



President's Report 2018

As of March 2018, the BC Lymphedema Association has been active for 12 years, following the Mission, Values & goals of BCLA

Membership remains pretty consistent year after year, currently with a total of 154 members: 102 Individuals, 32 Professional, 16 corporate members and 3 Gold.

Of these, I want to acknowledge several founding members & others who have been with the BCLA organization for 10 years. Their sustained dedication & work on behalf of BCLA provides significant strength to the organization. **Congratulations to:-**

Robert Harris, Carol Armstrong, Koby Blanchfield, Tricia Datene, Rebecca Hutchinson , Lynn Holloway, Eileen Holloway, Leona Towers, Pauline Chang, Sonja Redden, Denise Drisdelle, Annette Crocker, & Leslie Williams.

This report outlines the activities of the new board of Directors from April 2017 through to March 2018.

The first few months were spent with executive members receiving or transferring files & information plus learning their new roles. With Lynn as admin assistant working with me, considerable time was spent updating internet access codes and re-registering administrative access for all the online services, some of which dated back to directors long off the board. We developed new job related e-mails plus an administrative guides that will stay with the organization to make future transitions more streamlined.

Geographic representation throughout the province is an important goal for us to be more effective in connecting with members... We now have people in Prince George, Duncan, Sunshine Coast & Vancouver; Having a northern representative was very successful thus we are looking to expand this representation for the coming year.

The Conference call and e-mail is the only way we can conduct business. With the exception of one face to face strategic planning meeting per year.

We implemented a number of cost saving measures to ensure sustainability with the additional monthly cost of an administrator. A less expensive conference call line, reduced travel costs were two of those measures. We activated a credit card for BCLA payments & pay invoices by e-transfer which cuts both time & mailing costs.

While on the surface it may seem that not much has happened this year, there has been a lot of ground work completed for more efficient operations in the future.

We thank all those who have been regular donors some for several years & hope that next year we might get more attention for the "December **"Giving Tuesday" project through Canada Helps** We are hopeful that with a specific project in mind for the 2018 /2019 year we may be more successful in raising funds targeted toward the provision of Lymphedema awareness days & workshops throughout the province.

In October Janine & I attended the National Conference in Montreal. We shared a full morning with other provincial reps discussing how we can support each other by sharing ideas, resources & new information. We continue to connect through regular e-mails and quarterly cross-Canada conference calls. A full review of the conference plus our impressions from the event was presented in the winter edition of the Pathways magazine.

We continued preparation of the BC insert for the quarterly magazine. However the demands of writing the insert plus preparing monthly newsletters is time consuming. We are considering alternative options for next year, we think contact with members through a monthly newsletter is probably more helpful than a quarterly insert where it is harder to be topical & timely. We have some alternative ideas to ensure that our professional members have exposure.

November/December involved advertising for, interviewing & training our new administrator, Sharon, with whom some of you have already had contact. Recently there has been significant streamlining & organization of the website to make it more user friendly. We are posting new information every week so please do make this your go to place to see what is happening.

In January we prepared advocacy letters to Pharmacare' asking that the criteria for compression garment coverage be reviewed.

Another to the head of plastic surgery at UBC, asking that they recruit Doctors who could specialize in surgical treatment for Lymphedema.

We plan to expand this letter writing campaign to include major hospitals around the province.

In February we held the annual strategic planning meeting in Delbruck North Vancouver. Ironically this was the location of the inaugural meeting of BCLA back in 2008. We focused on the :-

Four pillars of the BCLA: Education Support & Networking plus Advocacy.

The most significant step was establishing a date for a Vancouver Lymphedema Awareness day to be held Nov 18th 2018 This will be organized jointly with the new BC APPGroup and the CLF Education Working group (*see the members only section of our website for more background on these groups*)

The intent is to invite therapists, nurses and people living with LE for a shared day of information on all aspects of managing the condition of Lymphedema.

Following the Vancouver event in 2019, we plan to take the workshops around the province to central locations including: Prince George, Victoria, Kamloops & Kelowna

We discussed ways to re-energize the support group contacts in each area to link members through informal meetings, plus a variety of Social media connections. We hope to recruit a director with particular interest in this field.

In closing I want to thank the Directors for their energy, commitment & passion this past year. In particular my executive colleagues, Janine & Bev who have carried a large load, this year & new directors who had a steep learning curve prior to taking on more responsibility.

If you have ideas or could make a contribution in any way please do not hesitate to contact me.

Respectfully submitted

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