

Last Month's Recap | Halloween Townhall

Thank you to everyone who was able to attend our inaugural Halloween townhall event on Oct 30th, it was a great chance to connect with the community and have some spooky fun! During the event we played a little trivia game which sampled the local SCI data from Edmonton and the results were surprising to say the least:

From the collected Edmonton CFU data it was reported:

- 27% of people are employed after sustaining a SCI
- 35% of people experience neuropathic pain
- 54% can void their bladder without the need for catheters
- 55% had no need for bowel assistance
- 50% did not need a wheelchair
- 74% noted having good to excellent health
- 70% reported their need for accessible housing to be fulfilled completely or to a great extent
- 59% responded that they required additional income support
- 23% noted having general health care needs completely fulfilled
- 68% reported complications due to spasticity
- 63% noted having shoulder problems
- 61% dealt with urinary incontinence
- 50% reported depression

Does this data seem representative of the community? Or does it seem skewed and inconsistent to you? Everyone is entitled to their own opinion... but from the feedback we have heard from the community, it does not seem indicative of the challenges faced by those in the community. The moral of the story is that we can only make change with the data available to us.

Data is used to identify: gaps and trends in care, inform priority for funding, with policy formulation. It also helps us to monitor the rehab program, facilitate comparisons across care settings and build transparency in healthcare. We can't make changes without supporting data! I know it can feel monotonous filling out survey after survey, but we can't create change to create a better tomorrow without it! So when you are contacted by the RHSCIR team for your scheduled Community Follow Up (CFU), it would be awesome if you took the time to provide your valued experience!

Last but not least, congratulations to Danielle for winning the prize for best costume!



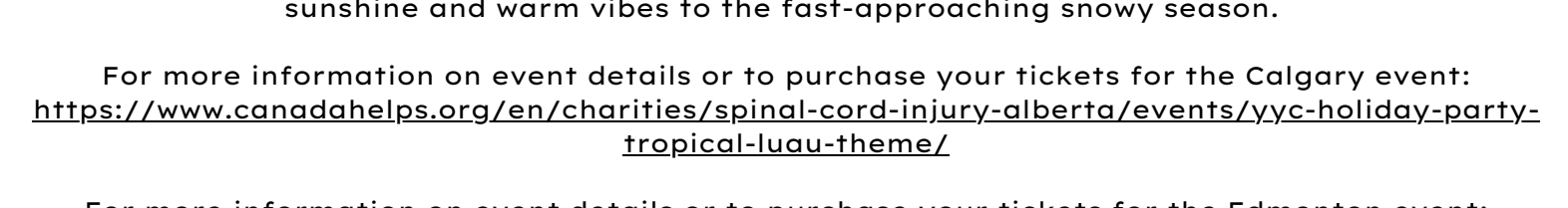
SCI-AB + ConocoPhillips Canada (CPC) Outreach Event

On October 24, five staff members from ConocoPhillips Canada (CPC) participated in the modified version of the Mobility Change Maker program at their downtown office where they experienced what it would be like to spend a day in a wheelchair in an office environment. They learned about the hardships faced by many people living with physical disabilities every day, even in a workspace deemed accessible.

Following the experience, SCI-AB gave a presentation to their staff on October 26, providing an overview of the hardships and roadblocks faced by people with physical disabilities who not only want to return to a new normal, but also return to work. Some of those who participated from CPC also shared their experiences about their day in a wheelchair.

It was a very well received and insightful session for all at CPC. Thank you, ConocoPhillips Canada, for participating and inviting us to present! This awareness and support is key to helping the members of our community adjust, adapt and thrive.

Special thanks to Cal Schuler for providing the wheelchairs and the framework to help make the day possible.



Updates | December Holiday Parties:

First off, a warm welcome to all of our new team members! We have three new client service coordinators across the province. Kacie in the Grande Prairie region, Twila in the Edmonton zone, and Christian in the Calgary zone. We also now have a dedicated director of philanthropy, Peta, who will be based out of Calgary as well!

Our December Holiday Parties are just around the corner! In case you missed our save the date video on social media, you can [check it out here](#)! The first will be in Calgary on December 3rd at 12pm at the Carriage House Inn. Later in the month Edmonton will host theirs on December 20th at 5:30pm at the Central Lions Rec Centre!

