

**Quest - A Society For Adult
Support and Rehabilitation**

ANNUAL GENERAL REPORT

01 April 2022 - 31 March 2023



TABLE OF CONTENTS

About Quest	3
Board of Directors	4
Senior Management Team	5
Quest's Mission and Vision	6
Chairperson, Board of Directors	7
Executive Director	9
Director of Human Resources	13
Financial Statement	16
Quest Regional Rehabilitation Centre	
• Director of Nursing	17
• Director of Resident Supports	19
• Recreation Coordinator (Acting)	22
• Occupational Therapist	32
• Behavioural Interventionist	34
• Social Worker	35
• Director of Facility Services	37
Quest Small Option Homes	
• Albyn Avenue and Roywell Drive	40
• Lynnett Road	43
Community Transition Program	46

ABOUT QUEST

Quest – A Society for Adult Support and Rehabilitation is funded by the Department of Community Services under the Disabilities 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 21-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.



OUR BOARD OF DIRECTORS

Ronald Cooper
Chairperson

Corrinna “Dolly” Mosher
Vice Chairperson

Patti Snow
Treasurer

Chloe Gagnon
Secretary

Angela Cooper
Board Member

Laura Holdright
Board Member

OUR SENIOR MANAGEMENT TEAM

Joseph Rudderham
Executive Director

Chelsy Flemming
Director of Human Resources

Cheryl Newcombe
Manager of Finance and Accounting

Karen Strangward
Manager of Policy and Education

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.



OUR 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



Ron Cooper

living with disabilities. 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 not left us and has 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, Manager of Policy and Education 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 Courts 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 Covid burden which occurred in parallel with our Strategic Direction initiative and the Court ruling process I give my proudest thank you.

Respectfully Submitted,

Ronald Cooper
Chairperson



EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR



Joe Rudderham

Covid remained front and center at Quest as the year began with an outbreak underway at the RRC site. Hope of a new fiscal year without the ravages of a pandemic was dashed but, fortunately, the impacts were minimal. The outbreak status at the RRC cleared on April 6th and returned to Albyn SoH in June. By November there was an outbreak at 2 Lynnett and given the risks, masking remained in effect to the end of March 2023. The minimized impact was a testament to the hard work and dedication of all Quest staff in their efforts to reduce the risk of spread, commitment to testing and selfcare including vaccinations. The on again and off again status of resident programming saw the shredding and wood product activities restarted in April. In June two RRC residents assisted program staff in selling the fruits of their labour (washer toss sets) at the local Payzants' retail store in Sackville. The Payzants' partnership enabled the two RRC residents to have experience in a customer service setting. More than 60 sets were sold through Spring into Summer. As the washer toss production shifted to Christmas products, all of the Christmas goodies were sold during the December Christmas gathering at the RRC. Washer toss production restarted in January and continued to the end of March and beyond.

In the Fall of 2022 we said our heartfelt goodbyes to Shawn Armsworthy who passed in Hospital. Shawn was a resident at the 1 Albyn home in Dartmouth and was loved and adored by those who provided care. As I noted at the time, Shawn always brought a smile to my face when he greeted me entering the Albyn residence. Most of the time his smile from ear to ear was followed by a hug that at times, took a bit of effort to release. Shawn is missed by all..

The year presented an opportunity to revisit the strategic directions created the year previous. The opportunity was the creation of an operation plan that would enable Quest to make progress on several fronts. Of particular interest and relevance was work planned and to be implemented around staff morale.

In March of 2023 Quest completed a staff Satisfaction Survey that provided specific insight into where we should focus efforts. Staff indicated that current recognition programming (Long Service Awards, Kudos Cards, Perfect Attendance Cards and Staff Appreciation Week) should continue. New to the list of recognition programming was the creation of an Employee of the Month program. By the end of March most of the planning was completed with an anticipated start date earmarked for May 2023.

In September, the week of the 12th, Quest celebrated our front-line staff by hosting several Appreciation Week activities. BBQs and pizza were offered at all locations throughout the week and the highlight was Quest's first and last dunk tank event. Several of the management team and others offered themselves up to be dunked by staff and RRC residents. Although a resounding success, it was clear more risks were present then expected. All in all, laughter filled the air and no injuries were reported.



In late fall/early winter the Department of Community Services began consultation on the outcome of the early October 2022 Court of Appeal ruling on the 2014 case involving three individuals who alleged discrimination. The October ruling reinforced the finding of discrimination of 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 and CTP programs.

The DCS/Provincial consultations were led by two researchers, one from British Columbia and the other from Australia. The overall consultation was a partnership between the Province and the Disability Rights Coalition.

Although Quest and its sister organizations participated somewhat, the writing was on the wall on the eventual closure of all congregate settings (greater than 4 residents) in DSP funded offerings. By the end of March 2023, the consultants' report had not been publicly released. It was known, unofficially, that the RRC program would close in a 2 to 5-year window. Unknown at the time was the eventual fate of CTP as it is a program managed by the Nova Scotia Health Authority with assistance from Quest. Also known by the end of fiscal 22/23 was Quest not being allowed to submit specific proposals that would offer smaller community settings for the 20 RRC residents. Given the extent to what was anticipated in the report noted above, the subsequent work needed to create the infrastructure for ARC/RRC program closures was monumental and therefore, DCS did not have resources to address proposals from Quest or any other service provider.

Just off of the March 2022 obligations under the Joint Workforce Initiative (JWI), Quest continued to aggressively manage WCB case files with the assistance from Dallas Mercer Consulting. This assistance further lowered the costs and time loss incidents for Quest. Although this was expected to result in the eventual elimination of the current WCB surcharge and a significantly reduced rate, the 2022/23 costs and time loss reductions will not have the desired impact until 2023/2024.

In late December we celebrated the retirement of John Macpherson (Manager of Accounting and Finance) and welcomed Cheryl Newcombe to the role. Although John retired, he agreed to a six-month transition period that would have John and Cheryl jointly serve in the role to the end June 2023. It was my pleasure welcoming Cheryl to the Quest team. In late January Emily Flinn, our Recreation Therapist, left Quest for a new opportunity to apply her skills. Emily was an asset on Quest's Multidisciplinary Team and is missed mostly by our RRC residents.

