that forces disabled employees to make choices about their work based on how much a person on disability assistance is allowed to earn as employment income before they are rendered ineligible for PWD benefits — income that is a lifeline as much as it is constraining.

What I want, and can't have, is a discussion with my staff on how many hours they can work based on their own understanding of what they are able to do.

The earnings limit for people on PWD income makes a mockery of living-wage employers like DABC and other organizations that work to uphold the dignity and self-determination of people with disabilities.

My colleague Steve Wright shares this experience as a person who was receiving disability assistance for many years.

I was on disability assistance from 2008 until late 2023. My path to receiving, then leaving behind PWD [income], and thus financial support, was a long one.

At times, I experienced the crushing powerlessness of my livelihood being beholden to a faceless governmental ministry. Our government knows us and our existence. They have our statistics, control our support at all levels, and they are the ones who adjudicate on whether we are severely disabled enough to receive PWD income.

When my earnings limit was reached in 2023, and my disability assistance was stopped, I kept working because I was able to at that time. But my ability to work is never guaranteed because I am severely mentally ill.

So, we must choose between working beyond our abilities and possibly harming ourselves, ceasing work before reaching the earnings limit, or being left without any income at all. The earnings limit is a rule that is targeted squarely at a population known to be vulnerable and which denies us basic dignity.

As a living-wage employer, we have also committed to the central principle that we want our employees to earn enough to have a decent livelihood.

Impossible Decisions

Time and time again, DABC has advocated to increase assistance rates, including calling upon the government to index rates to inflation so people on disability assistance have some level of confidence in financial planning for their future.

Beyond our client base, the majority of my organization's staff are people with disabilities.

To ensure we do not negatively impact their access to disability assistance, we often work with the employee to determine how much they can feasibly work while stay-

ing on PWD income or we develop a plan for them to transition to relying solely on their employment income from DABC.

We have tried to make our employment environment more inclusive by offering more sick days (18 sick days per year), robust extended health benefits and a health spending account for other health-related expenses.

Why Vancouver Should Be a Living Wage Employer

But these methods are only part of employers' moral responsibility to their employees. As a living-wage

employer, we have also committed to the central principle that we want our employees to earn enough to have a decent livelihood. The current earnings limit flies in the face of this central principle.

This is why [I've joined 50 other](#) non-profit leaders, advocates and community partners in the anti-poverty and disability rights sectors in calling for Minister of Social Development and Poverty Reduction Sheila Malcolmson to abolish the earnings limit.

HELAINE BOYD IS EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR OF DABC. 



Free Employment Support for People with Disabilities

Neil Squire's **Creative Employment Options** program offers:

- Individualized career and personal development
- Job search support and virtual training
- Distance learning technologies
- Ergonomic and/or assistive technology solutions
- Potential wage subsidies

Contact us today!

T 1 877 673 4636 E info@neilsquire.ca

www.neilsquire.ca/creativeemployment



Funded in part by the
Government of Canada's
Opportunities Fund for
Persons with Disabilities





Thank you
for helping
us grow.

Program and Project Funders

BC Community Gaming Grants

Canada Mortgage and Housing Corporation

Catherine Donnelly Foundation

City of Vancouver

Employment and Social Development Canada

Lu'ma Native BCH Housing Society

Insurance Corporation of BC

Island Health Authority

Law Foundation of British Columbia

Ministry of Social Development and Poverty Reduction

Vancouver Coastal Health

Vancouver Foundation

Dedicated Funders

BC Hydro Employees Community Services Fund

Canada Helps Giving Fund

PayPal Giving Fund

Provincial Employees Community Services Fund

TELUS Employees Charitable Giving Program

And generous donors like you!

We gratefully acknowledge
the financial support of the Province of BC.



DABC Workshops

Outside of our direct services, DABC also provides training and workshops to community organizations, health care providers, businesses and government on a variety of topics.

If you are an organization that wants to collaborate, please visit <https://disabilityalliancebc.org/program/workshops/>.

You can also follow our social media for more information on workshops available to the public.



Memorial Pam Horton

It is with great sadness that all of us at DABC acknowledge the passing of our dear friend, mentor, longtime board member and Honourary Past Chair Pam Horton.

In addition to serving on our board of directors for close to thirty years, Pam was also the first executive director of DABC. Her work as a disability rights advocate spanned over five decades at the municipal, provincial and federal level.

She was a founding member of both the North Shore Advisory Committee on Disability Issues and Trans-Link's Access Transit Users' Advisory Committee. She was also a past president of the North Shore Disability Resource Centre and a former board member of the Multiple Sclerosis Society of Canada.

As a staunch advocate for survivors of domestic and sexual violence, Pam was a member of the BC Institute Against Family Violence Steering Committee, the North Shore Coordinating Committee to End Violence Against Women in Relationships and Together Against Violence.

In her final years, she turned much of her advocacy efforts to supporting seniors, serving on the City of North Vancouver Seniors Action Table and their Seniors Working Group.

In the months prior to her death, she was also one of the founding board members of DABC's national affiliate Disability Alliance Canada.



In addition to serving on our board of directors for close to thirty years, Pam was also the first executive director of DABC.

Anyone who knew Pam will remember her for the kindness, wisdom, humour, generosity and compassion that she brought into any space. Her tireless advocacy, as well as her willingness to bravely speak out on important issues, however controversial, earned her the deep respect of so many people.

We send our deepest condolences to everyone in the community who was touched by this remarkable woman during her lifetime. It was a life well-lived, full of purpose and remarkable service to others.

Pam's amazing legacy, as well as her vision of a truly accessible, inclusive and equal society for all inspires all of us at DABC to continue with the important work that needs to be done to make that vision into a reality.

The DABC Board of Directors 

Introducing



This step marks a significant milestone in our efforts to extend our reach and impact across Canada.

Disability Alliance BC (DABC) is excited to announce the creation of a new national non-profit organization: Disability Alliance Canada (DAC).

DAC is a separate, stand-alone non-profit operating under direct leadership of DABC's Executive Director. Several of DABC's Board of Directors also sit on DAC's board.

In this way, the mission and mandate of DAC and DABC are intentionally aligned: DAC's mission is to promote a more inclusive and equitable society for people with all disabilities across Canada through direct services, community partnerships, systemic advocacy, research and publications.

Over the past several years, we have come to realize that the work DABC does, particularly in providing in-depth direct service support to clients, is not consistently provided in other provinces and territories.

DABC's knowledge and experience supporting clients with our

direct services is something we offer the disability community in BC.


Our aim in establishing DAC as a national non-profit is to expand our direct services across the country, starting with offering support for Disability Tax Credit (DTC) and Canada Pension Plan – Disability (CPP-D) applications.

This step marks a significant milestone in our efforts to extend our reach and impact across Canada.

With the formation of this new, independent entity, DABC will continue our work in BC, while DAC will work to serve disability communities in all other provinces and territories.

We remain deeply committed to our mission and values, and we thank everyone who has supported us on this journey. Please stay tuned for more updates from DAC through our [separate website](#), including [job openings](#).

We encourage you to share this announcement with your networks. Thank you for spreading the word!