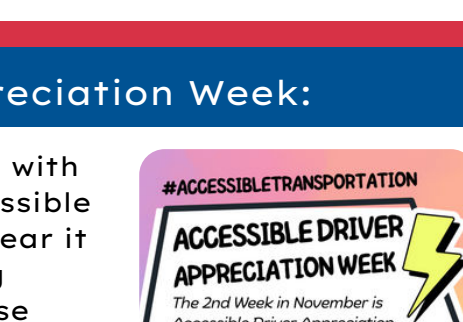
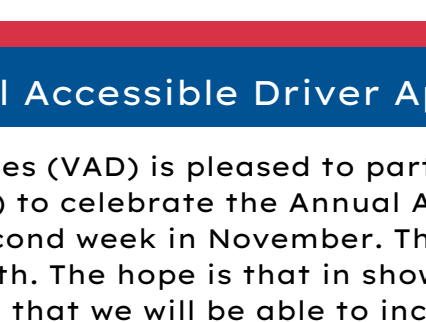
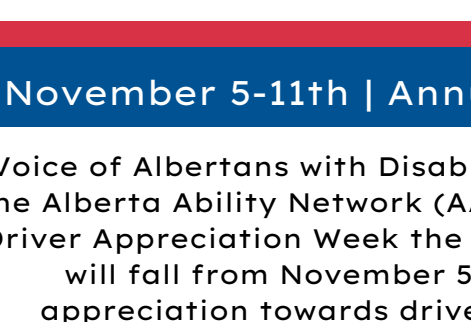
We are currently looking for event sponsors, as well as silent auction item donations to help make the event the best it can be. If you would like to donate or be a sponsor, please reach out to our director of philanthropy: Peta Glezerson at peta.glezerson@sci-ab.ca

This year we will be doing a combined theme across the province- "tropical luau" to bring some sunshine and warm vibes to the fast-approaching snowy season.

For more information on event details or to purchase your tickets for the Calgary event: <https://www.canadahelps.org/en/charities/spinal-cord-injury-alberta/events/yyc-holiday-party-tropical-luau-theme/>

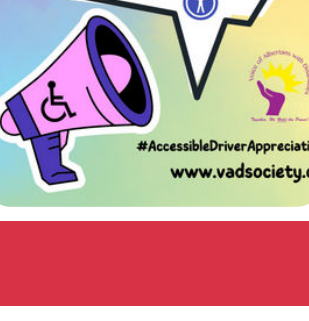
For more information on event details or to purchase your tickets for the Edmonton event: <https://www.canadahelps.org/en/charities/spinal-cord-injury-alberta/events/2023-yeo-holiday-party/>

We would love to see you there in your tropical best! 🌴



SCI-AB November Events:

- Nov 7: [Virtual Ladies Peer Chat](#)
- Nov 8: [YYC Coffee Group with Terry](#)
- Nov 13: [Offices Closed for Remembrance Day](#)
- Nov 14: [Coffee + Peers at the Glenrose](#) sponsored by Home Health Store
- Nov 15: [Online Peer Chat with Terry](#)
- Nov 21: [Virtual Ladies Peer Chat](#)
- Nov 22: [YYC Peer Dinner](#)
- Nov 23: [YYC Peer Dinner](#)
- Nov 30: [Pizza + Peers at the Glenrose](#) sponsored by Home Health Store



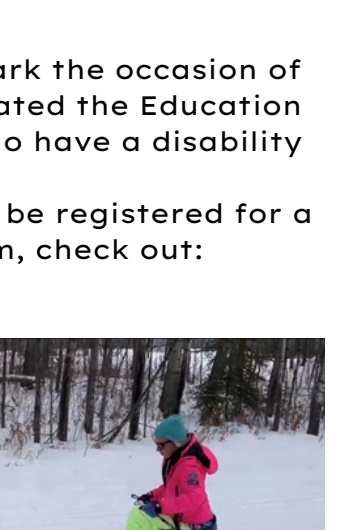
Be sure to check out our [online events calendar](#) or our social media channels to keep up to date on upcoming events!

November 5-11th | Annual Accessible Driver Appreciation Week:

Voice of Albertans with Disabilities (VAD) is pleased to partner with the Alberta Ability Network (AAN) to celebrate the Annual Accessible Driver Appreciation Week the second week in November. This year it will fall from November 5-11th. The hope is that in showing appreciation towards drivers, that we will be able to increase awareness around accessible transportation in the community. With the hope to help advocate for increases in funding, driver training, and overall improved service.