As in 2021/22, staff were incredibly vigilant throughout this past year as proven by the absence of any significant impact felt by Quest residents as a result 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 Human Resources, Chelsy Flemming, Manager of Policy and Education, Karen Strangward, Director of Nursing, Paulette MacMullin, Manager of Accounting and Finance, John MacPherson/Cheryl Newcombe, Director of Resident Supports, Tim McFarland, Director of Facility Services, Bruce Doary and our Senior Admin Support, Kim Howells. All these individuals on the Senior Management Team go above and beyond keeping operations running as smoothly as possible through all the ups and downs.

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

Respectively Submitted,

Joe Rudderham BSc., MBA
Executive Director



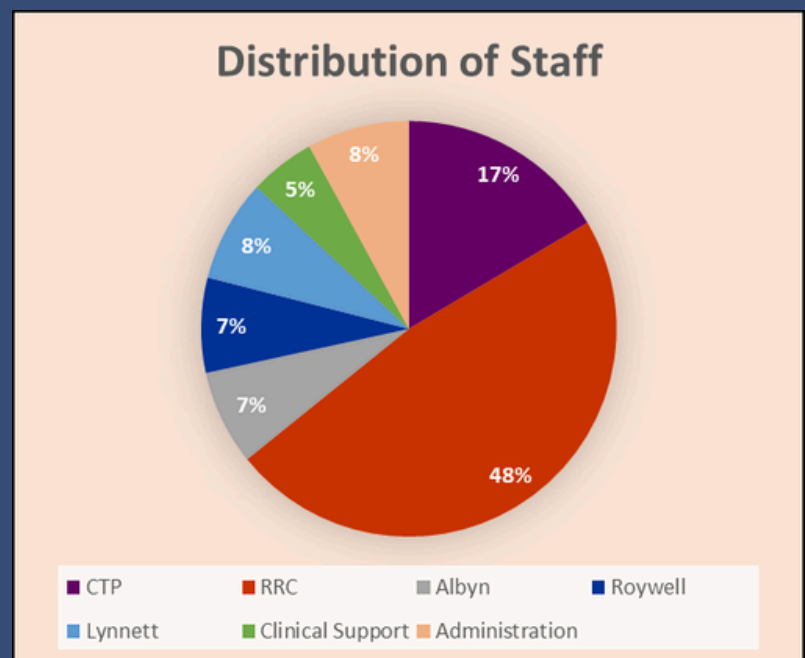
HUMAN RESOURCES

Fiscal 2022-2023 year was a very dynamic one marked by some key characteristics; including rapid change, uncertainty and complexity. Human Resources remained committed to excellence, safety and creating a welcoming environment that enables staff to do their best work every day. I am extremely proud of the work, commitment and dedication from the Quest staff. We continued to work through the midst of COVID-19 outbreaks, new health policies and practices and always keeping the residents of Quest as our top priority in our delivery of services. I'm privileged to be able to lead Human Resources and portray the team effort, workplace accomplishments and milestone.



Recruiting and Staffing

- At the end of the fiscal year March 31st, 2023 Quest had a total of 172 employees
- Quest values diversity and has a very diverse workforce
- Turnover rate was 32%
- The average age of an employee at Quest is 40 years
- 150 employees at Quest are unionized



Recruitment and retention consistently pose a challenge in Health Care as many Health Care Organizations province wide are operating with staff shortages on a daily basis; Quest is no exception to this. Our challenge in retaining staff is for many reasons; an external competitive workforce often means employees leave for new or different opportunities, burnout or illness causes an employee to leave the workplace and often employees come temporarily until they are accepted into a school to further their education.

The population of employees at Quest has become increasingly diverse, varying in religion, race, ethnicity, worldviews, age, etc. As the diversity increases, so does the environment for creativity and innovation. To ensure a workplace environment is created in which everyone feels needed, wanted, valued and genuinely welcomed, Quest will be engaging in opportunities to ensure everyone is trained in Diversity, Equity and Inclusion.



Workplace Safety

Safety in the workplace is a priority as we continue to employ a full-time safety officer and are constantly working together to identify risks. As well, we review incidents as they occur, develop strong workplace health and safety practices and manage risks for employees. All of this is undertaken to ensure a healthier workplace.

This year, we had a total of 30 Worker's Compensation Board (WCB) claims submitted. Ten of these claims have resulted in associated costs; either due to time lost from work or associated medical treatment required.

Quest continues to contract Dallas Mercer Consulting to manage the WCB claims, support the worker, provide consultation on a safe work environment and ensure quick treatment for injured employees and a return to work plan.

Training and Development

The previous fiscal year, the COVID-19 pandemic had caused all in-classroom training to cease due to public health guidelines. This year, we were able to implement in classroom training again by following crucial public health guidelines such as social distancing, masking and screening. The majority of classes remain small in size to ensure the health and safety of the employees of Quest.

Occupational Health and Safety

The health and well-being of our workforce are essential components of Quest's organizational success. Healthy organizations function better and achieve more, thus Quest remains focused on ensuring a healthy working environment for all.

The Joint Occupational Health and Safety Committee (JOHSC) continue to meet regularly to review pertinent safety issues that impact the workplace. Common recurring safety issues this past fiscal year can be summarized as the following:

- Workplace Violence
- COVID-19 infections
- Worker's Compensation claims and process
- Staffing Shortages (Burnout)
- Staff Morale
- Minor injuries

The JOHSC committee determined the anxiety, stress, and consequently decline in staff morale has been greatly impacted by the isolation, negative impact to residents and staff, strict health policies and staff shortages that have been caused by the COVID-19 pandemic. As a result, a flash survey regarding staff morale, anxiety and stress was sent out to all staff with the following yielded results:

- Staff want to be noticed and recognized more often
- Staff would like to have a closer relationship with their immediate supervisor
- Staff would like to earn awards for doing well
- Specifically, staff have indicated their preference specific staff recognition programs with the following being top priority; Long Service Awards, Employee of the Month, Staff Appreciation Week and Excellence Awards

The Department of Human Resources will be focusing one of its initiative's in the next fiscal year on improving staff morale and increasing staff recognition.

