

PATHWAYS TO INDEPENDENCE

JULY 29TH, 2022, 1:30PM TO 3:30PM

ZOOM VIRTUAL PEER GROUP MEETING NOTES

Pathways To Independence was created for peers to come together and share information and updates on current issues facing people with disabilities. More than ever, people with disabilities must come together as a unified group. Living independently is a choice and comes with challenges; through unification people with disabilities make a difference; each voice is important and strengthens us as a community and as individuals.

Hosted By:

Paul Gauthier,
Executive Director
Individualized Funding Resource Centre Society

Ruth Marzetti
Executive Director
Technology for Living

Special Guests:

Danielle Johnston, Manager of Democratic Engagement, City of Vancouver
Olga Zamudio, Coordinator, Mosaic

Thank you to all who participated in the July 2022 Pathway meeting; there were 73 attendees.

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Technology for Living

Bring your ideas to the Simon Cox Student Design Competition!

Technology for living is still looking for entries for the Simon Cox Student Design Competition.

If you need a certain kind technology, or you have an idea in mind of an item that would improve your independence, then please let us know.

Contact the TFL with your ideas. You can submit your information and ideas through the website.

[Simon Cox Student Design Competition](#)

[Simon Cox Student Design Competition – Looking for Peers!!](#)

If you require assistance in submitting your suggestion you can email them to Taylor Danielson or Nicole Whitford:

tdanielson@technologyforliving.org

nwhitford@technologyforliving.org

TFL Recruitment

1. Financial Clerk

Technology for Living is recruiting for a part time Financial Clerk. Peers are encouraged to apply.

View position description through the following link.

[Financial Clerk Job Posting](#)

If you require additional information for the position, please email Joan Kluge, Financial Officer, at jkluge@technologyforliving.org

2. Board Member

Technology for Living (TFL) is seeking volunteers for the Board. The Board of Directors is responsible for sound governance, including financial sustainability, risk management and fidelity to the mission, values and principles of the organization.

Governed by a Board of Directors, of whom 51% are TFL members, TFL collaboratively develops and provides member centred technological solutions and supports to optimize independence.

View the Board Members Responsibilities, Requirements and Time Commitment through the following link.

[Board Member Volunteer Posting](#)

Anyone interested in learning more about this position can email Taylor Danielson and he will forward your expression of interest.

tdanielson@technologyforliving.org

Vancouver Election Homebound Voting Pilot Program, with Danielle Johnston, Manager of Democratic Engagement, City of Vancouver

The upcoming elections is October 15th, 2022.

In 2022, the City of Vancouver is piloting a homebound voting program. Homebound voting allows Vancouver voters who cannot leave their home to vote. A team of two election officials will visit your home and assist you with the voting process. Your vote will be up to you and will be confidential.

Eligible Vancouver voters can apply for the homebound voting program starting on Tuesday, September 6th at 10 am at [Vancouver.ca/homebound-voting](https://vancouver.ca/homebound-voting) or by calling 3-1-1.

In order to register for the program, voters will need to provide:

- Legal name
- Residential address
- Date of birth

For more information, please call the Vancouver Election Office at 604-829-2010 or email specialvoting@vancouver.ca

If you would like to have this program in your municipality you could write to your local city or municipality; all of the BC towns and cities are going to vote on October 15th.

Another option is to write to Elections BC they are responsible for managing all provincial elections. They play a heavy role in supporting towns and municipalities. If they were to promote an option, such as Home Voting, you might see greater pickup. Then finally, you could also write to Elections, Canada

[Elections BC Contact](#)

[Elections Canada Contact](#)

Peer Feedback

General feedback from the peers was that the use of the word “Homebound” was negative because people with disabilities are living independent lives and participate in the community. A wheelchair is freedom. However, home support for community activities is minimal so having this voting option will be very helpful.

Danielle Johnston will take this feedback to the City of Vancouver Team with the peer’s recommendation they rename the program.

Mosaic / Visible Minority Newcomer Women Program/Employment Programs, with Olga Zamudio, Coordinator

Introduction

Mosaic is a settlement agency and has been in operation for over 45 years and serves BC’s Lower Mainland. Mosaic has updated their mission and are focusing on reaching the community as a whole,

through services and advocacy, and to further success in the sense of belonging for newcomers, and for individuals with diverse backgrounds.

Mosaic has several locations in the Lower Mainland. We rely a lot on volunteers for many of the services that we provide. We also have contractors, many of whom are interpreters and translators.

We have social workers who visit newcomers with young children to provide tools and resources and information, and we have a Diversity and Inclusion training. We also have free employment support services.

There are free English classes, and testing, and we have some programs focused on health and counseling, interpretation, and translation. We provide legal information and workplace rights information. We have sponsored refugees to come to Canada with our settlement services. Finally, we also have some gender-based violence prevention and support. Both this kind of support is available for men and women.

Employment Services and Employer Relations

We work with skilled professionals and with people who may not have arrived in Canada yet. We have mentorship programs, which are programs where newcomers are still back in their home country but are already learning how to navigate the system here.

