

Intro | Happy New Year !



Happy 2024 from all of us at Spinal Cord Injury Alberta! We hope you had a joyful and restful holiday season, and are looking forward to all that is to come this year!

The new year brings new resolutions and new goals. A chance to start fresh, or a chance to reinvent and revitalize. Although we still have a long winter ahead of us, the days are getting longer again... symbolic of how small positive changes add up over time. Sustained change comes from small victories.

Take the time to reflect: what would you like to bring into your 2024? What is one small thing you can do today to get closer to that? The journey of life is not a straight path, and we can't change the past.. but we can control our actions towards a better future.

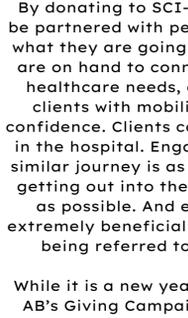
December Holiday Party Recap



Thank you to everyone that was able to attend our Tropical Luau Holiday Party celebrations in December! Calgary had theirs on December 3rd and it was no short of a tropical delight to kick off the month! There was an improv performance from the Kinkonauts, as well as a gourmet plated meal from the Carriage House catering team.



Later in the month Edmonton had their party on December 20th with a delicious buffet dinner prepared by the fabulous Ela Euro Catering, followed by some holiday themed performances and trivia extravaganza!



Thank you to our event sponsors: Red Plaid Developments, Hammer Injury Law, Pipella Law, Coloplast, Islander Oil, Stephen & Joanne Hughes, Conoco Phillips Canada, All About Seniors, and Dollarama. Also thank you to all of our silent auction donors to help make the event the best it could be!



Most of all thank you to everyone who was able to attend and celebrate the holiday season with friends new and old!

Giving Campaign | Donations Matched by the Government of Alberta

A spinal cord injury can happen to anyone, any time, anywhere, any place. In the blink of an eye, life can change forever. When something as devastating as this happens, hopes and dreams for the future can disappear instantaneously.



By donating to SCI-AB, you make it possible for clients to be partnered with peers who have a deep understanding of what they are going through. Client Services Coordinators are on hand to connect clients to resources like food and healthcare needs, and the exercise physiologists assist clients with mobility, strength, body conditioning and confidence. Clients can participate in peer events while still in the hospital. Engaging with peers who are navigating a similar journey is as important to the clients' well-being as getting out into the community and resuming normal life as possible. And exercising and moving one's body is extremely beneficial to the clients' overall health as well as being referred to the resources available to clients.

Crowdfunding Campaign - Eligible for 30% match funding from the Government of Alberta



While it is a new year, it isn't too late to contribute to SCI-AB's Giving Campaign! Donations will be eligible for 30% match funding from the Government of Alberta and it is a great opportunity to give back to the community and those in need, and making your dollar go the extra mile. Learn more about the initiative, help spread the word, or donate today!



https://give.crowdfunding.alberta.ca/helpspinalcordinjury_alberta?ref=ab_0toj5PdKiAX0tj5PdKiAX

Permobil Ti-Lite Wheelchair Raffle Date - June 21



The date has been set for the Permobil manual Ti-Lite wheelchair raffle! The lucky winner will be announced on June 21st on the first official day of summer! We can't think of a better way to kick off the sunny season than with a new set of wheels.



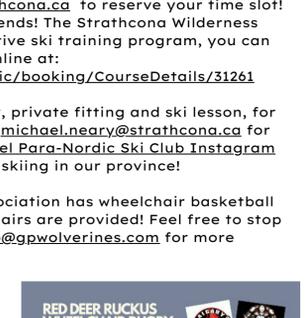
Entries can be obtained at each in-person peer event attended until the draw date. Please note that to enter your name in the draw you must be in attendance at the peer event, be a wheelchair user, and agree not to re-sell the chair for monetary gain. For more details please reach out to Kendra at Kendra.erhardt@sci-ab.ca.

Receive an entry for the chair at every in-person SCI-AB Peer Event you attend! The more events you attend, the more entries you receive!

Good luck to those who have already entered, and remember it's not too late to get your name in the draw. While the more entries will increase your odds, you only need one ballot for a chance to win!

SCI-AB January 2024 Events:

- Jan 9: Coffee + Peers at the Glenrose
- Jan 10: YYC Coffee Meet Up
- Jan 11: YEG Peer Dinner at Bucu
- Jan 16: Virtual Ladies Peer Chat
- Jan 17: Online Peer Chat with Terry
- Jan 24: Pizza + Peers at the Glenrose
- Jan 24: YYC Peer Dinner at Surfy Surfy Bar



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

In the Community + Across the Province:

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!

Diet and nutrition can be essential to healthy living with a spinal cord injury. There is a virtual seminar regarding healthy eating after SCI, "Nutrition in SCI: Strategies for Managing Weight and Living on a Budget" on January 10th from 12:00pm-1:00pm EST (so 10am-11am MST for us in Alberta). If you are interested in attending, please [register by clicking here](#). The webinar is put on by the Circulus Primary Care Network, and previous recorded webinars can be found on their website: <https://www.mobilityclinic.ca/research-and-advocacy>.

Just outside of Edmonton, the Strathcona Wilderness Centre will be having a full day of snow themed fun planned for [World Snow Day](#) on January 20th from 1-4pm. There will be a scavenger hunt, snow painting, snow angels, snow forts, a chance to try out adaptive sit ski equipment, and most importantly, hot chocolate! For more information, or to register for a sit ski demo contact Mike at michael.neary@strathcona.ca to reserve your time slot! Be sure to dress warmly, and bring your family & friends! The Strathcona Wilderness Centre will also be offering Wednesday evening adaptive ski training program, you can get more info or register online at: <https://reconline.strathcona.ca/STRATHCONA/public/booking/CourseDetails/31261>

There is also the opportunity to have a complimentary, private fitting and ski lesson, for more information or to book your ski contact Mike at michael.neary@strathcona.ca for more information! Also be sure to check out the [Paralle Para-Nordic Ski Club Instagram page](#) more information about para-nordic skiing in our province!