The campaign encourages those who use accessible transportation services to consider thanking their drivers. The campaign hashtags are: #AccessibleTransportation and #AccessibleDriverAppreciation.

For more information on the initiative, visit: <https://vadsociety.ca/2023-gdaw-accessible-driver-appreciation-week-november-5-to-11/>



In the Community + Across the Province:

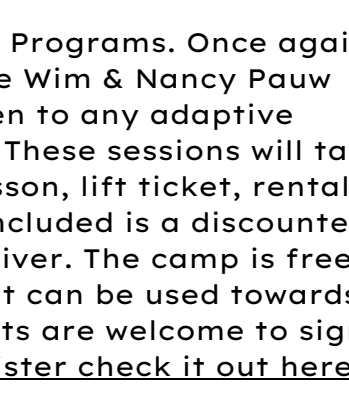
Starting off with a quick reminder that the Challenged Athlete's Grant application is due on November 3rd, so be sure your application is good to go and submitted by then!

On the topic of deadlines.. If you are in Grande Prairie the deadline for the Inclusive Community Award nominations is on November 5th, so be sure to send in your submissions. The form to nominate can be found here: https://docs.google.com/forms/d/e/1FAIpQLScEpC82h-Wa-4tXm3C051N130om-SYLLqAaEzDpCG9VOXoLw/viewform?usp=sf_link

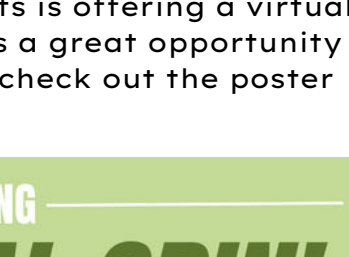
The VAD Education for Life Bursary application is due Nov 15th To mark the occasion of our 25th anniversary in 1998, Voice of Albertans with Disabilities initiated the Education for Life Bursary program. With this program, we support students who have a disability to achieve their post-secondary goals.

To be eligible you must be a resident of Alberta, live with a disability, be registered for a post secondary program. For more details and application form, check out: <https://vadsociety.ca/participation/>

As much as we would all love the summer to last forever, snow season is here to stay for the next few months. If you are looking for a fun winter activity to keep you active and get outdoors, come and give adaptive cross country skiing a try! Nordiq Alberta will be offering a full subsidy for any para-athletes that would like to come out and try the sport at the [On-Snow Provincial Open Camp](#) at the beginning of the season. Check out full details here. Para-athletes can get a full paid subsidy to participate, the [application form](#) is available [here](#).



For those in the Edmonton region the Strathcona Wilderness Centre will be starting a [fall dryland training camp](#) for cross country skiing beginning on November 2nd, and running every Thursday until Dec 21. This is a great way to get outdoors and try a new sport with family and friends. There is also an option for [Saturday afternoon training](#) sessions. For more information or to sign up, check out their website. Once the snow falls and the trails are established, they will continue to offer a complimentary fitting and private lesson for first timers. There will be try-it sessions throughout the season, and established group ski evenings as well. Stay tuned for details!



For those in Central Alberta who would like to give sledge hockey a try, check out the free sledge hockey drop ins every Thursday from 4:30-5:30pm at the G.H. David Community Rec Centre. This is a great opportunity to try out a new sport with friends and family. For more information check out the poster below!

Registration is also now open for the CADS, downhill adaptive ski program across the province. There are chapters in: Hardisty, Calgary, Cold Lake, Edmonton, Grande Prairie, Lethbridge, Medicine Hat, Red Deer, Westlock and Cammore. For more information, or to register, check out their website: <https://cads.ski/>

Registration is also now open for Rocky Mountain Adaptive Winter Programs. Once again this they will be offering a the [U CAN Try-It Camps](#) thanks to the Wim & Nancy Pauw Foundation's generous support. These one-day camps are open to any adaptive participants who have not tried skiing, snowboarding, or sit skiing. These sessions will take place at Sunshine Village in Banff. It includes a full day private lesson, lift ticket, rentals, and any necessary adaptive equipment for the participant. Also included is a discounted lift ticket or complimentary gondola pass for one parent or caregiver. The camp is free, but a deposit is required during booking. However, the \$60 deposit can be used towards future activities with RMA once the camp is completed. Participants are welcome to sign up for up to two separate camps. For [more information](#), or to register [check it out here](#).

