

ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING REPORT

01 April 2023 - 31 March 2024

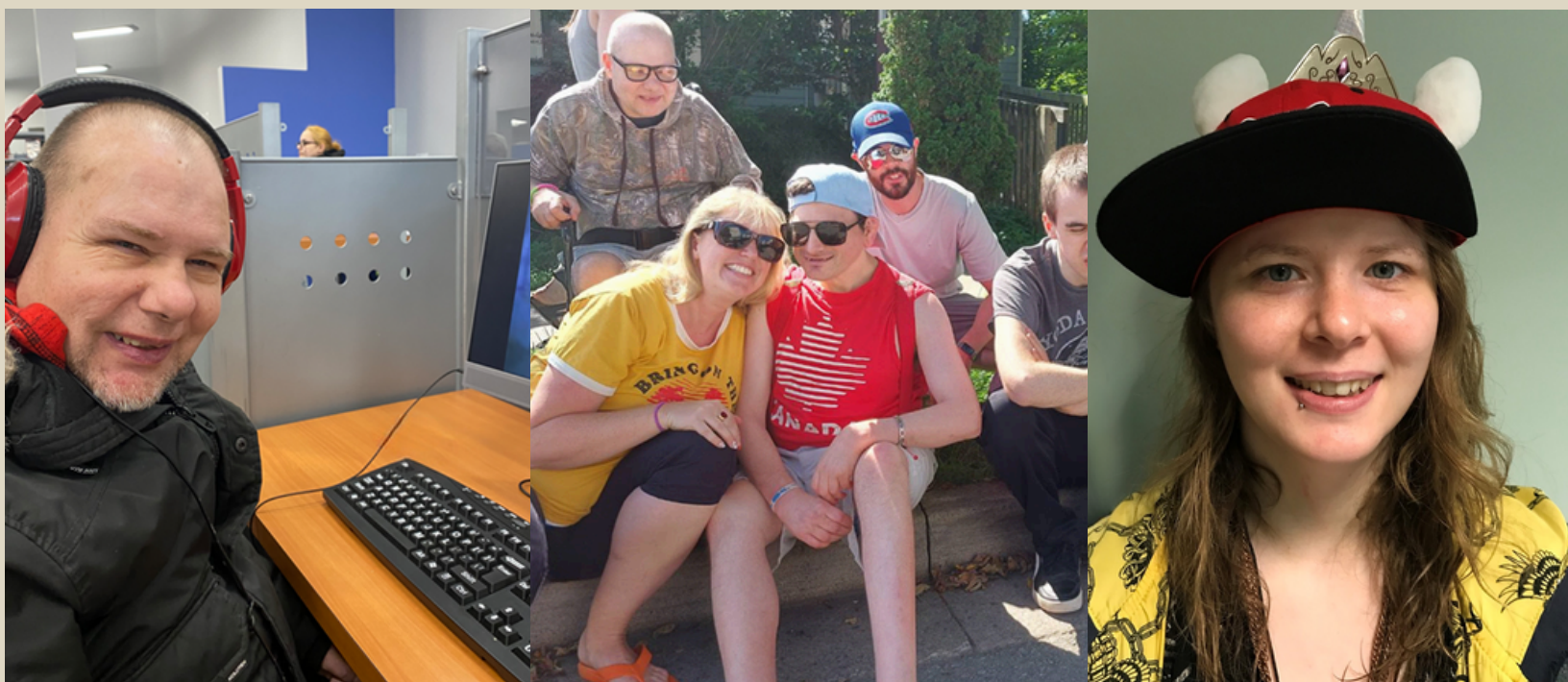


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ABOUT QUEST

Quest – A Society for Adult Support and Rehabilitation is funded by the Department of Opportunities and Social Development under the Disability Support Program.

Quest provides rehabilitation services to individuals with:

- Identified psychological, social and/or behavioral problems.
- Intellectual/mental health challenges who need additional skill development and/or improved social behavior.

Quest provides holistic resident support services within a person centered/directed model of care. Quest is staffed by caring and knowledgeable professionals working in multidisciplinary teams. Staff teams work closely with residents and their families to develop program plans designed to respond to the specific needs of each individual.

Quest operates four sites:

a 20-bed regional rehabilitation centre, two 4-bed small option homes and a 3-bed small option home. Quest is also a collaborative partner with Nova Scotia Health Authority's Central Zone in the Community Transition Program.



BOARD OF DIRECTORS

Ronald Cooper
Chairperson

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Vice Chairperson

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Secretary

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Board Member

Angela Cooper
Board Member

Chantal Piercy
Board Member

Patti Snow
Board Member

SENIOR MANAGEMENT TEAM

Joseph Rudderham
Executive Director

Chelsy Flemming
Director of Human Resources

Cheryl Newcombe
Chief Financial Officer

Karen Strangward
Director of Policy, Education and Safety

Paulette MacMullin
Director of Nursing

Tim McFarland
Director of Resident Supports

Bruce Doary
Director of Facility Services

Kimberly Howells
Senior Admin Support

QUEST'S MISSION

We specialize in helping people with complex developmental and mental health challenges to develop their personal goals and achieve community living.



QUEST'S VISION

Every resident and participant is able to fulfill their unique purpose in a community where they are valued, respected and belong.



CHAIRPERSON, BOARD OF DIRECTORS

This report and imbedded message are opportunities to address the ongoing operational aspects of our society and delve into the future possibilities as winds of change stir the landscape of care for persons with disabilities. We have arrived at this point in time as a result of the monumental court decision impacting the community living opportunities that must be provided to those living with disabilities.



Ron Cooper

The when, where, how and schedule of implementation is presently being determined, which leaves our organization and many others in this field in a waiting period, which allows us to have discussions on the impacts affecting residents, families, and staff. There is further information on this subject contained in the report of the Executive Director. As you may recall, we as an organization reviewed and updated our strategic plan and directions. We devised an implementation plan which we believe dovetails with future directions for the Department of Community Services. Prior to addressing the future, I am going to make some comments about the operations of the Society.

I believe that in general the population of Nova Scotia has come to relegate Covid to the sidelines of their lives, but it remains a priority to our staff and to the Board. Covid has hopefully left us but resurfaced occasionally at our sites where staff has reacted quickly in all instances to reinforce infection control, maximize masking and support levels. Our senior staff have been involved and I particularly note the contributions of Karen Strangward, Director of Policy, Education and Safety along with Paulette MacMullin, Director of Nursing.

Given the economic situation today and the state of labour market in the health care sector, staff retention is a significant concern for Quest and other providers. Without the dedication found at all levels of staffing we would be in a much more difficult position. We are pursuing staff feedback along with acknowledging accomplishments for service levels, long service awards and appreciation occasions through which hidden talents can be discovered and encouraged. The Board thanks all who contribute.

Quest along with many other organizations in the province work with and for persons with disabilities. I believe the range and frequency of disabilities along with the number of people affected is little appreciated or understood by many who are not impacted. The Courts have determined that those with disabilities must have a community living component when receiving programs and services.

This has meant that for Quest, there is a pause until it is determined by the parties involved how best to answer the Court's ruling.

Quest does not have issues with the ruling and has started discussing how we can best assist our clients and their families to participate fully in the process ahead. I urge all receiving this report to carefully read the accompanying reports to get a fuller appreciation of where we are and what lies ahead.