For more information or inquiries, please contact info@disabilityalliancecanada.ca. 

Employment Equity Campaigns

DABC and community partners are pressing for provincial and federal changes.

This Transition looks at some of the fundamental obstacles in the way of real employment equity for people living with a disability. Over the past few years, DABC has been part of two major advocacy efforts around earnings exemptions for people who receive the Persons with Disabilities (PWD) benefit.

2024

Removing the Annual Earnings Exemption from PWD Benefits

BC Poverty Reduction Coalition, Disability Alliance BC and Living Wage Campaign

In June 2024, our organizations sent an open letter to Sheila Malcolmson, Minister of Social Development and Poverty Reduction about the Annual Earnings Exemption (AEE) (see article on p. 6).

BC's latest Poverty Reduction Strategy was being developed at the time and we urged the Minister to prioritize removing this exemption so workers with disabilities would "have access to the same working rights and quality of life as their peers." The letter stresses how the AEE discourages employers from paying staff with disabilities a living wage. Currently, employers must pay workers with disabilities less than their non-disabled peers or offer fewer hours, so their income and other disability benefits are not affected.

The letter was supported by [50 BC organizations and individuals.](#)

2025 Update

Since our advocacy campaign in 2024, the provincial government came out with their new Poverty Reduction Strategy, however, there was no indication that the Province intends to scrap the earnings cap any time soon. DABC continues to liaise with the Ministry of Social Development and Poverty Reduction on this advocacy during quarterly meetings.

2022

Treating EI Benefits as Earned Income

BC Poverty Reduction Coalition, Disability Alliance BC and West Coast LEAF

[This campaign](#) recommended that Employment Insurance (EI) benefits should be considered earned income, so they are not clawed back from PWD benefits. The organizations compared the EI claw backs for PWD recipients to exempted benefits available to other Canadians, such as the Canada Emergency Response Benefit, Canada Recovery Child Care Benefits, Workers' Compensation and others, can be seen as "giving precedence to one form of illness or disability over another."

This campaign recommended that Employment Insurance (EI) benefits should be considered earned income, so they are not clawed back from PWD benefits.

The campaign was also supported on human rights grounds by the BC Human Rights Commissioner, Kasari Govender.

2025 Update

Since our 2022 advocacy on this issue, BC's latest Poverty Reduction Strategy does mention the Province's intention to change how they treat EI income. On page 34 of the strategy document, they state: "Considering income exemptions that could stack benefits and help people retain more income. Examples could include changing the rules around spousal income or exempting federal benefits like Employment Insurance from income."

We continue to follow up with the Provincial Government on both of these points of advocacy so that they make good on what they have published in their strategy. [T](#)

The Canada Disability Benefit and Employment

How could the CDB encourage more people with disabilities to become part of the workforce? by Alissa Segal and Liss Cairns

The federal government created the Canada Disability Benefit (CDB) to reduce the disproportionate rate of poverty among people with disabilities by improving the financial security of working-age people with disabilities.

While the introduction of the CDB is an exciting development resulting from years of community advocacy, it falls short of its promise to lift people with disabilities out of poverty.

Advocacy groups and advocates alike have urged the government to improve the CDB by increasing the benefit amount and raising restrictive income thresholds. An improved benefit design that eliminates disincentives to employment could provide many people with disabilities the support they need to participate in the workforce.

Work is a Human Right

Being a part of the workforce is a fundamental human right. Disability advocates have long argued that employment is crucial for promoting greater social participation and inclusion.

[Many people with disabilities want to work](#) but face significant barriers. According to the Government of Canada's *Canada Disability Inclusion Action Plan, 2022*, there are [an estimated 852,000 people with disabilities](#) aged 15 to 64 who are unemployed but have the potential to work.

The [poverty rate for people with disabilities](#) is twice as high as that of non-disabled people, leaving many struggling to meet basic needs. Without access to essential resources, such as basic income, health-care, and other support services, people with disabilities are [unable to fully participate](#) in their communities, including in the workforce.

The maximum a person can receive from the CDB is \$200 per month, which does not adequately address this disparity, leaving many people with disabilities facing the same challenges as they did before the CDB.

Low Income Threshold a Disincentive

Many benefit programs have income thresholds that are set too low, creating barriers for people trying to supplement their income through employment. Exceeding these thresholds results in reductions or "clawbacks" for any additional income earned, effectively penalizing people for working more.



Additional work hours could mean a reduced benefit amount, and exceeding threshold limits could mean losing the benefit entirely.

While these income thresholds are meant to ensure that only those who need these benefits are the ones receiving them, they often complicate the efforts of people trying to support themselves.

The income thresholds and working income exemptions for the CDB are as follows:

- A single person can earn up to \$23,000 plus \$10,000 in working income
- A couple can earn up to a combined \$32,500 plus \$14,000 in combined working income.

These income thresholds and working income exemptions mean people will be forced to choose between receiving the benefit or working. Additional work hours could mean a reduced benefit amount, and exceeding threshold limits could mean losing the benefit entirely. This system makes it nearly

impossible for people who may want to transition from dependence on benefits—which often perpetuates poverty—to achieving financial security through multiple income sources.

Two Crucial Changes are Needed

Raise the benefit amount

For some people with disabilities, working may not be feasible. However, those who can and want to work must receive the necessary support and resources. An adequately funded CDB would help more people with disabilities access the workplace by addressing their fundamental needs and allowing them the time and space to pursue meaningful employment. When basic needs are not met, people struggle to live a life of dignity that everyone deserves. By ensuring proper support for people with disabilities, we allow them to define their own participation in society.

Increase the income thresholds and working income exemptions

As the cost of living continues to rise, it is becoming increasingly difficult for people to make ends meet. Many people with disabilities want to work more to increase their income, but low income thresholds and strict working income exemptions disincentivize them. These income thresholds and exemptions should be raised to a level that does


These income thresholds and exemptions should be raised to a level that does not penalize people for working more.

not penalize people for working more.

[Plan Institute](#) and our partners will continue to advocate for an improved and increased CDB to ensure it fulfills its original purpose of lifting people with disabilities out of poverty and providing the resources needed to participate fully in their communities.

To learn more about the Canada Disability Benefit and for all the latest updates, please visit: <https://www.canadadisabilitybenefit.ca/>

LISS CAIRNS IS A NEURODIVERGENT NONBINARY PERSON WHO HAS HAD LIFELONG MENTAL-HEALTH-RELATED DISABILITIES AND IS THEIR WIFE'S CAREGIVER. THEY HAVE WORKED WITH PLAN INSTITUTE SINCE 2017 FOCUSING PRIMARILY ON SUPPORTING ACCESS TO DISABILITY BENEFITS AND OTHER PROGRAMS.

ALISSA SEGAL JOINED PLAN INSTITUTE IN 2023. WITH A BACKGROUND IN NON-PROFIT WORK AND VOLUNTEERING, SHE HAS DEDICATED HER CAREER TO MAKING A MEANINGFUL IMPACT THROUGH EMPOWERING OTHERS. ALISSA STARTED HER CAREER IN THE CREATIVE INDUSTRY AND, IN 2022, PIVOTED TO EARNING A MASTER OF BUSINESS ADMINISTRATION. 

