

Report of the Executive Director

CLGS ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING

12 NOVEMBER 2020

In my first report, I listed my priorities for the coming year. I outlined a plan to have CLGS be a leader in change.

With leadership comes accountability. To be a true leader, CLGS must be trustworthy and demonstrate its performance in meaningful ways.

We set out to build the foundation that would transform CLGS into a continuous improvement organization – a cornerstone to creating a best practice model. We took steps to eliminate paper-based processes that prevent us from accurately seeing trends and outcomes. We invested in new systems and IT infrastructure to become data rich, essential tools for good informed decision-making.

We introduced a Quality Assurance Lead who will turn our attention to continuous improvement practices. We've created improvement teams to drive focused improvements across all facets of the agency.

Genuine engagement is another priority I identified. We started with staff engagement. We've established new channels of communication and engagement including staff huddles, coffee chats with the Executive Director, an employee survey and a management satisfaction survey. We launched a new website and soon we will be broadening our engagement to include people supported and families.

The third priority is to become a champion and voice for people living with developmental disabilities. Our work on this front will be guided by our values of respect, choice and inclusion. We are now developing a person-centered framework which will give shape to the supports we provide to help people live a good life.

Over the coming year, we will launch Accountability Based Management which will include expected Managerial Leadership Practices for our leaders. I believe this will prove to be the most significant means to changing our organizational culture.

There will also be a need to turn our attention to the agency's financial health. Over the past eight years, CLGS has accumulated a net asset deficiency of over half a million dollars.

Addressing this financial challenge will require courage, resiliency and inventiveness.

These very qualities came to the forefront at CLGS in March, when the agency was confronted with the threat of the COVID-19 pandemic. Our staff exhibited tremendous bravery and dedication throughout the pandemic. I was proud to lead such a courageous team. Together, we successfully kept our employees and the people we support safe and healthy.

What was striking about this pandemic were the many parallels to be found. Suddenly overnight, the majority of us were living the life people with developmental disabilities live every day. Isolation, a lack of inclusiveness, and the invisibility of the DS sector are all sadly relatable to the daily lives of people with developmental disabilities.

There is much talk about reforms in our sector. The pandemic has taught us that people living in large congregate settings are particularly vulnerable. I expect we will see a move towards more individualized supports, a greater use of technology and more shared services. I also believe we will see a greater focus on community. You cannot create an inclusive community within your own walls. The greatest opportunities lie outside our doors, and the outside community.

As I reflect on my past 20 months at CLGS, my greatest learning lies in the gifts that surround us. Our families gift us with their appreciation. Our employees bring gifts of creativity, courage and passion. The people we support have gifts of opportunity which they reveal to us in their own unique ways.

I see these gifts as signs of hope and change. Paulo Coelho, author of one of my favorite books, *The Alchemist*, said: “When we love, we always strive to become better than we are. When we strive to become better than we are, everything around us becomes better too.”

That is the change I hope for at CLGS.

VIVIANE LAPOINTE
Executive Director