On behalf of the Board of Directors, I recognize the exemplary leadership of our Executive Director, Joe Rudderham, and the skill set of all staff. Much appreciation to all of you. To all Board members during this time of significant change, I give my proudest thank you.

Respectfully submitted,

Ronald Cooper
Chairperson



EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

Although COVID remained at the beginning of April 2023, its impact lessened as the year progressed. This also did not impact our programming, as any short outbreak had little to no effect on our Quest operations. Early in the year, Quest received approval to proceed with renovations to the 2 Lynnett small option home. This renovation project allowed one resident living on the main floor to move into a basement apartment.



Joe Rudderham

This move resulted in a safer environment for both the Lynnett residents and staff. The year also began with significant delays in getting a completed CUPE contract. Quest completed its local negotiations in August 2022 and then waited and waited for the CUPE provincial reps to reach an agreement with the province. This wait was felt by our CUPE members, as many expressed significant frustrations with the time it was taking. In late fall/early winter of 22/23, the Department of Community Services began consultation on the outcome of the earlier October 2022 Court of Appeal ruling on the 2014 case involving three individuals who alleged discrimination. The October ruling reinforced the finding of discrimination for the three and found that the province systemically discriminated against persons with disabilities by keeping persons too long on support wait lists, by housing some with disabilities in institutions unnecessarily, or by requiring individuals with disabilities to move out of their home communities to receive supports.

The case was significant for being the first court ruling in Canada regarding whether it is discriminatory to require persons with disabilities to live in congregate/institutional settings in order to receive necessary supports. Given this, the ruling was significant regarding the future of the Quest RRC program. Following this, Quest staff awaited the specific direction the province would be taking to remedy the discrimination. By the beginning of fiscal 2023/24 the Remedy report was released, and clarity was finally presented with a schedule of facility program closures. In the report, the Quest RRC program was identified to close in a 12–24-month period once the provincial infrastructure was in place and the DCS closure teams were ready to begin transition planning. At this time, it was anticipated the planning would begin in the fall of 2024.

As in 2022/23, staff were incredibly vigilant throughout this past year, as proven by the absence of any significant impact felt by Quest residents because of the pandemic.

As I did last year, I applaud Quest staff's effort and the residents who understood and embraced the need to keep safe. Thanks go out to our Director of HR, Chelsy Flemming; Director of Policy and Education, Karen Strangward; Director of Nursing, Paulette MacMullin; CFO, Cheryl Newcombe; Director of Resident Supports, Tim McFarland; Director of Facility Services, Bruce Doary; and Senior Admin Support, Kim Howells. All these individuals on the Senior Management Team went beyond keeping operations running as smoothly as possible through all the difficulties.

On a final note, as I did last year and the years before, I want to express my sincere gratitude to all Quest staff and the Board of Directors for their continued commitment to improving the lives of the residents we serve. To the residents of the Quest facility and small option programs, I hope for the absolute best for each of you in the years ahead.

Respectively submitted
Joe Rudderham BSc., MBA
Executive Director



DIRECTOR OF HUMAN RESOURCES

A MESSAGE FROM OUR TEAM

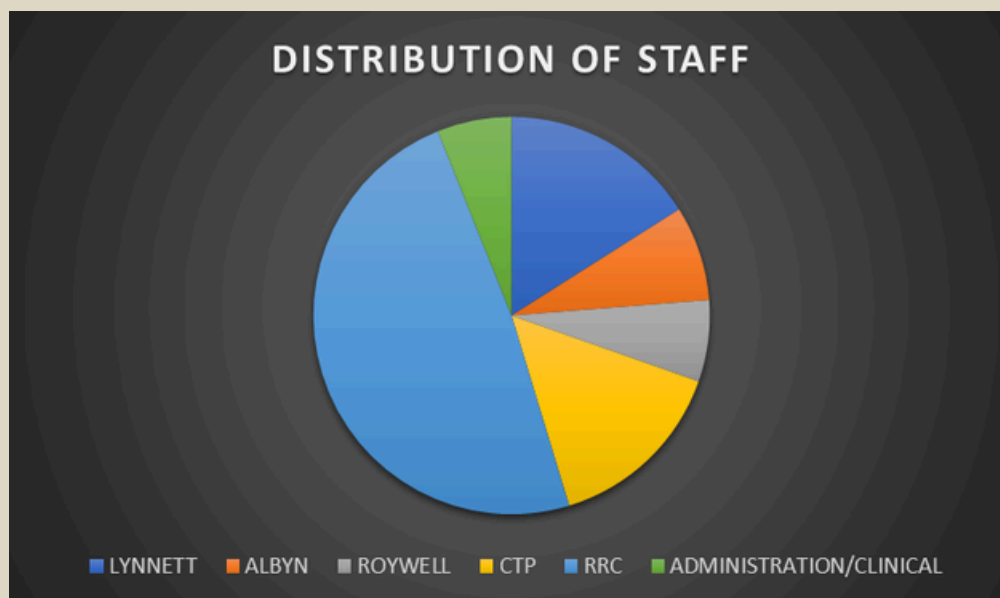
This fiscal year, Human Resources has remained committed to inclusive excellence and has strived to produce a welcoming work environment at all our Quest locations that ensures employees feel empowered to do their best work. The Human Resources team has been working diligently with employees and recognizes the hard work and dedication that goes into providing exceptional services and support to our residents.

Looking toward the future, there is a lot to be excited about as we prepare to embrace change, adapt, and grow as a team.



Chelsy Flemming

TRENDS IN THE WORKFORCE



During this fiscal year, Quest had 186 active employees, an increase of 6 employees from the previous fiscal year. Quest has 7 locations where employees work.

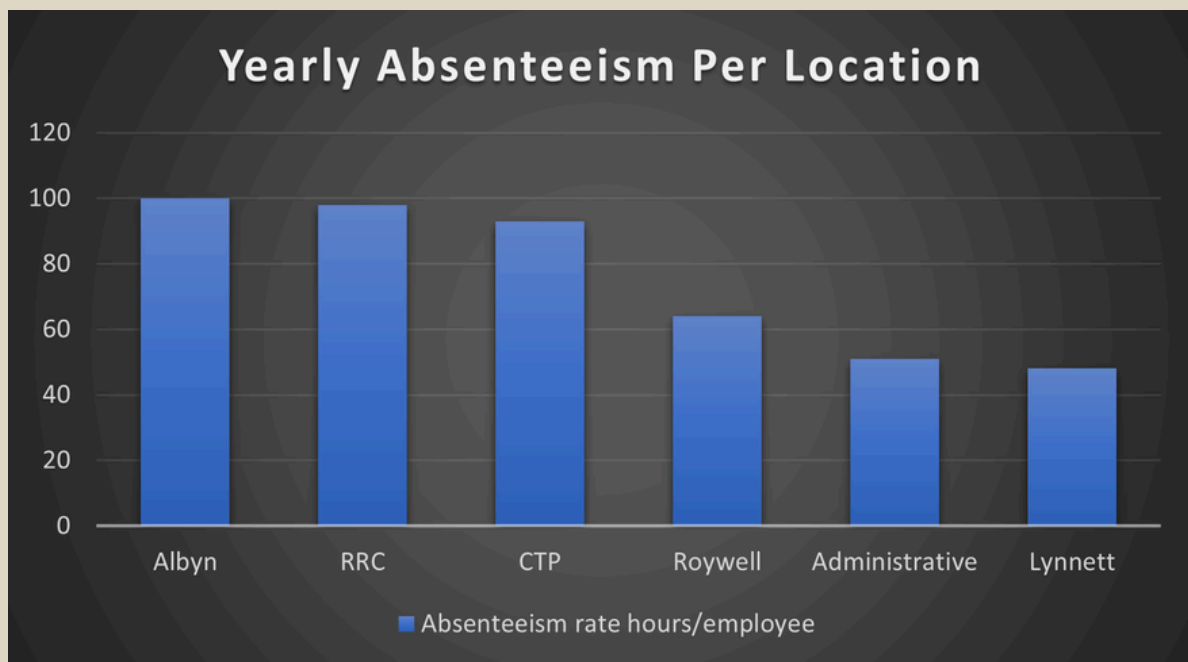
These include our Small Options Homes: Roywell, Albyn, and Lynnett (which has 2 units); the Community Transition Program (CTP); the Residential Rehabilitation Centre (RRC); and our Administrative Office. Quest continues to employ a clinical team that provides support and services to all residents at all our locations