CDB Accepting Applications Now

The Canada Disability Benefit application process is open. Click below to find details and the application form.

APPLY NOW

If you have the Disability Tax Credit and have filed your taxes, you can apply online through the application portal above, **by phone** or in person at a **Service Canada Centre**.

DABC can help every step of the way:

Supporting DTC applications, renewals, and denials

Filing 2024 taxes

Helping to gather necessary documents

Supporting CDB applications and appeals

CONTACT US AT
dtc@dabc.ca

See the Fall/
Winter 2024
Transition on
the CDB





Planned Giving

Make generosity your legacy today.

Being there for people we care about is one of the most gratifying things in life.

Regardless of our means, legacy giving is a great way to extend our generosity beyond our lifetime. No matter our age, there's no time like the present to set good intentions in motion.

Wherever you are in your planning, let us know if you're considering a legacy gift to Disability Alliance BC (DABC). We are glad to support your decision every step of the way.

Your Planned Giving support to DABC will protect the dignity and independence of people living with a disability.

Why Consider a Planned Gift?

There are many benefits to Planned Giving. By writing down your wishes, you will have increased peace of mind and control over your finances. You can also provide a significant future donation without reducing your income today.

A gift in your will to DABC will help us to be here in the future for those who need us.

Tax Savings

You can realize significant tax savings with Planned Giving. For example, stocks, bonds and mutual funds that you may have in a trust can be transferred through your Will to a charity and a tax receipt will be issued.

We're Here to Help

Our donors are important to us and we'll work with you to be recognized in the way that you'd prefer.

If you would like more information about Planned Giving, please contact us at 604-872-1278 or feedback@dabc.ca. We will send you DABC's Planned Giving information to review with your financial planner, lawyer, family or friends.

Learn More Online

dabc.ca

Planned Giving Brochure

<https://tinyurl.com/33cvw83s>

How Workplace Accommodations Are Meant to Work

BY CHLOE KRAUSE

I have been part of the working world for 21 years, 17 of those at Disability Alliance BC (DABC). I'm currently DABC's Board and Communications Coordinator. I'm also a person with multiple disabilities: a traumatic brain injury (TBI), mental illness, chronic pain, GI issues, mobility issues and (I suspect) undiagnosed ADHD. I also suffer from an average of one or two migraines a month which can last up to three days.

This means that most days I deal with some combination of pain, executive dysfunction, brain fog, fatigue, low mood and anxiety. Some days these symptoms are just annoying, others they render me unable to do much more than rest.

As you can imagine, my disabilities sometimes impact when and how I'm able to do my work for DABC. I take more sick time than most and it's unlikely that I'd be able to work long-term without the accommodations I receive.

But this doesn't mean that my disabilities impact my reliability or the quality of my work. Accommodations allow me to carry out all my responsibilities and consistently produce high-quality work, without sacrificing my well-being.

I am particularly grateful to be able to work exclusively from home. The COVID-19 pandemic was devastating for everyone, but also showed employers that people can successfully work remotely. Allowing for remote

My fatigue was so intense, I'd have panic attacks because I didn't know how I'd manage to get through the day.

work may seem like a single accommodation, but it actually functions as a series of accommodations.

In the past, I'd get up early to commute to work and spend all day interacting with people. My fatigue was so intense, I'd have panic attacks because I didn't know how I'd manage to get through the day. The constant buzz of activity was so distracting, it was anxiety-inducing and exhausting.

Taking public transit during rush hour also sometimes brought on panic attacks, leaving me wrung out and on edge. The harsh office lights often triggered migraines. I don't know how much longer I could have continued working at the office.

Most of my work doesn't need to be done during office hours, so working from home allows me flexibility with my schedule. If I need to take a walk with my dog to alleviate anxiety, or rest for a bit due to fatigue or executive dysfunction, I can just...do that. I can make up the missed time later.

Five years after the start of the pandemic, some employers have requested that their employees return to the office full-time, even if this goes against some employees' wishes or best interests. I don't necessarily think this reflects an intentional lack of care on the part of employers, but instead a deep lack of understanding of the diversity of the human experience.

While firm structure and social connection may increase productivity for

some people, those same things may cause others to feel distracted, overwhelmed, exhausted and anxious. It can be difficult to truly understand this if you haven't experienced disability and/or neurodivergence yourself. Or, if you're not an employer like DABC that is open to including staff like myself – willing to listen and work with different people's capacities.

I would like to recognize and emphasize that some people with disabilities simply cannot work and shouldn't be made to do so.

Even so, I wonder how different the employment landscape would look if more people were simply granted basic accommodations, many of which require no financial burden on the employer. Sometimes, all that's needed is a bit of empathy and flexibility!

CHLOE KRAUSE IS DABC'S BOARD AND COMMUNICATIONS COORDINATOR 





The Reducing Poverty Initiative | by Bill Dyer

RPI provides guidance and resources to help individuals transition back into the workforce smoothly.

Living with a chronic condition like arthritis doesn't just affect your health—it can also impact your ability to work and stay financially stable.

Without access to benefits, even a short-term illness or injury can lead to months off the job, rising costs and real risk of poverty.

That's where the Reducing Poverty Initiative (RPI) steps in.

Funded by the Province of British Columbia and the Government of Canada, RPI is a pilot program that provides early, practical support to help people facing non-work-related health challenges—like arthritis—get back to work and regain their stability.

Through partnerships with employers, Certified Disability Management Professionals (CDMPs), and health care providers, RPI helps remove barriers and ease the return-to-work process for those who need it most.

How RPI Works and How It Can Help You

RPI empowers individuals and employers alike by addressing the root causes of work-related exclusion due to disability or illness. Here's how the program works in practice.

Support for Early Return-to-Work Planning

RPI provides guidance and resources to help individuals transition back into the workforce smoothly. By identifying those recently affected by illness or injury, the program helps prevent long-term unemployment and associated financial hardship.

Assistance with Workplace Accommodations

Navigating accommodation requests can be confusing. RPI helps individuals understand their rights and options, and supports employers in providing suitable workplace adjustments.

Funded Health and Rehabilitation Services

RPI offers financial support for vital allied health services such as physiotherapy, occupational therapy, counselling, and other treatments that promote recovery and readiness to return to work.

Return-to-Work Tools and Accommodations

Whether it's adaptive equipment or ergonomic tools, RPI helps secure the supports individuals need to succeed in their roles post-injury or illness.

Support for Employers

RPI works directly with employers to foster inclusive, accessible workplaces. This includes guidance on

policy development, staff training and return-to-work planning tools.

Who Is Eligible?


The RPI is currently available in Vancouver, Kelowna, Nanaimo and Prince George (including surrounding areas within 75 km). Individuals may be eligible if they:

- Are temporarily off work due to a non-work-related illness or injury.
- Do not have access to extended health or disability benefits.
- Reside in one of the pilot communities or nearby areas.

To apply or find more information, visit the official RPI website at www.reducingpoverty.nidmar.ca or email us at reducingpoverty@nidmar.ca for support. Or, [download our brochure](#).

