



The VOICE of Albertans with Disabilities

January - March 2018

AISH Forms Updated!

The AISH forms have been updated and the new forms are available online at <https://www.alberta.ca/aish-how-to-apply.aspx>. The new application and medical report are now available and should be easier for applicants to fill out. Voice of Albertans with Disabilities is always willing to help the public fill out government forms - book an appointment today.

Did you hear? AISH has changed the rules around trust accounts. Under Bill 5, introduced March 19, people with trust funds could still qualify for the program and they would have a year to invest an inheritance or financial gift in a tax-exempt asset such as a Registered Disability Savings Plan.

Annual Membership Drive



It is that time of the year, VAD's annual membership are due April 1. With membership, members receive a certificate of membership to proudly display. Visit the VAD website to download a membership form. <http://vadsociety.ca/support-vad>

October - SAVE THE DATE

Voice of Albertans with Disabilities is hosting its first Conference October 18-19, 2018 at Chateau Nova Kingsway in Edmonton.

The conference is a two day dialogue and information exchange, featuring keynote speakers, workshops, panels, and presentations. The audience will go on a journey of topics that pertain to the conference theme "Together, We Hold the Power!" The purpose of the sessions will be to showcase where and how the community is moving forward toward inclusion and accessibility in Canadian society. The focus will be on action, strategies and tools you can use.

Themes:

- Accessibility: The Many Facets
- Collective Impact A Strategy for Future Actions
- Non-Profit Disability Services Workforce: Strong & Sustainable
- The Individual Voice of Persons with Disabilities

Call for Presenters!

Session presenters are required for Friday, October 19, 2018. For complete proposal details visit: <http://vadsociety.ca/blog> Presenters should submit their proposal or questions to Maureen Murphy-Black, Provincial Coordinator, at email: adf@vadsociety.ca before May 1, 2018. For further information, call 780-488-9088 or 1-800-387-2514.

45 Year Anniversary

Voice of Albertans with Disabilities has been making an impact in Alberta and assisting people with disabilities for 45 years! Congratulations VAD!



March ADF Forum

The spring forum was a success. We look forward to solutions, as actions are implemented to bring change to individuals with disabilities. Topics discussed were:

- The Federal Accessibility Legislation under development. Guest Presenter: James Van Raalte, Director General, Accessibility Secretariat.
- Copies of the conference call with James Van Raalte are available via email, contact VAD today to request a copy.
- Presentation by the Calgary Ability Network Guest Presenter, Mezaun Lakha-Evin, Associate Executive Director, Cerebral Palsy Association Alberta.
- Updates from Voice of Albertans with Disabilities
- Presentation by Neil Pierce, Council Member, Premier's Council on the Status of Persons with Disabilities
- Focus Group: Sharing networks for accessibility discussions and levels of engagement.



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Introducing iVAD

Who is in the Individual Member Network called iVAD?
Individuals interested:

- in helping to generate solutions
- who want their collective voice heard
- who may need assistance through the support and referral programs
- who support the objectives of the organization
- who have a vested interest because of lived experiences or family relationships and feel that the community is a place that allows them to voice concerns and help generate solutions to those concerns.



We need people interested in making iVAD a stronger voice for those with disabilities, if you are interested in becoming an iVAD participant, please contact Trudy at 780-488-9088 or email programs@vadsociety.ca.

Ride Transit Program

Keep Talking...emailing...calling Edmonton City Council about the issues with The Ride Transit Program. Edmonton City Administration provided an update on the Ride Transit Pilot at the Community and Public Services Committee of City Council on March 14. Four public speakers including 2 individuals with personal experience with the ride transit program, Inclusion Alberta and Voice of Albertans with Disabilities spoke to the issues connected to the pilot. Mayor D. Iveson, and Councilors S. McKeen, B. Henderson, T. Carmell and J. Dziadyk indicated that they have heard multiple complaints and want to have the issues addressed. The Community and Public Services Committee directed "that Administration report back in 60 days or less on steps to enable online/mail out distribution and options for an annual pass for those receiving Assured Income for the Severely Handicapped."

This is great news. Next Steps:

1. VAD will follow up with the Community and Public Services Committee Chair and the Edmonton Accessibility Advisory Group.
2. It is important that a solution is found within the 60 days. So get in touch with your Council Members and contacts at City Hall to continue to voice your concerns.



Together, We Hold the Power!

Full Participation - Accessibility - Equity

Think Tank Update

Attracting and Maintaining a Vibrant, Well Trained and Fairly Paid Community Services Workforce in Alberta was the focus of the Think Tank. With a cross reference of organizations in the non-profit sector, the representatives at the table discussed retention ideas and solutions. The working group came away with five action items to follow up with the group in the future. Next Steps: Determine how these issues can be addressed through Collaborative Actions across the voluntary non-profit sector. Determine the role of ADF to address issues from the disability workforce sector.

Accessibility Assessment Project



VAD is pleased to announce that we have received a grant for the Accessibility Assessments Project. Working with the Alberta Building Code, the Barrier-Free Design Guide and principles of Universal Design, VAD is looking to market our Accessibility Assessments to a wider range of clientele.

New Staff Member

Welcome to Carl Barton, our newest staff member! Carl is the Social Enterprise Coordinator for the Accessibility Assessment project. A father of two young children, Carl is a great addition to the office. His undergrad background is in Physical Education and Sociology with a Certificate in Project Management.



Carl worked with non-profits for eight years. He has been a part of community development programs for fourteen years, through research, development, policy development, strategic management, community connections, data collection and review. Carl has been a part of a community league board and the brain tumor walk fundraiser in various roles.