

SCI-AB | August 2025 Peer Newsletter

REGISTRATION NOW OPEN

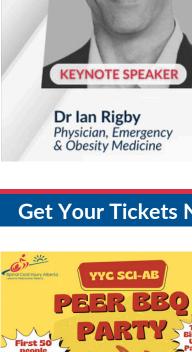
Upcoming Peer Conference (Sept 18th) - Get Your Tickets Today!

Spinal Cord Injury Alberta PEER CONFERENCE

partners. **Individual Registrations:** Attendees will have the opportunity to learn from engaging presentations, take part in panel discussions, and connect with others who are passionate about accessibility, inclusion, and innovation. Attendees will also have access to the vendor showcase. The event runs from 10:00 AM to 3:00 PM, with dedicated trade show times from 10:00-11:00 AM and 12:00-1:15 PM

Complimentary lunch and refreshments. Opportunity to explore TELUS Spark before or after the conference (open 9:00 AM - 4:00 PM) Opportunities to network and build community. Participant Pricing: \$25 Early Bird

Meet your Speakers



Calgary BBQ: August 10th

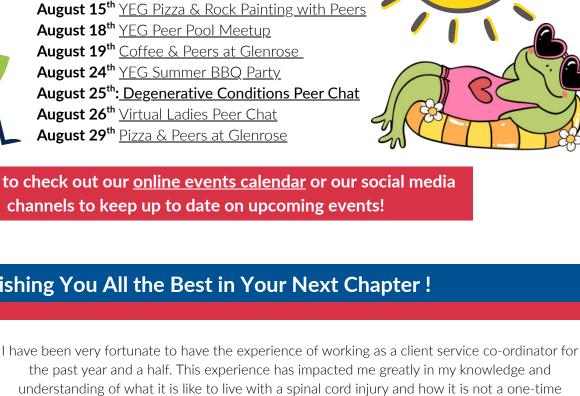
Riccardo Baldini Pianist, Innovator, & Entrepreneur. Get Your Tickets Now for the Upcoming SCI-AB BBQs in August!



Peer Program Survey Client Services Coordination Survey

The links to complete the surveys are below:

August 18th YEG Peer Pool Meetup August 19th Coffee & Peers at Glenrose August 24th YEG Summer BBQ Party August 25th: Degenerative Conditions Peer Chat August 26th Virtual Ladies Peer Chat August 29th <u>Pizza & Peers at Glenrose</u> Be sure to check out our online events calendar or our social media channels to keep up to date on upcoming events!



It has been a true pleasure working with clients in the CAPCC program, supporting their goals and encouraging meaningful participation in the community. I've thoroughly enjoyed being part of their journeys and witnessing so many moments of growth and connection.

offers so much support to one another. This has been one of the most positive working

the odd vent session that I was either giving or receiving.

even without and SCI- Injury, I have an SCI family I can rely on. - Dallyn

Farewell and Thank You - Spinal Cord Injury Alberta Five years ago, I was simply looking for a job. I had no idea that what I was really about to find was a purpose, a community, and an experience that would change my life. It's funny how sometimes, the job you never knew you needed has a way of finding you.

Spinal Cord Injury Alberta invites you to join us for the 2025 Peer Conference on Thursday, September 18th at TELUS Spark in Calgary. This

year's theme, Living Beyond Limits, celebrates resilience, independence, and connection in the spinal cord injury and disability community. The Peer Conference brings together individuals with spinal cord injuries, families,

caregivers, healthcare professionals, and community partners from across Alberta.

Learn more, or buy tickets here: https://sci-ab.ca/peer-conference-2025-2/

We are grateful to have received a Gift of Flight Raffle from West Jet to help support he Peer Conference. You could win one roundtrip flight for two

> to any regularly scheduled and marketed WestJet destination. See the poster for details!

I've also been lucky to work with such a wonderful team. Everyone's dedication and compassion have made this experience incredibly rewarding.