Moving Forward

The Reducing Poverty Initiative is about more than returning to work—it's about economic empowerment, inclusion, and building a future where illness or injury does not dictate financial security. With a focus on early intervention, accessibility and collaboration, RPI is reshaping how we support individuals facing temporary setbacks.

BILL DYER IS THE DIRECTOR OF THE REDUCING POVERTY INITIATIVE. HE IS A CERTIFIED DISABILITY MANAGEMENT PROFESSIONAL WHO HAS BEEN WORKING IN THIS SPACE FOR OVER 30 YEARS. HE INVITES [YOUR COMMENTS, QUESTIONS AND INSIGHT](#). 

A PRACTITIONER'S GUIDE TO THE DISABILITY TAX CREDIT



Created by Access RDSP in partnership with Island Health Authority, with thanks to our funders
BC's Ministry of Social Development and Poverty Reduction and the Vancouver Foundation.

[Download the booklet.](#)



A MESSAGE FROM NEIL SQUIRE

Welcome to Our Employment Programs

Neil Squire Society offers a variety of free programs that can help people with disabilities find employment and thrive in the workplace.

Here's a snapshot of how our programs can help you reach your employment goals.

Creative Employment Options

[Creative Employment Options](#) helps people with disabilities prepare for, find, and maintain employment.

The program is customized to meet your individual needs, providing support around careers and personal development, wellness for work and job search support.

It's the individualized support that makes us unique. When people first come to us, we have an in-depth interview with them and develop an action plan that fits their needs and goals.



"I found that Neil Squire really did a great job of recognizing my different skills. They connected me to exactly what I was looking for which is incredible." Dougie, Creative Employment Options participant.

Wage subsidies may be available if needed. The program can also facilitate ergonomics and assistive technology assessments and solutions for your workstation.

Empower3D

[Empower3D](#) provides youth with disabilities the opportunity to develop skills and gain valuable work experience in the manufacturing sector. We provide supports to help participants overcome barriers and transition into the workforce.

Participants receive 14 weeks of pre-employment and skills training in a small group setting.

Once training is complete, participants have 12 weeks of meaningful paid work experience in the manufacturing sector. This is a great opportunity for youth with disabilities to learn about different manufacturing sectors and receive hands-on, paid work experience in an inclusive and accessible learning environment.

WorkBC Assistive Technology Services

[WorkBC Assistive Technology Services, operated by Neil Squire](#), is available to people who have a work-related barrier due to a disability or a functional limitation. This may include barriers related to traveling to and from the workplace.

Supports available through this program include:

- assistive devices
- equipment and technology
- ergonomic supports
- restorative supports
- American Sign Language (ASL) interpreting and captioning services,
- communication and hearing devices related to work,
- workplace access and modification for eligible employers
- vehicle modifications

Distance Computer Comfort

Digital literacy is a vital component for modern employment, including looking for a job. Our [Distance Computer Comfort](#) program offers free virtual one-on-one computer tutoring for people with disabilities. You can learn how to use your computer, tablet or smartphone, as well as programs and assistive technology tools that can help you at home, at the workplace and beyond.


Working with a tutor once a week, your lessons will be centered around your needs and goals, whether you're starting from scratch or just looking to upgrade your skills for the workplace. If you are located near our Burnaby office, you can also take in-person lessons.

"I definitely would recommend this program as it has been a life changer. I feel that I can give more of my time and energy as I can work longer hours." Kari, Work BC Assistive Technology Services participant.

Other Resources

[WorkBC](#), a BC provincial government site, has a number of great resources for people in BC looking for employment, including an expansive job portal

[BC 211](#) is another resource to connect to resources across the province, for employment or anything else. Essentially a search engine to find BC service providers for a variety of needs, BC 211 also has live support available by phone, text, live chat and email 24/7.

Read more about [all these programs](#), call us at 1-877-673-4636 or email us at info@neilsquire.ca. 

Free DABC Employment Resources



[Disclosing Your Disability: A Legal Guide for People with Disabilities in BC](#)

"In our work as a cross-disability organization in BC, it became clear to us that many people with disabilities do not understand their legal rights and responsibilities around disclosure of their disability in the context of employment. This document answers key practical questions around disability disclosure."

[Help Sheet 19: The Duty to Accommodate Employees with Disabilities](#)

This Help Sheet is about the legal duty to accommodate a person's disability, in the context of human rights in the workplace.

[Help Sheet 9: Employment, Education and Training for People with Disabilities](#)

There are a number of employment, education and training incentives available through the Ministry of Social Development and Poverty Reduction. DABC has prepared this Help Sheet to help you understand what you may be able to apply for.

DABC is Expanding our DTC Supports!

I by Cynthia Minh

Since 2016, DABC's Access RDSP program has been offering free navigational support through the Disability Tax Credit (DTC) and Registered Disability Savings Plan (RDSP) process. Now, with our DTC-related supports expanding even further, we are changing our name to Access DTC to better reflect the services we provide.

Our program was originally launched as part of the Access RDSP Partnership to boost uptake of the RDSP, alongside Plan Institute (PI) and the BC Aboriginal Network on Disability Society (BCANDS). The RDSP is a savings plan designed to help people with disabilities build long-term financial security.

In recognition of the barriers to accessing the RDSP, and its main bottleneck, the DTC, we work in collaboration with our partners:

- DABC helps eligible individuals through DTC applications, renewals and appeals.
- PI helps people with the RDSP and other financial planning topics.
- BCANDS provides Indigenous-specific navigation through the DTC and RDSP.

Over the years, it's become increasingly clear that the reasons to apply for the DTC extend beyond the RDSP.

As one of the primary ways the federal government recognizes

disability, the DTC has become the gateway to other related benefits and federal financial programs, including the Child Disability Benefit and Canada Workers Disability Supplement. For example, as part of the federal government's response to the COVID-19 pandemic, a \$600 one-time payment was made available to recipients of the DTC and Canada Pension Plan-Disability.

Most recently, the DTC has been integral in helping people gain access to the Canada Dental Care Plan and upcoming Canada Disability Benefit which offers up to \$200/month for those with low income.

Our program has always shifted our priorities to reflect changes in DTC policy. We support people of all ages and incomes, and help our clients access any related benefits for which they are eligible. We have created closer ties to DABC's Tax AID program and Disability Law Clinic to offer more holistic DTC supports that may involve tax filing or going to Tax Court.

We have also engaged in the following new partnerships and projects that help to expand our services.

Regional Support

Vancouver Island

DABC partnered with Island Health Authority to offer localized DTC services to children and youth living on Vancouver Island. This program has now expanded to include people of all ages.



Over the years, it's become increasingly clear that the reasons to apply for the DTC extend beyond the RDSP.

Interior Region

We partnered with Ki-Low-Na Friendship Society to offer DTC support to people of all ages living in the Interior Region, including local mobile clinics to West Bank First Nation and Penticton Indian Band.

Resources

DABC has released [My DTC](#), an online tool that features guides and tools that can help people across Canada take the first step to apply.