We manage several WorkBC Centres, and they assist in finding employment for all different kinds of status, not only newcomers, but Canadian citizens as well. We can cover a wider spectrum of resources through WorkBC programs and the Care Pathways program is a program that I coordinate.

The Care Pathways program was originally designed as a research project to help newcomer women by offering them a steppingstone. They may have a health background, or they are interested in working in the care sector, but they are facing several barriers, such as Canadian education or Canadian professional designation in their field.

They may face financial, or language barriers as well. What we provide them is training. We pay for WHMIS, Food Safe and First Aid certifications.

We provide support once they are working, because we have helped them to find jobs. Also, if they need transportation support, if they are relying on transit, we also reimburse them for that. The main idea is that they will get their first job here in Canada. If they have a health background, we are going to enable them to move forward and later on, if they are interested, tap into other professional development that is available.

There is a focus on the senior care sector. This is how the project is designed, and we have been working with these women to join senior care facilities, however, some have realized that the expectations that they have don't necessarily match with the reality of working in a senior's facility. Many of them have a nursing background or a caregiver background and they are looking for more of a personal connection with the people.

We have had several clients who despite having joined these senior care facilities, realize that is not what they are looking for. When we were on that point of the research project, we also offer them home care.

For many of them, that was the first approach. Recently an individual employer reached out to us with an opportunity, and we connected them with one of our clients. That match was really good for both parties. It worked really well for our clients because they were feeling a personal connection that they were craving for, but also it worked really well for the individual employer.

I want to emphasize here that the project is not designed necessarily for your demographic, it is emphasized for senior care, but we may have found something through the cracks, a way to make it work, we have to be creative.

The side of the Employer Services is that we have a different suite of HR and Career Services from hiring to job sustainment. What we are offering is that if you can gain access, as an employer, to these local and international trained candidates we have a job board for Mosaic clients, but also for all these WorkBC centres.

When you share a job opportunity or a job posting with us, we are going to promote it not only in Mosaic, but also in these different WorkBC centres. We can help you to screen suitable candidates. We also have hiring events and the job board.

Finally, we also offer professional development. If you have an interested candidate, but they don't have, for example, First Aid, then we can build customized training plans so they can get the First Aid and be ready to work with you.

If you have questions, in particular about the job board, or if you are looking for someone, I will encourage you to contact my colleague, Selene Nguyen. She is the Employer Relations Coordinator. Should an employer have a job posting they can send it to Selene, and she will share these opportunities in our job board and within our WorkBC centres.

[Mosaic Website](#)

Telephone: 604-254-9626

Selene Nguyen, Employer Relations Coordinator: selene.nguyen@mosaicbc.org

General Enquiries: Email: info@mosaicbc.org



Q. Is it possible for Mosaic to create a program that is directly suited for the CSIL Employers [or other employer who receives individualized funding]?

A. That is a very good question. In my capacity as a Coordinator, I do not have the answer, but I certainly can see that there is a potential opportunity here that I already discussed with my supervisor.

Mosaic relies on Federal and Provincial funding. I think it will be more a matter of finding the right place to find additional funding. We will need to gauge outcomes from the from the side of our clients. What I'm saying is that we really want to make this work, but we must first find out if our clients will be transitioning into these opportunities. We may have a program but if we don't have clients available, that's going to be a problem. That is something that since yesterday that we were talking about, yes.

Q. Do the job seekers that you have in your organization have social insurance numbers, because in the past there's been challenges. I got a lot of interest with some people that wanted cash when I ran the ad or wanted direct sponsorship. All CSIL Employers have to pay through a payroll account, which means that they can't pay under the table or cash. In my ad, I have to specify that they require SIN numbers, and that I don't pay cash.

Also, how do you train people to speak English if it is not their first language?

A. We work with permanent residents who already have their SIN numbers. They may have work permits, and they are waiting for their permanent resident number, or they are confirmed refugees also in the process to become permanent residents here in Canada, but all of them are entitled to work in Canada.

Knowing English is really important and when dealing with oral communication it will be key. How do we ensure that they have the English level that is required? That's a very good question. I did mention these are racialized newcomer women, so their first language is not English.

We work with clients who are in the lower end of the proficiency of English. They may need some work, they may have accents, they may have grammar errors, but English skills is part of the program, because they need to join with an employer who has certain requirements.

We ask them to take an English test. All of them have their English assessments and although we have clients that are on the medium end of the English level, we also have clients who are on the higher end of the spectrum. We can circumnavigate these to adjust the English education if you share with us the profile of client that you are looking for.

Comment: I hire people who are immigrants and they do not yet feel comfortable with their English, but because of my slow speech they understand me well. I can get the time to talk to them. I'm just letting you know, by my speech, that there are people like me that are able to take the time, I just need to know that somebody is willing to learn English more, that we're learning together. Thank you.

Response: Thank you for sharing that. As you were speaking, I also was thinking that we have had clients that are working in home care, in this case with seniors, and it's something similar in the sense of the senior maybe needing to take the time to talk and teach our clients English through that method.