When I started as a Peer Coordinator at Spinal Cord Injury Alberta, I thought I understood my own spinal cord injury journey. But I quickly realized I had only been scratching the surface. What unfolded over these past five years was a deep dive into not only my own growth and healing, but also into a vibrant, resilient, and awe-inspiring community that welcomed me with open arms. This organization—and more importantly, the people in and around it—have shaped me in ways I could never have imagined. I've grown professionally, yes, but more than that, I've grown as a person. I've become a better husband, a more capable father, and a more confident version of myself. The strength, vulnerability, and tenacity I've witnessed in this community have given me the courage to face life's biggest challenges head-on. Ironically, it's this very confidence and support that now make it possible for me and my family to take on our next big adventure: a move to Australia. It's not a step we take

want to say: thank you. It has been an absolute pleasure working with all of you. Keep pushing forward, keep supporting one another, and keep living your best lives. The work you're doing matters—deeply—and I'll be cheering you on from across the ocean. With heartfelt gratitude -Terry WestJet Gift of Flight Raffle and September Peer Conference

GET YOUR TICKETS HERE! In the Community + Across the Province:

GIFT OF FLIGHT

WESTJET

The Paralympic Sports Association (PSA) will be offering a free sledge hockey try it event wheelchairsportsab and pizza evening on Friday, August 15th at the Meadows Rec Centre in Edmonton. The ice time will take place from 5:00-6:30pm and pizza will take place form 6:30-7:30pm. All levels of experience are welcome! To register email Director@parasportsab.com WHEELCHAIR SPORTS Wheelchair Sports Alberta (WSA) has an adaptive sports try it opportunity every Thursday at the main gym at the Glenrose from 2-3pm, there is a rotating try it schedule. There is also now the option to try adaptive sports at the Terwilleger Recreation Complex on Thursdays from 4:15-5:15pm every week! Wheelchair Pickleball will start on Wednesday evenings on August 6th at the Glenrose main gym from 6:30-8pm

If you are in the central zone there are lots of great accessible activities to check out. The Ellis Bird Farm will be offering forest bathing every Thursday, this is a great way to relax and connect with nature, and they will also have birdhouse building on August 3rd. There are also lots options for live music! Including a <u>drum circles</u>, the <u>Red Deer Filipino Music and Food</u> Street Festival and the "In the Neighbourhood Concert Series" on August 16th. Finally,

Wednesdays 6:30pm-8:00pm in Glenrose gym on main floor

available or can bring your own.

(10230 111 Avenue) Starting August 6th, 2025

are also welcome.

WHEELCHAIR PICKLEBALL

Pickleball group for people with physical disabilities. Friends & family

Open to all ages, abilities, levels of experience, and mobility aids. Can play in manual or power wheelchair, using other mobility aids, o

using sports wheelchairs available at the gym. Pickleball paddles also

Have fun, socialize, get physically active, learn to play pickleball, and learn and practice wheelchair skills through pickleball games.

Contact info: WheelchairPickleballEdmonton@outlook.com

Supported by WSA

Canadian Disability Benefit | How to Apply? Starting July 2025, the new Canada Disability Benefit (CDB) will provide up to \$200 per month (or \$2,400 annually) to eligible low-income Canadians with disabilities. To qualify, applicants must be between the ages of 18 and 64, approved for the Disability Tax Credit (DTC), a resident of Canada for tax purposes, and must have filed their 2024 income tax return—along with their spouse or common-law partner's return, if applicable. Applications open on June 20, 2025, with payments beginning in July for those who apply by June 30. The processing time is approximately 28 days. To apply, individuals will need their Social Insurance Number (SIN), proof of <u>DTC approval</u>, their 2024 Notice of Assessment (line

on the official website to get a personalized estimate of their monthly payment.