DABC is continuing the [DTC Medical Fees Fund](#) to help people with disabilities in BC with medical costs associated with DTC applications.

In April, DABC launched a new national organization, [Disability Alliance Canada](#) (see page 10). Our first

DAC program will help us expand direct service supports through federal disability benefits, including the DTC and Canada Pension Plan-Disability.

For all these reasons, we are changing our name to Access DTC. We will continue the work we do with our Access RDSP partners to promote DTC uptake, but also make room for the other initiatives that we are working on to improve access to the DTC.

Visit our new [web page](#) and follow us on social media to stay updated on our program.

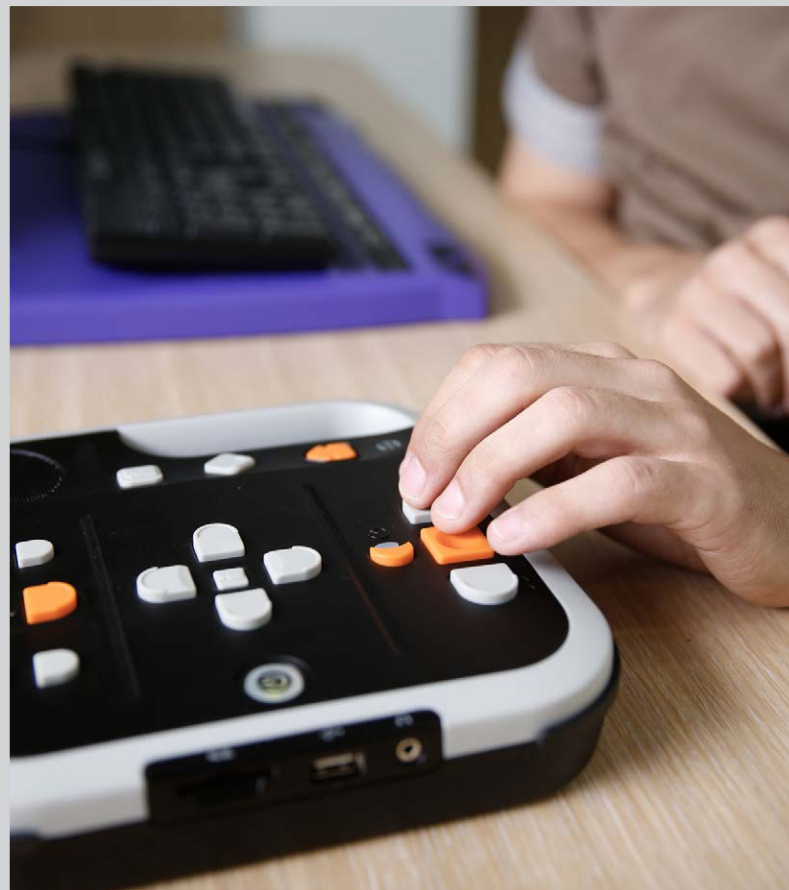
CYNTHIA MINH IS THE DIRECTOR OF DABC'S TAX AID AND ACCESS DTC PROGRAMS. 

Accessibility Projects Grants 2025/26

Disability Alliance BC is happy to announce that the Accessibility Projects Grants have been renewed by the Province for the 2025/26 granting cycle. The Accessibility Projects Grants provide up to \$40,000 to not-for-profit organizations for year-long projects that increase accessibility for people with disabilities throughout BC.

Applications will open on **August 5th**, with a deadline of **September 12th**.

Learn more about [DABC's Accessibility Projects Grants](#).



WorkBC

Assistive Technology Services

Are you employed, self-employed, or seeking employment?

Funding is available now for hearing aids, vehicle modifications, ergonomics, and other assistive devices you may need for work!

1-844-453-5506
workbc-ats.ca

Canada 

 **BRITISH COLUMBIA**

This program is funded by the Government of Canada and the Province of British Columbia.

Contact Tax AID DABC for free income tax assistance and other tax-related issues.

We can file multiple years and self-employment taxes.

We offer drop off services and one-on-one appointments in-person, over the phone, through video conference, by email or by mail.

CONTACT US

- Call or text 236-477-1717
- Email taxaid@dabc.ca
- Book your appointment online <https://www.taxaid.janeapp.com>
- Visit <https://taxaiddabc.org>



Tax Assistance & Information For People with Disabilities



CONTACT THE TAX AID REGIONAL PARTNER NEAREST YOU FOR LOCAL SUPPORT

- LOWER MAINLAND (AND ALL OF BC) | DABC | 236-477-1717 | Toll Free 1-877-940-7797
- INTERIOR | KELOWNA | Ki-Low-Na Friendship Society | 250-763-4905 ext. 215



Yes, our income tax services are FREE.

Am I eligible for Tax AID DABC services?

We provide free tax-filing support to people receiving disability supports including: Persons with Disabilities (PWD), Persons with Persistent Multiple Barriers (PPMB), Canada Pension Plan Disability (CPP-D), WorkSafeBC (WCB) or the Disability Tax Credit (DTC). We also assist people with disabilities with income below \$35,000 and those with family incomes below \$42,000.

What if I Haven't Filed Taxes for Years?

We can help people file their taxes for up to 10 previous years.

What if I Don't Have All My Tax Documents (T5007, T4s)?

Don't worry! We will help you locate tax slips that the government already has on file.

My Income is Low. Why Should I File Taxes?

There are many advantages to filing your income taxes! Our clients usually receive \$500 to \$900 in income tax credits for each year they file. People eligible for an income tax refund, and those with dependent children, often receive much more.

If you haven't filed your taxes for multiple years, your refunds may grow dramatically.

Other benefits you may be eligible for include:

- GST Credits
- BC Sales Tax and Climate Action Tax Credits
- Canada Workers Benefit
- Canada Child Benefit
- Registered Disability Savings Plan Grants and Bonds

Income tax filing can also help you qualify for MSP Premium Assistance coverage, subsidized housing, and other income-tested benefits.

New Drop Off Service

Have all of your tax slips ready? If you are living in Vancouver and your tax situation is straightforward, you can now drop off your tax information to our advocates for faster support. Bring in your ID and tax slips to our office. You can pick up your package when your taxes are ready.

What Should I Do Next?

Contact Disability Alliance BC or one of our Regional Partners. We'll set up an appointment to meet with you. Call us today! We're here to help.

CONTACT THE TAX AID REGIONAL PARTNER NEAREST YOU FOR LOCAL SUPPORT

- **VANCOUVER ISLAND | VICTORIA** | Together Against Poverty Society | 250-361-3521
- **NORTHERN | PRINCE GEORGE** | Active Support Against Poverty Society | Toll-Free 1-877-563-6112



From the Hands of Many

BY SIMON DRIVER

Each ENT student's goals include developing an entrepreneurial identity, exploring sustainability through the UN Sustainable Development Goals and developing a business plan.

There are a growing number of [entrepreneurship opportunities](#) for people with disabilities. However, access to social support remains inconsistent and this can leave entrepreneurs with disabilities without the resources they need to succeed.