ABSENTEEISM

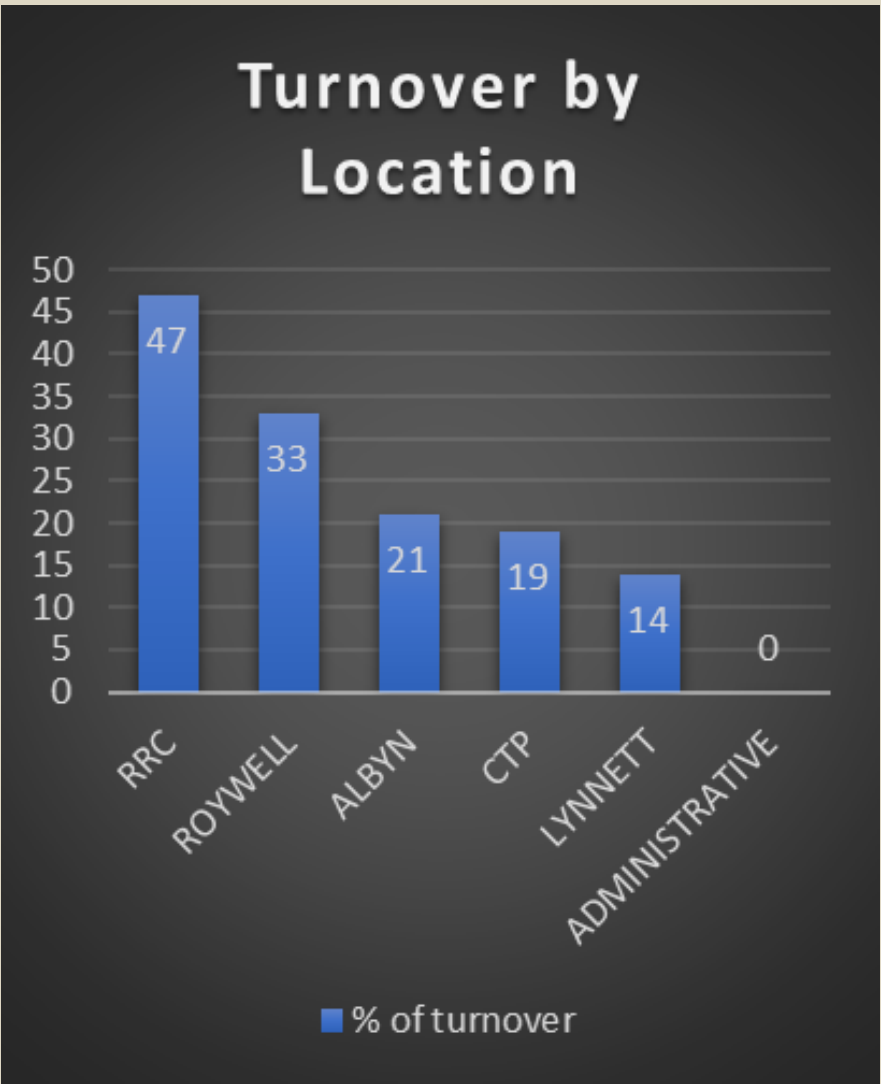
Approximately
1,590 Shifts had
to be Replaced

10.1 Days
Missed on
Average per
Employee

#1 reason for
absence was due
to personal ill
ness



ATTRITION



THE OVERALL STAFF
TURNOVER RATE
WAS 22%

This past year, our turn-over rate continued to be an ongoing challenge, particularly at our Residential Rehabilitation Centre.

The majority of employees left to seek higher paying employment, to continue post-secondary education or for personal reasons. During this year, we had four employees retire.

TRAINING, HEALTH AND SAFETY

Improved employee satisfaction, quality of work, and lower turnover rates are just a few of the outcomes we achieve by offering a wide array of training. This year, Quest had over 5,100 training hours and 19 different course offerings. With a goal of building a stronger and healthier workforce, Quest continues to strive and cater training to the needs of the organization and its employees.

Diversity, Equity and Inclusion (DEI)

Promoting a workplace of inclusivity and diversity, welcoming foreign workers from many different countries, is always a priority. Every year, we see an increase in workforce diversity. Through this diversity, we are able to access a larger talent pool, offer more innovation and creativity for the residents, and create a positive working culture. This past year, we began offering Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion training in response to a highly diverse workforce. This training was conducted by Zoé Hawkins, Diversity, Equity, Inclusion, and Accessibility Liaison (DEIA) through the Health+ Community Care Workforce Sector Council.

Workers Compensation Board (WCB)

Quest continues to work in collaboration with Dallas Mercer Consulting (DMC) to support a working environment that promotes employee well-being and productivity. For the period of April 1st, 2023, to March 31st, 2024, there was a total of 8 claims registered with WCB with a total claim cost for all claims to be \$36,319.52. The average duration of those claims was 2.82 weeks.

On Quest's 2024 Experience Rating Statement, there was an additional surcharge applied to the base rate of \$2.65 per \$100 of employee payroll, as well as a demerit of \$1.55 per \$100 of employee payroll. This was due to the claim's cost ratio being 328.65% higher than industry peers. In August 2024, the 2025 Experience Rating will be calculated and take effect on January 1st, 2025. This will see data from January 2021 to December 2023 used to recalculate these numbers:

- In 2020 Quest has a total of 31 injuries
- In 2021 Quest had a total of 31 injuries
- In 2022 Quest had a total of 15 injuries
- In 2023 Quest had a total of 12 injuries
- In 2024 From 01 Jan - 31 March, there were 4 claims registered with WCB NS.

Injury Year	2024	2023	2022	2021	2020
Total Number					
All Claims	4	12	15	31	31
Time Loss Claims	3	4	3	15	16
Total Cost					
All Claims	5508.42	34747.08	11783.88	157611.56	508753.24
Time Loss Claims	2947.23	8959.14	1429.89	80184.59	292815.38
Temporary Benefits					
Temporary Benefits	2947.23	8959.14	1429.89	80184.59	292815.38
Health Care Benefits					
Health Care Benefits	2561.19	25787.94	10353.99	71415.51	172688.25
Permanent Benefits					
Permanent Benefits	0.00	0.00	0.00	6011.46	43249.61

*Costs are aged one year (e.g. 2022 injuries show payments through Dec 31/2023).

