



Annual Report for 2018

President's Message

As of March 2019, the BC Lymphedema Association has been active for 12 years, educating people about lymphedema and ways to manage their condition, increasing awareness through World Lymphedema Days and public displays organized by support group teams Plus working with the medical community to establish strategies for the provisions of medical services.

Achievements for 2018-2019 year:

- Membership numbers increased to 178 by end of year and continue to grow now at 199. We are pleased to welcome BC Cancer as a new corporate member, ensuring that each of the satellite agencies around the province will receive Pathways and Lymphedema information on a regular basis.
- We exhibited at the BC Cancer Information Day for Gynecological patients and at the UBC Continuing Education day for Vascular Surgeons. These provided valuable opportunities to make contacts with professionals and reach post cancer patients at risk of developing Lymphedema.
- We had March 6th proclamations declared in several communities plus a 2-minute announcement in the BC Legislature. This is available to view on the web site plus the BCLA Facebook group.
- BCLA continued to participate in the quarterly cross-Canada conference calls to hear about the work that Canadian Lymphedema Framework (CLF) does on our behalf and connect with other provincial association, to share ideas and receive up-dates on their activities.
- We started the year with 9 directors, appointing a 10th after, the AGM bringing us to a full slate. However, after giving consideration of the best way they could contribute to the work of BCLA, two directors stepped down from the board. Gail Reichart continues to make regular posts on the Facebook group and organized a successful World Lymphedema Day mall display in Victoria Ethel Jenkins, in Kimberly, is advocating for service and doing outreach in her community. They both continue to be the contact person for their local support group.
- We had two new support groups form this year: one in Surrey/White Rock, the other in the Tri- Cities, bringing our total to 9 support groups, several meeting on a monthly basis. The opportunity to connect with others, share & learn from each other, is a really important part of improving the quality of life for many people with LE. Thank you to those who take the initiative to arrange a meeting & maintain contact with others in your area.

- Committee work accelerated during 2018 involving almost all directors.
The Communication committee reviewed & streamlined all forms of member communication and continue to make regular posts on the Facebook page.

The planning committee organized the November LED.

An add hoc committee was formed to prepare a Province wide survey reaching out to all BCLA members and others with Lymphedema & chronic edema patients. The goal is to gather credible prevalence numbers to use for advocacy with the government. We are gathering data on both: costs to the health care system and costs to the individual living with Lymphedema. We would appreciate any help you can provide in distributing this survey to people who fit the criteria.

On behalf of all BCLA members, I thank the Board of Directors for their dedication to specific projects and the overall functioning of the board. Thanks also to those professional members that provided answers to medical questions arising from the information line.

Plans for 2019:

We held a 2-day Strategic Planning Session in Feb 2019 with directors from Prince George & Trail meeting up with Lower mainland volunteers. Some outcomes from the working session include:

- BCLA goals & mission statements were reviewed and minor changes made. New membership inserts have been printed,
- Annual finances & budget were reviewed proving the necessity of increasing membership fees for the 2019-2020 year to ensure sustainability of the services we provide.
- The new Professional Directory was reviewed for content, layout & visual appearance. We hope to print & distribute this in the next couple of months.
- The second education day is being planned. This event will target health care providers in Prince George & surrounding northern areas.
- The website lay out was reviewed. Due to increasing web management and transaction fees, we are considering changing to another provider.
- Newsletters will continue to be sent out on a regular basis, providing the kind of information that used to be included in the Pathways insert, only now more frequently.
- We are meeting with the UBC Dept. of Plastic Surgery who have initiated global training for one of the specialist team and are planning to establish Lymphedema surgeries as early as summer 2019.

How can you be involved in ensuring the ongoing strength of your organization?

A lot has been achieved during this past year, but there is still much to do to achieve our goals. We encourage all members to continue to support the BCLA, by offering your energy and skill as a director or committee member in your area of expertise. Volunteer. Here are some specific areas of need:

1. It is essential that we have a Treasurer for the coming year. The job requires ensuring bills are paid and record keeping completed every quarter. It is not that hard, I have no formal bookkeeping skills but have managed to complete the required year end reports.
2. [but I cannot continue to carry this for another year] The job of President has many other responsibilities and demands a lot of my time.
3. We need volunteers for the finance & fundraising committee. We have discovered that finding grant opportunities for our organization takes time & patience. We need a volunteer to explore grant possibilities. To date, the only support we have been able to muster is from suppliers of LE products and therapists providing treatment. We need to source other potential funding to provide the level of education members need.
4. We need people to be the support group contact person in Kelowna and Kamloops. We know there are lots of people with LE in those area and several busy therapists providing treatment. We just need a person to bring you together.

If you have questions or require more information about any of the above volunteer opportunities you can go to the main page of the website under the AGM tab. Or contact me through info@bclymph.org

I look forward to speaking with you on March 28th.

Respectfully submitted,

Christine Chandler
President