23600), and direct deposit information for faster payment.

attend, and if you need any equipment. No experience is necessary, and family/friends are welcome to come and play/try as well! See the poster for all spring/summer ice times. For August, the ice times will be on August 18th from 9:00pm-10:15pm and on August 25th from 9:15pm-10:30pm at Millennium Place Chev Area in Sherwood Park.

Rocky Mountain Adaptive has lots of awesome things coming up this summer. From camps, to lessons, or equipment rentals, they will have something you will love! They have adaptive mountain bikes, accessible paddleboards, kayaks and more! Between biking, hiking and paddling, it is a great way to enjoy the mountains during the summer months!

Ultimate Para Sports will be starting up an adaptive scuba program out of Cochrane at the SLS Center. The try scuba nights will be free on Tuesday evenings, and then it is \$550 if you

want to complete your open water certification!

Nothing says summer like waterski season! Come try out adaptive waterskiing at one of the try it days scheduled across the province! See the poster for details, for more details check out: Waterski Wake Alberta

Lacombe has Music in the Park nights every Wednesday evening!

reproductive health, including pregnancy, childbirth, menstruation, and menopause. If you are interested email the Project Coordinator: Namartin@Ualberta.ca Or scan the QR code! Check out the all of the current research study opportunities here! https://sci-ab.ca/research-opportunities/ SCI-AB Peer Program New Mentor + Mentee Shoutout

There are four ways to apply: online, by phone through Service Canada (1-833-486-3007), in person at any Service Canada Centre, or by mail using a printed application form. If you didn't receive a pre-approval letter or code in the mail, you can still apply—you'll just need to provide the required documentation. The benefit amount is income-tested. Individuals earning less than \$10,000 (or \$14,000 for couples) can receive the full amount, with benefits gradually reduced for earnings above those levels. Applicants are encouraged to use the Canada Disability Benefit Estimator Tool If you need help with the application process, free support is available from community organizations or by contacting the dedicated Service Canada line. Applying early and setting up direct deposit is the best way to ensure timely payments. The AISH regulation was amended, so CDB is non-exempt income for people on regular AISH, and fully exempt for people on modified AISH (i.e., people living in continuing care facilities that charge accommodation rate). Please note, that people in facilities on modified AISH won't receive the \$200 benefit. Since being on modified AISH makes income higher, people may get a lower amount from the CDB. For example, if they were on modified AISH for whole 2024 tax year and had no other income, their income would be \$32,772\$ so \$32,772-\$23,000=\$9,772 then \$9772x(0.2)=\$1,954.4 then \$2400-\$1954.4=\$445.6 then \$445.6/12=\$37.133 per month received. Research Study Spotlight: OB/GYN Care for Wheelchair Users

n @ (780) 721-7071 fo

WATER SKI & WAKE ALBERTA ADAPTII

GIVE IT A GO

CLINIC DATES

Additional dates to fol

Go to www.wswa.ca/adaptive-program for more information or to register

JUNE 24 - TEMPEST, ALBERTA

JULY 8 - STAFFORD LAKE, CRANFORD

JULY 15 - SCHACRES, LACOMBE

AUGUST 9 - PREDATOR BAY, CALGARY

JUNE 28 - PREDATOR BAY, CALGARY

JULY 12 - PREDATOR BAY, CALGARY

JULY 22 - TEMPEST, ALBERTA

AUGUST 12 - TEMPEST, ALBERTA

move into a new stage of life. The peer mentor training consists of an online course that can be completed on your own time, as well as a peer mentor profile that will help make matches with those in the community who have

For more information on becoming a peer mentor, contact

To sign up to be a mentor or mentee, complete this form:

Adaptive Swimming + Pickleball Program Dates:

https://forms.office.com/r/Vm4AMuLMHC

The peer program is the basis of how SCI-AB came to be. Peers

supporting peers and the invaluable lived experience perspective.

Learning the ropes from someone who has been there and gets it.