Among the more significant challenges are gaps in mentorship and networking.¹ Services are emerging to provide targeted support, but ableist attitudes persist, often failing to recognize the social connections that aspiring entrepreneurs with disabilities seek.

Leah Lakshmi Piepzna-Samarasinha, author of *The Future is Disabled*, says, "Ableism isolates and keeps disabled, Deaf, and neurodivergent people from finding disabled, Deaf, and neurodivergent communities."² For entrepreneurs with disabilities, this raises a critical question: "Where is my Community of Practice?"

The Entrepreneurial Focus (ENT) is part of the Employment and Community Studies Program (EACS) at

Kwantlen Polytechnic University (KPU). The EACS program provides lifelong learning, employment and community engagement opportunities for students with disabilities. Each ENT student's goals include developing an entrepreneurial identity, exploring sustainability through the UN Sustainable Development Goals and developing a business plan.

Collectively, however, the cohort aspires to something even more ambitious: to build a Community of Practice.

What is a Community of Practice?

A Community of Practice (CoP) is a place where individuals with similar objectives, deepen their knowledge, skills and mastery through networking, collaboration, resource-sharing and peer support. This year, the ENT CoP has inspired and supported several entrepreneurial projects, including Joseph Logan's plant adoption program and Waqas Ahmed's comedy writers' circle.

When asked about the common challenges faced by emerging entrepreneurs, Logan and Ahmed highlighted fear of failure, the absence of a safe space to share ideas and difficulty in forging connections.

Logan explains, "I communicate through plants—that's what I talk about." Ahmed says, "I need to be my authentic self; it's how I write jokes."

For ENT students, a strong CoP provides a space where students can see themselves reflected in the process. This includes communication styles, approaches to working and even humour.

"The comedy writing circle had to be a place where I could take risks, where I could receive critical feedback," adds Ahmed. Interdisciplinary collaboration has been instrumental in the development of Logan's plant adoption project. He describes ENT's CoP as, "Life-changing, being part of a real community is so important."

While aspiring entrepreneurs with disabilities face unique barriers, they also bring unique strengths. Ahmed shares with a grin, "My


jokes and writing come directly from my lived experience and unique perspectives. Through comedy, I can create an environment where it's okay to laugh at uncomfortable things." Logan echoes the sentiment, adding, "Having a disability is resilience training—it has made me who I am."

Currently, Logan is redesigning a memorial garden on the KPU campus and you can find his plants on sale at the KPU Bookstore. Ahmed continues to co-host his comedy writers' circle, and he had a public performance in June of this year in Vancouver. With the financial support and generosity of the Canadian Western Bank, as well as the in-kind support of community organizations including Disability Alliance BC and Community Futures, the ENT pilot plans to launch its third cohort this coming Fall.

A Community of Practice for entrepreneurs with disabilities is not a simple adoption of traditional systems. As an ENT faculty member, I am the first to admit that ours is a work-in-progress. However, I beam with pride when I hear that student meetups, film screenings and off-campus activities continue without my knowledge or planning.

A thriving CoP after all, does not rest on the shoulders of a few. It blossoms from the hands of many.

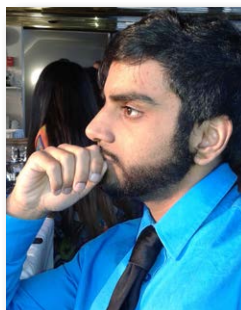
SIMON DRIVER IS A FACULTY MEMBER IN THE EMPLOYMENT AND COMMUNITY STUDIES PROGRAM AT KWANTLEN POLYTECHNIC UNIVERSITY.

WAQAS AHMED AND JOSEPH LOGAN ARE ASPIRING ENTREPRENEURS AND RECENT GRADUATES OF THE EMPLOYMENT AND COMMUNITY STUDIES PROGRAM. 



"Having a disability is resilience training—it has made me who I am."

Joseph Logan



"Through comedy, I can create an environment where it's okay to laugh at uncomfortable things."

Waqas Ahmed

¹ Bahry, Norliza. (2023). "The Challenges of Disabled Entrepreneurs: A Systematic Review." *Journal of International Business, Economics and Entrepreneurship*. 8. 54-63. 10.24191/jibe.v8i2.24044.

² Piepzna-Samarasinha, L. L. (2022). *The Future Is Disabled: Prophecies, Love Notes and Mourning Songs*. Arsenal Pulp Press

Employment Equity Work of NIDMAR

■ by Wolfgang Zimmermann



For many British Columbians living with disabilities, navigating the world of employment can present significant challenges.

The National Institute of Disability Management and Research (NIDMAR), an internationally-recognized organization based in British Columbia, is dedicated to improving workplace accessibility, return-to-work programs, and disability management practices.

Although some Transition readers may not be familiar with NIDMAR, its impact has been profound in helping people with disabilities find meaningful employment. The organization also supports employers to create inclusive workplaces. For those of you who don't know us, we'd like to introduce ourselves!

Although some Transition readers may not be familiar with NIDMAR, its impact has been profound in helping people with disabilities find employment.

How We Support People with Disabilities in BC

At NIDMAR, our work ensures that more employers understand the value of workplace accommodations and proactive disability management. This translates into more job security, enhanced workplace support and increased opportunities for people with disabilities to thrive in their careers.

Also, NIDMAR's professional and program standards, and training programs, empower professionals working in the field of disability management. This means more knowledgeable advocates are available to help people navigate workplace challenges.

A Brief History of NIDMAR

NIDMAR was established in 1994 to address the need for structured, effective disability management programs in workplaces.

Our founders recognized that injury and illness can often lead to long-term unemployment, without proper intervention. So NIDMAR set out to develop best practices that support both employees and employers. Over the years, it has grown into a globally-recognized organization, influencing disability management policies and practices across Canada and internationally.

NIDMAR's work is based on the principle that early intervention and structured disability management strategies lead to better employment outcomes, reduced poverty rates and stronger workplace retention for individuals with disabilities. By providing education, certification, and resources, NIDMAR has become a leader in shaping a more inclusive workforce.

Services and Programs

NIDMAR offers a range of services that directly benefit individuals with disabilities, as well as employers looking to create more accessible workplaces. The following are NIDMAR's main areas of activity.

Educational Programs

NIDMAR founded and supports the Pacific Coast University for Workplace Health Sciences (PCU-WHS), offering degrees and continuing education in disability management and workplace health.

Professional Standards

The Occupational Standards in Disability Management and Return to Work outline the essential skills and competencies for professionals in the field. These standards form

the basis of the Certified Disability Management Professional (CDMP) and Certified Return to Work Coordinator (CRTWC) professional designations.

Program Standards

Using international research, NIDMAR developed [audit and assessment tools](#) to help employers evaluate and enhance their disability management programs.

Research and Policy Development

NIDMAR conducts and shares research that informs better workplace policies and provides recommendations to government and industry stakeholders across Canada.

How This Looks in the Workplace

To help connect the dots between NIDMAR's programs and their real-world applications, here are some examples of how these programs show up in practice.

A Disability Manager, trained through Pacific Coast University for Workplace Health Sciences, might work for a municipality, healthcare authority or post-secondary institution. Their role could involve coordinating return-to-work plans, ensuring appropriate accommodations, and serving as a liaison between the employee, union and management.