Looking Ahead

Human Resources will continue to work to enhance collaboration and communication with the employees of Quest, providing resources and support on an ongoing basis. Leadership development, staff recognition, inclusive excellence and improving the employee experience are all focuses for Human Resources as we continue down a dynamic journey of constant change, uncertainty and increasing complexity in the type of services provided.

Lastly, I want to express profound appreciation to the employees. The hard work does not go unnoticed and staff consistently exceed the expectations through every obstacle we face. The work ethic and dedication go unmatched and for this, I want to offer my sincerest thank-you.

Respectfully Submitted,

Chelsy Flemming
Director of Human Resources

FINANCIAL STATEMENT

**"Statement of Income and Expenditures
Year ended 31 March 2023 with comparative figures for 2022 and 2021"**

	2023 ACTUAL	2022 ACTUAL	2021 ACTUAL
INCOME			
Provincial Government Per Diem Funding	\$2,034,146	\$1,706,180	\$1,361,237
Provincial Government Grants	6,958,479	7,336,435	6,803,288
Other Income & Special Funding	161,620	43,886	1,041,462
Community Transition Program Funding	2,125,077	2,109,574	2,075,943
TOTAL	\$11,279,322	\$11,196,075	\$11,281,930
EXPENDITURES			
Quest RRC Site	\$6,284,819	\$6,117,015	\$5,466,058
Administration	974,731	879,840	1,123,261
Community Behavioural Support			463,046
Community Transition Program	1,771,606	1,905,133	2,430,147
Community Based Options Homes:			
Albyn	842,011	800,726	885,707
Roywell	766,843	723,894	779,894
Lynnett	916,320	777,181	
TOTAL	\$11,556,330	\$11,203,789	\$11,148,113
Excess of Revenue Over Expenditures	-277,008	-7,714	\$133,817
Gain Upon Disposal of Capital Asset	--	--	--
EXCESS (DEFICIENCY) OF REVENUE OVER EXPENSES	-277,008	-7,714	\$133,817

QUEST RRC

DIRECTOR OF NURSING

As everyone, everywhere, has had to adjust to the return to a less restrictive world, this past year has had its challenges as we continued to adjust to ongoing life style changes secondary to Covid-19. All Quest staff continue to rise to the occasion, supporting these challenges with our residents.

With direction and continuous follow-up between Public Health and our Management team, we worked through a couple of small outbreaks requiring isolation and restrictions. Fortunately, all residents and staff infected, recovered without any serious issues.

We are pleased to report that all of our residents have received and will continue to be vaccinated according to our Public Health recommendations.

Over the past year, we have welcomed two new residents and many new staff. New staff have also had the support of our valuable mentors. With this added support and training, staff have expressed an easier adaptation and understanding of their roles.

We also were fortunate to add an OTA (Occupational Therapist) to our staff. This has resulted in more in-house activities and enjoyment for our residents.

Resident's Individual Support Plans (ISP) are actively being revised, which have resulted in 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.



Paulette MacMullin



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 look forward to embracing any challenges that come. We are thankful for having the privilege of supporting our residents who aspire to a full life, where they can succeed in achieving their goals.

Respectfully Submitted,

Paulette MacMullin, RN
Director of Nursing



DIRECTOR OF RESIDENT SUPPORTS

As with all of our team members, my role as Director of Resident Supports includes a variety of tasks. Since assuming this role in September of 2020, it has been a rewarding experience to be involved in the lives of our RRC residents and my co-staff.

Managing RRWs, RRW Mentors, Social Worker, Behavioural Interventionist and liaising with Psychologist – I have been active in engaging ongoing supports for our RRC RRWs. When performance issues arise, I have met with individuals and sometimes with groups to seek improvement in what we do in our service to residents. I strive to be a listening ear for any RRWs who have concerns, questions or merely wish to chat. I conduct RRW meetings once every five weeks.



Tim McFarland

The mentor team is of huge benefit to the Quest personnel. They are responsible for ongoing training and workshopping in many areas of Quest life; from policy updates to developing lunch and learns to orientation of new staff. In addition to daily informal meetings, we meet together as a group once a month. Over the past year we have had a few staffing changes among the mentors. Richard Hache left the position to further studies and worked as a casual employee instead. Scott Spragg joined us as interim and then joined the team full time. He has left the mentor role to pursue other areas of development. The regular complement of Mentors number is currently four in total. Two of our mentors were recently seconded to temporary positions. Shannon MacKintosh filled the gap when our recreation therapist departed. Shannon served as acting recreation coordinator for 2.5 months. Dylan Timmons worked for a number of weeks in developing the new Quest website under the leadership of Chelsy Flemming. Danielle Hirtle and Jacob Jackson have adeptly continued the mentor tasks with great expertise and care for our residents.

The Quest social worker, Aziza Omar, and behavioural interventionist, Jessy Arackal, report to me. We also share the same office and are able to effectively collaborate on a regular basis. The Quest psychologist, Lindsay Leighton, is currently on contract for four to six hours per week. She directly liaises with me.

Multidisciplinary Team – I serve on the Multidisciplinary Team with the Director of Nursing, Occupational Therapist, Social Worker, Recreation Coordinator, Occupational Therapy Assistant, Behavioural Interventionist and our contracted Psychologist. We meet formally three to four times a week in Rounds and for Rehab Plans. We consistently and regularly meet and work together every day with ongoing opportunities and challenges.

Resident Engagement – I conduct a Resident Council meetings once a month. These are occasions to discuss important topics as well as to experience community living together. We share music and special celebrations together in Town Square. I endeavor to take a significant portion of my day to spend time with residents on both units. This will involve conversations, games and music. My office door has always been open to residents who would like a chance for some quiet chat as well.