This provides an "apples to apples" comparison of injury years, which helps to show trends.

Note: 2023 and 2024 costs may grow as the data has not yet fully aged.

WCB records show that in 2020 there were over 16 injuries that incurred time loss benefits to a total of 400 weeks being paid out with an average claim duration of 25 weeks. This number has drastically reduced over the last 4 years as a result of hard work and dedication to putting clear Return to Work (RTW) processes in place and offering employees modified work opportunities. In 2023 there was only a total of 3-time loss claims with 21 total weeks of Temporary Earnings benefits paid and an average claim duration of 5 weeks.

Year	Time Loss Claims	Total Wks Of Temp Benefits Paid	Avg # of Weeks Paid
2024	3	6	2
2023	4	21	5
2022	3	8	3
2021	14	173	12
2020	16	400	25

Once the 2025 experience rating statement is put into effect in January 2025, the 2020 claim cost of \$508k will no longer be used in the calculation, which may remove Quest from its surcharge penalty and potentially remove most, if not all, of the demerit that is also being applied. With the current claim costs and durations, Quest's work over the past 3 years with DMC will bear fruit.

UNION NEGOTIATIONS

CUPE Local 1028 and NSNU continue to work with Quest, and I am sincerely appreciative of the continued collaboration from these unions. Quest continued to engage in negotiations with Local CUPE 1028 to finalize a new contract

FINAL THOUGHTS

Moving forward, we will continue to focus on creating a vibrant, inclusive, and rewarding workplace. We look forward to continuing engagement with our employees and local unions and preparing for exciting and dynamic change in the years to come. Human Resources remains committed to supporting employees to meet the future needs of Quest, strengthening our team, enhancing our operational effectiveness, and ensuring a strong sense of belonging for all employees. Finally, the Human Resources team would like to thank all employees for your unwavering dedication, hard work, and commitment. Your efforts are noticed and appreciated.

Respectfully,
Chelsy Flemming
Director of Human Resources

FINANCIAL STATEMENT

Statement of Income and Expenditures

Year ended 31 March 2024 with comparative figures for 2023 and 2022

	2024 ACTUAL	2023 ACTUAL	2022 ACTUAL
INCOME			
Provincial Government Per Diem Funding	\$2,176,427	\$2,034,146	\$1,706,180
Provincial Government Grants	7,249,651	6,958,479	7,336,435
Other Income	915,338	161,620	43,886
Community Transition Program Funding	2,131,185	2,125,077	2,109,574
TOTAL	\$12,472,601	\$11,279,322	\$11,196,075
EXPENDITURES			
Quest RRC Site	\$6,496,583	\$6,221,375	\$6,117,015
Administration	1,099,902	974,731	879,840
Community Transition Program	1,918,189	1,771,606	1,905,133
Community-Based Options Homes:			
Albyn	880,774	842,011	800,726
Roywell	725,289	766,843	723,894
Lynnette	1,276,153	916,320	777,181
TOTAL	\$12,396,890	\$11,492,886	\$11,203,789
Excess of Revenue over Expenditures	\$75,711	(\$213,564)	(\$7,714)
Gain upon disposal of capital asset		-	
Excess of Revenue over Expenses	\$75,711	(\$213,564)	(\$7,714)

QUEST RRC

DIRECTOR OF NURSING

This past year has been an exciting one for residents and staff alike. We welcomed some new residents and said farewell to others. We have also been fortunate to welcome several new front-line staff, which include both RRW's, nurses, and other multidisciplinary staff, to our team.

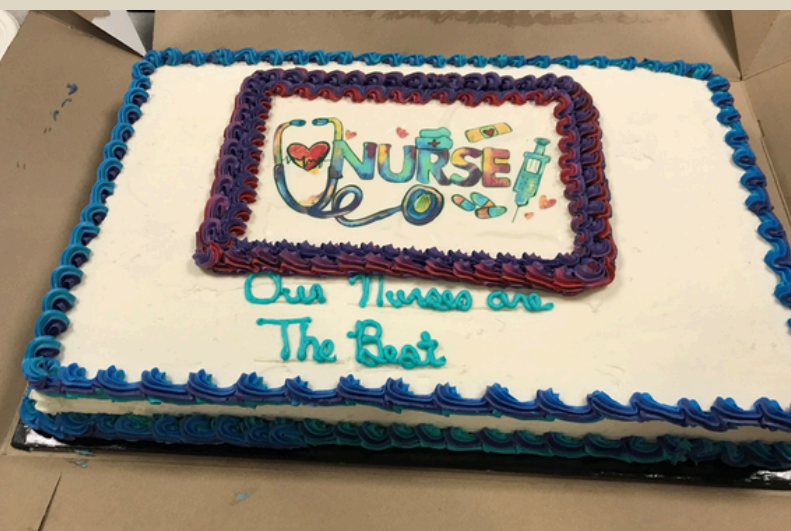


Paulette MacMullin

These additions expand our cultural and professional backgrounds, which enhances our diverse perspectives. Despite discussions around "The Remedy," with the end goal for all our residents to reside in a community setting, we continue to provide all necessary support to ensure their lives are safe and fulfilling. We worked through a small Covid-19 outbreak, requiring short-term isolation and restrictions. Fortunately, all residents and staff infected recovered without any serious issues.

We are pleased to report that all our residents have received and will continue to receive vaccinations according to our public health recommendations





We continue to have very good fortune to have Dr. Y. Stubeda on our team as he continues to provide regular and dedicated support to all our residents, ensuring their good health and medical support.

Residents' Individual Support Plans (ISP) continue to be reviewed regularly, which leads to an improved quality of care for residents and the ability to better meet their needs and goals.

The Multidisciplinary Team continues to liaise with Nova Scotia Department of Community Services, Disability Support Program Care Coordinators, Nova Scotia Department of Health, Adult Protection Workers, Nova Scotia Legal Aid Lawyers, Nova Scotia Public Trustee staff, Capital District Health Authority Mental Health Services, Protection for Persons in Care, Local RCMP, and other community organizations/advocates working on issues related to services with persons with disabilities, housing, financial issues, and special needs.

We are actively involved with the transition process in assisting individuals to transition from Quest to a community setting. This involves our participation in The Transition Project with other service providers throughout the province. We continue to dedicate our energies to the processes around transitions to the community, as the residential facilities will be closing. As always, we, the Quest team, look forward to and will embrace the challenges that may come. We continue to be grateful for the privilege of supporting our residents who aspire to a full life, where they can succeed in achieving their goals, no matter where that may be.

Respectfully submitted,
Paulette MacMullin, RN
Director of Nursing



QUEST RRC

DIRECTOR OF RESIDENT SUPPORTS

From April 1st, 2023 to March 31st, 2024, Quest has experienced many changes while continuing to deliver exemplary service to those who have been placed in our care. In conjunction with one another, the members of frontline support and multi-disciplinary team members, along with kitchen, housekeeping, and security support, have worked very hard to maintain consistent and compassionate care for our residents.



Tim McFarland

The challenges of the Covid-19 resurgence as well as some of the understandable uncertainty of what the Remedy closure strategies will reveal have demanded flexibility, patience, and resilience from our residents and staff alike. I am very pleased to report that Quest continues to be up to the task of high caliber care and punches well above its weight class within the world of community services.