If being out in the cold isn't your thing.. then Ultimate Para Sports is offering a virtual cycling program that can be done in the warmth of your home. It is a great opportunity to get some cardio in, stay fit and socialize! For more information check out the poster below!

Sledge Hockey Try it Events
THURSDAYS FROM 4:30-5:30
Starting October 12 at the Dave Center
TEAM JIGGER
Call Ray Westcott 403-318-3623 or Use this Form to Sign up

ADULT ADAPTED CYCLING VIRTUAL SPIN!
Get fit & sweat it out with us - without leaving your house. A little competition and a LOT of fun!
Mondays & Thursdays Nov 2023 - Mar 2024
6:00 - 7:30 PM
40 Sessions * 45 min OR 1.5 hr sessions
Need ALOT? Contact Us! For a small fee, our team is happy to set you up with any equipment you're missing (handcycle, rollers, etc.)
Fee Exemption Program Available
No financial documentation required. Contact us for more information on how to apply!
Register & Join the Fun!
403-909-6576 @ULTIMATEPARASPORTS WWW.ULTIMATEPARASPORTS.COM

Consortium Project + Conference:

Consortium is a national network looking to improve the quality of care for those living with spinal cord injuries. Their vision is to "ensure the highest recovery, health and well-being of Canadians living with spinal cord injury". The Consortium's goal is to ensure Optimal and Equitable Health Care Services for all Canadian's regardless of where you live, to ensure the functional recovery, health and well-being for individuals living with Spinal Cord Injury or Disease (SCI/D).

Research is focused across a number of domains including: emotional wellbeing, sexual health, walking, and wheeled mobility, community participation, tissue integrity, urinary tract infection, and self-management. Our local domains in Edmonton include: urinary tract infection, community participation and self management. Teams include a mix of clinicians, community members, site implementation specialists, and various community partners. Teams work together to identify gaps in care, and working to make improvements so people have the highest quality of life.

The 10th annual National SCI Working summit is coming up on November 21st in Toronto. It will bring together working groups from across the country and will celebrate the increase on inclusivity and engagement in our clinical practice, research endeavors, technology development, knowledge translation and implementation initiatives. For more information on the conference visit: www.cscir.ca

Did You Know? | Keeping Warm in the Winter

Snowy season is on its way, and it can make it more challenging to navigate in a wheelchair. Here are some top tips from those in the community regarding how to stay warm and wheeling through the winter months. Be sure to wear lots of layers, especially if sensation is diminished. Start with thermal undergarments, add insulating layers, and finish with a waterproof and windproof outer layer. Wear a hat or beanie to prevent heat loss through your head. For footwear: choose insulated, waterproof boots to keep your feet warm and dry.



When times call for it, heated blankets are awesome, just be sure they aren't too hot, and avoid putting directly on skin, especially if sensation is diminished. Remember to stay mindful of frostbite and hypothermia risks, as these can set in quick! It can also take a long time to warm back up once you get a chill. This can cause secondary conditions such as nerve pain to be exacerbated.



Disposable hand warmers in your pockets or gloves to keep your hands toasty, these are also portable rechargeable versions. There can be great to keep in pockets, as hands can chill quickly pushing on metal push-rims. Finally, a hot beverage can go a long way to warm up when you have a chill. Carry a thermos with hot tea, coffee, or hot chocolate to sip on when you're outdoors.



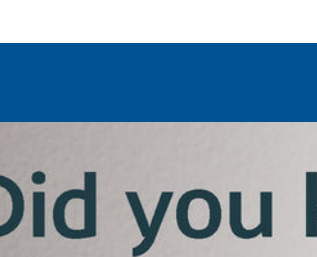
For manual wheelchair users, an investment in a pair of good waterproof gloves for pushing around can go a long way. Or you can be like me and have 10 different pairs stashed in all the pockets of my jackets. Then if one pair gets too wet, it's an easy swap to a warm pair. To de-snow wheels, it can be helpful to keep a designated small microfiber towel to dry off wheels to avoid leaving wheel marks everywhere you go.