Continuing Education – I am completing my Doctorate in Ministry from Carey Theological College, a subsidiary of the University of British Columbia. I additionally seek to keep my core competencies of Quest up to date. Over the past year, I attended WHIMS workshops for managers, which addressed safety for employees in the workplace. I have recently enrolled to become a trainer for Mental Health First Aid. This will become a new training component for all Quest staff. I look forward to the teaching opportunities.

Working with Students – I continue to be primary contact person with students from university who are working at Quest for their co-op program. The students are from Acadia University and primarily in the psychology department. During the past year, I have worked with three Acadia students.

Engagement with Outside Agencies – Along with the rest of the Multidisciplinary Team, I interface with members of outside agencies as the needs arise. This would include, but is not exclusive to, our RCMP liaison, DCS, ANSU, DANS, etc. I have attended HANS workshops as well as a conference in December of 2022 in Sydney of DANS directors and managers. I also meet with directors once per month via a zoom meeting. I employ the art of referral as well as offering any supportive words I am able to give. Sometimes I will refer people to EAP, union representatives or other assisting agencies in our community. I have also engaged in performance evaluation of the RRW staff at the RRC. I also work closely with the behavioural interventionist and social worker and conduct performance evaluation with them.

Collaboration with Fellow Directors – The directors at the RRC and at the Damascus site are currently a strong team of committed individuals. We work closely together on projects, changes and challenges. Whether the issue will affect one individual or the entire organization as a whole, the managerial team has worked hard to value all opinions and consider all options in an ever-changing environment.

Staff appreciation – In partnership with the Executive Director, other directors and some mentors, I participated in the staff appreciation week of 2022. This included BBQ lunches for all day staff and pizza for nighttime staff, games (with a dunk tank no less!), and associated games with prizes.



Book Launch – Thanks to the initiative of our Executive Director, I was able to complete the publication of the Quest book, “The Covid Letters”. The first edition has been offered free of charge to all employees of Quest, many employees in the sector who work with different service providers as well as members of community service groups. I am grateful to the Executive Director, the Board and the entire Quest community for this opportunity to contribute.

Respectfully Submitted,

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



RECREATION

Recreation is an important aspect of the residents' lives at Quest and it focuses on six aspects;

- Overall quality of life and enjoyment
- Increase physical activity
- Increase social opportunities with peers
- Provide opportunity for community engagement
- Increase and promote independence
- Support emotional regulation

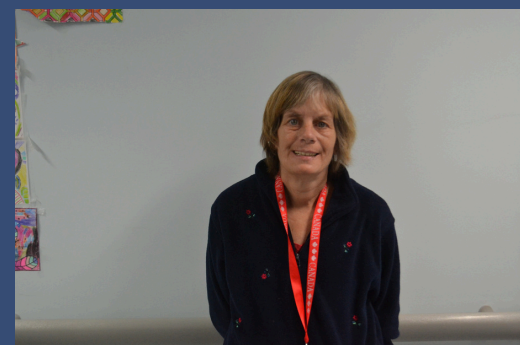
Recreation and leisure activities improve the quality of life for our residents and each resident has their own person-centered goals in their recreational programming. This programming is offered to all residents and is highlighted on the monthly recreation calendar. Residents have Individual Support Plans that include their goals and established programs that best fit their individual needs. These plans are reviewed every three months to determine how residents are meeting their goals.



Each month there are several opportunities for community and in-house engagement detailed in the monthly program calendar. The calendar is posted on bulletin boards accessible to all residents. Community outings include the indoor walking track, swimming, movie outings, SPCA volunteering, cat and goat yoga, library outings, park outings, flea markets, bowling, museums, therapeutic farms, and many seasonal activities such as corn mazes, apple picking, wildlife parks, sleigh rides, holiday events, etc. There is also a Monday-Friday walk to a local retail establishment to promote physical activity. An indoor walking track is accessible at least two days a week for the residents and swimming is offered once a week at the East Hants pool. In the summer months the pool is available daily. Movie outings are once a month. Recently the residents have been accessing the gym at Fit4less.



In house programs are offered daily that include in house yoga, spa nights, bingo, movie nights, arts and crafts nights, dance parties, karaoke parties, baking group, cooking group, basketball, air hockey/table tennis, gardening, coffee talk, holiday celebrations, scavenger hunts, Xbox games, and many more fun activities. Coffee talk is twice a week where residents enjoy coffee, tea, hot chocolate and conversation. During this time, they also listen to music or play board games.



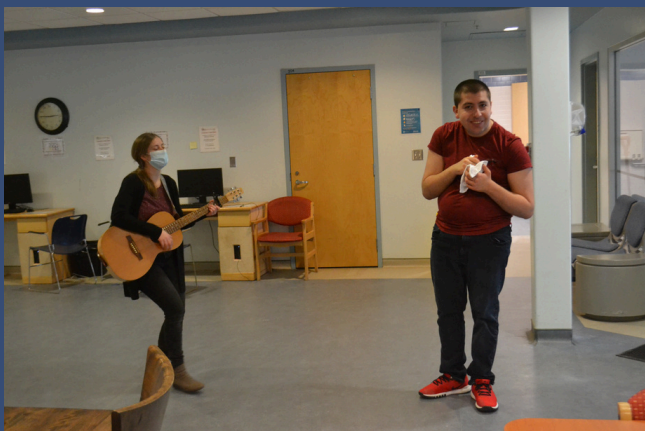
Students from the Canadian College of Massage & Hydrotherapy volunteer to give massages to the residents during spa nights once a month. The residents look forward to this interaction with the volunteers.



