

## 2023 | A Year in Review:

It's hard to believe it's December again already! This year sure seemed to fly by! I for one am enjoying the snowless Edmonton streets in December (that doesn't happen too often here!).

This past year has provided opportunities to get together to share struggles, stories and smiles together. From cross country ski try it days at the Strathcona Wilderness Centre for International Snow Day.

The monthly peer dinners at a variety of restaurants to share a meal and company. Educational afternoons at the Muttart Conservatory. Wheelchair curling, sledge hockey, and adaptive waterskiing try it days. As well as the Servus Marathon, Virtual SCI Education Days, Rocky Mountain Adaptive Demo Days, and other Community Showcase Days.

Some fun in the sun at our Summer BBQ's and a SCI Wellness Retreat in the fall with Rocky Mountain Adaptive, featuring adaptive biking, yoga and hiking. A spooky Halloween Townhall event in collaboration with AHS to showcase local research. It was also fantastic to be able to host in person events at the Rehabilitation hospitals again.

Thank you to our peer event, coffee afternoon, and pizza evening sponsors: Red Plaid Developments, Coloplast, Hollister, Home Health Store, Congdos Aids to Daily Living and Mobility Equipment Services.

## SCI-AB Land Acknowledgement

As an organization we acknowledge that what we call Alberta is the traditional and ancestral territory of many peoples, presently subject to Treaties 6, 7, and 8. Namely: the Blackfoot Confederacy - Kainai, Piikani, and Siksika - the Cree, Dene, Saulteaux, Nakota Sioux, Stoney Nakoda, and the Tsuut'ina Nation and the Métis People of Alberta. This includes the Métis Settlements and the Six Regions of the Métis Nation of Alberta within the historical Northwest Metis Homeland. We acknowledge the many First Nations, Métis and Inuit who have lived in and cared for these lands for generations, and the harm and suffering they have endured. We are grateful for the traditional Knowledge Keepers and Elders who are still with us today and those who have gone before us. We make this acknowledgement as an act of reconciliation and gratitude to those whose territory we reside, and wish to take actions towards authentic allyship.

## YEG Holiday Party | December 20

Early-bird ticket sales for the Edmonton holiday party event will continue until Dec 7th, after this tickets will only be available for full price. The event takes place on Wednesday, December 20th from 5:30pm to 9pm. Be sure to get your tickets before it's too late! The evening will feature a gourmet dinner, entertainment, a silent auction + 50/50 draw, holiday games and most importantly: a fun evening with friends new and old! Plus attendance gets you entered into the draw for the Permobid wheelchair! Keep in mind the theme this year will be "Tropical Christmas" so you are encouraged to wear your best tropical themed outfit!



Get your tickets today!

## Year End Giving Campaign

December marks the final ramp up of our year end giving campaign as a last push to support those with Sci's and other mobility issues around the holiday time. From isolation due to snow and monetary constraints. Contributions towards the Helping Way Fund can help to cover the extra fees needed to cover equipment that increases the quality of life and allows everyone to adjust, adapt and thrive!

Visit the [donation page on our website](#) to make a difference to those in need!

## SCI-AB December Events:

- Dec 3: [YYC Holiday Luau Party](#)
- Dec 5: [Virtual Ladies Peer Chat](#)
- Dec 6: [Virtual Peer Chat with Terry](#)
- Dec 12: [Peer Coffee at the Glenrose](#)
- Dec 19: [Virtual Ladies Chat](#)
- Dec 20: [YYC Coffee Meet Up](#)
- Dec 20: [YEG Holiday Party](#)
- Dec 21: [Pizza + Peers at the Glenrose](#)

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

Please note our offices will be closed from Dec 22 at noon and will reopen on Tuesday January 2nd in the new year! Happy Holidays!

## In the Community + Across the Province:

The Ignite Change Human Rights Virtual Convention takes place from December 1st-10th. Each day has a specific topic and there will be a variety of pertinent presentations. On December 4th the topic of the day will be disabilities. There will be presentations from a variety of people and organizations looking to improve various aspects of life for those living with disabilities. For the full schedule and details to register check out: <https://www.ignitechangeconvention.ca/schedule>

December 3rd marks the International Day of People with Disabilities or IDPD for short. It was established in 1992 and is now celebrated worldwide. The aim of the day is to promote the rights and well-being of those with disabilities in all aspects of life. Those living with disabilities have been historically marginalized and face barriers to full community participation. Various municipalities will be hosting in person and virtual events to attend to celebrate the day.