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 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 for additional info.

RED DEER RUCKUS WHEELCHAIR RUGBY TOURNAMENT
January 6, 2024 9:45-8:00
Red Deer Polytechnic Main Gym, 100 College Blvd, Red Deer, Alberta

This is a great opportunity to watch an exciting, high energy, full contact team sport played by disabled individuals!

WUSA PARTICIPACTION

They will also be hosting the Red Deer Ruckus tournament on Jan 6, so be sure to check it out, it is an exciting and fast paced sport! They don't call it murderball for nothing! Check out the poster for details.

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 Or check out the poster below!

The Paralympic Sports Association will be offering a Winter Integrated spin at the Van Vilet Centre at the University of Alberta in Edmonton. There are Monday evening and Wednesday evening classes which run from 7:00pm-7:50pm starting mid January (Jan 15 + Jan 17) and run until March 25 and April 3rd respectively. For more information or to sign up, please [visit their website](#).

PSA will also be offering a Winter Bowling program on Friday afternoons (1:00pm-2:30pm) at the Bonnie Doon Bowling Lanes in Edmonton. Come down and work on your strikes and spares! For more information or to sign up, [check out their website](#).

Finally, PSA will be offering FREE Women and Girls Sledge Hockey Development Sessions at the Meadows Community Recreation centre on Mondays from 7:30pm-9:00pm from January 8th to March 18th (with no program on Feb 19th). For more details or to sign up [check out their website](#).

Once again this year Rocky Mountain Adaptive 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](#).

Sledge Hockey Try It Events
THURSDAYS FROM 4:30-5:30
Starting October 12 at the Dave Center

TEAM JIGGER
Nov 2023 - Mar 2024

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

6:00 - 7:30 PM
40 Sessions
+ 45 min CR 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!

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Edmonton Accessibility Advisory Committee Openings

The Edmonton Accessibility Advisory Committee has 3 positions open, and the recruitment date closes on Jan 14, so don't delay sending in your application if interested! Help shape public policy and be the voice for those with mobility challenges and disabilities in the Edmonton region.

For full details [check out the position posting here](#).

Alberta SCI Research Updates | Recruitment Database

Spinal Cord Injury Research Participant Recruitment Database



A new database to assist in informing individuals with SCI about potential research studies that are currently recruiting is now live at <https://redcap.link/SCIdatabase>. Individuals who are interested in having researchers contact them about trials in Alberta that are of interest to them should please enroll using the link provided. You may indicate what types of studies interest you. If you have any questions about this database, please contact Dr. Jessica D'Amico at the Glenrose Rehabilitation Hospital/University of Alberta at damico1@ualberta.ca.

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Research Spotlight | Effects of 5HTP after SCI



The Effects of 5-Hydroxytryptophan (5HTP) after Spinal Cord Injury

A study at the University of Alberta, and run by the Scientific Program Lead of the Glenrose Rehabilitation Hospital, Dr. Jessica D'Amico, is currently recruiting individuals with chronic, incomplete spinal cord injury (SCI), and/or individuals with subacute (<1 year), complete SCI.

The study aims to assess how a drug, 5-HTP, can affect the levels of a chemical, serotonin, below a spinal cord injury and how this may affect reflexes and muscle activity. This study is funded by the Wings for Life Spinal Cord Research Foundation and is a Health-Canada regulated clinical trial. The time commitment for the study is 4 visits to the laboratory, with each visit lasting ~ 7 hours.

Participants will receive \$25/visit to cover any costs incurred. Interested individuals can please contact Dr. Jessica D'Amico at damico1@ualberta.ca for further information.

Did You Know? - Kessler Foundation Personal Care Assistant Course

The Kessler Foundation is dedicated to helping people with disabilities to maximize recovery, independence, and inclusion. They have developed and are offering the first **FREE online education resource** specifically designed to introduce personal care assistants to spinal cord injuries (SCI).

It was created in conjunction with those with lived experience, family members, clinicians and experience personal care assistants for a range of perspectives. Since SCIs are a life altering condition that often creates the need for hands-on help to perform daily tasks, the course hopes to enhance the quality of personal care assistance available to people with spinal cord injury.

Most home health care providers lack the specialized knowledge to work with clients with SCI, but with increased education it will enable those requiring personal care to receive the best standard of care and allow them to thrive and participate in the community. The course focuses on understanding needs, communication, and building positive working relationships.

The course can be accessed for free online at: <https://bit.ly/understandingSCI>

Concetric My Experience Survey Reminder

Just wanted to give a friendly reminder regarding the Concetric survey tool. The Concetric team is still looking for more participants to fill out the "My Experience Regarding my Care and Changes in my Health, Function & Quality of Life Survey". The goal of the survey is to track changes over time and help guide the conversation during outpatient care team meetings.

Overall, it is primarily a reflection and self-management tool that helps those 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. They are looking to get more respondents and feedback from the community, so participation is greatly appreciated! Thank you for your help to improve the transitions of care for those with Spinal Cord Injuries in Alberta. It is through your continued support that we can work towards the best possible future for those with spinal cord injuries in our province!

The online survey can be found by [clicking here](#)

Tropical Luau Holiday Party Throwback

Happy New Year! - Kendra + Terry