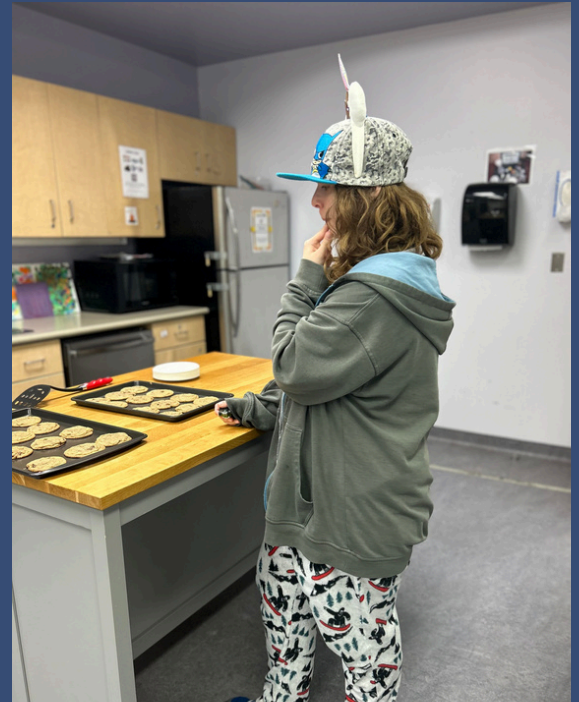
Volunteers for dog therapy come once a week and provide an opportunity for the residents to socialize with a dog.



Music therapy also takes place once a week and the residents have preferred songs that they sing along to.



Individual cooking programs, along with cooking groups have been facilitated using the accessible kitchen located in the Multi-Purpose Room. Cooking groups take place on Fridays and individual cooking programs take place on Monday, Tuesday and Wednesday. Meals have included but not been limited to, pasta dishes, stir fries, pizza, steak and rice, tacos, wraps, salads. Foods from all around the world have been incorporated into these cooking programs. Residents have also taken part in baking groups that meet on Thursday and have made cookies, cakes and other desserts.



To further promote physical activity, peer socialization and teamwork, residents take part in floor hockey, soccer, bowling, powerlifting, and track and field. Some residents also attend their own day programs with Club Inclusion multiple times a week, summer camps and community drop-in programs. Some attend Autism Arts program through Autism Nova Scotia along with cooking programs with Club Inclusion. Other residents have attended the Best Buddies program and access the community twice a month with their Best Buddy to do fun outings like going for coffee or shopping. To facilitate all this activity, the Recreation Coordinator liaises with coaches, camp support workers and volunteers to ensure the residents are getting the most out of their community programs.



Once a month, the recreation coordinator plans an in-house event and invites our small options home residents to interact with those who live at the RRC. As an example, the Superbowl event allowed for resident participation organization wide where residents watched the game on the big screen and enjoyed pizza, pop, chips, fruit and veggie trays and other treats. During the summer months, residents have been utilizing the courtyard for BBQ's, outdoor fire pit gatherings, water sports such as sprinklers, balloon fights, etc.

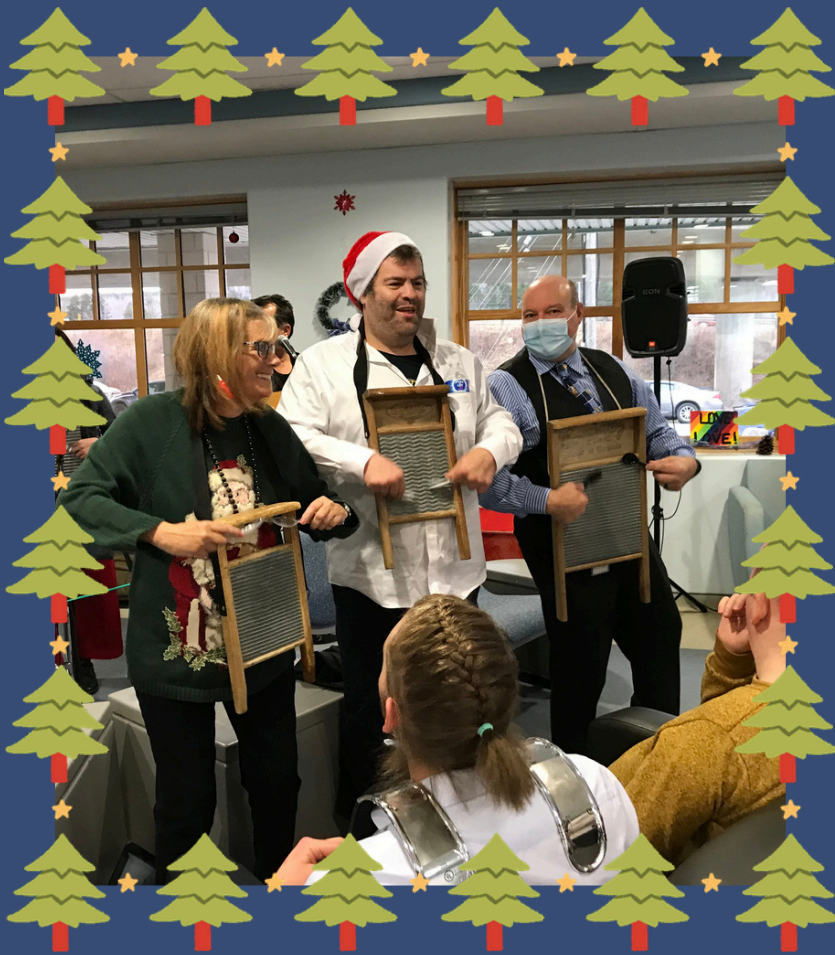
The Recreation Coordinator provides the monthly calendar to staff and residents of the three small option homes. The Recreation Coordinator supports community engagement and recreational activities on an as needed basis. These include consultations on opportunities for daily activities, community engagement, registration for drop-in programs, Special Olympics, Autism Arts program, Autism Walks, etc.