Human Rights Day is celebrated on December 10th around the world. The date was chosen to honour and reflect the proclamation of the Universal Proclamation of Human Rights (UDHR) in 1948. This year marks the 75th anniversary of the declaration! It is available in over 500 languages and is the most translated document in the world. The theme for 2023 is "Freedom, Equality, and Justice for All" and hopes to expand the conversation to human rights protection that focuses on vulnerable groups such as those with disabilities, indigenous peoples, and migrants. For more information, [check out the overview on the United Nations webpage.](#)

For those who love twinkling lights at this time of year, be sure to mark your calendar to visit Glow on. This event will be FREE for people with disabilities on December 16th from 10am-12pm, and a discounted price for family and friends. Glow takes place at the [Edmonton Expo Center](#) and runs from Dec 1 to Jan 1. It is an amazing festive and accessible activity for all ages! There is also a [Calgary event](#) as well!

**Glow with us for a fun, sensory-friendly and inclusive event!**

**Saturday December 16th | 10:00AM - 12:00PM**  
Edmonton Expo Centre, Hall A & B

FREE for individuals with disabilities and special pricing for friends and family

glowyeg.ca/no-limits

Explore at Your Own Pace | Immerse in Holiday Magic | Celebrating Together

Join us to share smiles, create memories, and immerse in an enchanting world designed just for you!

Get Your Tickets: Admission is complimentary for individuals with disabilities

General Admission \$50.00\* | Seniors \$25.00\* | Children \$15.00\* | Kids \$10.00\* | Family Pass (2 adults + 2 children) \$75.00\*

## Looking for accessible activities and programs to try out to get a kick start on your New Year's Resolution?

Whether your resolution is to get fit, meet new people, or just try new things there are lots of unique accessible activities available in Alberta!

In Red Deer, the [sledge hockey drop in will continue on Thursday evenings from 4:30-5:30pm](#) at the G.H. Dawe Community Rec Centre. This is a great activity to try with family and friends as well! For more information check out the poster below!

**FREE SLEDGE HOCKEY TRY IT EVENT!**

Monday December 18, 2023  
7:30-9pm  
Meadows Recreation Centre  
Pre-registration required

Interested? Email [programs@parasportstab.com](mailto:programs@parasportstab.com)

\*Helmets and protective gear can be provided if required

There will also be a sledge hockey try it opportunity in Edmonton on Monday December 18th from 7:30-9pm at the Meadows Recreation Centre. Please note preregistration is required, email [programs@parasportstab.com](mailto:programs@parasportstab.com) to sign up or for more information. Helmets and protective equipment can be provided if needed!

In Edmonton, the INSPIRE CENTRE provides programming for individuals of all ages, levels and abilities that are searching for inclusive experiences suited for their needs. They will be offering adult drop-in Hand Tap Dance classes in a wheelchair accessible space on Thursday December 14th from 6:30-7:15 and Friday December 22nd from 6:30-7:15 with Jane Porter. Jane is a dance teacher with a background in rehabilitation neuroscience. For more information please contact: [info@inspirecentreforlearning.com](mailto:info@inspirecentreforlearning.com) For a full list of programming, check out [InspireCentreForLearning.com](http://InspireCentreForLearning.com)

In Grande Prairie, the Wolverines adaptive sports association has wheelchair basketball on Thursday evenings at 7pm at the Eastlink Centre. Chairs are provided! Feel free to stop by for a drop in session to try it out! Contact [info@gpwolverines.com](mailto:info@gpwolverines.com) for more information.

If you are in central Alberta, the Red Deer Reapers Wheelchair Rugby practices Sunday nights at the Penhold Multiplex 7:30-9pm. Come to watch or play, we have chairs and equipment and are looking for new players! Contact Wanda Seifried at [wanda.seifried@sci-ab.ca](mailto:wanda.seifried@sci-ab.ca) for additional info.

