

president's/executive director's report 2023

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Reflecting on the Year...

As we put COVID-19 behind us and continue to evolve our services to meet new challenges, it is becoming clearer that there are significant cracks that have appeared throughout the social services and health care sectors. Chronic staffing shortages and staff burnout after four years of extreme pressure have forced us to rethink everything we do. This is not as doom and gloomy as you might think, as true positive change often comes through adversity and the need to challenge the status quo.

NACL is rising to this challenge by continuing to develop services that build on the individual strengths of persons served, providing staff only as specifically required. The intent of this shift is to take the constant strain off our overworked front-line staff, while safely encouraging greater independence. Over the past year we have made great strides in providing housing alternatives to staffed homes through our ongoing agreements with Ballenas Housing Society and Woodgrove Senior Citizens Housing Society, where we are continuing to acquire blocks of apartments to enhance our housing options. The ultimate goal would be to lessen our reliance on staffed homes through a greater utilization of home share or supported apartment living.

We believe there will always be a role for staffed homes, but have identified a number of people who do not need that level of care; and as indicated in last year's report, we are slowly moving in this direction and, at present, purposely staying away from new contracts that are as labour-intensive as staffed homes.

In addition, we have a number of accomplishments from this past year that we are particularly proud of:

1. Based on our survey in June, NACL achieved its seventh 3-year accreditation from CARF (the Commission on Accreditation of Rehabilitation Facilities). This is yet another excellent result that is indicative of our quest for continuous quality improvement.
2. Our property at 3405 Uplands Drive has finally been subdivided and we are into the rezoning process, which will enable us to build a 40-unit apartment building with a similar model as we have next door. The Request for Proposals from BC Housing has now been released, and we will be preparing a response for this next project to proceed. The second house on this property (3401 Uplands) has been sold, which will help with the farm purchase described below. The existing house at 3405 Uplands will be kept and used for community inclusion services as an adjunct of Actions Day Program, and potential respite for home share.
3. As we continue to do our part to become a greener, more sustainable agency, we are slowly rolling out new initiatives that will lessen our impact on the environment. We are significantly behind on replacing capital assets such as vehicles and installing solar panels, etc. due to supply chain issues and other obstacles that have prevented purchasing. That said, we are committed to and will continue to actively pursue these courses of action.

Further to all of this, NACL has also recently removed the subjects on an offer made on a 52-acre farm in South Wellington. Our possession date was September 1st, and we will now be doing extensive renos on the main house and the secondary 2-bedroom cottage. This is a significant milestone in regard to our strategic objectives regarding housing, employment, educational and community inclusion opportunities for persons served, as well as self-sustainability.



The overall plan is to begin farming the property intensively in partnership with Growing Opportunities Farm Community Co-operative (a local organization NACL has been involved with for some years). This plan will take some time to come to fruition, but the intent is to get production rolling ASAP. This is a defining moment in NACL's development, and we need to recognize and thank our Board of Directors for having the vision and fortitude to take us to the next level.

In Conclusion/Future Outlook...

It is only through the commitment of our staff that we have been able to keep moving forward on our strategic initiatives. NACL is well positioned as the service provider of choice to innovate and create new models of service that meet the needs of an ever-changing population.