Respectfully Submitted,

Shannon MacKintosh
Acting Recreation Coordinator (Mentor)







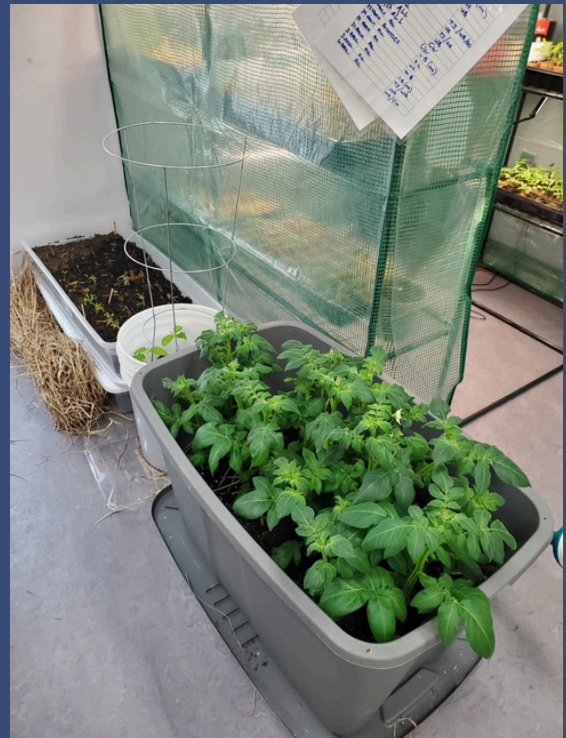
OCCUPATIONAL THERAPY

During the past year, we welcomed Occupational Therapy Assistant, LaToya. LaToya has been a wonderful addition to Quest's Multidisciplinary Team, helping to run and oversee programs and engaging residents in skill building activities both in-house and in the community.

Residents involved in the Quest woodworking program have continued to build washer toss boxes and, during the summer months, began selling these in collaboration with Payzant Home Hardware. These residents also made several new Christmas decorations for the holiday season this year. Many residents participated in decorating wooden reindeer, snowmen and candleholders, which were sold at the Annual Holiday Celebration with great success.



Over the course of the year, new group and individual programs have been trialed and implemented for residents based on identified strengths and interests. Some examples in the community include the Abilities in Motion (AIM) program, volunteering at Fultz House and wheelchair curling. Most recently, we have started the Quest gardening program. Residents have planted various vegetables and herbs, including tomatoes, peppers, brussel sprouts and cucumbers from seed. They have been learning how to care for the seedlings indoors and will soon start to transplant them into Quest's new outdoor garden beds. Throughout the summer months, residents will be able to harvest, clean and utilize the fresh vegetables and herbs in our regularly scheduled cooking groups.



A Mindfulness Board has been created and placed on Skyview unit to promote the use of mindfulness strategies and activities. Content and resources are updated and discussed regularly. Finally, a course has been developed and implemented to increase staff knowledge and confidence in using available equipment, such as lifts and slings. A training room has been set up onsite at QRRC to allow for demonstrations and practice of lifts and transfers.

Respectfully Submitted,

Alee Wickins
Occupational Therapist

BEHAVIORAL INTERVENTIONIST

During the past year, Quest started a new training session for staff on positive behavior support with the goal of enhancing the quality of life of our residents. The training focuses on the importance of proactive strategies in our workplace to reduce the likelihood of resident problem behaviors.

The following highlights Quest's focus on behavior intervention:

- A mindfulness board has been created in SkyView unit with activities to introduce mindfulness to our residents and to increase their engagement in activities. Our OT assistant regularly changes the mindfulness worksheets and breathing exercises.
- We continue to collaborate with COAST team for severe problem behavior and have been giving more attention to precursor behaviors to decrease the likelihood of challenging behaviors or crisis. We do this to ensure the safety of the residents and staff.
- We collaborated with a private speech pathologist to explore meaningful communication system for one of our nonverbal residents due to his increased maladaptive behaviors and started teaching the resident how to use it to communicate using AAC device.
- We work with staff to complete functional assessments to identify the pattern of challenging behaviors and create individualized interventions to decrease the likelihood of concerning behaviors with the goal of teaching resident replacement behaviors through social stories, modeling, and visuals.
- I continue to collect data, monitor, record, and review our residents' progress with the multidisciplinary team and staff.

Respectfully Submitted,

Jessy Arackal
Behavioral Interventionist



SOCIAL WORKER

The Social Worker role at Quest is multifaceted and starts with consideration of new admissions. This past year I have worked with the Quest team on a number of admissions at the Quest RRC and Quest Small Option Homes. With these admissions, I have conducted tours of Quest RRC and the Small Option Homes for families and new residents.

A large part of my role is advocating on behalf of the residents we support. I continue to liaise with numerous support agencies to have the needs of our residents met. One of my most enjoyable duties I continue to fulfill is establishing and maintaining rapport with resident's family members and supporting residents in maintaining relationships with their family members and other loved ones. One example of how this relationship building works well is the feedback received during the Easter holiday when a parent contacted me to advise that they had a wonderful family visit/dinner this year for the first time in years.

A time-consuming task has been working to support a resident to obtain tax documents through Canada Revenue Agency so that he could receive GST/HST income. We faced many obstacles along the way as a result of not being able to provide CRA with the information on file. This was a long and tedious process as the resident could not recall information required by CRA and a reminder of how difficult it can be for folks with intellectual challenges to navigate a complex system without support. After many months of calling and providing documents/proof to the CRA we managed to sort this out.

During the year I continued to liaise with NS Dept. of Community Services, Disability Support Program Care Coordinators, Adult Protection Workers, Guardian Ad Litem, Nova Scotia Legal Aid Lawyers, Mental Health Court Clinicians, Nova Scotia Public Trustee staff, and other community organizations/advocates working on issues related to support services, housing, financial issues, etc.

Sadly, a resident in one of our small option homes unexpectedly passed away this year. I was heavily involved in funeral arrangements and ensuring the wishes of family members were honored, while also providing support to the front-line staff.

Other daily tasks/responsibilities include:

- Completing the Social section of Individual Support Plans (ISP) for all new residents, and reviewing and updating the ISP Social section for all current residents.
- Maintaining filing system for social work documents,
- Completion of Resident Information Forms for all new residents and updating these forms for current residents on an as needed basis,
- Participating in regular Clinical Rounds and Individual Support Plan Reviews,
- General social work tasks for residents,

- Providing one-on-one supportive counseling for residents,
- Coordinating Christmas and other event home visits for residents,
- Maintaining a data base of next-of-kin / substitute decision maker contact information,
- Preparing notices for the resident Christmas party and preparing phone calls to residents' family members,
- Participation in monthly Residents Council Meetings,
- Supporting residents to understand and sign various consent forms,
- Liaising with support for residents with ongoing Mental Health Court, Probation and Adult Protection matters,
- Liaising with NS Department of Community Services, Disability Support Program Care Coordinators and, contacting next-of-kin, Care Coordinators, Mental Health Court, Guardian Ad Litem and other services providers with dates for Individual Support Plan Review for residents.
- Ensuring documents were electronically sent using a secure file process,
- Establishing and maintaining rapport with clients' family members and other persons acting in this capacity, and
- Attending required training.