It is a win, win situation. They are having someone to talk with, and our clients are improving their English.

Hiring Crisis

Ministry of Health Invitation to Pathways, August 31st Meeting

The Pathways Peers were asked if they were amenable to the Ministry of Health being invited to join the August 31st meeting for a discussion on the current issues facing CSIL Employers. The intention is to have a meaningful, positive discussion with the CSIL Employers presenting their concerns, stories, and solutions to the Ministry.

A thorough discussion was held amongst the peers highlighting the current challenges facing the peers and the overall consensus was that they welcomed the opportunity to have a representative attend from the Ministry of Health.

The peers want a discussion with the Ministry of Health to be meaningful and organized in a way that presents the issues and proposed solutions in an organized fashion which would allow the Ministry to respond in conversation and engage in questions and feedback so the suggestions can be taken back to the Ministry team for follow up.

Issues discussed the Hiring Crisis. Following are some of the issues that impact the crisis.

1. Hiring Crisis
 - a. Lack of required hours
 - b. Parity with wages and benefits
 - c. CSIL Eligible Expenses
 1. Overhead costs should be provided on top of wages and benefits
 - d. Ability to use agencies in times of emergency when needed without prior approval
 - i. Without approval (i.e. midnight or weekends) some people are being left in their beds up to 12 or 15 hours
 - e. Payment to Family Members
 - f. Cost of living in BC

Update: Ministry of Health Invitation

We are pleased to announce that the Ministry of Health has accepted our invitation and will be attending the August 31st Pathways meeting.

CSIL Updates

COVID 19 Vaccination Booster Shots

At the last meeting between the Association of CSIL Employers and the Ministry of Health, the ACE Executives requested that the Ministry update the Booster Shot eligibility to include people who are immunocompromised.

On Monday, July 25th, the [provincial website](#) was updated to read:

“Invitations continue to be sent to seniors 70+, Indigenous people 55+ and people who are moderately to severely immunocompromised [that opens the doors to people with disabilities and severe health conditions that put them at additional risk of COVID effects]

People in long-term care and assisted living have already been offered their dose.

We understand some people have unique needs and getting a booster dose in July or August might be best for them. This is okay, but not recommended.

If you're 18 or older and you have unique needs, the call centre can help you book an appointment. Don't phone until you've received a fall booster update email or SMS.

You can telephone 1-833-838-2323 seven days a week from 7:00AM to 7:00PM PST to book your appointment.”

Community Updates

Extreme Heat Preparedness

The devastating effects of last summer's extreme heat wave claimed 619 lives (final Coroner's report) in British Columbia. 98% of those deaths happened inside people's homes, with 67% of those being seniors and 56% being people who lived alone.

The province created the [PreparedBC: Extreme Heat Preparedness Guide](#) to help educate the public on Heat Preparedness. We have been fortunate in the months of June and July, but the province is now warning the public about August's temperatures, and they anticipate extreme heat waves to reoccur in the summers to come. Additional pages from the province's website have been added to this document because they contain valuable resources.

A second document uploaded is [Health Checklist during extreme heat events](#). This document was published by National Collaborating Centre for Environmental Health in Vancouver and is a guide for performing in-person or remote health checks. Extreme heat events can lead to dangerous indoor temperatures in homes without functioning air conditioning. Health checks are used to assess how people with high risk related health conditions are doing during extreme events.

Both documents can be downloaded to your computer. Please distribute them to your family and friends.

Update: Extreme Heat Preparedness:

Reported on August 9th, 2022, by BC's Coroners Service for the period of July 26th to August 3rd, 16 people died from suspected heat related illnesses in British Columbia [*confirmation will be released after postmortem*]. Half of those deaths occurred in the Fraser Health Authority region, six in Interior Health and at this update, one in Vancouver Coastal Health and one in Vancouver Island Health.

[BC Coroner Service Summary](#)

Heatstroke is a life threatening medical emergency. If you suspect or see the signs of heatstroke in an individual, **call 911**.

[Heatstroke Prevention: What to Wear](#)

[Heatstroke: Emergency Symptoms](#)

[Emergency First Aid for Heatstroke](#)

[Beat the Heat](#)

Upcoming Pathway Meeting

Date & Time

Wednesday, August 31st, 1:30pm until 3:30pm



Topics

1. **Technology for Living Updates**
2. **Ministry of Health**

We are pleased to announce that representatives of the Ministry of Health will be attending the August 31st Pathways meeting to have a conversation with CSIL Employers around topics related to the hiring crisis.

We are organizing Pathway peers to discuss the topics on behalf of the group, however, if you have a specific issue which you would like put forward with a solution, please email Paul at Paul@ifrcsociety.org

To Register, send an email to pathways@ifrcsociety.org

Pathways To Independence Peer Group Meeting Notes and pertinent documents are uploaded to <https://www.ifrcsociety.org/pathways>

THANK YOU FOR YOUR ATTENDANCE AND CONTINUED CONTRIBUTION TO THE MEETING!