Managing RRWs, RRW Mentors, Social Worker, Behavioural Interventionist and Liaison with Psychologist – In my role as Director of Resident Supports, I have continued to coach, guide, and manage RRWs and RRW mentors.

We have enjoyed a huge growth in diversity of our front-line support workers. Our team boasts members from seven or more countries. This multicultural reality strengthens our skill set and delivery of service potential to our residents. The three mentors, Alice Chen, Olaide Olaolopin, and Andrew Purje, have engaged in wonderful work of mentoring and orienting more than 20 new staff members since September of 2023. They are to be commended for this work in addition to their ongoing mentoring tasks. Jessy Arackal, Lindsay Leighton, and Lisa Hurst are valuable members of the multi-disciplinary team. I have worked with them in the privilege of enhancing the lives of our residents.



Lisa became Quest's social worker after Aziza Omar left us in October 2024. My thanks to Aziza for her work and gratitude to Lisa for bringing to bear her many years of experience as a Quest RRW, Team Lead and Occupational Health and Safety Officer. Regular team meetings and evaluation encounters have equipped me to experience positive communications with those who report to me:

1. **Multidisciplinary Team** – I have regularly met with members of the multi-disciplinary team for ongoing scheduled meetings as well as ad-hoc meetings when required. I have benefitted from learning from the varied disciplines in an effort to do my own job better. The art of referral to experts is crucial for the ongoing success of our programs and care.
2. **Resident Engagement** – More than 50 percent of my time is spent not in the office but in the community and within the RRC with residents. I have regularly taken residents into the community and engaged with them in such programs as Resident Council meetings as well as other programs facilitated by recreation coordinators. Residents have also been welcomed into my office for 1-to-1 chats when they wish.
3. **Working with Students** – I continue to be primary contact person with students from universities and community colleges who are working at Quest for their co-op program. The side benefit from these educational opportunities has been that students often will join us as employees following their degree completion. I have also worked with employees who complete their university internships with us.
4. **Engagement with Outside Agencies** – I have been involved with liaison activities with a number of different agencies outside of Quest, including the RCMP and other service providers.
5. **Collaboration with Fellow Directors** - I continue to work on a regular basis with fellow directors in the organization in regard to all facets of Quest life. There is a great deal of cross-sectioning in the work the directors do, from policy/education, finance, HR, and facilities, etc. One of the strengths of the organization continues to be open communication and avoiding the perils of working at cross purposes. This intentional directionality will serve Quest well into the changing times that come with the Remedy. In addition to this in-house effort, I also chair the monthly meetings for all directors of the seven service-providing facilities across Nova Scotia.



These meetings enable directors to support one another with strategies that are helpful across the sector as well as more informal support in these changing times. I report these meetings to the executive directors once a month.

6. **Staff appreciation** – During September of 2023, we celebrated staff appreciation week. This involved several prize-winning contests, BBQs, and signage/expressions of gratitude for our frontline support workers. Our residents were involved in this celebration.

7. **Staff Training** – Quest enabled me to become a trainer in Mental Health First Aid, which is offered through the Mental Health Commission of Canada. Once equipped, I began offering several courses to our staff members with the aim that all Quest staff would be so trained. This type of training allows for peer-to-peer support for people experiencing mental health decline.

8. **Remedy Preparation** – Over the past year I have worked with fellow staff members within Quest for the planning necessary for our residents to be successful when they ultimately move into the community. This involves work with residents as well as consultation with members from DCS and families of the residents.

9. **Final Comments** All in all, the work at Quest in my capacity as Director of Resident Supports is greatly rewarding. This is hands-on, relevant care for the marginalized, as well as support for dozens of individuals who feel called to this noble profession. I have confidence that as Quest continues to evolve, the organization will leave a considerable and positive footprint on the human landscape of Nova Scotia.

Respectfully submitted,
Timothy J. McFarland, BA, MDiv, MA
Director of Resident Supports



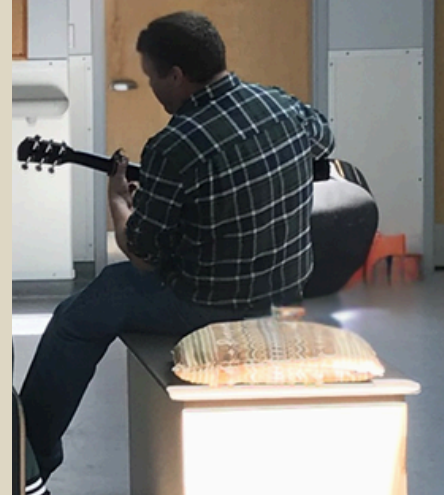
RECREATION THERAPY

Recreation is an integral part of the individuals we support. Without recreation, we would miss the mark when it comes to implementing the social model. Recreation coordinators work with a wide range of individuals, including those with mental health conditions, developmental or physical disabilities, etc. The interventions cover fine and gross motor skills, physical functioning, social effectiveness, self-awareness, emotional regulation, and more. Recreation at Quest makes a positive impact! Recreation and leisure improve the quality of life for the residents at Quest. Each resident has their own person-centered goals in their established recreation programs. Programs are offered to all residents, which are indicated on the monthly calendar. Recreation focuses on individuals' strengths, not their deficits, and their abilities, not disabilities. Recreation therapy has 5 domains that include the following for the residents' lives, which are social, emotional, spiritual, physical, and vocational.

The common goals for residents include, but are not limited to:

1. Promote physical activity
2. Improve quality of life and enjoyment
3. Increase social opportunities with peers
4. Provide opportunity for community engagement
5. Increase and promote independence.
6. Support Emotional regulation.

Each month, there are several opportunities for community and in-house engagement on the monthly program calendar. The community outings include the indoor walking track, swimming, horse therapy, Fit4Less gym, SPCA volunteering, movie outings, library outings, park outings, bowling, museums, therapeutic farms, and many seasonal activities such as apple picking, skating, corn mazes, local farms, holiday fairs, etc.



RECREATION THERAPY

There is also a Monday-Friday Walk to Petro Canada to promote physical activity. The indoor walking track is accessible for the residents, and with the warmer weather coming up, trail walks are encouraged. Swimming is at the Cole Harbor Pool. Movie outings every few months. Residents are encouraged to utilize the bus or walk but may also be supported in the van for further trips.

The Special Olympics is always a program that provides social engagement, teamwork, physical activity, and the chance to learn new skills. The residents currently participate in Special Olympics hockey, soccer, golf, and bowling. Depending on the level of skill, the residents have been invited to attend tournaments and other special events at the BMO center. This year one of our residents participated in the yearly hockey tournament and brought home a silver medal. This year, our residents were also part of Unified Soccer, where they were able to play with Soccer Halifax. A few times a year, the recreation coordinators plan an in-house event that invites our small options home residents as well as those who live at the RRC. This year a DJ played at the Halloween Party, and the residents enjoyed dancing and singing. The Super Bowl was a huge success again this year, and the residents watched it on the big screen. Keeping with tradition, the residents from the RRC and one of our small options homes attended the New Year's Eve Moosehead game.