Finally in the Calgary region, Ultimate Para Sports will offer a [FREE Nordic skiing try it days on December 16th and 17th](#) in collaboration with Rocky Mountain Adaptive at the Canmore Nordic Centre (transportation to and from Calgary can be arranged!)

For those adverse to being out in the cold Ultimate Para Sports also offers a [virtual cycling program](#) that runs until March. Equipment can be provided! Program cost is \$50 plus \$25 membership fee, but they have a fee exemption program for those who may have difficulty affording these fees, for more information contact [info@ultimateparasports.com](mailto:info@ultimateparasports.com) Or check out the poster below!

Once again this year Rocky Mountain Adaptive will be offering a [U CAN Try-It Camps](#) thanks to the Wim & Nancy Paw 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.](#)

For those who are feeling more artsy, the City Arts Centre in Edmonton has lots of different accessible classes available. Those needing a companion to help out can do so free of charge. [Check out a full list of programming here!](#)

**Sledge Hockey Try it Events THURSDAYS FROM 4:30-5:30**

Starting October 12 at the Dave Center

Free 4 anyBODY

TEAM JIGGER

Call Ray Wasdal 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  
8:00 - 7:30 PM  
40 Sessions  
+ 45 min QR 1.5 hr sessions

Need Equipment? 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!

403-909-4276 | MULTITAPARASPORTS.COM | WWW.ULTIMATEPARASPORTS.COM

## Insist on less, and get more from your catheter!

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## Red Plaid Developments Housing Initiative

Adam from Red Plaid Developments is passionate about building and creating spaces that improve people's lives. Over the past few years of building homes, he realized there is an urgent need in our communities for quality, accessible, barrier-free housing. Alberta cities have started breaking down barriers to backyard home development. This is an incredible opportunity for current homeowners to build a secondary property that would help someone with mobility challenges improve their life.

Their mission at Red Plaid Developments is to improve the quality of life for those with mobility challenges in housing. They have developed the Hobby Loft and the No limits Collective; both projects which aim to improve the quality of life for those living with spinal cord injuries and other mobility constraints. Firstly, the Hobby Loft is a barrier free single detached home that can be built in new subdivisions and infills.

Second is the Hobby Loft Garden suite which is a more compact and affordable version that is built on the back of properties that have laneway or alley access.

The Hobby Lofts are level entry and all come with elevators as standard. They are going beyond basic accessibility, and provide environments that allow for the individual to thrive. Automatic doors can be added throughout the home and the main floor flex/hobby space can be used to pursue one's passions.

But where are these homes to be built? How will they be built? And how do we ensure they go to the people who will really need them?

The solution is named A City Within A City: The No Limits Collective - Accessible Housing Initiative. It's aim is to reduce barriers to accessible housing by creating a program that incentivizes home owners to build accessible homes literally "in their own backyards." The solution is simple: build beautiful barrier-free homes on existing properties that have alley access!

The Hobby Lofts will provide an investment opportunity to property owners so they can take advantage of an under-utilized space. The build process is non-invasive and completed by Red Plaid Developments. Once built the property owners can use the home for a family member or join the No Limits Collective (NLC) Program. The NLC works with non-profit organizations to match people with mobility challenges with our homes. These services are provided at no extra cost to the owner. All barrier free properties for rental or sale will be listed on the No Limits Collective Website.

This will allow the non-profit partners to find a suitable tenant that would most benefit from the space. This would allow for accessible accommodation options to be ready immediately after injury, rather than extra time spent in the hospital waiting for patchwork renovations to be completed. The property owners will also see the benefit of never having to search for tenants, no responsibility for maintenance over the first 5 years, adding 100% of the cost of the build to the property value, and finally a 1-year rental lease agreement as part of the build contract. This allows existing homeowners to build a low-risk investment property in their backyard while helping someone in their community find an accessible home. For more information about the project, and to share your feedback, check out: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=IZXLakJg8RM>

## Research Spotlight | Concentric My Experience Survey

The [Concentric](#) "My Experience Regarding my Care and Changes in my Health, Function & Quality of Life Survey" was first launched in early May 2023. While the 'survey' in the title may throw people off. It is not a traditional survey used for research purposes. Rather it is a self-management tool that is to be used to get a "snapshot" of a persons experience living with a SCI at multiple stages in their journey, and offers an opportunity to seek intervention in areas that may be of concern. It is being rolled out as a tool to help the transition from inpatient in a hospital setting to an outpatient in the community, by providing a framework and set of goals to aspire to. The survey can be filled out multiple times at various time points from discharge. This can help track changes over time and help guide the conversation during outpatient care team meetings.