Organizations like public sector employers, insurance companies, unions and large private companies often recruit Certified Disability Management Professionals to help reduce absenteeism and improve

retention for employees who experience injury or illness.


Employers use NIDMAR's assessment tools to identify gaps in how they support workers with chronic conditions and implement changes, like creating transitional duties, offering modified work schedules, or establishing early contact and support strategies.

By integrating these programs and supports into everyday workplace practices, NIDMAR provides key support designed to help employers meet not only their statutory obligations, but ultimately deliver better outcomes for disabled workers.

Looking Ahead

Conversations around disability inclusion and workplace accessibility continue to evolve. NIDMAR remains at the forefront, advocating for policies and practices that support people with disabilities to achieve meaningful employment. For people facing workplace barriers due to disability, NIDMAR's initiatives provide essential resources and guidance that can make all the difference.

For more information about our programs, visit www.nidmar.ca.

WOLFGANG ZIMMERMANN, OBC, IS EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR OF NIDMAR AND PRESIDENT OF THE PACIFIC COAST UNIVERSITY FOR WORKPLACE HEALTH SCIENCES. FOLLOWING AN INDUSTRIAL ACCIDENT, HE WAS RETRAINED AND CONTINUED WORKING FOR HIS PRE-DISABILITY EMPLOYER. IT IS HIS GOAL THAT EVERY INDIVIDUAL HAS THE SAME OPPORTUNITY FOLLOWING AN INJURY OR DISABILITY. 

subscribe for free

Would you like to receive Transition FREE in your inbox three times a year?

Email the [Transition Distribution team](#) and ask to be added to our email list. Be sure to include your:

- first and last name
- email address
- organization (if applicable), and
- a phone number (optional).

You can also read current and past editions [online](#) in PDF or text-only format.

become a member

You can also receive Transition and support DABC by becoming a member. Visit our [Membership Page](#) to learn about your membership benefits and what your membership means to us.



thank you



Yes, We'd Like to Donate to DABC

Your support will help us continue our advocacy and frontline support of people living with a disability.

- ☐ \$50 will contribute toward the cost of matching a disabled family with accessible housing
- ☐ \$100 will help fund disability education workshops for doctors and social workers
- ☐ \$500 will support legal representation for a person with a disability who has experienced discrimination
- ☐ Other \$ _____



How to Donate

You can donate by cheque or online by credit card. You can choose to make a one-time or monthly donation. We will send a charitable tax receipt for any donation over \$10.

Cheque donations can be sent to our office, along with this tear off donor form. You can make a secure online credit card donation in seconds through [Keela](#). Or, call us at 604-872-1278 and we will help you make your donation.

You can also support our work with an annual membership fee. Memberships are \$15 for individuals and \$25 for groups. Join at dabc.ca/support-us.

Thank you for your support.

Contact DABC Programs and Services

DABC offers in-person and remote appointments. However, please note that in-person services are available by appointment only. Below is the contact information for our core programs—to book your appointment or ask about the services and support we can provide.

Advocacy Access

If you need help with provincial disability benefits or CPP Disability, contact Advocacy Access:

advocacy@dabc.ca

604-872-1278 or 1-800-663-1278 (Toll-free)

Tax AID DABC

If you are a person with a disability who needs assistance filing your income taxes, contact Tax AID DABC:

taxaid@dabc.ca

Call or text 236-477-1717 or call toll-free 1-877-940-7797

Book your appointment online at <https://www.taxaid.janeapp.com>

Access DTC

If you need help with the Disability Tax Credit and related benefits, contact Access DTC:

604-872-1278 or 1-800-663-1278 (Toll-free)

dtc@dabc.ca

<https://disabilityalliancebc.org/direct-service/help-with-the-rdsp-and-dtc/>

Disability Law Clinic

Our Disability Law Clinic can help with legal issues related to disability rights:

236-427-1108

lawclinic@dabc.ca

The Right Fit

For questions about the Right Fit Program and for media inquiries, please contact:

Isabelle Groc, Right Fit Program Manager

rightfit@dabc.ca <https://therightfitbc.org>

If you are a wheelchair user looking for wheelchair accessible housing in the Lower Mainland, please contact:

The Right Fit Navigation Team

navigation@therightfitbc.org 604-777-7576

Learn More About Us

Programs and Services dabc.ca/programs/

Core Program Brochures dabc.ca/category/publications/brochures/

Living, Parenting and Working After Brain Aneurysms

BY GERALD P.

I am a 48-year-old man who has had two ruptured brain aneurysms. The first one was in the late 1990s and the second in 2011.

It has taken me a long time to understand my own needs and how my abilities have changed. Many people in my life have also not understood my changes in function, mood, memory and general stamina. It has been a challenge for everyone who knows me.

Finding and keeping employment has been a struggle. I have a hard time with sensory overstimulation, loud noises, bright lights, processing information, organizing and memory.

For a decade or two, landscaping was a good job for me. I worked primarily alone doing physical labor. For a while, I worked for myself part-time on a couple of contracts.

I also tried jobs in a group home for adults with disabilities and at Canada Post. I did enjoy the people I worked with at the group home, but their care needs were too much for me to manage.

I thought working at the post office would be straightforward, but it proved to be challenging as well. I needed to pass an online test to be hired. Because of my memory challenges, it took dozens of attempts over three days to pass.

Once I started sorting and delivering mail in a rural part of town I was

unfamiliar with, I realized it took too much out of me mentally and physically. I started to have visual headaches and was completely exhausted. I knew I needed help.

Doctors told me I should not be lifting more than 50 pounds, that it could cause another rupture. I was told to minimize my stress. This was the first time I was told about the risks of physical and mental exhaustion. If I had known, I might not have had my second brain aneurysm.

There are also the social challenges I mentioned. These affect everyday life, but work situations too. I often forget names, conversations and having met some people at all. I have come to accept these things, but sometimes people get upset at needing to repeat themselves. They just don't understand my memory condition. I usually let it roll off of me, but once in a while I miss what I used to be capable of.


I recently read a college paper I wrote. It was so well written, I can only imagine what I used to be capable of. It was like reading it for the first time. If I hadn't kept my old papers, I wouldn't have believed I'd written it.

Since becoming a parent, I realized balancing work and family life was too overwhelming for me. I need

I recently read a college paper I wrote. It was so well written, I can only imagine what I used to be capable of.

extra rest because of my needs. Things that are straightforward and easy for other people are so much more challenging for me.

Recently, I decided to retire and apply for CPP Disability. I am happy with my achievements over the past 20 years since my aneurysms. I am grateful to have less stress in my life.

GERALD P. IS A VANCOUVER ISLAND FAMILY MAN, LOVING PARTNER AND FATHER OF TWO. 

Connection, Community and Redefining “Contribution”



But what about people who never enter the workforce? Not only do they often live with economic insecurity, they experience discrimination, too. | by Liss Cairns

We all have goals that drive what we want to do and where we want to be in life. To be happy, the possibilities and combinations are endless.