The residents enjoyed the cottage this past summer and were able to develop simple cooking skills using the BBQ with staff support. A new leisure room has been created where the residents can learn to play the piano, play indoor basketball, and play ladder toss. Residents can play the Wii, use the yoga ball, and use free weights. There are art supplies and crafts. The leisure room is also a quiet space to do one-on-one activities.

Individual programs for residents are also important for obtaining the residents' goals and promoting physical activity, peer socialization and teamwork. The residents have taken part in floor hockey, soccer, bowling, powerlifting, and track and field. Residents attend summer camps and drop-in programs within the community, such as Autism Camp and the Autism Arts program. Autism Camp runs from July to the end of September, where the residents participate in hikes, swimming, and other leisure outings.



RECREATION THERAPY

This year, in the off-season, the residents participated in Autism Camp that ran on Tuesdays and Wednesdays. Autism Nova Scotia ran a media arts program that our residents attended on Saturdays to further develop their creativity with art.

Volunteers for dog therapy come once a week and provide an opportunity for the residents to socialize with a dog. Music therapy also takes place once a week, and the residents have preferred songs that they sing along to.

Residents also enjoy attending horse therapy, where they feed the animals and brush their coats.

Students from the Canadian College of Massage & Hydrotherapy volunteered to give massages to the residents during spa nights once a month during the spring and summer.

During the summer months, residents have been utilizing the courtyard for BBQs, outdoor fire pit gatherings, water sports such as sprinklers, balloon fights, etc.

The recreation coordinators welcome new ideas and programs to ensure that the residents' lives are enhanced and inspired with joy.

Respectfully submitted,
Shannon MacKintosh
Acting Recreation Coordinator (Mentor)



OCCUPATIONAL THERAPY



Since joining Quest in October 2023, LaToya and I have worked tirelessly to enhance our offerings, enrich the lives of residents, and foster a supportive community environment.

Early in the year, the Sensory Room at Quest was updated to cater to the diverse sensory needs and interests of all residents. Data collected using a Sensory Screening Tool allowed the development of individualized Sensory Profiles, outlining each resident's goals in the Sensory Room. The room was organized, new items were purchased, and staff received training on its use.

The woodworking program remained a consistent source of engagement and skill development. One resident crafted Christmas decorations such as snowmen and reindeer, which were sold at Quest's annual Christmas party, providing meaningful opportunities for community involvement.

The Abilities in Motion (AIM) program continued, with one resident participating in tailored activities to support their strengths and interests. While volunteering at Fultz House and wheelchair curling were discontinued, we explored new avenues to provide engaging experiences for residents.

Residents continued to actively participate in the Quest gardening program, planting various vegetables and herbs from seed indoors, which will soon be transplanted into the outdoor garden beds. This program will allow residents to cultivate and harvest fresh produce for use in cooking groups throughout the summer months.

In a major development, I wrote a proposal and secured a \$22,000 grant from the Mental Health Association of Nova Scotia to build a 20 x 30 ft. greenhouse in Quest's courtyard. This greenhouse project, designed to be therapeutic and increase physical activity, will also enhance skill-building and community involvement. Plans include selling produce at the farmers market, with proceeds benefiting the Fultz House Museum for ground maintenance. Additionally, students from the Therapeutic Recreation Program at NSCC will assist in facilitating programming in the greenhouse and community come the fall.

OCCUPATIONAL THERAPY

To further enrich our residents' experiences, I acquired a piano for the Leisure Room. With my formal training in piano, I offered lessons and provided music therapy to interested residents.

Autism Camp, traditionally held in July and August, was extended to year-round programming thanks to funding from the Department of Community Services. This extension will allow residents to engage in activities that keep them active and involved in their favorite occupations throughout the entire year.

As we reflect on the past year, we are proud of the progress and accomplishments achieved at Quest. Through our dedication to person-centered care and innovation, we remain committed to providing enriching experiences and fostering a vibrant community for all residents.

Respectively submitted,
Emma Brown, MScOT, OTReg(NS)
Clinical Occupational Therapist



OCCUPATIONAL THERAPY

During the past year, with the support of the multi-disciplinary team, I have been able to assist residents with life skills and engagement in various programs with the goal of preparing for independent living. There are several programs that I facilitate at the QRRC, one of which is the cooking group, an essential program that residents have been participating in and building their culinary skills. The gardening program has been a program implemented to get residents outdoors and engaged in the process of planting seeds, watering the plants, and harvesting the fruit/vegetables. The greenhouse in the multi-purpose room is where the seeds are planted, and seedlings are transferred to the garden beds outside the QRRC each summer.

Coffee talk is on Tuesday and Thursday mornings, which gives the resident an opportunity to have a cup of coffee or hot chocolate while doing an activity or engaging in a topic-specific conversation with other co-residents and myself. Work is a skill that is encouraged, and through the P-50 program, residents are encouraged to engage in activities such as cleaning tables, assisting with laundry, or shredding paper for compensation each month. I take residents to deliver and pick up mail from DCS and Damascus and assist them with shredding paper at Damascus by transporting residents to and from. I have been successful in getting residents who would not normally participate in programs to get involved. The AIM program at the YMCA has been very instrumental for one of our residents who is in a wheelchair because it allows him the opportunity to go to the gym, interact with others, and complete his strengthening exercise regimen. My goal is to continue to encourage participation and productivity while bringing enjoyment to the lives of our residents through programs and activities.

Respectfully Submitted
LaToya Bethel
Occupational Therapy Assistant



BEHAVIOURAL INTERVENTION

During the past year, with the support from the multidisciplinary team, my focus was on decreasing incidents of physical aggression and property destruction to increase the safety of residents and staff. I continue to use the principles of applied behavior analysis while writing programs and use evidence-based interventions. Applied behavior analysis focuses on reducing problem behavior by understanding the function of behavior and teaching them replacement behavior.

Over the past year, new programs and interventions have been implemented to improve the residents' social skills, communication skills, engagement, essential living skills, etc. I continue to work with outreach and ANSU BCBA's when residents exhibit severe problem behavior and have supported transitioning residents from the hospital to QRRRC. Besides, some communication skill-building programs have been trailed and implemented as recommended by NS hearing and speech pathologists.

Staff continues to provide Positive Behavior Support training at least once a month and individualized training on implementing interventions and working with residents to increase their engagement and decrease problem behavior. PBS training helps the staff gain knowledge about challenging behavior, background, and rationale for implementing positive behavior support. Different activities and case studies test staff's knowledge and give them insight into the concerning behaviors we see with our residents.

I also worked with SOH lead and SOH supervisor on a consultation basis and helped them to identify the patterns of challenging behaviors and implement positive behavior support strategies to reduce the concerning behaviors. I continue to collect data and analyze the behavior and use the collected data to make decisions on treatment goals, progress, and effectiveness.

Respectfully Submitted,
Jessy Arackal, Behavioral Interventionist



SOCIAL WORK

My name is Lisa Hurst, and although I am new to the role of social worker at Quest, I am not new to the organization. I began my journey with Quest in 2008 as a Residential Rehabilitation Worker (RRW) and have held various positions within the organization over the years. It is an honor to continue contributing to the vital work we do at Quest

New Admissions and Family Reconnection

The past six months since I assumed this role have been exceptionally busy. During this period, I have been actively involved in the admission of two new residents at the Quest Regional Rehabilitation Centre (QRRC). One notable case involves a gentleman from Romania who had lost contact with his family for several years. Facilitating his reconnection with his family has been a profoundly rewarding experience. Witnessing the joy and relief during their video calls has reinforced the importance of family ties and the positive impact they have on our residents' well-being. Building and maintaining strong relationships with residents' families is crucial for providing the best possible care, and it is an aspect of my job that I find immensely fulfilling.