Research Study Spotlight | Functional Electrical Stimulation to Restore Function:

The SMART Network and the University of Alberta are looking for participants to enroll in a study looking at the effects of functional electrical stimulation (FES) training to restore arm and leg function after spinal cord injury or stroke. Participants must be over the age of 18, with a spinal cord injury (C4-T10; AIS B, C, or D). The study will involve training with FES assisted cycling for 1 hour per day for either 12 weeks (AIS C or D) or 48 weeks (AIS B). There will be 3 pre, 1 post and 1 6-month follow up assessments completed. Parking expenses are covered and remuneration for your time will be provided periodically throughout the study. For more information please contact: Jane Porter, Research Assistant at 780-492-6227 or by email at japorter@ualberta.ca

Do you want to participate in a research study?
Functional electrical stimulation training to restore arm and leg function after spinal cord injury or stroke

Researchers in the SMART Network at the University of Alberta are looking for **volunteers** to participate in a study, aimed at improving walking function after a spinal cord injury



- You can participate if you are an adult with a spinal cord injury (C4-T10; AIS B, C or D)
- This study involves training with FES assisted cycling 1 hour / day for either 12 (AIS C or D) or 48 (AIS B) weeks
- 3 Pre, 1 Post, and 1 6-month follow-up assessment will be completed

Parking expenses are covered and remuneration for your time is provided periodically throughout the study for further information please contact:

Jane Porter, Research Assistant
(phone) 780-492-6227
(email) japorter@ualberta.ca

Dr. Vinita Mushahwar, Professor
(phone) 780-492-6519
(email) vmushahw@ualberta.ca

For other research studies seeking out participants in the community check out the research studies page of our website: <https://sci-ab.ca/research-opportunities/>

Did you know?
Canadian clinicians recommend using a new, sterile, pre-lubricated catheter every time you catheterize. All **SpeediCath®** catheters are instantly ready-to-use as they are pre-lubricated with a unique hydrophilic coating!

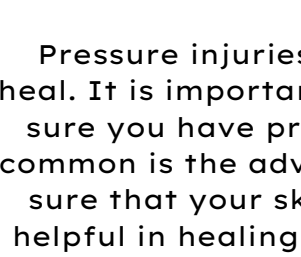
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Advocacy | Moose Hide Campaign

The Moose Hide Campaign is an initiative to raise awareness regarding the issue of disproportionate violence against women and girls. They seek to end gender-based violence by creating safer communities in Canada. Statistics show that indigenous women are even more likely to experience violence... and those with disabilities have an even higher incidence. SCI-AB will be supporting the campaign and will have pins available in our office for those who would like one to wear to show their support and raise awareness of the issue and show solidarity. For more information, check out their website: <https://moosehidecampaign.ca/>



MOOSE HIDE CAMPAIGN
CAMPAGNE MOOSE HIDE

AB-SCILS Video of the Month | Pressure Injuries and Nutrition:

The Alberta Spinal Cord Injury Community of Interactive Learning Series (AB-SCILS) is a monthly webinar series supported by PRAXIS and led by representatives from Alberta Health Services (i.e., Glenrose Rehabilitation Hospital, Foothills Medical Centre, North Zone and South Zone) and SCI-AB, including people with lived experience. Each webinar is co-designed by lived experience experts and non-lived experience experts so that both perspectives are shared. All webinars are recorded and posted in a dedicated YouTube channel and are open to the public.



The aim of the AB-SCILS is to improve the audience's knowledge and empowerment through creating a sense of community, changing perceptions on disability and improving social connectedness. While they were initially started as a way to promote learning and connection during the COVID epidemic, they continue to be a valuable tool to be able to educate and inspire.

Pressure injuries can develop quickly, and can take a long time to heal. It is important to always keep up with pressure reliefs, and make sure you have proper cushioning and seating to support yourself. Less common is the advice to keep up with hydration and nutrition to make sure that your skin stays intact and healthy. High protein diets are helpful in healing and skin strength. Making diet a key component of prevention and recovery.

November 16th marks World Stop Pressure Injury Day, so we thought we would take the opportunity to showcase the skills webinar videos on our youtube channel detailing how to keep skin healthy and happy! Check out the online video playlist here: https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=lixqF_qCTMY&feature=youtu.be

Stay warm out there! - Kendra + Terry