From educational sessions, peer social meetings, one on one peer connections, and much more. We are always looking for more peer mentors to add to the roster to help to connect with those

who are newly injured, or those who have new questions as they

There are several facets to our peer program.

requested support.

kendra.erhardt@sci-ab.ca

ACCESSIBILITY & ASSISTANCE Lifeguards assist with getting in and out of pool using ramps or lifts.
 Peer support requesting assistance and sharing strategies for floating and moving in water. Must bring your own support person if need assistance in changeroom

and wheelchair pickleball ACT Aquatic Centre - Monday August 18th 12pm-1pm uatic exercise, public swim, and hot tub) Tri Leisure Centre - TBD opportunities in Arrive early to get ready and in pool by start time Edmonton! or 1:1 in the water (alternatively could arrive and leave in swimwear).

Edmonton Recreation Centres are free with leisure access pass, and support person admission is free. Check out the posters for dates and details! Contact Tristan.Kowal@sci-ab.ca to RSVP. for pool accessibility questions, or to explore options for addressing barriers. **Portable Ramp Solutions + Options** Not all ramps need to come from high-cost mobility suppliers. In fact, some budget-friendly models offer the same durability and weight capacity at a fraction of the price. Having a reliable ramp can make everyday access and travel much easier for wheelchair users. For home use, a great low-cost option is the Princess Auto bi-fold aluminum loading ramp, which offers 72" of reach and supports up to 1,200 lbsideal for wheelchairs and power chairs. Originally designed for equipment, it's increasingly used by wheelchair users for home access. For travel, the <u>Dunlop Care</u> lightweight ramp is a compact, ultra-portable option perfect for curbs and

Open to all ages, abilities, levels of experience, and mobility aids. Can play in manual or power wheelchair, using other mobility aids, o using sports wheelchairs available at the gym. Pickleball paddles also available or can bring your own Have fun, socialize, get physically active, learn to play pickleball, and learn and practice wheelchair skills through pickleball games. Contact info: WheelchairPickleballEdmonton@outlook.com

spinal cord injuries and other physical disabilities. Friends and family are also welcome. RSVP to Tristan.Kowal@sci-ab.ca

" Wheelin' and feelin' the summer vibes—catch you in September!"

- Kendra + Terry + Tristan

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Living Beyond Limits

Participant Registration Includes: Admission to all sessions and activities (10:00 AM - 3:00 PM) Access to the vendor showcase **Get your ticket today!**

> Adam Arsenault No Limits Collective Inclusive Housing

New Survey Roll Out for SCI-AB Program Review We have worked hard with our colleagues across Canada to develop an evaluation tool for the Peer Program. We are happy to be launching it now and would appreciate your responses. You are a valued member of the SCI-AB peer program and your feedback will assist us with understanding how your involvement with the program has impacted you and where improvements can be made. You will be entered into a draw to win a gift card for completing the survey.

SCI-AB August 2025 Events: Upcoming SCI-AB August 4th YEG SCI Peer Pool Meetup August 6th Virtual Peer Chat with Terry **Events in August:**

August 12th YEG Peer Bowling

August 10th Calgary Peer BBQ Party August 12th Virtual Ladies Peer Chat August 12th YEG SCI Peer Pool Meetup

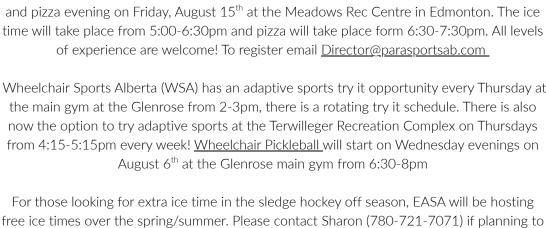
August 13th Red Deer Peer Meet Up



involved within the community. Through that shared experience and understanding there is such strong connection and intention to support one another, and I think that has been one of my favourite experiences- which has truly been one of my favourite parts of this role. Seeing the resiliency, connection and growth of individuals is always rewarding and awe-inspiring. There are many positive experiences I have had while working with this team, getting to know every team member and their senses of humour, strengths and weaknesses. The team is very close knit and environments I have ever worked in, and I am sad to be leaving. I genuinely appreciate everyone I have met and been able to connect with, and appreciate all of the laughs, conversations and even I wish nothing but the absolute best for this organization and all of those who are involved as you truly do make an impact and I am grateful to have been able to experience all of your characters in the past year and half, it has added years to my life and I know that if I ever need support that