Respectfully Submitted,

Aziza Omar, BSW, RSW
Clinical Social Worker



DIRECTOR OF FACILITY SERVICES

This past year I am pleased to report that we have seen a stabilization of in staffing levels in my areas of responsibility. It has been challenging to find the right resources for our particular environment. A shout out to our HR Director, Chelsy Flemming, for constantly seeking candidates from all possibilities to provide the staff we needed.



Bruce Doary

The following are highlights in facility services:

- In housekeeping, we bumped one staff up to full time and added one casual employee that rounded out our numbers.
- In the Kitchen, our turnover has been minimal and is currently at an optimal level. Our head cook and kitchen supervisor, Colin MacCabe, retired after over 14 years of service to Quest. He graciously returned in February as permanent part time to maintain a supervisory role and over-see the logistics and operations of the Kitchen.
- In Security we updated processes and logistics for safety which included making available a panic button for every staff on shift. As well, we implemented a new mobile device policy that included lockers available for safe storage.
- To alleviate the high risk of clients leaving the facility through the use of manual door pulls, we converted them to a keyed pull system that removed the risk of clients leaving that may not be in their best to do so. These new pull stations use the same key as we have for our fire pull stations.
- Regarding our fleet, we added 1 vehicle to the fleet bringing the total to seven vehicles. The added vehicle was a 2018 Toyota Rav4 for the new Lynnett house. Over and above the usual inspections and regular maintenance we did experience a couple of higher unexpected costs to replace the transmission in two of the Dodge Caravans. Our fleet age ranges from 2015 – 2019.
- At the RRC, the courtyard was updated with couple of new picnic tables and some lawn chairs for the residents to enjoy the outdoor summertime weather. In Q1, 2023 a walk-in green house was set up inside to provide the environment for residents to start planting seeds for the upcoming summer. This was very successful. The side courtyard with the tall grass has been removed and new planters built to transfer the seedlings. This will be quite the vegetable garden come summertime.



In other resident locations we made to the following improvements:

- At 1 Albyn Avenue, the remaining flooring upstairs into the bathrooms and bedrooms were replaced, the kitchen countertop and backsplash replaced, the walls on the main level all repainted and had a chain link fence installed in the back yard for the safety of our clients.
- At 5 Roywell Drive, the exterior of the house and all trim work was repainted, the ramp was re-surfaced, and bathroom flooring installed.
- At 1 Lynnett Road, 4 security cameras were installed for staff peace of mind. These included the view of the driveway, front entrance and under the front deck that provides access to the 3 basement doors.

- At the Cottage, the roof was replaced, the gates off the deck and the existing railing system had to be replaced to meet the current building code.

Respectfully Submitted,

Bruce Doary
Director of Facilities Services



ALBYN AND ROYWELL SMALL OPTION HOMES

Coming to the third year of the Covid 19 pandemic; this year at each of the two small option homes located on Roywell Drive in Lawrencetown and Albyn Avenue in Dartmouth, has been shared between uniquely modified celebrations as well as getting back to some normalcy; and we are pleased to be offered the opportunity to share some of that with you.

Three residents continue to reside at the Roywell Drive small option home; and four residents continue to reside at the Albyn Avenue community-based option home. With sadness we said goodbye to a long-term resident who had passed away, he will be dearly missed. Several months later we welcomed a new resident, who has adjusted very well and is making fast friends with his housemates. The resident age range between the two homes is twenty-five to seventy- one.



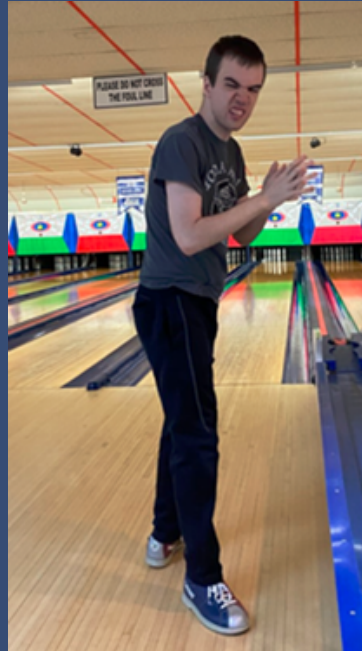
All residents residing in the two small option homes require various forms of support from our residential rehabilitation staff, community resources, community consult services, and various consult Multidisciplinary Team members.

Both homes are fortunate to have manicured spacious grounds that our residents and staff are able to enjoy all year round; whether it be playing in the water sprinkler, enjoying the sweet smell and colors of the many flowers, relaxing on the swing, or having fun making snowmen. There is always something readily available to enjoy and the opportunity to get some fresh air. A great win for the Albyn Avenue small option home is successfully getting a fence installed to help ensure a safe space for the residents to be able to enjoy.



Our residents who participate in Project 50 work tasks have been able to maintain stable work this year and have continued with paper shredding, pickup and delivery of mail, laundry folding, helping staff with errands, and enjoying time at the SPCA

Through the use of productive work tasks, activities of daily living, games that help encourage fine and gross motor skills, bowling, and tabletop activities, residents have continued to demonstrate good form of both physical and emotional well-being. As well we further support community integration via group activities; such as the DASC Youth Pilot Program, Autism NS Arts Program, and Club Inclusion Cooking Programs.



The Residential Rehabilitation Worker staff were proven exceptional again this period. While we were untouched by Covid-19 for the vast majority of the last few years, we did experience an outbreak at each of the Albyn Avenue and Roywell Drive small option homes. The residents coped very well and after everyone recovered, staff did not miss a beat. They picked up where they left off and worked diligently in collaboration with our residents and community resources to ensure that valuable activity and experiences were re-established.

