



# AAN POVERTY REDUCTION

**Date/Time:**

May 17<sup>th</sup>, 2022 / 1:30pm – 3:30pm

**Location: Zoom**

<https://us02web.zoom.us/j/811762804>

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**Chairs: Allyson Dann**

**In Attendance:**

Mezaun Lakha-Evin (AAN)

Darryl Janzen (Cerebral Palsy Alberta)

Allyson Dann (Calgary Fetal Alcohol Network)

Andrea van Vugt (Community Advocate)

Levi Nilson (Cerebral Palsy Alberta)

Meri Topchieva (AAN)

Margot Brunner (VAD)

Colleen Huston (Disability Action Hall)

Greg McMeekin (Advocate for Persons with Disabilities)

## Meeting Minutes

Land Acknowledgement  
Welcome and Introductions

Review/Approval of previous meeting's minutes

**Topics of Discussion:****Volunteers for Co-Chair**

- Due to scheduling conflicts our co-chair has left the table. We are seeking a new co-chair. Please contact Mezaun Lakha-Evin

**Distribution of Survey**

- The cost of gasoline has increased again, making the cost of living higher. Homecare caregivers are limiting their travel because their gas coverage is minimal, forcing them to pay extra from their pocket when they travel.
- Agencies are currently covering 61 cents per kilometer for caregivers. If gas prices keep rising through the summer, agencies will not be able to keep increasing gas coverage. This increases the amount that caregivers must pay from their own pocket.
- People with disabilities will have a harder time accessing their services if the price of transportation keeps rising.
- We will have the survey done within the next couple of days, the survey will be distributed throughout the summer, and the results will be collected in the fall.
- Margot is on the AISH Group Advocacy Project, where there are 35 organizations working on coordinated action. Margot will give the minutes from the AISH Project to Meri, where Meri will distribute them to the table's members.



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- AAN will participate in the AISH Group Advocacy Project.
- Edmonton closed its temporary shelter spaces in March and April. This has left the homeless population camped out in parks, where police officers have confiscated their belongings and forced them out of the parks as well.

## **RDSP Update**

- Levi Nelson provided an update on his work with the RDSP program.
- About 30-31% of people who are eligible for RDSP currently have it. Most people who are eligible for RDSP do not know they are eligible or feel as if it's too good to be true. Levi will work on an information campaign to educate Albertans about how the application process works.
- To be eligible for the RDSP you must have 1) the Disability Tax Credit (DTC), 2) be under the age of 60, 3) be a resident of Canada, and 4) have a social insurance number (SIN).
- Potential initiative to talk to banks about how the RDSP can be included in their equity, diversity, and inclusion plan and commit some of their resources to increase awareness.
- The Friendship Centers across Alberta received the grant for the RDSP initiative.
- If anyone has any questions or resources to share with Levi about the RDSP, please contact him at [lnilson@cpalberta.com](mailto:lnilson@cpalberta.com)

## **Recruitment Update**

- As the AAN tables won't meet in July and August, Meri and Mezaun will recruit more stakeholders across Alberta. Meri has already started recruitment and will continue to find new stakeholders throughout the summer.

## **Action Items:**

- Write a 300-word letter independent of the survey about poverty within the disability community.
- Margot will distribute the survey to the AISH committee.
- Meri will contact Calgary Citizen and see if they will agree to post our survey on their website.

Wrap-Up/Adjournment

## **Next meeting:**

**Date:** June 21, 2022

**Time:** 1:30pm – 3:30pm

**Location:** Zoom