lightly, and it wouldn't have been possible without the foundation built during my time here. My coworkers, mentors, and the countless peers I've had the privilege to support and learn from—you have left a permanent mark on my heart. You've been my teammates in every sense of the word, helping me climb mountains I once thought impossible. To the greater spinal cord injury community—whether you're a peer navigating your own path or part of the amazing organizations that work tirelessly behind the scenes—I just

Thank you for the memories! -Suzy



Who: Anyone! (age 5+) When: Friday August 15 Ice Time 5:00pm-6:30pm Pizza 6:30pm-7:30pm **Where: Meadows Recreation Centre** Cost: FREE How to register: email Director@parasportsab.com

We Are Researchers are looking for participants for a new study regarding experiences while accessing OB/GYN **Participants** care. Please note, that this study is considering any OB/GYN care, NOT only care for obstetricians or gynecologists. This means any care from a physician or nurse practitioner that focuses on female You will be compensated \$25

SCI Peer Pool Meetup Looking to try something and other physical disabilities. Open to family and friends as well new with a group of Float around and get active in water, learn from peers, adjust to be in water safely with changes to physical abilities, and gain confidence peers? Check out the new LOCATION, DATE & TIME Commonwealth Recreation Centre - Monday August 4th 6pm-7pm (public swim with climbing wall and waterslide, lane swim, and hot tub)

Bonnie Doon Leisure Centre - Tuesday August 12th 3pm-4pm adaptive swim meetup

low steps. It folds down small, has a built-in handle, and is light enough to carry easily—great for hotel stays, taxi access, or visits to non-accessible homes. When choosing a ramp, consider the height you need to cover, weight capacity, surface grip, and whether you need something portable or permanent. A foldable ramp can be a smart addition to any travel kit, offering flexibility and independence wherever

Pizza & Rock Painting with Peers





you go. When choosing a ramp, it's important to start by measuring the height of the step or threshold you need to cover. A general guideline is to use one inch of ramp length for every inch of rise, though power chairs may require a more gradual incline. The ramp's surface is also critical—look for non-slip materials, especially if it will be used outdoors in rain or snow. Consider whether the ramp will be permanent or portable. Permanent ramps are ideal for home use, while foldable or lightweight options are better suited for travel, events, or temporary setups. Lastly, always check the weight capacity to ensure it can safely support both the user and their wheelchair or mobility device. Pizza & Rock Painting with Peers | August 15th 6-8pm

> August 15th from 6pm-8pm at SCI Alberta Edmonton office on the 4th floor of the Hys Centre 400-11010 101 St



RECRUITING We are interested in learning about your experiences in accessing OB/GYN care

Have accessed obstetric or gynecology care.

women & children's health research institute AMHF

PIZZA WITH PEERS

4PM-6PM AT GLENROSE REHABILITATION CENTRE UNIT 38 ATRIUM

disabilities.

Upcoming Dates

June 26 July 31 August 28 Sept 25

spinal cord injuries and related physical SCI AB Peer Support Program Sign-up

Médullaires Alber

WHEELCHAIR PICKLEBAL

Pickleball group for people with physical disabilities. Friends & family

Wednesdays 6:30pm-8:00pm in Glenrose gym on main floor

(10230 111 Avenue)

are also welcome.

Starting August 6th, 2025

COFFEE WITH PEERS

Supported by