Every day is a new day. The residents we serve, their families, loved ones, and staff are looking forward to great things on the horizon ahead, as we continue to develop and progress as individuals.

Respectfully Submitted,

Natasha Leyenaar
LPN SOH Team Lead

LYNNETT SMALL OPTION HOME



In September, I was privileged with transitioning from working as a Residential Rehabilitation Mentor to being provided the opportunity to take over the permanent role of the Team Lead for the Lynnett home. I want to thank the residents, families and Lynnett team for welcoming me with open arms and extra patience as I navigated this new opportunity.

Reflecting back over this past year, recognizing COVID-19 still presented us with many uncertainties, I have taken the opportunity below to highlight the hard work, dedication and achievements displayed by our residents and staff:

- Continually developing strategies to enhance communication and openness with families, further strengthening collaboration and a supportive environment for the residents of Lynnett to thrive.
- In October, we welcomed the successful transition of a new resident to our home
- The staff team continued to be diligent in preventing occurrences of COVID-19. infections through continued masking, hand washing and screening for symptoms.

- Residents continued to participate in meaningful community outings, discovering new opportunities, trying some new foods and enjoying life as they choose to do. One of those new experiences involved the set-up of a fish tank and we are now proud to say we are the home to three pet fish!



- An innovative and genuine caring group of staff who continue to demonstrate commitment, honesty and compassion to the residents who have worked diligently to ensure the residents have choice, autonomy and respect in their daily lives.
- The addition of a new vehicle to allow for increased accessibility and opportunity for our residents who have now been able to engage in many more community events.





As we moved through this year, we have been able to watch our efforts become successful as we see the residents thriving. Moving forward, we will continue to grow as a family and a team, navigating any opportunities or challenges presented to us, not only within our Small Option Home but as an organization.

Respectfully Submitted,

Amber Gilby
SOH Lead/Supervisor

COMMUNITY TRANSITION PROGRAM

Community Transition Program (CTP) is a joint program between the Department of Community Services (DCS) via Quest - A Society for Adult Support and Rehabilitation, and Nova Scotia Health (NSH) - Central Zone. The program supports individuals who have complex mental and physical health/ behavioural and residential/social support needs. The program was designed to use an Integrated Care Approach to transition individuals with complex health and social needs from inappropriate settings to community-living based options that meet their identified needs and levels of care and supports.

The program, located on the second floor of the 70 Memory Lane site, consists of various health professionals that assist our clients daily in reaching their individual goals. Those professionals include Residential Rehabilitation Workers, Licensed Practical Nurses, Registered Nurses, Recreational Therapists, Occupational Therapists, Complex Case Social Workers (from both DCS and NSH), housekeeping and kitchen staff, Health and Quest managers, various medical professionals related to the supports/goals needed by our clients and numerous other community-based supports.

The goal of our program is to assist clients with their transition from various levels of care within the Health Authority and DCS system; to a community-based setting suited to meet their needs. Our mandate is to work collaboratively within our interdisciplinary team, working alongside clients' families to develop individualized care plans that will identify and meet each clients' needs in order to transition to the most appropriate setting; while working with a guideline of a maximum 18-month stay period.

The collaborative journey begins prior to admission, when the team at CTP work with various organizations to develop a plan to admit a client based on their goals; the areas to strengthen and reinforce, and the areas to develop progress or improvements.

This collaborative process continues throughout their admission and includes requesting assistance from various supports such as psychologists, behavioral analysts, and other professionals who will assist in meeting the final goal of transition. Utilizing our complex caseworkers from both DCS and NSH, we continue to follow our clients into their community to ensure that our transitions are successful.

As our COVID-19 restrictions and protocols fluctuated, the team here at CTP provided quality client care by modifying and implementing both on-unit provide clients with the meaningful engagements and previous life opportunities that had been offered pre-COVID. While following NSH COVID-19 protocols the CTP clients gained more access to the community and eventually programming and community-based programs. In doing so, CTP was able to reintegrate volunteers

into our programs. Along with goals of community access and reintegration; the team at CTP, along with clients and their families, were able to successfully transition 3 clients to appropriate placement settings and the admission of 5 clients to our program that are actively working towards their goals.

In the past 12 months, CTP clients were able to access the community more effectively than the previous two years. Clients were provided opportunities to participate in various activities that they previously had no access to due to COVID restrictions, such as; swimming at various indoor pools, different group sports with clients at provincial and municipal parks, movies, on/off-unit BBQs and picnics, bowling, ice cream gatherings and other community-based options. We also were able to restart social groups/projects through Connections such as Among Friends group, as well as Art & Social group. We had Music Therapy begin again with the help of the Maritime Conservatory of Performing Arts, along with our music volunteer through NSH. CTP was also able to offer various programs and supports during Halifax's PRIDE week, and support clients at CTP who identify as part of the 2SLGBTQIA+ community.

During the fall/winter seasons, we were able to initiate lunch outings into restaurants, grocery shopping for all clients along with meal preparation programs designed to meet their identified needs.

We offered community-baking projects, events to celebrate community members of Indigenous heritage, van drives to see the holiday lights as well as a holiday party and a New Year's Eve party to end off the year.

We have been able to offer CTP clients support through work programs with Lake City Woodworkers, Stone Hearth Bakery, and New Boundaries in Windsor NS; along with various community based p50 options ranging from recycling programs to baking for community centers within our locale area. For clients with educational goals our team was able to assist clients in accessing NSCC to participate in their upgrading education programs, along with programs at Saint Mary's University catered around specific client-oriented goals.

During the brief time I have served as Manager of Support Services here at CTP, our team has provided the utmost professional, person-centered, quality care to our clients and families while maintaining the clients' health and dignity in a safe environment. This was no easy feat; however, the team completed these requirements throughout the face of adversity and many challenges that arose. All CTP employees deserve recognition for achieving such high-quality care under the difficult circumstances of working through the pandemic.

Respectfully Submitted,

Christopher Higgins (he/him)
Manager of Support Services
Community Transition Program Quest - A Society
for Adult Support and Rehabilitation