Some people find deep meaning and belonging in their work, with confidence underlying everything they do. Others may be less interested in or able to participate in employment or entrepreneurship, either because there are few appealing opportunities or because a disability creates barriers.

We all know that money matters. You must be able to afford necessities to have choices in your life. Too many people these days are stuck in a job they don't enjoy because they need the income to survive. This combined with competition for jobs and a capitalist society that prioritizes productivity—a “hustle and grind” culture—can leave many people with disabilities on the sidelines.


Most people I know that work are extremely grateful for their job(s) and have significant anxiety in

periods of unemployment. But what about people who never enter the workforce? Not only do they often live with economic insecurity, they experience discrimination, too. So often there is social pressure to find a job of some kind to “contribute” and bring value to society. Each person's inherent value and their right to experience joy, for the limited time we have, is devalued.

What if society shifted to a more inclusive, personal understanding of contribution? That each of us has value and contributes to the world around us in big and small ways—our gaze, our hobbies, our laughter, our empathy, our understanding and solidarity, our playfulness, our passions, and much more.

Every single one of us is infinite in our make-up. Each of us has something to offer to the diverse society we live in, if we only shift our perspective. Work can provide significant meaning, but it isn't always the only or most important way to find meaning. We're more than our work and we deserve so much more.

So go ahead and work, if that's your choice. But your value isn't measured by your job, or whether you have a job or not. You've only got one life to live and we can redefine the value in that together.

THE DABC BOARD OF DIRECTORS WELCOMED LISS TO THE TEAM IN SEPTEMBER 2022. LISS IS A NEURODIVERGENT NONBINARY PERSON WHO HAS HAD LIFELONG MENTAL HEALTH RELATED DISABILITIES AND IS CURRENTLY THEIR WIFE'S CAREGIVER. 

Advertise with DABC

DABC's Flagship publication since 1977

From its early years in print, to its current form as a digital magazine, Transition has been an integral part of DABC's history and a hub for the disability community for over four decades.

With content ranging from policy news to personal stories, the pages of Transition provide a trusted platform where writers and readers with direct lived experience and other contributors working in the disability sphere share perspectives.

We publish three times a year, with each edition presenting a timely theme relevant to the community. Past editions have focused on topics such as Parenting With Disability, Disability Justice, Respecting Disability Language and Identity, and Healthcare: Navigating an Ableist System.

Readership

- Over 3,000 magazines emailed to subscribers
- Featured on our website
- Theme articles promoted through our blog and social media
- Distributed to libraries, community centres, MLA offices and other public facilities

Non-profit Discounts

We're glad to offer all Transition advertising, including ads bundled with our e-newsletter advertising, at a 25% discount to non-profit organizations and a 35% discount for non-profit organizations who are also DABC members (minimum cost per ad \$50).

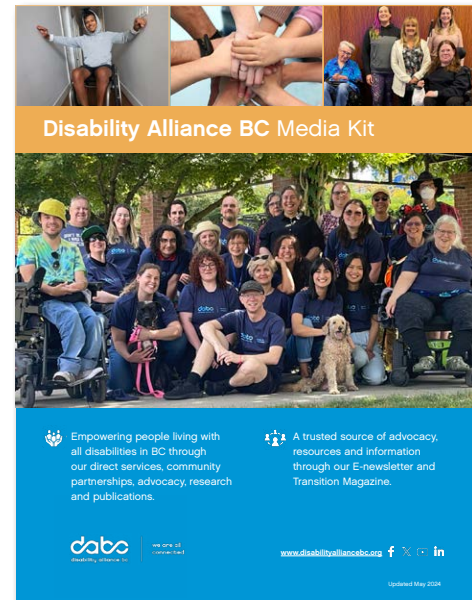
Choose Bundled Ads

Combine Transition magazine and Our Voice e-newsletter advertising into a package bundle to amplify your message, while achieving savings for your ongoing support. Our Voice offers readers regular updates including news, events, opportunities and more.

Our current readership includes policy makers, healthcare and housing providers, organizations serving the disability community, and individuals spanning a wide range of lived experiences with all disabilities.

See our Media Kit for rates and details.

https://dabc.ca/wp-content/uploads/2024/04/DABC_MediaKit.pdf





Connect with DABC

About Us

Our vision is for people, with all disabilities, to live with dignity, independence, and as equal and full participants in the community. We envision a future where people with disabilities are recognized for their inherent worth as individuals, and as valued members of society.

We're proud to share our [Mission and Vision Statements, and Values.](#)

Services and Programs

Our **Advocacy Access Program** provides one-on-one assistance with provincial and federal (Canada Pension Plan-Disability) income supports and other benefits. The **Disability Law Clinic** provides free legal advice to people with disabilities about human rights and discrimination. We also offer advice to people having problems with their disability benefits. **Tax AID DABC** helps people with disabilities living on low incomes to file their income

taxes year-round. **Access DTC** helps people with the Disability Tax Credit and with opening a Registered Disability Savings Plan (RDSP). The **Right Fit Program** helps to match affordable wheelchair-accessible homes in the Vancouver region with people who need them.

Our programs and projects respond to community need and increase people's ability to participate and contribute.

Growing Partnerships

We stay connected with a large network of community organizations across BC and regularly provide them with updates about issues of importance to the disability community.

Free Publications

We publish a range of capacity-building, self-help guides and help sheets in reader-friendly language. Resources are provided free of charge, either by mail or download.

How to Support Us

You can support our work by:

- becoming a member
- making a one-time or monthly donation
- advertising your business or organization in Transition magazine or our e-newsletter, or
- considering a planned giving legacy to DABC.

Learn more, donate or become a member at dabc.ca/support-us. Or, fill out and return the form on the next page. Your support will help us continue our work on behalf of people with disabilities across BC.

Follow Us

Want to know more about our work? Check us out online.





Become a Member

Numbers matter. The more members we have, the stronger our voice in the community. Your membership plays a pivotal role in helping us advance our mission.

You can become a Disability Alliance BC member today as a Core (voting) member or an Allied (non-voting) member. Core Members are people with disabilities and self-help groups where at least 50% of members have a disability. We welcome both individual and group members.

Membership Fees:

Individual \$15 Group \$25

1. Sign up online at [Become a Member](#), or
2. Return your payment with this form to: DABC, 1450-605 Robson Street, Vancouver, BC V6B 5J3.

Please check the applicable boxes

☐ New membership or ☐ Renewal ☐ Core Membership or ☐ Allied Membership

Name _____ Organization _____

Address _____ City/Prov _____

Postal Code _____ Phone _____ Email _____

Thank you for your support!



we are all
connected

Suite 1450, 605 Robson Street, Vancouver, BC V6B 5J3
(604) 875-0188 • fax (604) 875-9227
transition@dabc.ca • dabc.ca

A photograph of a young woman with long, dark, wavy hair, smiling warmly at the camera. She is wearing a light blue, textured sweater. She is sitting in a field of green plants with small white flowers. The image has a teal overlay.

OVER
48
YEARS OF ADVOCACY

Thank you to the Province of BC – Community Gaming Grants for their continuing support.