The Remedy and Its Implications

A significant development affecting our work has been the Nova Scotia Supreme Court's ruling that all congregate living settings with more than four beds serving persons with disabilities must close within the next four years. This ruling, known as The Remedy, has understandably caused considerable anxiety among residents and their families. As the primary liaison for Quest RRC families regarding The Remedy, I have provided essential information and support to help them understand and navigate this change.

To improve communication and address concerns, Joe Rudderham, Chelsy Flemming, and I organized two meetings with family members. These sessions were successful in disseminating available information and offering a platform for families to voice their questions and concerns. Many family members expressed their gratitude for these meetings, which helped to clarify the situation and provided reassurance during this transitional period. Additionally, I was present to support residents and their families when the Department of Community Services Disability Support Program presented information about The Remedy and the closure strategy at QRRC.



SOCIAL WORK

Collaborative Efforts and Advocacy

In my role, collaboration is key. I frequently work with the Nova Scotia Department of Community Services, Disability Support Program Care Coordinators, Adult Protection Workers, Guardians Ad Litem, Nova Scotia Legal Aid Lawyers, Mental Health Court Clinicians, Nova Scotia Public Trustee staff, and various community organizations and advocates. Our collaborative efforts focus on addressing issues related to services for persons with disabilities, housing, financial matters, and more. These partnerships are essential in ensuring comprehensive support for our residents.

Training and Education

Beyond my responsibilities as a social worker, I am also one of the instructors for Quest, teaching the PACE component of the Safe Handling & Mobility program for several years. PACE (Physical, Agitation, Communication, and Environment) is crucial for safely repositioning, moving, or transferring residents, thereby enhancing resident care and reducing staff injuries.

Furthermore, I have designed and implemented a self-care course for our staff, which I also teach. Self-care is vital for disability support workers as it helps them maintain their physical, emotional, and mental well-being. Ensuring that our staff are well-equipped to take care of themselves is essential for them to provide consistent, compassionate, and effective support to our residents.

Conclusion

The past six months have been both challenging and rewarding. I am grateful for the opportunity to serve in this role and to continue making a positive impact at Quest. The developments regarding The Remedy will require ongoing communication and support, and I am committed to working closely with all stakeholders to ensure a smooth transition for our residents and their families. Thank you for your continued support and dedication to the mission of Quest.

Respectfully submitted,
Lisa Hurst, BA, BSW, MSW, SWC
Social Worker



DIRECTOR OF FACILITIES SERVICE

Facilities had a remarkably busy year between resource challenges and the various projects that were implemented for completion by year-end 2023. One significant change in maintenance was the addition of a second NS Provincial Housing resource that was assigned to 70 Memory Lane to help lighten the load of our already maxed-out maintenance person. Tasks that had been overdue or set aside as low priority have been completed, and we are now caught up and just dealing with the day-to-day requests.



Bruce Doary

Housekeeping has been keeping up with the required services. There had been some challenging times through the year with staffing, but they persevered. We did lose a casual resource and are now looking for replacement. Kitchen resources were down most of the year due to unforeseen circumstances and leave of absence. We were able to promote one person up to cook and did bring on some temporary resources to carry us through.

Security, our security supervisor, resigned to pursue another career opportunity, but we were able to quickly fill the position with someone who was familiar with the role and has been working out well.



Fleet, we are still at a count of 7 fleet vehicles. The costs for maintaining the vehicles have been about the same as the previous year, with the usual regular maintenance and occasional major expenses due to daily usage and high km of certain vehicles.

The greenhouse program for starting seedlings was successful, and by late spring there were many vegetable plants that were transplanted to our newly created garden beds on the Skyview side of the RRC. That, with some other flower beds, made for some beautiful flowers and delicious produce that clients and staff enjoyed.

The old dining room area of the RRC had a new epoxy floor installed that is very durable and stunning to see. The larger area was repurposed into a spacious recreational room for clients to visit and enjoy with games and activities. The bedroom that was next to that room was also transformed into the new woodworking room that moved from the Head Office at Damascus Road.

In other facilities, Quest went through a significant basement renovation at 2 Lynnett Drive to create a separate independent living space for our client; in addition to that, also a separate office setup for that staff was created.

In February, 5 Roywell Drive received approval for a complete kitchen renovation to become more updated and functional. Plans for completion are fall 2024.

As part of ongoing maintenance, the Quest cottage received a new coat of stain on the building and trim work, which freshened up the look for the new season.

Respectfully submitted,
Bruce Doary
Director of Facilities Services





ALBYN & ROYWELL HOMES



This year has been filled with growth, community engagement, and meaningful experiences for the residents and staff alike. Our dedicated team has worked tirelessly to create a supportive and nurturing environment, ensuring that each resident feels valued and empowered. We have celebrated many milestones together, from personal achievements to community events, all while fostering a sense of belonging and inclusion. Three residents continue to reside at the Roywell Drive community-based option home, and four residents continue to reside at the Albyn Avenue community-based option home.

Throughout the year, the residents have had the opportunity to participate in a variety of community outings, events, and programs. From exciting summer camps and engaging activities at the Sportsplex to local sightseeing, our residents have enjoyed a rich array of experiences.

Two favorites include the Cow Bay Moose and the Lobster Trap Christmas Tree. Festive celebrations like the Canada Day parade and Halloween Pumpkin Trail scavenger hunt add to the enjoyment. These activities not only provided fun and enjoyment but also fostered social connections and community engagement.

ALBYN & ROYWELL HOMES

An exciting development this year was a resident accepted placement in a peer leisure and recreation group. This has enhanced their recreational options and provided further opportunities for socialization with peers in the community. In addition, residents participating in Project 50 have maintained stable work this year.



They have continued tasks such as paper shredding, mail pickup and delivery, laundry folding, assisting staff with errands, and spending time at the SPCA. It can't be all work and no play!

While our residents are pros at getting things done, they also know how to have a good time. They enjoy battling it out in the arcade and unwinding with a good book at the library. Balance is key, and our residents have mastered the art of mixing business with pleasure!



ALBYN & ROYWELL HOMES

Several of the residents have enthusiastically joined a new peer bowling league, further integrating into the community and building connections with their peers outside of the home.

The Residential Rehabilitation staff were proven exceptional again this period, proven to work diligently in collaboration with the residents and various community resources to ensure that the residents we serve are supported in engaging in activity and experiences they value.

Every day brings new opportunities. The residents, their families, loved ones, and staff eagerly anticipate the great things on the horizon as we continue to grow and progress together. We are proud of the positive impact each of us continues to have on the lives of one another. With the support of our dedicated staff, community partners, residents, and their families, we look forward to another year of growth, engagement, and meaningful experiences.

Thank you for your continued support.

Respectfully,
Natasha Leyenaar LPN, SOH Supervisor





LYNNETT HOME

In 2023, Lynnett experienced significant growth and success. The completion of our basement apartment aligned with the organization's goals and standards, showcasing a commitment to providing personalized support. The addition of a resident-specific staff team allowed for a successful transition of a resident into the apartment, highlighting the dedication and collaboration of all involved. The investment in staff training and on going development of skills has aided our team in being equipped to provide quality support.