It allows time for reflection and will help direct questions and discussion with the care team. Overall, it is primarily a reflection and self-management tool that helps to look back with SCI empower themselves, take control of their goals of care, and have a record to look back and see progress that is made over the journey. While the survey was validated by those with lived experience, it is still a work in progress, so any feedback or suggestions from the community are extremely valuable. At the end of the day, the survey is patient centered, and those taking the time to do the work will see the benefit of putting their health and goals first. The survey also has the option to be read aloud and translated into 32 languages to make the tool accessible. The survey time will take around 30 min, and can be done over multiple sessions, so you can take breaks as you go if needed. It was formulated by consolidating questions from numerous peer reviewed, standardized questionnaires into a single congruent format. It is currently the ONLY evaluated tool for those with a SCI!

They are looking to get more respondents and feedback from the community, so your participation is greatly appreciated! Remember that everything is confidential and only for your personal use unless you consent to release the information to your care team, or for research purposes!

The online survey tool can be found here

## Did You Know? | Full Service Gas Stations + Gas App

For those with mobility issues that drive it can be a process to independently fill up with gas, especially in the colder months. It takes so much extra time when adding loading and unloading a wheelchair into the mix. To save time and add security if I am driving alone, I usually go to full service gas stations like DOMO or some CO-OP gas stations. There is also a new initiative with Shell gas Stations where wheelchair users can use the [fuelService app](#) to get help filling up vehicles. Notify when you arrive and an attendant will come out and fill up for you. Most gas stations are good about this if you call ahead and let them know the make and model of your car. Keep this in mind when it's extra cold out, or if you are on a road-trip!



## Advocacy | Bill C-22 Feedback

The [Canada Disability Benefit \(Bill C-22\)](#) received royal assent on June 22. This is huge, as it is a huge first step to reduce poverty and support the financial security of working-age persons with disabilities.

Legislation is still in development stages, and the details of the Benefit—such as eligibility and amount—will be set in future regulations. To create a framework for these regulations the Government is [asking for feedback.](#)

The benefit aims to reduce poverty and support the financial security of working-age Canadians with disabilities by supplementing, not replacing, existing federal and provincial and territorial supports.

They have launched the Canada Disability Benefit Regulations Online Engagement Tool, which gives the opportunity to have a say in the development of the benefit's regulations. The engagement tool provides an overview and space to on each of the regulatory areas.

Please be sure to take the time to [provide feedback](#) and to help shape the future for those living with disabilities in Canada! Feedback can be provided until Dec 21, so don't delay!

Share your thoughts on regulations for the **Canada Disability Benefit.**

Visit the online engagement tool.

Dites-nous ce que vous pensez du règlement sur la **Prestation canadienne pour les personnes handicapées.**

Servez-vous de notre outil de consultation en ligne.

## Accessibility Advisory Committee | Vehicles for Hire

Your voice matters in shaping a more accessible and safer vehicle-for-hire experience in our city. The City of Edmonton's Vehicle for Hire Unit is working to enhance safety and accessibility for passengers utilizing taxis, limousines, and rideshares. As part of this mission, they've partnered with MacEwan University. Research is being conducted to understand your experiences, limitations, and needs when using vehicle-for-hire services. This research will inform future policies and amendments to the Vehicle for Hire Bylaw. Your insights can pave the way for a more inclusive service. Volunteers are needed for interviews. These interviews, lasting approximately 30-45 minutes, can be scheduled virtually or by telephone.



To thank participants for their time and valued experiences, a \$75 gift card will be provided. Spots are limited, and there will be pre-screening questions to ensure diverse representation. Interested? Contact Soyinka at [seginsky@mymacewan.ca](mailto:seginsky@mymacewan.ca) or 780-918-2959 to schedule an interview and discuss any required accommodations.

## Happy Holidays! - Kendra + Terry