Program development at Lynnett has been tailored to individuals, emphasizing person directed care and focusing on choice, experiences and relationships. This approach has been instrumental in the successes at Lynnett, our team has worked together to navigate challenges and find solutions. We take great pride in our ability to think outside of the box to strategize and problem solve.

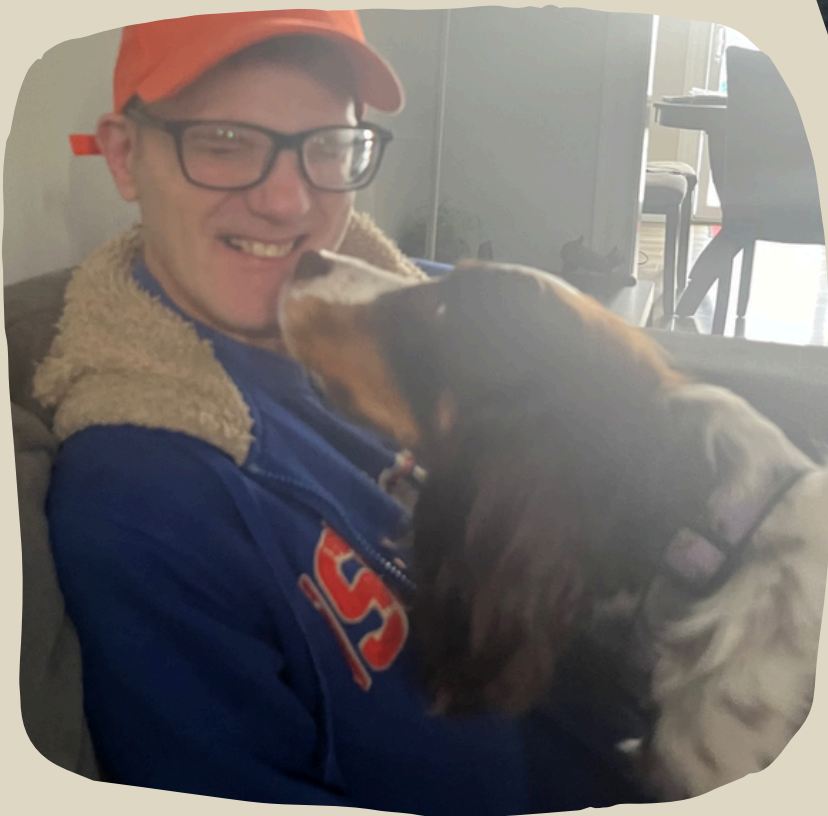


LYNNETT HOME

Looking ahead to 2024, Lynnett is committed to expanding our integration within our community. By strengthening our partnerships with families, service providers and community liaisons, Lynnett aims to enhance the quality of support for our residents. Our commitment to supporting local businesses as well as community events and enhancing existing programs reflects our dedication to making a positive impact in the lives of those we serve.

With a focus on collaboration, personalized support and community engagement, Lynnett is looking forward to continued growth and successes in the coming year.

Respectfully submitted,
Amber Gilby



THE COMMUNITY TRANSITION PROGRAM

The Community Transition Program (CTP) is a collaborative initiative between the Department of Community Services (DCS) through Quest—A Society for Adult Support and Rehabilitation and Nova Scotia Health (NSH) —Central Zone. It caters to individuals with intricate mental and physical health, behavioral, and residential/social support needs. The program utilizes an integrated care approach to transition individuals requiring complex care to community living options tailored to their specific needs and levels of support.

Situated on the second floor of the 70 Memory Lane site, CTP is a 12-bed unit comprised of an interdisciplinary team of healthcare professionals dedicated to assisting clients in achieving their personal objectives. The team includes Residential Rehabilitation Workers, Licensed Practical Nurses, Registered Nurses, Recreational Therapists, Therapeutic Assistants, Occupational Therapists, Complex Case Social Workers from both DCS and NSH, as well as additional support staff and management personnel. The program's primary objective is to facilitate clients' transition from various care settings within the NSH and DCS systems to community-based environments that best meet their individual needs. Collaborating with clients' families, the program develops individualized care plans with a target transition period of 18 months. During the reporting period of 2023-2024, as a direct outcome of the NSH Leadership Safety Rounds, CTP management incorporated a neuropsychiatrist on a part-time basis to provide consulting services for our clients. This strategic move was aimed at effectively addressing concerns within community mental health and addiction.

CTP recreational programs have resumed full operations with the easing of COVID restrictions, resulting in full-community access effective March 2023. Clients were engaged in a diverse, broad range of activities, including physical activities such as trail walks throughout Lower Sackville and surrounding areas, group sporting events (i.e., bowling, billiards, fishing, swimming, and Special Olympics softball and bowling leagues), as well as access to community fitness centres (i.e., Sackville Sports Stadium, Joseph Zatzman, and Canada Games Centre).

THE COMMUNITY TRANSITION PROGRAM

Clients also saw a collective increase in social activities such as Sackville Seniors programs—kitchen parties, lunch socials, and quilting clubs; Cineplex movie outings; group BBQs and picnics; bingo; coffee/ice cream gatherings; library outings; lunch outings; and van drives for clients, as a soothing opportunity, along with various social groups on the unit. The program also resumed initiatives such as music therapy, social projects through Connections—Halifax and Dartmouth, and support for 2SLGBTQIA+ individuals during PRIDE week. Clients were able to participate in multiple community events such as the Halifax International Buskers, Halifax Burger Week, Halifax Pride Parade, Halifax County Horse Show, and Bedford/Halifax Canada Day & Natal Day events. CTP was also permitted to reinstate in-person community church services for clients requesting religious services, resulting in attendance at numerous services throughout Lower Sackville. Noteworthy fall and winter activities included restaurant outings, grocery shopping, baking projects, Indigenous heritage celebrations, holiday-themed events, and social gatherings.

In addition to recreational and social engagements, CTP facilitated access to employment programs with partners such as Lake City Woodworkers, Stone Hearth Bakery, and New Boundaries in Windsor, NS; we assisted in the creation of various P50 programs for clients seeking employment opportunities that met the clients individualized needs, such as on-site programs: lunch/supper assistant, cleaning tasks appropriate for the clients; Fultz Park program—assisting their foundation in yard maintenance; SPCA programs—assisting their association in providing routine animal care and supports. We also facilitated clients in resume-building workshops and a reverse job fair for a specific client. Clients pursuing educational goals received supported access to programs of interest at Saint Mary's University, along with an online IT program through Udemy.

THE COMMUNITY TRANSITION PROGRAM

As Manager of Support Services at CTP, I wish to express my appreciation to the team for their commitment to delivering professional, person-centered care that respects the health and dignity of our clients. Despite challenges, the employees at CTP have consistently provided high-quality care, demonstrating unwavering dedication. Notably, the program has successfully transitioned four clients to various community settings during this period, bringing our total transition number to 49 clients since inception. Currently, CTP is supporting twelve clients; six were admitted during this reporting period.

Respectfully submitted,

Christopher Higgins (he/him)

Manager of Support Services – Community Transition Program

QUEST – A Society for Adult Support and Rehabilitation.



Thank You